

## **Investigating the Impact of a Firm's Resource Portfolio Management on Organisational Effectiveness within Private Universities in Kenya**

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### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of a firm's resource portfolio management on organizational effectiveness within private universities in Kenya. The study was underpinned by strategic leadership theory and adopted positivism philosophy. The research design was cross-sectional survey with a quantitative approach to research. A sample of 325 was drawn from 1733 management team members of all 36 private universities at the time of study. Data was collected using a structured 5-point Likert scale questionnaire and was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 29) software. Pseudo R-square Nagelkerke  $R^2=0.521$  indicated that firm's resource portfolio explained 52% of variance in organisational effectiveness. Parameter estimates ( $\beta=2.331$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) showed that firm's resource portfolio had a significant positive effect on organisational effectiveness. The study concluded that effective management of a firm's resource portfolio has significant impact on organizational effectiveness within private universities in Kenya. The study recommends that strategic leadership teams in private universities should establish robust processes for identifying their resources, convert them into desired capabilities, and develop proper plans for utilisation in alignment with the universities' strategic objectives.*

**Key words:** Firm's resource portfolio, Organizational effectiveness, Private universities, Strategic leadership

### **Introduction**

In recent times, strategic leadership has piqued the interest of individuals and organisations across industries due to environmental turbulence (Al Haddad & Al Shobaki, 2021). The COVID-19 crisis also accelerated emphasis on the role and importance of strategic leadership in helping organisations to remain financially and operationally sustainable (Belias & Trihas, 2022). Strategic leadership is critical for effective and efficient deployment of resources and enabling and directing learning, strategic thinking, and change in an organisation so that it is effectively equipped to confront challenges and adapt in changing business environments (Tipurić, 2022). Effective strategic leadership practices include determining strategic direction, sustaining effective organisational culture, establishing balanced organisational controls, emphasising ethical practices, and effective management of firm resource portfolio (Hitt et al., 2017). An organisation's resource portfolio includes human capital, social capital, and core competencies. Human capital is an invaluable arsenal of an organisation's skills and knowledge that resides in the organisation's universe of employees (Nyongesa et al., 2022).

Strategic leaders make quality decisions on how organizational resources will be integrated and applied to effectively confront threats and leverage opportunities in the external environment (Cegliński, 2020). Continuous investment in human capital development creates a pool of strategic leaders for the future thereby accelerating continuous learning and adding to the organisation's capabilities. Social capital encompasses the entirety of relationships within and outside an organisation (Hitt et al., 2017). Strategic leaders of universities use social capital to build and enhance their networks to access strategic resources (Mandibaya & Khan, 2020). Core competencies are skills at the organisation's disposal that enable execution of tasks effectively (Hitt et al., 2017). Private universities that build their core competencies create the ability to efficiently utilize their resources for positive outcomes (Fundira, 2021). By leadership effectively selecting core competencies, universities can be foundations for social change through nurturing of suitable talent (Kim, 2022).

Organisational effectiveness is the efficacy with which an organisation achieves its goals and objectives beyond financial performance (Bako & Olabimtan, 2020). It indicates how healthy an organisation is wholistically (Xu et al., 2022). Organisational effectiveness goes beyond internal stakeholders and efficiencies that drive positive performance to include external factors that impact how the organisation is measured beyond its economic value (Hassan, 2021). Organisational effectiveness has long been measured on financial performance, which despite its significance does not by itself provide a holistic view of how effectively and sustainably an organisation is operating (Hitt, 1988). Further, environmental turbulence has made financial planning and projection difficult in a way that achieving set performance targets cannot be ascertained (Islam et al., 2020). Thus, to have a true picture of how an organization is measuring relative to its goals, quantitative and qualitative aspects of performance and other competing organizational demands must be evaluated (Pounder, 1999). In universities organizational effectiveness is indicated by various elements including leadership, quality of teaching, staff satisfaction, acquisition and efficient utilization of resources (Albassami et al., 2019).

Private higher education in Kenya emerged and accelerated in the 1990s (Kibuine et al., 2022). Currently there are 36 private universities. Despite this growth, these universities are seen as hubs of poor performance producing low quality graduates. Low faculty qualifications and high attrition, high student-to-staff ratios, and low research capacity are some of the issues contributing to compromised quality (Wekullo et al., 2022). A Commission for University Education (CUE) (2019) report revealed that private universities are far behind public universities, at 38.2% in research publications, 29.9% in innovation, and 4.6% in patenting. Additionally, brain drain is eroding gains made (Bett, 2019). Effective management of universities' resources enables strategic leadership to create environments where ideas and knowledge generation thrive, and opportunities are converted thereby accelerating development of required capabilities to sustain situations of evolving competitive demands. Strategic leadership's ability to embed strategic insights in translating innovative creativity into a determinant of success reinforces its position in the success of private universities.

### ***Statement of the problem***

According to Al Haddad and Al Shobaki (2021) private universities that adopt effective strategic leadership practices can realise their corporate objectives, thereby achieving effectiveness. This assertion, however, conflicts with reality across geographies as private universities are seen as ineffective due to weak leadership practices (Rubera, 2023). Studies show that strategic leadership

has been adopted in Kenyan private universities but has not been practiced effectively. There is also a concern that leaders are not appropriately trained or orientated to the work of strategic leadership (Mulwa et al., 2019). On the other hand, research on leadership in private universities is diverse but literature relating to effective strategic leadership practices and organisational effectiveness constructs is scanty. These illustrations indicate significant gaps in practice and literature in relation to effective strategic leadership practices and organisational effectiveness in private universities. Further, the prevailing and seemingly unending narrative of environmental turbulence, ongoing change, and survival in the context of private universities warrants evaluation of effective strategic leadership practices and effectiveness in these institutions. This study, therefore, sought to investigate the impact a firm's resource portfolio management on organisational effectiveness within private universities in Kenya.

### ***Strategic leadership theory***

Strategic leadership theory postulates that leadership efforts and strategic decisions translate to organisational success. Hitt et al. (2017) highlighted human, financial, social, and organisational resources as tangible and intangible resources that form part of strategic leadership action deliverables. Effective strategic leadership action in the context of managing an organisation's resources is classifying them into capabilities so that they can be assigned in alignment with the organisation's objectives (Nyongesa et al., 2022). Resources add distinctive value and augment continuity of operations enabling an organisation to differentiate itself for sustained competitive advantage.

### **Methodology**

The study was underpinned by strategic leadership theory and adopted positivism philosophy. The study adopted cross-sectional survey design with a quantitative approach. The target population was 1733 management team members from 36 private universities in Kenya. A sample of 325 strategic leadership members comprising trustees/directors, university council, university management board, senate/academic board/academic council, senior academic and administrative leaders, and student leaders was drawn. Probability sampling with stratification was used. Data was collected using a structured 5-point Likert scale questionnaire which was self-administered and shared online through a google form. Data was analyzed using SPSS version 29.

### **Results**

The sample size was 325, out of which 32 (10%) of the respondents participated in the pilot study. Therefore, for this study 293 questionnaires were distributed out of which 273 responded representing a response rate of 93%.

### ***Inferential analysis for firm's resource portfolio and organisational effectiveness***

#### *Factor analysis*

KMO measure was 0.921 indicating sampling adequacy for the study variable, with sufficient shared variance in the data to allow factor analysis to be undertaken. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ( $\chi^2=2720.124$ ,  $df=66$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) indicating significant correlation between variables thus supporting factor extraction. The significant test results indicated that variables were interrelated and justified use of principal component analysis. These findings validated the structure of firm resource portfolio as a measurable factor and meant that the study could

accurately assess impact of a firm's resource portfolio management on organisational effectiveness. Table 1 shows the results.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity results

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>			
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.			.921
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square		2720.740
	Df		66
	Sig.		.000

#### *Total variance explained*

One factor was identified with a variance of 64.621%. Results indicated that a single dominant factor captured most of the variability in firm's resource portfolio, and that it is a well-defined construct, thus reinforcing its importance in strategic leadership and organisational effectiveness. The strong variance explanation supported the study's validity in assessing the impact of a firm's resource portfolio management on organisational effectiveness. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2: Total variance explained results

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.755	64.621	64.621	7.755	64.621	64.621
2	.872	7.270	71.891			
3	.722	6.018	77.909			
4	.588	4.899	82.808			
5	.441	3.672	86.480			
6	.341	2.842	89.322			
7	.304	2.533	91.855			
8	.261	2.179	94.034			
9	.223	1.857	95.890			
10	.193	1.606	97.497			
11	.175	1.454	98.951			
12	.126	1.049	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

#### *Pattern matrix*

All items loaded strongly onto a single component. This suggested that firm's resource portfolio is a unidimensional construct meaning all measured aspects contribute to a single underlying factor. The strong factor loadings indicated a well-defined structure. These findings confirmed that effective management of resources contributes significantly to organisational effectiveness. This reinforced the validity of a firm's resource portfolio management in assessing organisational effectiveness in private universities. Table 3 shows the results.

Table 3: Pattern matrix results

<b>Component Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>	
	Component 1
The strategic leadership team effectively manages the organisation's human capital to enhance productivity and efficiency	.824
The strategic leadership team effectively manages the organisation's core competencies to enhance stability and control	.822
The strategic leadership team effectively manages the organisation's core competencies for cohesion and morale	.819
The strategic leadership team effectively manages the organisation's core competencies to enhance adaptation and resource acquisition	.816
The strategic leadership team effectively manages the organisation's human capital to enhance stability and control	.810
The strategic leadership team effectively manages the organisation's social capital to enhance stability and control	.808
The strategic leadership team effectively manages the organisation's social capital to enhance adaptation and resource acquisition	.803
The strategic leadership team effectively manages the organisation's social capital to enhance productivity and efficiency	.801
The strategic leadership team effectively manages the organisation's social capital to enhance cohesion and morale	.797
The strategic leadership team effectively manages the organisation's human capital to enhance adaptation and resource acquisition	.794
The strategic leadership team effectively manages the organisation's core competencies to enhance productivity and efficiency	.778
The strategic leadership team effectively manages the organisation's human capital to enhance cohesion and morale	.774
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.	
a. 1 components extracted.	

#### *Pearson Product Moment correlation*

Results showed positive and strong correlation between firm's resource portfolio and organisational effectiveness ( $r=0.668$ ,  $p<.001$ ), indicating that improvements in resources management are associated with increased effectiveness in private universities. These results support firm's resource portfolio as one of the key drivers of organisational effectiveness and reinforce the need for effective management by strategic leadership for greater outcomes in universities. Table 4 shows the results.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment correlation results

		<b>Correlations</b>		
Spearman's rho	Organisational EffectivenessEMF2	Correlation	Organisational Effectiveness	Firm Resource Portfolio
		Coefficient	1.000	.668**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	
	N	269	268	
Firm Resource Portfolio22	Firm Resource Portfolio22	Correlation	.668**	1.000
		Coefficient		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	
	N	268	270	

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

**Chi-Square test**

Results showed a statistically significant association between firm's resource portfolio and organisational effectiveness ( $\chi^2=208.004$ ,  $df=12$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Likelihood ratio test and linear-by-linear association test were also significant further reinforcing this relationship. The strong significance levels indicated that effective management of a firm's resource portfolio is an important element in achieving organisational effectiveness. Table 5 shows the results.

Table 5: Chi-Square test results

<b>Chi-Square Tests</b>			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	208.004 <sup>a</sup>	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	167.704	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	122.438	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	268		

a. 10 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .04.

**Analysis of variance**

Normality test results showed that Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests were significant ( $p<0.001$ ) suggesting that data did not follow a normal distribution. Deviation from normality implied that non-parametric methods or transformations would be necessary for further statistical analysis. However, as this study employed ordinal logistic regression, inferential testing relied on proportional odds assumption which ensured that conclusions drawn from regression analysis remained valid. Table 6 shows the results.

Table 6: Normality test results

<b>Tests of Normality</b>						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Organisational Effectiveness	.296	269	.000	.798	269	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

One-way ANOVA test results showed a significant difference in organisational effectiveness based on firm resource portfolio groups ( $F=56.134$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). However, between-group variance ( $SS = 55.500$ ) was smaller than the within-group variance ( $SS = 65.008$ ), suggesting that differences in organisational effectiveness are not very strongly attributed to effective management of firm's resource portfolio alone. Rather, there is potential influence of other internal or contextual factors. This suggests that strategic leadership needs to reevaluate and pair individual institutional resources with supporting components to optimize organisational effectiveness. Table 7 shows the results.

Table 7: One-Way ANOVA results

ANOVA					
Organisational_EffectivenessEMF2	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	55.500	4	13.875	56.134	.000
Within Groups	65.008	263	.247		
Total	120.507	267			

### **Ordinal logistic regression analysis**

Autocorrelation assumption test Durbin-Watson output was 1.840 which fell within the benchmark of 1.5 and 2.5, indicating no severe autocorrelation in the data. This suggested that residuals in the regression model were not correlated, thus ensuring reliability of regression assumptions. Table 8 shows the results.

Table 8: Autocorrelation results

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.677 <sup>a</sup>	.459	.457	.49527	1.840

a. Predictors: (Constant), Firm\_Resource\_Portfolio22  
b. Dependent Variable: Organisational\_EffectivenessEMF2

Proportional odds assumption test for parallel line result was not significant ( $\chi^2=1.848$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p=0.397$ ), indicating that the relationship between firm's resource portfolio and organisational effectiveness remained consistent across response categories. Since the assumption was met, stability of the predictor variable's influence was confirmed, and the regression model was used confidently to analyze impact of a firm's resource portfolio management on organisational effectiveness. Table 9 shows the results.

Table 9: Proportional odds assumption results

Test of Parallel Lines <sup>a</sup>				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Null Hypothesis	34.811			
General	32.963	1.848	2	.397

The null hypothesis states that the location parameters (slope coefficients) are the same across response categories.

a. Link function: Logit.

Multicollinearity assumption test results showed that tolerance value was 1.000 and variance inflation factor (VIF) was 1.000, indicating no multicollinearity between firm's resource portfolio and organisational effectiveness. This finding indicated that the predictor variable was independent and did not cause redundancy in the regression model. As multicollinearity assumption was met, regression analysis proceeded on the confidence that firm's resource portfolio is a distinct and valid predictor of organisational effectiveness. Table 10 shows the results.

Table 10: Multicollinearity results

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.900	.148		12.837	.000		
	Firm_Resource_P ortfolio22	.540	.036	.677	15.010	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Organisational\_EffectivenessEMF2

### Testing hypothesis

The null hypothesis was stated as below:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Effective management of a firm's resource portfolio does not have significant impact on organisational effectiveness within private universities in Kenya.

Ordinal logistic regression model fitting information was significant ( $\chi^2=160.683$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), indicating that firm's resource portfolio has a strong effect on organisational effectiveness. The final model (-2 Log Likelihood = 34.811) showed a substantial improvement over the intercept-only model. These findings confirmed that effective management of a firm's resource portfolio significantly predicts organisational effectiveness in private universities. The strong significance level ( $p<0.001$ ) further reinforced validity of this relationship and underscored the importance of strategic leadership in optimizing organisational resources for better outcomes. Table 11 shows the results.

Table 11: Model fitting information results

Model Fitting Information				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Intercept Only	195.494			
Final	34.811	160.683	1	.000

Link function: Logit.

Pearson Chi-square goodness-of-fit ( $\chi^2=7.721$ ,  $p=0.738$ ) and Deviance ( $\chi^2=7.020$ ,  $p=0.797$ ) statistics were not significant, suggesting that the model fit the data well. These findings indicated that the regression model appropriately explained the relationship between firm's resource

portfolio and organisational effectiveness. Since both tests showed a good fit, the model's assumptions were satisfied, ensuring reliability of the conclusions drawn from regression analysis. This further strengthened the case for firm's resource portfolio as one of the key determinants of organisational effectiveness in private universities. Table 12 shows the results.

Table 12: Goodness-of-fit results

<b>Goodness-of-Fit</b>			
	Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Pearson	7.721	11	.738
Deviance	7.020	11	.797
Link function: Logit.			

Pseudo R-square Nagelkerke  $R^2$  0.521 indicated that 52% of variance in organisational effectiveness was accounted for by effective management of firm's resource portfolio and 48% by other factors not included in the study. Table 13 shows the results.

Table 13: Pseudo R-square results

<b>Pseudo R-Square</b>	
Cox and Snell	.451
Nagelkerke	.521
McFadden	.299
Link function: Logit.	

Parameter estimates showed that firm's resource portfolio had a significant positive effect on organisational effectiveness. The coefficient for firm's resource portfolio was 2.331 ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that as management of the firm's resource portfolio improves, organisational effectiveness increases significantly. The confidence interval for firm's resource portfolio (1.899 to 2.764) further confirmed the reliability of this effect. These findings highlighted the importance of strategic leadership's efficiency in managing resources to enhance the effectiveness of private universities. Table 14 shows the results.

Table 14: Parameter estimates results

<b>Parameter Estimates</b>								
		Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Thresh old	[Organisational Effectiveness= 2.00]	2.774	.774	12.849	1	.000	1.257	4.291
	[Organisational Effectiveness = 3.00]	6.833	.797	73.541	1	.000	5.271	8.395
	[Organisational Effectiveness = 4.00]	11.191	1.004	124.322	1	.000	9.224	13.158

Locati on	Firm Resource Portfolio22	2.331	.221	111.622	1	.000	1.899	2.764
Link function: Logit.								

## Discussion

Correlation results ( $r=0.668$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) revealed a strong positive relationship between firm's resource portfolio and organisational effectiveness. This is in concurrence with Ofuoma et al. (2021) who determined that human capital development and organisational performance, are positively and significantly correlated. Development of employees generates expertise which is utilised for greater outcomes. Osazevbaru and Okeme (2023) found that organisational core competencies positively and significantly correlate with organisational performance. Interventional research by Balian et al. (2022) at a US-based small family-owned e-commerce firm found that social capital enhanced performance, with quantifiable annual outcomes of \$78,000 per year.

Chi-square test results ( $\chi^2=208.004$ ,  $df=12$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) showed a significant association between firm's resource portfolio and organisational effectiveness. These findings concur with Ekunoi and Thoronjo (2021) who found a positive association between organisational knowledge and performance. Enabling and strengthening this association requires a strong structure to foster knowledge generation, leadership support for a knowledge culture, and incentivization and reward systems to accelerate creation and sharing. Musara and Razafiarivony (2024) found that leadership, tangible and intangible resources have significant association with sustainable competitive advantage. A stronger association emerges when leadership, tangible, and intangible resources are combined.

One-Way ANOVA results ( $F=56.134$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) showed a significant difference in organisational effectiveness based on firm's resource portfolio groups, indicating that firm's resource portfolio significantly impacts organisational effectiveness. This is in line with Adhaya, Wainaina, and Odock (2023) who established that organisational characteristics have a significant effect on innovation and performance. Audi and Kilika 2023 found that composited core competencies had positive and significant impact on performance in selected tech startup firms in Nairobi ( $F = 16.748$ ,  $p<0.048$ ). Maina and Mangana (2022) established that organisational success is positively and significantly impacted by organisational competencies ( $F = 194.782$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) in Kenyan state firms.

Pseudo R-square Nagelkerke value ( $R^2 = 0.521$ ) indicated that firm's resource portfolio explained 52% of variance in organisational effectiveness. Parameter estimates ( $\beta=2.331$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) showed that firm's resource portfolio had a significant positive effect on organisational effectiveness. These findings are similar to Masyhuri et al. (2024) who found that effective management of human capital has a significant effect on organisational performance, both directly and through organisational innovation and learning. When leadership invests in and implements appropriate strategies to develop human capital it translates to positive organisational outcomes. In contrast, Jocelyne and Kariuki (2020) found that while employee empowerment has a direct positive relationship with organisational performance, it has a negative mediation effect between human capital development and performance. This partly supports this study's finding that firm resources

on their own do not strongly impact organisational effectiveness but that other internal or contextual factors play a role.

### **Conclusion**

The study determined that effective management of a firm's resource portfolio has significant impact on organisational effectiveness within private universities in Kenya. Based on this conclusion the null hypothesis that stated that effective management of a firm's resource portfolio does not have significant impact on organisational effectiveness within private universities in Kenya was rejected.

### **Recommendations**

The study recommends that leadership teams in private universities should establish robust processes for identifying their range of resources, convert them into desired capabilities, and develop proper plans for utilisation in alignment with the universities' strategic objectives.

It is suggested that a similar study be carried out on private universities' employees to identify convergences and/or deviations in outcomes, which will aid in generating a holistic view of the practice of strategic leadership within Kenya's private universities and enable consolidation of implications for practice and theory within the leadership discourse.

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