

**OPERATIONAL DECISIONS AND PERFORMANCE OF
RETAIL SUPERMARKETS IN UASIN GISHU COUNTY,
KENYA**


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DECLARATION

To the best of my knowledge, this Project is my original work and has not been earlier on published or submitted for the award of a degree in any other university.


Signature


24th November 2021
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Approval by supervisor

This Project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor. **Michael K. Chirchir**


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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research study to my husband Alex, my son Jayden, my parents Mr. and Mrs. William Chumo and my siblings Joyce, Chris, Caren, Lavendah, Harisson, Cole and Arnold.

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ABSTRACT

Operational decisions relate to all the undertakings essential to plan, develop as well as improve business processes that are involved in the provision of services in supermarkets. The current upsurge and spillover of organized retail outlets, like supermarkets, are adding to the growth of organized retail markets in Kenya. Despite operational decisions being a key in ensuring improved operational performance of retail supermarkets, many have closed shop in Kenya as a whole and even in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. The aim of this study was to determine the effect of operational decisions and performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. The specific objectives were to; determine the extent of implementation of operational decisions by retail supermarkets and to establish the effect of implementation of operational decisions on performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. Systems theory (Von Bertalanffy, 1936) and job characteristic theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1975) underpinned this research. Descriptive research design was adopted and target of 86 retail supermarkets where census was used. Data was collection was done using a structured questionnaire and analysis carried through frequencies, percentages and linear regression analysis. The study showed that majority (54.9%) of the retail supermarkets had implemented to a large extent equipment for carrying inventory which are made available to replenish shelves when stock demand was high. In addition, majority (58.5%) of the retail supermarkets in the study area have applied the periodical checking of equipment used to handle stock to ensure they are fully functional to a larger extent and majority (50.0%) retail supermarkets had minimized to a larger extent idleness among employees to ensure customer demands were met. The study found out that scheduling, maintenance management, job design, capacity management and layout design accounted for 57.0% variation in operational performance among retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. Thus, it was recommended that there are other major factors accounting for operational performance of retail supermarkets which need to be put in place to enhance operational performance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Operational decisions have gained prominence among scholars as well as researchers in the field of operations world all over. Operational decisions are such decisions that are usually adjusted frequently in order to correspond to present external as well as internal conditions, which in most cases impact on the company for a short time usually a year or even a day. These decisions determine operational performance of supermarkets and are thus key in achieving long-term performance objectives of supermarkets (Yazdanparast, Manuj, & Swartz, 2010). The operational decisions in retail supermarkets include scheduling, maintenance management, job design, layout decisions and capacity management. The operations manager should be keen in making these decisions related to day to day operations as it affects supermarket sales level and consequently profitability (Maingi, 2015)

This research was anchored on two theories namely: Systems theory (Von Bertalanffy, 1936) and job characteristic theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). According to systems theory, it alludes to the fact that systems are those components of the organization which are dependent on one another apart from having close relationship which might either be complex or simple, which helps attain performance objectives (Cristina, Jacqueline & Francesco, 2010). Hackman and Oldham (1975) derived job characteristic theory. According to the theory, a successful job should have five key features such as importance, task identity, self-sufficiency, skill variety, and feedback-that will eventually have an effect on five job related outcomes motivation, fulfillment, performance as well as absenteeism and turnover mainly by use of three psychological

states-experienced relevance, proficient responsibility as well as knowledge of results (Hackman & Oldham, 2007).

Supermarket outlets in Kenya are fast entering urban food retail and expanding out of their originally miniature confined markets among the high-end population class to expanded markets of low end class (Neven & Reardon, 2014). Supermarkets not only cater for a significant portion of the retail requirements but also redefine the economy in relation to employment creation and poverty reduction (Cytonn, 2020). The incoming of corona virus pandemic has had a downfall effect on business world over.

1.1.1 Operational Decisions

Operational decisions relate to all the undertakings essential to plan, develop as well as improve business processes that are involved in the provision of services in supermarkets. (Battistoni, Bonacelli, Colladon, & Schiraldi, 2013). These decisions revolve around sorting out the framework, design, and items management, the way of doing things, authorities as well as supply chain. It takes into consideration the acquisition, improvement as well as the use of resources that the organization needs to deliver the product/services to the needs of the customers. Operational issues in supermarkets include scheduling, maintenance management, job design layout decisions and capacity management (Wafula, 2016).

Different scheduling techniques are required for each type of the firm's operational needs. Bottleneck, routing, due date slack as well as queue are the main components of scheduling. Maintenance management encompasses parts and assets recording. Its main reason is to make sure that supermarket operations proceed with efficiency and with the least amount of resources being wasted (Battistoni et al., 2013).

Accomplishment of this can be made possible only when there are tailor made practices, software as well as workforce that is focused on achievement of the goals. Job design is the process of task allocation to the employees as well as groups or departments. Allocation of jobs means specifying the job content, methods of doing it and the relation that the job has with the person doing the job. Capacity management is the managing process of the production output required by the firm dependent on both the demand and supply situations in ensuring that the business fully utilizes its capacity (Gadwe & Sangode, 2019). Layout decisions are decisions on facility set-up, organization and items positioning that aid consumer experience. The types of layout decisions made are personnel arrangement, operating equipment arrangement, storage space arrangement and material handling equipment arrangement decisions. Decisions on personnel arrangement relate to how employees working within the supermarket are positioned. Decisions on arrangement of operating equipment relate to how machines meant for facilitating operations are placed (Orora, 2018). Decisions on storage space arrangement deal with how goods are stored before being placed on shelves once they are exhausted. Decisions on material handling equipment arrangement relate to how equipment used to move materials within the supermarket are arranged. Layout decisions are the most critical and strategic decisions that managers in consumer related businesses need to make (Kovács and Kot, 2017).

1.1.2 Operational Performance

Success in any profit-making organization is not only assessed by financial inflows but is also governed by its operational effectiveness, which involves customer satisfaction and retention and ease of doing business. This is usually a solid determinant in the company's quest for excellence as well as keeping afloat in the

current economic times with highly competitive markets (Vencataya, 2011). An organization's operational performance is determined by the ability to produce essential market requirements in the most low cost and low price manner and the extent to which those supplies meet the needs and expectations of its clients. Quality, speed, dependability, flexibility and cost are the key operational performance measures. In the operational realm of supermarkets, all the five mentioned dimensions of operational performance carry a major role in the continuity and sustainability of organizations. A number of customers have the ability to switch from one outlet to another hence their likes and dislikes have to be catered for to their satisfaction level. (Vencataya,2011).

Operational performance consists of direction on realizing efficiency and effectiveness in services support and delivery in order to guarantee service providers and customer values (Kungu, 2014). The operations manager is concerned with ensuring achievement of desirable operational performance so as to achieve organizational objectives (Domschke & Drexl, 2013). Tao (2019) states that it is the decisions that operations managers undertake that increase organization productivity and competitiveness in the industry. In consumer retail stores, the aspect of operational performance defines how the management has created a suitable environment for product efficiency and customer experience. The higher the number of clients a supermarket has, the higher the net incomes the supermarket outlet it posts hence higher sustainability (Domschke & Drexl, 2013).

The measures of operational performance differ from company to company and from industry to industry (Alamro, 2014). The measures that are used to assess the performance of retail stores include; cost minimization and sales turnover. Retail

stores focus on achieving sustainable market control and improved performance despite intense competition found in the industry (Vukadin, Lemoine & Badot, 2019). Prudential operational performance management helps in stability maintenance in offering of services enabling alterations in scale, scope, service level and design (Kungu, 2014). This study adopted quality, speed and cost as the operational performance measures.

1.1.3 Retail Supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

Supermarkets provide an assortment of goods and services at relatively competitive prices compared to wholesalers and small retailers. A supermarket is also a one stop shop and reduces time spent in moving from stall to stall looking for different items. Supermarkets also give customers the additional service of packaging a varied collection of products selling simultaneously in an opportune setting and location focusing on value, all shopping at one place and a general shopping experience (Nair and Chisoro, 2015). Supermarkets are self-service stores that offer the consumers different consumer experiences which include access to variety of consumer goods and household goods within the same building. Supermarkets are examples of consumer retail stores that offer a variety of goods in one shop stop (Mutinda & Mwasiaji, 2018).

The current upsurge and spillover of organized retail outlets, like supermarkets, are adding to the growth of organized retail markets in Kenya. Retail supermarkets provide space for customers to choose from a variety of products offered to them. Many of these retail stores are highly dependent on the number of transactions performed periodically which translates to profitability (Kovács and Kot, 2017). The rise of retail supermarkets in Kenya is mainly in urban centers across major towns in

the country. High end supermarkets in Kenya have been increasing since 1993 to the present. Many of these large supermarkets have strived to command a large number of customers and market share by providing suitable customer experiences (Domschke and Drexl, 2013).

A fight for client retention at the retail stores has prompted many retail supermarkets to improve their operational decisions aimed at commanding the market share. In Uasin Gishu County, Kenya, there has been emergence of retail supermarkets in different locations especially within the vicinity of urban centres. The retail stores industry has intense competition and rivalry which makes managers to make suitable operational decisions that will help propel operational performance (Domschke and Drexl, 2013). Maisori (2009) explains that large retail supermarkets have more than one branch which is located in different locations. According to the Uasin Gishu County Government (2021), there are 86 registered small and large retail supermarkets located within the County.

1.2 Research Problem

Operational decisions are critical component of performance in the supermarkets and they particularly focus on good characteristic that are meant not only to win the customer but also to retain the existing customers which in essence confirms the high operational performance. Implementation of operational management tasks have higher positive impact on the firm's operational performance factors such as improvement of quality, responsiveness, speed, reduction of cost, productivity, sustainability, service recovery, proficiency, effectivity as well as sustainability (Gadwe & Sangode, 2019). These decisions provide capability not only to accomplish

the customer needs and wants but also to ensure regular timely delivery. A large part of operational decision making in supermarkets revolve on how suitable they can attract their customers and provide to them suitable shopping experience (Nkirote, 2014).

Despite operational decisions being a key in ensuring improved operational performance of retail supermarkets, many have closed shop in Kenya as a whole and even in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. A good example is Tuskys supermarket which closed business in various parts of Kenya including Eldoret town (Cytton, 2020). The retail supermarkets are faced with one big challenge which is intense competition and rivalry. Many of the retail supermarkets are closing down their operations while new ones are emerging in contrary. New supermarkets are found in estates, bus stops and strategic positions with ideal packing spaces. This factual finding indicates that many operating managers are making decisions of their retail supermarket based on operational decisions (Nkirote, 2014).

Several studies have been carried out linking operational decisions and performance and the results have been mixed. A positive relationship was observed by Heizer 2008, Maisori (2009) and Kovács, & Kot, (2017) some of the studies which found a non- significant relationship (Mutinda, & Mwasiaji, (2018). Muiruri, 2020) while Domschke &Drexl, 2013, Page, Trinh and Bogomolova 2019), found mixed results both positive and negative dependent upon operational variable dimensions. These inconsistent findings need further research to resolve them.

Further contextual gaps were also noted in some of the studies linking operational decisions to operational performance. Most of the studies relating to operational

decisions and performance have been done in Korea, Australia, Taiwan and Serbia (Jenny and Krifa 2007; Neubert, Matteo and Vijay, 2009; Walid and Dipak 2010). Studies done in Africa are scarce. They include Imbuga (2005), Mungai (2008), Kariuki (2014) Odula (2016) and Orora (2018). This presents a knowledge gap and therefore more studies linking operational decisions and operational performance contextualized in the region are called for to fill this gap.

Methodological gaps were also noted in some of the studies linking operational decisions to operational performance, (Otiende, (1976), Okundi (2005) used simple analytical method. Ogoma & Otieno (2006) used convenience sampling. All retail supermarkets that spread across Uasin Gishu County were sampled for the study. Also, the research employed multiple regression analysis

According to the earlier studies, it is realized that there are significant conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps which need to be looked at. This study sought to fill the gaps through the following questions being answered: i) what is the extent of implementation of operational decisions by retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya? ii) What is the effect of implementation of operational decisions on performance of retail supermarkets within Uasin Gishu, Kenya?

1.3 General Objective

The general objective of the study was to determine the effect of operational decisions and performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

1.3.1 Research Objectives

i) To determine the extent of implementation of operational decisions by retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu county, Kenya.

ii) To establish the effect of implementation of operational decisions on performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu county, Kenya

1.4 The Value of the Study

This research will develop tremendous positive effect supermarkets as it will give them direction on the type of operational decisions that will attract clients and the more clients they serve the more profits it turns into their coffers. A supermarket is a self-service outlet that is ready to offer a variety of food, beverages and household products to the satisfaction of clients. Other stalls are for household consumables right from manufacturers and others have kitchenware utensils and other common items as used in the offices and homes. The research study was carried out in Uasin Gishu supermarkets which has played a vital function in development of the economy. Growth of supermarkets is an important aspect of the socioeconomic development as it is positively correlated with the welfare of the citizens, the success of the retail sector and the related field of employment.

The study findings are expected to provide theoretical contributions that will aid policy derivation in the areas of operational and general management. Empirical findings will be useful in development of policies that can be used to enrich the subject of operations management in understanding the concepts of operational decisions. The study will also provide empirical findings on the operational decisions and their effect on performance. This research finding will be used as a point of reference for incoming researchers.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter carries a discussion on selected theories applicable to this study, there after a discussion of various operational decisions follows. What follows is a background check of relevant empirical literature, current literature and concludes with a conceptual study framework.

2.2 The Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework comprising of relevant theories basing the foundation of this study is discussed in this section. The current study seeks with guidance from the systems theory which was proposed by von Bertalanffy Ludwig (1936) and the job characteristic theory proposed by Hackman and Oldham (1975)

2.2.1 Systems Theory

Von Bertalanffy Ludwig (1936) developed the system theory. According to systems theory, it alludes to the fact that systems are those components of the organization which are dependent on one another apart from having close relationship which might either be complex or simple, which helps attain performance objectives (Cristina, Jacqueline & Francesco, 2010). Systems are basically series of activities carried by the organization working together for the purpose of fulfillment of the organizational objectives the systems can be closed or open. Systems theory is founded on two assumptions (Beer, 1972). Firstly, the epistemological assumption states that groups will certainly use the processes set as well as the resources allocated within the

environment so that they can create the preferred outcome. Secondly, the ontological assumption states that the deterministic nature of the theory, for the reason that the surrounding of the business as well as the resources give the processes that are utilized to obtain the anticipated outputs (Cristina et al., 2010).

Movement of information as well as material within various parts of the system must be consistent to the effort necessities. The inputs for the organization are gotten from the outside world before they are transformed into output and taken back to the outside world for consumption (Katz & Kahn, 1978). This theory provides an approach in which nature of the system can fundamentally be understood. The subsystems of the of the organization changes and adjusts time and again as a result of the disturbances caused by the environment. They do that so that the system can be wholly maintained. They do so in order to maintain the system as a whole. It's prudent to note that the firm gets inputs from the environment and then transforms then into output before sending them back to the environment. Some output will be input in other areas and vice versa (Beer, 1972).

Systems theory is appropriate to the research because in supermarkets, there is interaction with the external world since they usually systems or they are seeking ways of developing business networks. Various parts of the organization have internal interaction within so that they can exchange not only information but also material. Employees in the supermarket interact with customers and fellow employees as they execute their daily mandates. This proves the dependence between departments in internal environment and even the external environment (Lysons & Farrington, 2006).

2.2.2 Job Characteristic Theory

This is a theory used in work designing. It allows for the provision of a set of principles of implementation useful for job enrichment in an organizational settings. Hackman and Oldham (1975) came up with the original version of job characteristic model in which they identified some major job traits namely importance of the task, competence, uniqueness of job, autonomy as well as feedback that have an effect on five work related results and outcome namely motivation, satisfaction, performance, turnover, and absenteeism; by three different mental states a sense of purpose, a sense of accountability, and an understanding of the outcomes (Hackman & Oldham, 2007). Job characteristics theory (JTC) has three critical psychological states which are drawn from cognitive motivation theory as well as some earlier work on identification of existence of various psychological states which may perhaps lead to desirable output. JCT has given out an opportunity of methodically assessing the connection between the psychological states concealed previously and the result.

Previous studies done on work design have disclosed that job characteristics may perhaps actually predict performance of individual even though it did not provide for how and why the relationship actually existed. This gap has been filled by JTC by forming a connection between job traits and job related outputs that have been proposed in the model (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). For instance, workers will feel good when they are experiencing the three psychologic states and hence perform well. Workers will therefore perform well since they have been reinforced by the positive feelings (Hackman & Oldham, 2007).

Hackman and Oldham (1975) came up with the original version of job characteristic model in which they identified five job traits which are core namely variety of skill,

identity of job, significance of the task, autonomy as well as feedback that have an effect on five work related results/outcome namely motivation, satisfaction, performance as well as absenteeism as well as rate of incomings and outgoing of staff through three psychological state a sense of focus, a sense of obligation, and a comprehension of the final results (Hackman & Oldham, 2007). Feedback, identity, variety as well as autonomy are the four job characteristics which could increase employee's performance, satisfaction as well as attendance (Turner & Lawrence, 1965; Hackman & Lawler, 1971). George Oldham who worked as an assembly line worker derived task significance out of experience as a worker. Even though task variety or identity were not provided for by his job, he still had the experience of meaningfulness by realizing that other workers had dependence on his work. This observation prompted him to add task importance to the list of job characteristics that influence the sense of meaningfulness that a person gets from their employment. Job characteristic therefore came up with a proposal of five job characteristic that are core which may possibly envisage work related outcomes.

It is hard to overstate the importance of job characteristics in job design (also termed as work satisfaction). In the field of organizational behavior, this theory become one of the most cited one. In practical terms, JCT has provided a framework that increases staff's motivation, satisfaction as well as performance by enriching job traits (Hackman & Oldham, 1975, Hackman & Oldham, 1976). JCT has not only been embraced by scholars but also utilized in multitude of expertise as well as organization. Hackman & Oldham (1975) have reported that in the applied domain, several consulting organization have applied this model or even adjusted it in order to achieve their needs.

2.2.3 Operational Decisions

Operational decisions in this study are; scheduling, maintenance management, job design, capacity management and layout design. Each of these components of the operational decisions are expounded on in subsequent paragraphs.

Scheduling pertains establishment of both the timing as well as the use of resources inside the organization. Scheduling under management of operations is about how equipment and facilities are used, staff scheduling as stock receiving. This long term decisions establishes the constrains under which scheduling decisions are made. Bosire and Owuor (2018) opined that objectives of scheduling is generally to deal with tradeoffs amongst goals that are conflicting for efficient utilization of labour and equipment, lead time, levels of inventory as well as processing time. Customers don't like waiting and therefore labour should be scheduled properly to avoid making customers to wait. Scheduling of services can also become more complicated especially when several resources needs to be scheduled. It is prudent for managers to use technology in pursuing remedies for various problems and difficulties that are characterized by operations scheduling (Wafula, 2016).

Maintenance management is the process that states how assets and resources of a company are maintained. The main aim is ensuring that proceeds of operations are efficient and resources effectively used. Workflows that involve equipment can be optimized when equipment are well maintained (Battistoni, Bonacelli, Colladon & Schiraldi, 2013). This will eventually optimize employee's efficiency as well as productivity of the company. Areas where improvement needs to be done can also be enabled by ensuring regular measurement and analysis of your assets. Advance

calculation of these costs before the need makes the company able to find the best for either new or improved assets (Gadwel & Sangode, 2019).

The purposeful and systematic way of allocating task to employees and groups within the organization is called job design. The manner in which a job is designed will determine the effectiveness and efficiency of job since they are directly related. Good job design is aligned with the processes and also takes into consideration attention to details. Job and task allocation is about specifying content of the job, method used and relationships of the jobs with the intention of satisfying both technological and organizational requirements plus the needs of the job holders (Bosire & Owuor, 2018). Job designers should be able to thoroughly and strictly identify tasks that needs to be completed. People should feel compelled, excited and passionate about doing their job. Managers should also design jobs that motivate staff. When designing a job, designers should take care of the structure and make design in such a way that they use resources of the company efficiently. When resources are appropriately allocated, large organization are able to foster and develop innovation in their human resource and underscore strategy by distribution. There should be an outline of reward packages during job design (Battistoni et al., 2013).

The actions that are meant to ensure that business minimizes its potential activities as well as output all the time in all situations to eventually accomplish maximum yield is called capacity management. Capacity represents the resources available that can be leveraged to ensure a certain level of demand is met (Wafula, 2016). Many factors which are internal in nature like machine stoppage or employee illness, or factors external such as abrupt unexpected surge in demand from the marketplace or change

in regulatory environment may perhaps change the balance between supply and demand as well as objective for capacity managers. If this condition prolongs for long then steps must be put in place to improve capacity in order to avoid profits of the units being threatened. Designing capacity is theoretical capability that work center is capable of processing, when the effective capability is the actual capacity of the work centers after taking avoidable as well as unavoidable losses into account. The ration of the two provides the extent of efficiency of operations (Gadwe & Sangode, 2019).

Layout decisions are decisions on facility set-up, organization and items positioning that aid consumer experience. Layout decisions form a valuable planning puzzle. This is aimed at providing a competitive organization design that can aid operations and provide an exemplary consumer experience. Selection of a wrong layout is disastrous on organization operation efficiency and effectiveness (Kovács and Kot, 2017)). According to Li, Jin, Chen, Jiao and Liu (2017) service organization must consider location and layout decisions before setting up or commencing operation. There are several layout decisions those operational managers can choose upon to enhance operational performance in their business. The layout mix are part of strategic decisions that propel the organization to perform competitively. Supermarkets have enhanced their competitive edge by developing strategic layout formats that can enhance suitable customer experiences (Altuntas, 2017). Abdulmalek and Rajgopal (2007) established that Operational decisions comprises of various management practices which are imposed on the entire organization so as to make sure that customers' needs and wants are met consistently. Operational performance is a system of continuous improvement that uses cost-friendly operations while focusing on customers' needs and wants. In order to attain continuous improvement operations

firms strongly focus on quality, speed and cost (Yasui et al., 2011). Operational performance improves the effectiveness, competitiveness, and flexibility of the entire retail sector. The management puts the customer needs at the forefront of operations with an aim of enhancing operational performance.(O'Neill & Sohal, 1999). Further suggestions have been made that organizations should not only imitate operational decision procedures but instead put the practices to the culture of the firm in order for them to excel.

2.3 Empirical Literature Review

Here the researcher looked at findings from pertinent literature which dealt with the effect of operational decisions on operational performance. Battistoni *et al.* (2013) analyzed the effect of operations management practices on performance. This study investigates the possibility of a relationships amongst some optimization systems employed in operations management as well as the SMEs performance that operate in the manufacturing sector in Italian economy. In analyzing SMEs in Italy, a model which based on an approach of structured equation modelling. The study highlighted the significance of operational management in the manufacturing sector of SMEs in Italy.

Operations management methods in Kenyan electric utility firms have been explored by Wafula (2016). He collected not only primary data through a designed questionnaire but also secondary data obtained from end of financial year report. The findings found that there is possibility of company's activities being improved by the employees. Enhanced activity and work within the organization were also found to have reduced the cost of operations proving that they were efficient. The results

pointed that electric utility companies had a very high degree of efficiency. Kenya's electric utility firms will employ the most efficient method for determining safety stock levels. Using this method, you may improve your inventory management. An operations management advantage was found, according to the findings of the research.

Bochaberi (2017) did a study on the determination of factors that affect layout of retail outlet layout on procurement performance. In the study it was found that several retail outlet factors contribute significantly to procurement performance. These factors include; competition, infrastructure, customer availability, and space for expansion really affect procurement performance of supermarket outlets. The study found that they are predictors of procurement performance according to multiple regression analysis. The retail outlets determined the contribution of these factors before designing the physical layout.

Bosire and Owour (2018) studied how In Kenya's automotive industry, operational strategies have an impact on organizational performance, and a descriptive research approach and purposive sampling were used. Data was gathered through the use of questionnaires. The study found that the factors, particularly innovative tactics and performance, are tightly linked.

According to Kandi and Gitahi (2018) in their scholarly work on effects of internal storage promotion on performance of supermarkets in Nakuru East and Nakuru West SubCounties, they determined that internal storage promotion if well laid could easily attract more clients and bring in more income. The study indicated that the relationship between store layout and sales turnover was very strong among the 67

supermarkets sampled. The finding of this study shows that product layout enhances the performance of retail supermarkets in any outlet.

Tan, Corsi, Cohen, Sharp, Lockshin, Caruso and Bogomolova (2018) conducted a study that sought to evaluate the effect of endcaps on sales effectiveness in a supermarket. The aim of the research was to determine the influence of different product positioning on sales turnover in a supermarket. The authors found that product layout reduces the time spend when the consumers are accessing products hence increasing the sales effectiveness. Internally, product positioning reduces losses related to damaged or lost products. Therefore, it is important for marketers to position their products well in supermarkets because it contributes significantly to performance in the long run.

Gadwe and Sangode (2019) carried a study activities on operations management impacts on operational performance in service organizations. This research is an empirical type of research. This is due to the fact that primary data was analyzed through observation and field experience. Operational factors like quality improvement, responsiveness, speed productivity, cost reduction, sustainability, service delivery as well as effectivity and efficiency are highly positively impacted by implementation of operations management activities.

Mua and Anyieni (2019) discovered that marketing methods have an impact on sales performance in Nakuru County supermarkets. The assessment included; optimal shelf location of each product, the structure of the shelves, and positioning of the items in the shelves and their influence on customer purchasing power.

In Australia, Page, Trinh, and Bogomolova (2019) performed a side-by-side comparison of two supermarket layouts to determine the impact of a middle aisle on

basket size, spending, trip length, and endcap usage. Ignoring the middle aisle, all performance indicators between the two stores were nearly identical.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review and Research Gaps

This part contains the net total of literature review, research findings and research gaps:

Table 2.1: Summary of Literature Review and Research Gaps

Scholar(s)	Focus of Study	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gaps	Address of Gaps
Page, Trinh and Bogomolova (2019)	Comparative study to compare two supermarket layout and the effect of a middle aisle on basket size, spend, trip duration and endcap use	Comparing the effectivity of a traditional layout supermarket versus a supermarket layout with a middle aisle splitting all other aisles	The results showed that all performance metrics are almost similar on overall level between the two stores despite the middle aisle.	The study was done in only two supermarkets in Australia. Operational performance was measured differently from the proposed study and was not done in Kenya	The study did focus on operational performance of retail supermarkets in Kenya
Mua and Anyieni (2019)	The Merchandizing and sales practices of supermarkets in Nakuru county	The study used stratified and structured questionnaires to obtain its data from	There is relationship between merchandizing strategies, customer attraction, access to product, differentiation of product as well as staff attributes	The study was done in supermarkets in Nakuru County and did not base on O.P. but it based on other measures other than sales and	The study focused on operational performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu county

		supermarket line attendants	significantly predicted the level of sales performance	only relates with U.G..county	
Kahindi and Gitahi (2018)	Effect of in-store promotion on performance of supermarkets in Nakuru	The study adopted descriptive census design and use of primary data using structured questionnaires	Strong positive correlation exists between store layout and sales turnover	The study was done in Nakuru East and Nakuru West Sub-Counties' supermarkets. Did not focus on measures of operational performance other than sales turnover and was not done in U. G. County	The study focused on operational performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu county

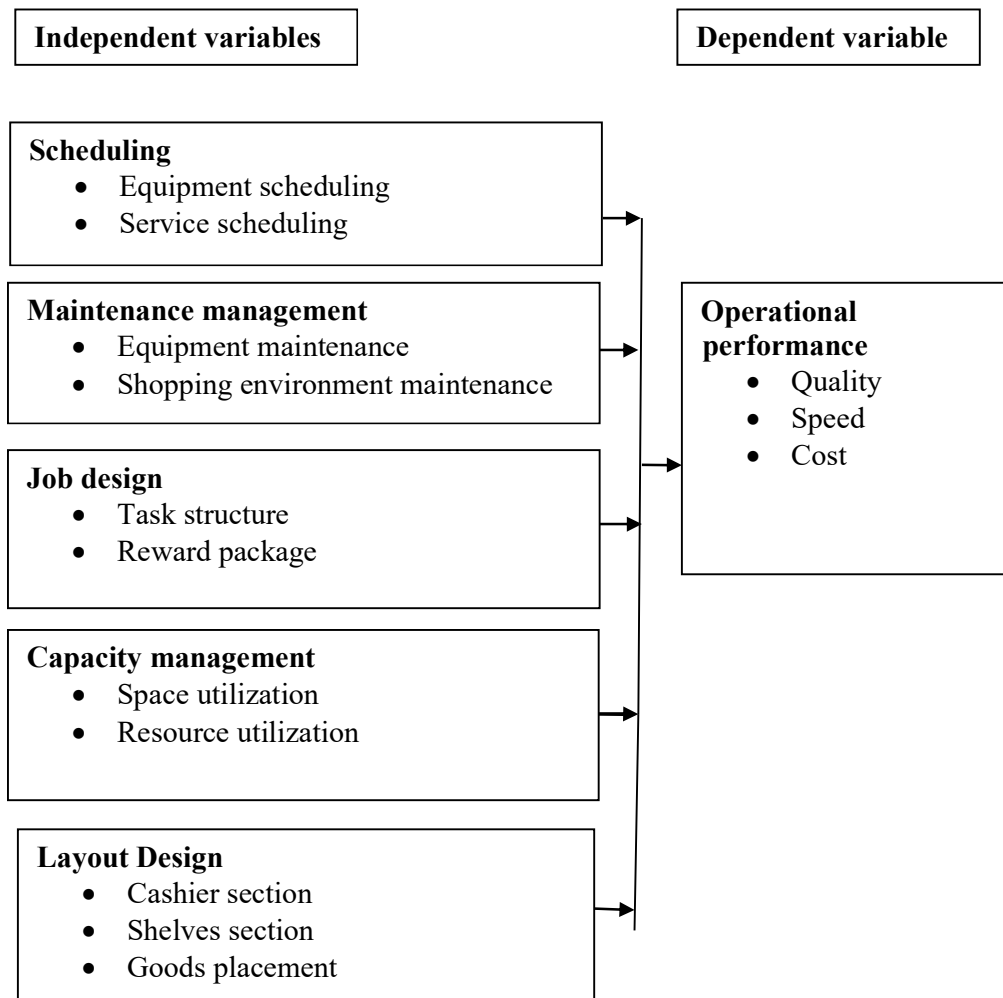
Source: The Researcher (2021).

2.5 Conceptual Framework

Under study, the independent variable is operational decisions whose dimensions are: scheduling, maintenance management, job design, capacity management and layout design.

The dependent variable was operational performance which is measured by: quality, speed and cost. The conceptual framework is depicted in Figure 2.1.

Fig 2.1: Conceptual Model



Source: Researcher (2021)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is all about the methodology used in this research study. It outlines the research design, the targeted population, methods of collecting data, data analysis as well as presentation of the findings.

3.2 Research Design

The study embraced a descriptive research design since it helped the researcher in the collection of data through observing, describing and reporting the conditions operating at that moment from a population (Cooper and Schindler, 2006). The use of the descriptive research design was justified for the reason that it helped the scholar to describe the attachment among operational decisions and Operational performance of all retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya (Kumar, 2011).

3.3 Target Population

The study population encompassed retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County which are 86 in number (Appendix II). With a small population in the study, a census was appropriate.

3.4 Data Collection

Data from primary sources was used. A systematic questionnaire was used to collect data and administering done using emails and drop and pick to various managers. Data was collected by questions and answers arrived at through a 5 point Likert scale format to

obtain individual rating. The questionnaire had three sections. Section A contained general information; Section B comprised of the first objective which is the extent to which operational decisions have been implemented by retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. Section C contained questions on the relationship between operational decisions and performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. The respondents were the managers in charge of operations or their equivalents— one in every supermarket. These operations managers were assumed to be the individuals with comprehensive knowledge of what was being researched on.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data was assessed for accuracy, validity and whether they are complete. The questionnaire was edited and coded for easier analysis. The study conducted both descriptive and inferential analysis. Background information (bio data) of the respondents, objective one; the extent to which operational decisions have been implemented were analyzed via descriptive statistics whereas for second objective; the relationship between operational decisions and performance was analyzed by the use of regression analysis as shown below:

$$Y_1 = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon_0$$

$$Y_2 = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon_0$$

$$Y_3 = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon_0$$

Where:

Y_1 = Quality, Y_2 = Speed, Y_3 = Cost α = the Y

intercept when x is zero or the constant β_{ij} =

Regression Coefficients

X_1 = scheduling

X_2 = maintenance management

X_3 = job design

X_4 = capacity management

X_5 = Layout design ϵ = the

error term

Table 3.1: Summary of Data Collection and Analysis Methods

The objectives	Questionnaire part	Data analysis response
General information (biodata)	SECTION "A"	Descriptive statistics
To determine the extent of implementation of operational decisions by retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County	Section "B"	Descriptive Statistics
To establish the effect of implementation of operational decisions on performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu county.	Section "C"	Regression analysis

Source: Researcher (2021)

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This segment gives the outcomes of analyzed data on operational decisions and performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. The chapter also has the interpretations and discussions of the findings based on the reviewed literature. Tables were used in presentation of the results.

4.2 Response Rate

The respondents completed and returned 82 of the 86 surveys. Therefore, the response rate used for data analysis in this study was 95.3% which was deemed sufficient to provide consistent info on operational decisions and performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. The high response rate witnessed in this research is supported by the argument by Peytchev, (2013) higher rate of response is the best system of obtaining unbiased estimates.

4.3 Demographic Information of the Respondents

In this research, data on demographics that was sought from the respondents was gender, level of education, position in organization and the duration of operation of the organization.

4.3.1 Gender of the Respondents

The study participants were asked to specify their sex in the questionnaires provided. Outcome of the analyzed information is shown in Table 4.1. The table shows that 44(53.7%) of the respondents were male while 38(46.3%) of the respondents were female. From the responses, it can be shown that there was no gender bias in the study

since this came out from the statistics of the returned questionnaires and this indicated that the male and female respondents is almost equal.

Table 4.1: Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentages
Male	44	53.7
Female	38	46.3
Total	82	100.0

Source: Research Data (2021)

4.3.2 Education Level of the Respondents

Additionally, the study participants were required to specify their highest education level they had attained. The outcome of the analyzed data is shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Education Level of the Respondents

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
Post-secondary	6	7.3
Graduate	61	74.4
Others	15	18.3
Total	82	100.0

Source: Research Data (2020)

Table 4.2 shows that 61(74.4%) respondents had university level of education (graduate),15 (18.3%%) respondents had other levels of education which in this study included masters, while (6(7.3%) respondents had post-secondary level of education.

There is evidence from the results that 74.4 percent of participants have a tertiary education. It implies that majority of the respondents had adequate education and good understanding of the issues revolving around operational decisions and performance.

4.3.3 Position in the Organization

Table 4.3 present responses on positions of the respondents in the retail supermarkets.

Table 4.3: Positions of the Respondents in Retail Supermarkets

Position	Frequency	Percent
Operations manager	34	41.5
Supply chain manager	16	19.5
marketing manager	28	34.1
Others	4	4.9
Total	82	100.0

Source: Research Data (2021)

Table 4.3 shows that 34(41.5%) respondents were working as operations managers, 28(34.1%) respondents were working as marketing managers and 16(19.5%) respondents were working as supply chain managers while 4(4.9%) respondents were working in other departments which included human resource department. Thus, it depicts that most of the respondents were working as managers in charge of operations thus believed to be well conversant with the operational performance of the retail supermarkets.

4.3.4 Length of Operation

Table 4.4 presents the length of operation that the retail supermarkets had been in operation.

Table 4.4: Length of Operation of Retail Supermarkets

Length in Years	Frequency	Percentages
Less than 1 year	2	2.4
1-3 years	13	15.9
3-6 years	31	37.8
6-10 years	22	26.8
over 10 years	14	17.1
Total	82	100.0

Source: Research Data (2021)

Table 4.4 showed that most of the retail supermarkets have operated in Uasin Gishu County for less than 10 years implying that this is a new strategy of attracting retail customers.

4.4 Extent of Implementation of Operational Decisions by Retail Supermarkets

The first objective of this study was determining the extent of implementation of operational decisions by retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. To gauge the quality of retail supermarkets, participants were asked to rate each of the following aspects as; 1 = very small extent; 2 = small extent; 3= Moderate extent; 4 = Large extent 5 = very large extent. The results are indicated in table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5: Extent of Implementation of Scheduling in Retail Supermarkets

Variable	Overall Mean	Overall Std.Dev
Maintenance management	4.05	.457
Job design	4.03	.486
Capacity management	4.03	.404
Scheduling	4.01	.434
Layout design	3.95	.443

Source: Research Data (2021)

From the above results in table 4.5 on the extent of implementation of operational decisions, the findings depicts that maintenance management with an overall average mean of 4.05 and overall standard deviation of 0.457 had been implemented to a large extent among the retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu county, followed by Job design (Mean =4.03 , std Deviation = 0.486), capacity management (Mean= 4.03, std deviation = 0.404), Scheduling (mean= 4.01, std deviation = 0.434), and lastly layout design with average mean of 3.95 and std deviation of 0.443. From the above results operational decisions had been applied to a large extent by the retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. Findings above help this research to make resolution as well as agreeing that retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County have implemented operational decisions in their operations at a large extent.

4.5 Operational Decisions and Performance

The study was seeking to establish the effect of implementation of operational decisions on performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. The operational performance measurements were analyzed using multiple regression analysis to assess the correlation

between the two variables. The key pointers of operational performance which were covered in are: quality, speed and cost.

4.5.1 Operational Decisions and Quality

Operational decisions were regressed against quality as the dependent variable. Table 4.6 depict a summary model on quality as dependent variable. Regression coefficient (R²) is used to illustrate how much variation can be predicted from a model's coefficient of determination (R²). On the other hand, the correlation coefficient (R) is a measure of how closely linked two variables are.

Table 4. 6: Model Summary on Quality as Dependent Variable

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.664 ^a	.441	.404	.39343

Source: Research Data (2021)

The results shown in Table 4.6 revealed that the value of R is 0. 664, R square is 0.441 and adjusted R squared is 0.404. This therefore implies that 44.1% changes in quality performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya is contributed by the scheduling, maintenance management, job design, capacity management, and layout design. Table 4.7 provides the results on model fitness using variance analysis.

Table 4.7: Analysis of Variance on quality as Dependent Variable

Model	Sum	of df	Mean	F	Sig.
	Squares		Square		
Regression	9.289	5	1.858	12.002	.000 ^b
Residual	11.764	76	.155		
Total	21.053	81			

Source: Research (Data 2021)

The ANOVA findings in Table 4.7 pointed out that the overall model was statistically significant ($F=12.002$, $p<0.05$) implying that the independent variables (scheduling, maintenance management, job design, capacity management, and layout design) are good predictors of quality performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. Table 4.8 gives the findings of the beta coefficients and the p-values where they showed significance.

Table 4.8: Beta Coefficients of Operational Decisions on Quality as Dependent

Variable

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.288	.539		2.389	.019
Scheduling	-.285	.141	-.243	-2.030	.046
Maintenance management	.396	.146	.355	2.708	.008
Job design	.551	.111	.525	4.960	.000
Capacity management	-.040	.138	-.032	-.288	.774
Layout design	.115	.116	.100	.994	.324

Source: Research Data (2021)

Table 4.8 produced results which revealed that three variables; scheduling, maintenance management and job design were significant while two variables; capacity management, layout design were not significant leading to the following predicted model where;

$$Y = 1.288 - .285X_1 + .396 X_2 + .551X_3 \dots\dots\dots\text{Equation (i)}$$

Y = Quality

X₁ = scheduling

X₂ = maintenance management

X₃ = job design

This gave an implication that when all other variables are held constant, quality performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya would be equal to 1.288 units. The quality performance of retail supermarkets would fall by 0.285 units if scheduling was raised by one unit in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. An increase of one unit in maintenance management results into 0.396-unit growth in quality performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. Increasing job design by one unit leads to 0.551 units rise in quality performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. At 5%, the study noted that scheduling, maintenance management and job design all had their respective p-values ($p < 0.05$) and Because of this, retail supermarkets' quality performance was greatly affected in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.

4.5.2 Operational decisions and Speed

Linear regression analysis was performed where the independent variables were scheduling, maintenance management, job design, capacity management and layout design whereas operational performance (speed) was the dependent variable. Results of model are presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 Model Summary of Speed as Dependent Variable

R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate
.789 ^a	.623	.598	.35179

Source: Research Data (2021)

Table 4.9 indicated that the value of R square is 0.623 meaning 62.3% change in speed as a measure of operational performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu

County is explained by operational decisions that exist. Results suggested that the model employed to connect the relationship between the variables was excellent.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was carried out at a 95 percent significance level and the results of F were analyzed in table 4.10 below.

Table 4.10: ANOVA of Speed as Dependent variable

Model	Sum	ofdf	Mean	F	Sig.
	Squares		Square		
Regression	15.532	5	3.106	25.101	.000 ^b
Residual	9.406	76	.124		
Total	24.938	81			

Source: Research Data (2021)

Table 4.10 contains the ANOVA findings, which show that the model was statistically significant with a p value of 0.000, which is less than the necessary p value of 0.05. As a result of this, it is clear that the independent factors (scheduling, maintenance management, task design, capacity management, and layout design) can accurately predict operational performance (speed). An F-statistic of 25.101 and the stated p-value (0.000) confirmed this conclusion. This implies that operational decisions had significant effect on speed as a measure of operational performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. The researcher conducted the regression model coefficients in order to use in the regression equation. The study results are presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Regression Beta Coefficients of Operational Decisions on Speed as Dependent Variable

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients				
	B	Std. Error Beta			
(Constant)	.377	.482		.783	.436 –
Scheduling	-.255	.126	-.200	2.030	.046
Maintenance management	.272	.131	.224	2.084	.041
Job design	.588	.099	.514	5.914	.000
Capacity management	-.198	.124	-.144	-1.597	.114
Layout design	.553	.104	.442	5.334	.000

Source: Research data, (2021)

The results in Table 4.11 revealed that four variables; scheduling, maintenance management, job design and layout design were significant while one variable; capacity management was not significant leading to the following predicted model;

$$Y = 0.377 - 0.255X_1 + 0.272X_2 + 0.588X_3 + 0.553X_4 \dots \dots \dots (ii)$$

Where;

Y = operational performance (speed)

X₁ = scheduling

X₂ = maintenance management

X₃ = job design

X₄ = layout design

Retail supermarket operating performance (speed) is 0.377 as shown in Table 4.11 when all other factors are held constant. An increase in one unit of scheduling when the rest of the variables are held constant would decrease operational performance (speed) of retail supermarkets by 0.255. An increase by one unit in maintenance management holding other variables constant would increase operational performance (speed) of retail supermarkets by 0.272. An increment in job design holding other variables constant would increase operational performance (speed) of retail supermarkets by 0.588. An increase by one unit of layout design holding other variables constant would increase operational performance (speed) of retail supermarkets by 0.553. At 5%, the study noted that scheduling, maintenance management, job design and layout design all had their respective p-values ($p < 0.05$) and therefore they affected operational performance (speed) of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya significantly.

4.5.2 Operational decisions and Cost

For retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, linear regression analysis was used to quantify the impact of operational decisions on cost as a gauge for their operational performance. Correlations between variables were measured using the correlation coefficient (R) and coefficient of determination (R²) (dependent and independent). Data from Table 4.12 is shown here.

Table 4. 12: Model Summary on Costs as Dependent Variable

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.525 ^a	.275	.228	.52180

Source: Research data (2021)

The results of the regression in Table 4.17 indicated that R² value was 0.275 implying that about 27.5% of the variation in operational performance (cost) of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County is explained by the independent variables (scheduling, maintenance management, job design, capacity management and layout design).

Table 4.1 showed the ANOVA results of the regression model.

Table 4.13: Analysis of Variance of costs as Dependent Variable

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	7.860	5	1.572	5.774	.000 ^b
1	Residual	20.693	76	.272		
	Total	28.553	81			

Source: Research Data (2021)

A significant F-statistic (F =5.774) was found in Table 4.13, indicating the model's validity. If this is true, then the multiple regression model was a fair reflection. Hence the independent variables (scheduling, maintenance management, job design, capacity management and layout design) affect operational performance (cost) of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. The overall regression is very significant as indicated by the F value. Table 4.14 shows results of beta coefficient as well as p-value.

Table 4.14: Regression Beta Coefficient and Significance of cost as Dependent variable

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.884	.715		4.034	.000
	Scheduling	-.438	.187	-.320	-2.348	.021
	Maintenance management	.238	.194	.183	1.226	.224
	Job design	.726	.147	.594	4.923	.000
	Capacity management	.005	.183	.003	.027	.979
	Layout design	-.287	.154	-.214	-1.864	.066

Source: Research Data (2021)

Table 4.14 results revealed that two variables; scheduling and job design were significant while three variables; maintenance management, capacity management and layout design were not significant leading to the following predicted model:

$$Y = 2.884 - .438X_1 + .726X_2 \dots\dots\dots(iii)$$

Y = operational performance (cost) of retail supermarkets

X₁ = Scheduling

X₂ = Job design

The study results as expressed in Table 4.19 revealed a negative linear effect of scheduling on operational performance (cost) of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County

($\beta_1 = -.438$, $p = 0.021$). This reveals that an increase in scheduling leads to decrease in operational performance (cost) of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County by 0.438 units.

The study also found that retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya, had a favorable and significant impact on operational performance (cost) due to job design ($\beta_2 = .726$, $p = 0.000$). When job design is improved, retail supermarkets' operational performance (cost) improves as well. At 5%, maintenance management, capacity management and layout design had p-values ($p < 0.05$) and thus they significantly affect cost which is regarded as a measure of operational performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County.

4.6 Discussion

This study outlined that quite a number of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County have implemented operational decisions to a large extent. Other operational decisions implemented by retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu include; Maintenance management, capacity management, job design, scheduling and layout design. According to empirical studies, Selection of a wrong layout is disastrous on organization operation efficiency and effectiveness (Kovács & Kot, 2017).

The study established that most of the retail supermarkets have ideally implemented operational decisions to a very large extent to ensure that customers get products and services meeting their expectations. The study realized that maintenance management has the largest significant influence on quality as dimension of operational performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. Job design was the second, followed by scheduling. Capacity management and layout design were not significant. The study

findings are consistent and supported by studies conducted by (Yasui et al., 2011) who stated that operational decisions influence the changes in operational performance of firms in the health sector. This study outlined that operational decision greatly influences the quality as an operational performance measure of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. This study noted that job design has the largest significance on quality as a dimension on of operational performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. The second is maintenance management, layout design, capacity management and lastly scheduling.

These results showed that operational decisions greatly influence speed of the retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. Job design has the largest influence on speed of the retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County followed by layout design, maintenance management and scheduling, while capacity management had insignificant influence. These study findings are backed up by Bosire and Owour (2018) who studied operation strategies and organizational performance in the automotive industry in Kenya. They found that operational decisions influence the changes in the performance of operations of firms in the automotive industry.

This research study deduced that operational decision influences the costs of operations of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. Job design carries significant weight towards cost of the retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. Next is scheduling whereas maintenance management, capacity management and layout design had insignificant influence on costs of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. These study findings conformed with a study conducted by Gadwe and Sangode (2019), whereby operational decisions had a substantial impact on operational performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County.

CHAPTER FIVE:

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter starts with the summary of the study, followed by conclusions, recommendations and finally the limitations of the study. The first objective of the study was to determine the extent of implementation of operational decisions by the retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu county and the second objective was establish the effect of implementation of operational decisions on performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu county, Kenya

5.2 Summary of the Findings

This study focused on operational decisions and performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. The first objectives of this study to determine the extent of implementation of operational decisions by the retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu county and the second objective was establish the effect of implementation of operational decisions on performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu county, Kenya. The study carried out a census of all 86 retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County in Kenya and used a descriptive research design. Primary data was collected using structured questionnaires which were administered to operations managers, procurement managers, marketing managers or their equivalents in various supermarkets within Uasin Gishu County. Use of emails and drop and pick was adopted in administering the questionnaires to respective managers. A total of 82 responses were received from the respondents which were fit for data analysis. The bio data from the respondents indicated that there was no gender bias in the respective

departments. The respondents had adequate level of education and good understanding of the issues revolving around operational decisions and most of the respondents were working as operations managers thus believed to be well conversant with the operational decisions and performance of the retail supermarkets and thus were in a good position to provide the data sought by the researcher.

The study sought to establish the level of implementation of operational decisions by retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. The findings depicted that majority of the retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County had implemented operational decisions at a large extent. The study outlined that operational decisions that had been implemented to a great extent by retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County comprise of job design, maintenance management, layout design capacity management and scheduling.

The second objective of the study sought to establish the effect of implementation of operational decisions on performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County, and variables were measured by quality, speed and cost. According to analysis of variance results, operational decisions had significant influence on operational performance in terms of quality of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. The study found out that scheduling, maintenance management, job design, capacity management and layout design accounted for 44.1% variation in quality, 59.5% variation in speed and for 27.5% variation on cost as components of operational performance.

The study revealed that job design had the greatest influence on quality as a dimension of operational performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County

followed by maintenance management, job design, capacity management and layout design.

Speed was another measure of operational performance and analysis of variance results depicted that operational decisions had significant influence on speed as a measure of operational performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. Furthermore, it was noted that job design had the prevalent influence on speed as a measure of operational performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County followed by layout design, maintenance management, capacity management and scheduling.

The other measure of operational performance used in the study was cost. It was noted from the ANOVA findings that operational decisions significantly predicts cost as a proxy of operational performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. It was further noted that job design had the largest influence on cost as an indicator of operational performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County followed by maintenance Management, capacity management, layout design and scheduling.

5.5 Conclusion of the study

According to the results, majority of the retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County have implemented operational decisions to a large extent. Some of the operational decisions that retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County have implemented from the highest to the lowest include job design, capacity management, layout design scheduling, maintenance management, and layout design being the moderate.

The study also concluded that operational decisions have positive significant effect on the operational performance of retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County. The results found that the implementation of the operational decisions had improved the quality

of services offered to customers, reduced operational costs and improved speed in serving customers.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations set out by this study. First, the study focused only on the retail supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County leaving out all other retail supermarkets within other counties in Kenya, this was because of financial resources and time constrain. The study was based on a retail supermarket sector, this was a narrow focus for this study while other sectors in Kenya such as the manufacturing, health, education, transportation sectors have adopted operational decisions, yet were not covered in the study. In addition, this study limited its data sources to only primary data and use of questionnaires to collect this data. Also this study focused only on job design, capacity management, layout design, scheduling and maintenance management, other major factors accounting for operational performance of retail supermarkets which need to put in place to enhance operational performance were not included in this study. Lastly, this research study was limited to only two variables, the operational decisions which is the independent and operational performance which is dependent variable.

5.6 Recommendations for Further Studies

Further studies are recommended to be done on operational decisions and performance targeting other retail sectors in other counties to allow for generality of the study findings. Also, there is recommendation that future studies should cover other economic sectors like manufacturing, health sector and banking industry other than retail sector. Lastly, operational decisions with other additional performance

measures such as flexibility and dependability should be studied, since this study used cost, speed and quality as a measure of operational performance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTION LETTER

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I, Kemboi Mercy, a postgraduate student taking Master of Business in Administration (Operation Management Option) from the University of Nairobi Department of Management Science, Faculty of Business and Management Science.

.My research title is "*OPERATIONAL DECISIONS AND PERFORMANCE OF RETAIL SUPERMARKETS IN UASIN GISHU COUNTY*". It is my humble request that you provide the required data as shown in the questionnaire. Data collected, identity of the respondents and any information acquired in the course of the research will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Kemboi, Mercy Jebiwott, University of Nairobi

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is meant to gather information for an academic study entitled

“OPERATIONAL DECISIONS AND OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF RETAIL SUPERMARKETS IN UASIN GISHU COUNTY”.

Serial Number

Section A: General information

You are required to tick appropriately.

1. To which gender do you belong?

Male [] Female []

2. Please indicate your highest level of education

Primary [] Secondary [] Post secondary [] Graduate []

Post graduate []

3. Please indicate your position in the organization

Operations Manager [] Supply chain Manager [] Marketing manager [] other

[Please specify]

4. For how long has the supermarket been operational?

Less than 1 year [] 1 to 3 years [] 3 to 6 years []

6 to 10 years [] Over 10 years []

RULES TO FILL PARTS B AND C

To what extent have the following operational decisions been implemented in your firm? Kindly rate on a scale of 1 to 5 where; 1 = very small extent; 2 = small extent; 3 = Moderate extent; 4 = Large extent 5 = very large extent.

Section B: EXTENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF OPERATIONAL DECISIONS

SCHEDULING

	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	Equipment for carrying inventory are made available to replenish shelves when stock demand is high					
2	Equipment are scheduled in such a way that there is no congestion when moving across the supermarket					
3	Employees are scheduled appropriately based on customer demand to prevent long waiting times					
4	Scheduling confusion where one employee undertakes more than one activity at the same time is avoided					

MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT

	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	Computer hardware and software are checked by technicians periodically					
2	Equipment used to handle stock are checked periodically to ensure they are fully functional					

3	The shopping hall is cleaned to ensure healthy environment					
4	The building condition is checked and improved over time to ensure safety					

JOB DESIGN

	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	The content, method and relationships of tasks are well defined					
2	The tasks are structured in manner that maximizes efficiency in use of resources					
3	The tasks have benefits that motivate employees					
4	Task benefits are commensurate to the load					

CAPACITY MANAGEMENT

	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	The supermarket is arranged well to avoid customer congestion					
2	The supermarket does not have underutilized spaces					
3	Idleness among employees is minimized to ensure customer demands are met					

4	Machines and equipment are optimized in line with customer demands in the supermarket					
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LAYOUT DESIGN

	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	The distance between the employees at cashier section and the shelves is adequate for customers to queue comfortably					
2	Equipment used to identify products while making payments are well placed to ensure fast service to customers					
3	The supermarket store is located far from the shelves to avoid unnecessary congestion					
4	Equipment for moving stock to the shelves are well placed to avoid hindering customer movement					

To what extent has the implementation of operational decisions influenced the following measures of performance? Kindly rate on a scale of 1 to 5 where; 1 = very small extent; 2 = small extent; 3= Moderate extent; 4 = Large extent 5 = very large extent.

Section C: OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	Quality					
	The customers get products and services that meet their expectations					
	Customers rarely complain about our services					
	Customers are generally happy about our services					
2	speed					
	Customers are served with minimum delay					
	The stock in shelves are replenished on time					
	Customers inquiry are handled quickly					
3	Cost					
	The inventory costs of the supermarket are decreasing					
	The transportation costs are not high					
	The maintenance costs of the supermarket are not high					

THANKS !

APPENDIX III: LIST OF SUPERMARKETS IN UASIN GISHU COUNTY

The table below shows the list of supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County

1. Tusky's Supermarkets
2. Naivas Supermarkets
3. Chandaranafood plus Supermarkets
4. Yako Supermarket
5. Tulin supermarkets
6. Khetias supermarkets
7. Quickmart Supermarket
8. Better choice supermarket
9. Ukwala supermarkets
10. Uchumi Supermarkets
11. EldoretMatressSupermarkets
12. QuickMart Supermarkets
13. Eldo supermarket
14. Masaku wholesaler's supermarkets
15. Eldorado supermarkets
16. Eldommat supermarkets
17. VillagemarkSupermarkets
18. Uzuri supermarket
19. Transmatt Supermarkets
20. FreshmartEldoretSupermarkets
21. Saiyat mini Supermarket

22. StageMatt Supermarket
23. Ushanga Supermarket
24. Economy Supermarkets
25. Lucky Supermarket Ltd
26. Jora Supermarket
27. Campus SupermarketEldoret
28. Eldomatt Hyper Supermarket
29. Veer supermarket ltd
30. Genah mini Supermarket ltd
31. Gilmas center Supermarket
32. Alphamart self-selection supermarket
33. Chepkoriowholesaler's ltd
34. Mbaro Supermarket ltd
35. Best self-selection supermarket
36. Smart Supermarket
37. National Supermarket Ltd
38. Moisja self-selection Limited Supermarket
39. Nice Supermarket
40. Stagematt Supermarket
41. Delta supermarkets
42. Njiwa supermarket
43. Royal supermarket 44. Faith supermarket
- 45 Smile again supermarket
46. Cheap smart supermarket
47. Raiya supermarket

48. High way supermarket
49. Mwanzo best supermarket
50. Pepi supermarket
51. Stage wise supermarket
52. Rehema supermarket
53. Mogaka's Lounge supermarket
54. Eldoret Jolly supermarket
55. Promise supermarket
56. Jackares supermarket and wholesale ltd
57. Sogomo supermarket
58. Kapkatui mini supermarket
59. Jabez mini supermarket
60. Bora supermarket
61. Wema supermarket
62. Hawaii mini self-selection supermarket
63. Bennymart supermarket
64. Kasmart supermarket
65. Elmart supermarket
66. Kenmart supermarket
67. S.s Supermarket
68. Elvim mini supermarket
69. Jamii supermarket
70. Freemark supermarket
71. Umoja one supermarket

72. Star Grocers supermarket
73. Reliance supermarket Moi university
74. Mayo supermarket
75. Muigai supermarket
76. OK supermarket
77. Eagles supermarket
78. Pamwai supermarket
79. Furaha supermarket
80. Peppy supermarket
81. Rahisi supermarket
82. Banisa self-selection supermarket
83. Tumaini supermarket
84. Ainabkoi Royal supplies supermarket
85. Kipkaren supermarket
86. Budget Supermarket

Source: Researcher (2021)

APPENDIX IV: INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR RESEARCH



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19 October 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR RESEARCH
KEMBOI MERCY JEBIWOTT – REGISTRATION NO. D61/28844/2019

This is to confirm that the above named is a bona fide student in the Master of Business Administration degree program in this University. She is conducting research on "*Operational Decisions and Performance of Retail Supermarkets in Uasin Gishu County*"

The purpose of this letter is to kindly request you to assist and facilitate the student with necessary data which forms an integral part of the research project. The information and data required is needed for academic purposes only and will be treated in **Strict-Confidence**.

Your assistance will be highly appreciated.

Thank you



PROF. JACKSON MAALU
DEAN, FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

JM/Jo