

Turnaround Strategies and Performance of Water and Sanitation Companies in Kenya: A Case Study of Nyeri Sub-County

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Abstract:- Water and Sanitation services are rights enshrined in the constitution that every Kenyan needs to enjoy. The United Nations SDG number envisages a world where water and Sanitation are available by 2030. The Water Act 2016 Section 78 mandates water and sewerage companies to be responsible for providing water and sewerage in a specified area. The study's primary goal was to ascertain the turnaround strategies and performance of water distribution and sanitation companies in Kenya, a case study of Nyeri Sub-County. The particular objectives of the research are; to analyze the influence of reorganization, and repositioning strategies on the performance of Nyeri Water and Sanitation Company. Utilizing questionnaires, the study used a descriptive research design to gather data from 179 employees at NYEWASCO. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25 was used to clean, code, and analyze the collected qualitative data. The analyzed data was presented using tables and graphs. The study found that reorganization and repositioning strategies had positive significant effects on organizational performance. The study concluded that the reorganization strategy led to increased employee performance and improved employee morale which positively affected organization performance. Further, the study also concluded that the adoption of a repositioning strategy helped the organization to be forward-looking in investing in areas that serve the increased customer base. The study recommended the adoption of the reorganization strategy on not only top management but also internal staff and a need to reorganize the workforce and have a mixture of the young and the experienced to increase productivity and business stability. The study's recommendations for the repositioning strategy included expanding into new markets to reach a wider audience of customers and making additional investments in water and sewer infrastructure to keep up with demand from all of its customers. On market redefinition strategy the study recommended investment in technology to reduce leaks and increase the effectiveness of providing sewage and water adoption of a customer-centric approach where customer complaints.

Keywords:- Turnaround Strategies, Performance of Water and Sanitation Companies, Organizational Performance, Reorganization Strategies, and Repositioning Strategies.

I. INTRODUCTION

Access to clean, affordable drinking water and sanitary services for all by 2030 is a global goal that must be accomplished by all countries, according to Sustainable Development Goal number 6 (UNSDG, 2022). Globally, 3.6 billion people could not access safely managed Sanitation services as of 2020, and 2 billion people lacked access to well-managed water services (WHO&UNICEF,2021). 771 million of the 2 billion people lack access to clean drinking water. Out of the 3.6 billion people without access to well-managed sanitary services globally, 1.7 billion lack essential sanitation services (UNSTATS,2023).

In Africa, as of 2020, the Shortage of clean drinking water affects 387 million people, while 737 million lack access to essential sanitation services. Of the 737 million people, 181 million did not have access to essential sanitation services (UNICEF,2021). Over the past decade, there has been an increase of 37 million Africans without access to safe and clean water, while 247 more Africans lack access to essential sanitation services. With the increased urbanization trend in African countries, by 2030, there will be an increase in the number of people without access to clean, safe water. (Koros, Juuti, Juuti, Hukka, Asokan,2023).

As of 2020, the World Health Organization report estimates that only 75% of Kenya's population will have access to safe and clean drinking water(WHO & UNICEF,2021). The Water Services Regulatory Board 2022 indicates that water services coverage in the country is at 60% as of 2021, while sewerage coverage stands at 16%. According to the Water Sector Performance Report 2022, 15,679,774 people have access to clean drinking water, and 4,093,204 people have access to a sewerage system served by 79 water utility companies (WASREB,2022). According to the WASREB impact report for 2022, 158,967 people residing in Nyeri had access to water against a population of 165,612. However, the number of active connections was 45,675

against a total connection of 59,210, representing a 77.29% active connection rate. As of 2021, only 34 % of Nyeri County's population was connected to sewerage (WASREB, 2022).

However, the water services regulatory board noted a decline in operational efficiency due to an increase in non-revenue water and operating cost coverage ratio, which would affect the overall level of service and lead to service deterioration in the long run (WASREB, 2022). To get the desired result on NRW and OPCCR, water and sanitation companies develop strategic repositioning turnaround strategies to improve market competitiveness, efficiency, and performance (Reger, 2017). However, for the turnaround strategy to be more effective, strong management and a sound business strategy are needed to accomplish the turnaround strategy. Successful turnaround strategies are based on the company's financial, strategic, and operational improvements (Hardy, 2017).

➤ *Organization Performance*

Organizational performance is an essential point of study in any business. The link between organizational performance and the strategy adopted by an organization is vital in strategic management research. It enables organizations to assess and improve their overall effectiveness, productivity, and competitiveness, ensuring sustainable growth and success for the business. Organizational performance measures the degree to which a company accomplishes its objectives outlined in the strategic plan, encompassing all aspects of operations, including financial, operational, and competitive success, thereby gauging effectiveness and efficiency (Mukya, 2017). Organizational performance indicators provide valuable insights for business leaders to identify areas requiring improvement and formulate precise strategies to optimize the attainment of the organization's vision and mission with utmost efficiency and effectiveness (Johnson & Scholes K, 2011).

Organizational performance can be evaluated from various angles, such as assessing customer satisfaction, analyzing financial indicators, or examining market share and competitor positioning. Each perspective offers unique insights into the effectiveness and success of an organization, enabling comprehensive measurement and strategic decision-making (Njiru, 2015). An organization's performance measures include and are not limited to the profit attained, market share, product quality, and sound financial ratios, among other measures in the organization's strategic plan (Ondimu, 2015). Good organizational performance is evidence of how productive workers in an organization are. This evidence is through growth in revenue, profit, and productivity of an entity, demonstrating efficiency and effectiveness in achieving organizational objectives, which in turn leads to sustainable success (Paley, 2015)

➤ *Turnaround Strategies*

According to Reger (2017), a turnaround strategy is a collection of long-term resolutions and deeds intended to undo an apparent predicament that endangers a business organization's existence. By implementing strategic changes, optimizing processes, and revitalizing the organization's financial health. These strategies empower the business to adapt to evolving market conditions, enhance competitiveness, and regain the trust of stakeholders (Inyange, 2014). By diligently pursuing a turnaround strategy, a company can revitalize its operations, and achieve long-term profitability and sustainable growth in a competitive business environment (Gathiru, Khamah, & Nyakora, 2023). Stakeholder support is essential because their approval reinforces the credibility of the firm, enhances its reputation, and fosters trust among investors, customers, and employees. (Capron & Karim, 2015)

Sije et al. (2016) noted that successful turnaround strategies should also incorporate effective marketing campaigns to increase brand awareness, customer acquisition, and market share, while simultaneously focusing on streamlining operations and optimizing resource allocation for maximum efficiency and profitability. The turnaround strategies should be multifaceted to include finances that deal with the balance sheet, financial position and the price of producing a good or service, and reorganizational through a change of an entity's internal management and organization (Sofyani, Abu Hasan, & Saleh, 2022). Sije et al. also stressed the repositioning strategy by efficiently and effectively producing goods and services. Market redefinition strategy is also essential for an organization to try and increase its products' market share (Sije, Omwenga, Iravo, & Mike, 2016)

➤ *Reorganization Strategy*

Reorganization is the change in the internal management of an entity. Reorganization requires changing planning systems, decentralization, human resource management styles, and organizational culture. Reorganization is also the reconfiguration of assets and organization structure as the business grows in changing markets and technology. (Girod & Whittington, 2017).

The reorganization involves fundamental changes in organizational principles (Capron & Karim, 2015). Helfat & Winter (2011) opined that reorganization strategy comes in two different styles; reconfiguration of internal operations and restructuring. Reconfigurations are suitable for dynamic environments, while restructuring is too irregular to complement the speed of environmental change (Helfat & Winter, 2011). The management of an organization must consider how to replace an outdated organizational structure with a new one to improve performance (Sije, Omwenga, Iravo, & Mike, 2016)

➤ *Repositioning Strategy*

Repositioning strategies are adopted to improve the organization's effectiveness and efficiency when offering goods and services. Under the repositioning strategy, resource management is needed to fulfil the economic and social needs by including all stakeholders (Falak, Chiun, & Wee, 2014). Growth, an innovation under the repositioning strategy, tends to drive organizations into new target markets and frontiers. Repositioning Strategies also involve increasing service options and improving the reputation of the organizations from a stakeholder's perspective (Rutherford, 2014).

Under the repositioning strategy, an organization works to change and expand its target markets (Ryan, Moroney, Geoghegan, & Cunningham, 2007). The reorganization was influential in the organizations' turnaround and performance. According to Millington & Ntounis (2017), effective repositioning should not replace prevailing markets but adapt homegrown services to correspond with their requirements. It might entail scaling back or giving current local users better value or an improved experience. Harker (2010) opined that repositioning as a turnaround strategy for a firm will be made in the form of investments in new markets, customer segments, services, and products.

➤ *Statement of the Problem*

Water and Sanitation services are rights enshrined in the constitution that every Kenyan needs to enjoy (Government of Kenya, 2010). The United Nations SDG number envisages a world where water and Sanitation are available by 2030 (DESA, UN, 2016). The Water Act 2016 Section 78 mandates water and sewerage companies to be responsible for providing water and sewerage in a specified area (Government of Kenya, 2016). Nyeri County's water and sewerage needs are served by the Nyeri Water and Sewerage Company (NYEWASCO). According to the WASREB impact report for 2022, NYEWASCO had served 158,967 people with water against a population of 165,612. However, the number of active connections was 45,675 against a total connection of 59,210, representing a 77.29% active connection rate. As of 2021, only 34 % of Nyeri County's population was connected to sewerage (WASREB, 2022). In a bid to be in line with the constitution and the UN SDG 6, NYEWASCO developed a strategic plan in 2021 that outlined strategies that would guide its operations while improving its efficiency in the provision of water and Sanitation to residents of the Nyeri sub-county while improving its financial performance. (NYEWASCO, 2021).

Several studies have been undertaken on the turnaround strategies firms can undertake to reverse their poor financial performance and improve their sustainability. Gathiru, Khamah, & Nyakora (2023) researched the effectiveness of turnaround strategies and concluded that these strategies are more effective when the management is up to the task. The turnaround strategies require effective leadership that motivates and supports the employees to achieve the desired

target. Without the management and employees' support and involvement, no successful changes can be made in the firm's capital, financial, operations, and human resources structure. However, according to Dionysus & Arifin (2020), effective turnaround strategies are those that are focused on retrenchment, repositioning, and reorganization. At the same time, Kinyua & Kihara (2021) argued that changes in the leadership or management of the firm, technology, revenue, and cost reduction strategies are the most crucial turnaround strategies for an organization facing a decline in performance. According to Omwakila (2022), a firm striving to recover from a decline can adopt six turnaround strategies. These strategies encompass leveraging cost efficiencies, implementing asset retrenchment measures, and prioritizing the firm's core business activities and profitability. By doing so, the company can position itself for a successful resurgence in the market while maintaining a professional approach to reclaiming its competitive edge. The other turnaround strategies include a change in a firm's culture and the reinvigoration of the firm's leadership. However, corruption, political interference, low staff morale, and mismanagement affect the success of the turnaround strategy.

Turnaround strategies organizations adopt help organizations achieve their vision while improving their operational and financial performance. Different studies have shown that a different mix of turnaround strategies can effectively lead to long-term performance; However, several factors were found to influence the success of a turnaround strategy. This research, therefore, will analyze the turnaround strategies adopted by NYEWASCO and specifically the impact of reorganization strategy, repositioning strategy, market redefinition strategy, and cost efficiency strategy on the performance of water and Sanitation companies.

➤ *Objectives*

- To establish the relationship between reorganization strategy and the performance of water and Sanitation companies in Kenya
- To examine the relationship between repositioning strategy and the performance of water and Sanitation companies in Kenya.

II. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

➤ *Strategic Orientation Theory*

Dan Schendel and Kenneth Hatten developed this theory in the year 1972. The theory categorizes the strategies adopted by a firm into two types of strategies; the entrepreneurial strategy and the efficiency strategy. Entrepreneurial strategies are innovative ideas that drive organizations into new markets to increase revenue and improve their market dominance. On the other hand, efficiency strategies emphasize the prudent use of the firm's resources and maximizing the value derived from the internal skills and capabilities available to the company (Schendel & Hatten, 1972).

Under the strategic orientation theory, organizations' strategic orientations are essential to a firm's performance and long-term growth. The strategies adopted by a company should be in line with the two dimensions of this theory to achieve success in any business (Inyange, 2014). Dionysus & Arifin (2020) observed seven distinct types of an organization's strategic orientation: customer orientation prioritizes satisfaction, Market orientation emphasizes market intelligence, innovation orientation seeks new ideas, cost orientation emphasizes efficiency, entrepreneurial orientation focuses on risk-taking, learning orientation values continuous development, and competitor orientation prioritizes understanding competitors. The study noted that an organization must mix the seven strategic orientations to achieve optimum performance (Dionysus & Arifin, 2020).

Saebi & Foss (2017) observed that firms' past strategic orientations were important in determining a company's performance and why it adopts a given business model. Saeb and Foss observed that a market development strategy was more effective than one geared to defend an existing market niche. The study observed that a market orientation strategy, a cost orientation strategy, an entrepreneurial strategy, and an innovative strategy were important in driving long-term growth in an organization.

This theory was chosen as the anchor theory since it tends to determine whether the strategies adopted by NYEWASCO followed the seven types of strategic orientation. The study analyzed if the strategies adopted have different aspects of customer, Market, innovation, cost, entrepreneurial, learning, and competitor orientations.

➤ *The Organization Development Theory*

Kurt Lewin developed this theory in 1947. The theory opines that an organization desires to change from its current state to a desired future state. According to Kurt Lewin was called development (Lewin, 1947). This theory states that development is a key attribute of the growth of a firm, and all firms must experience it. This theory defines organisational development as behavioural-based values, theories, strategies, and technologies adopted by the company to spur individual growth and improve productivity, improving the firm's performance (Lewin, 1947).

Organizational development leads to change in how the company functions by improving its efficiency through the deployment of technology, improvement of critical skills, and implementation of strategies that drive efficiency and lead to growth and improved performance. This theory highlights the importance of an excellent environment to spur organizational development (Mwin'jaka, 2013).

This theory is essential to this study since, by adopting the strategies in 2021, NYEWASCO wishes to change from its current situation to a future position of improved performance and profitability through technology, among other strategies

proposed in its strategic plan. This theory helped the study assess whether the strategies adopted by NYEWASCO improved how it efficiently supplies water and whether the strategies adopted led to growth and improved performance.

➤ *Resource-based Theory*

The theory analyzes a firm's available assets, giving it a competitive advantage. It borrows from the Penrose 1959 theory of the firm and the concept of the resource developed by Wernerfelt in 1984 (Kisaka & Kitur, 2021). Jay Barney further developed it into the resource-based theory in 1991. The theory assumes that a company's comparative advantage is achieved when its internal reserves, strategies, behaviour, and performance are linked. The theory opines that these essential resources and drivers of an organization's performance are due to its resources and skills considered precious and unique to every organization (Barney, 2009). This theory assumes that the skills and capabilities of an organization are essential to drive the firm's strategies and performance, establishing a competitive advantage in the industry. The research assumes that the strategic resources adopted by the organizations are unique to the company, and thus competitive advantage is gained through the effective deployment of these strategies.

According to Lin & Wu (2014), while exploring the capabilities of a firm under the resource-based view, an organization is a pool of resources and skills that determine the strategies to be adopted by a firm and its overall performance. The resource-based view stresses that an organization's future success depends on maximizing strategies, resources, and skills (Ondimu, 2015). Kisaka & Kitur (2021) advised that an organization's management should proactively assess the competencies and assets available within the company, to strategically harness them for optimal gain. This theory is vital to the study since it evaluates the efficacy of the tactics used by NYEWASCO to maximize their available resources, skills, and capabilities, resulting in improved performance and an industry competitive advantage.

➤ *Conceptual framework*

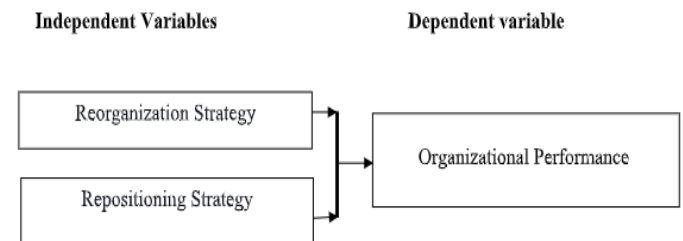


Fig 1 Conceptual Framework

III. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research design was employed to investigate the defined objectives. According to Kothari (2004), a research design offers a direction to the research study on how best it answers the objectives adopted by the research. This research design is adopted when studying a phenomenon specific to an organization, ensuring a systematic and structured approach that caters to the needs of all stakeholders involved, leading to comprehensive and reliable findings (Yin, 2009). A descriptive research design is considered highly valuable as it aims to uncover in-depth insights into the phenomenon being studied. By carefully examining a given situation and making logical assumptions, this approach offers comprehensive explanations and delivers reliable results. It was adopted since it studies the effect of turnover strategies adopted by NYEWASCO and their effects on the performance of NYEWASCO. It helped in giving a detailed understanding of the strategy adopted in 2021 and reviewing how the strategy achieved the intended performance of NYEWASCO. The targeted population for the study is the 179 employees at NYEWASCO during the research period. Through using questionnaires, the research paper obtained

primary data from a wide range of participants, ensuring accurate and trustworthy information.

The findings derived from the descriptive statistics were effectively showcased through visually appealing graphs and informative tables for easy comprehension by all recipients. The extent of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables was revealed by a regression and correlation analysis, and both analyses provided important insights for comprehending the underlying dynamics of the variables in our study. A multivariate linear regression equation was created to develop the inferential statistics. This equation shows how the dependent variable and the four independent variables are related, giving important details about how they all together affect the statistical results.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 179 research questionnaires were successfully circulated to employees at NYEWASCO for this study, and 148 were correctly answered and received. This represented a response rate of 82.68%.

Table 1: Correlation Matrix

	Organization Performance	Reorganization Strategy	Repositioning Strategy
Organization Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
Reorganization Strategy	Pearson Correlation	.582**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
Repositioning Strategy	Pearson Correlation	.469**	.574**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000

According to Table 1 findings, there is a significant positive correlation between reorganization strategy and organizational performance. A Pearson coefficient of 0.582 at a significance level of 0.01 indicates that reorganization strategy has a significant positive impact on organizational performance. The results demonstrate that a reorganization strategy improves organizational performance. Organizational performance and repositioning strategy had a moderately positive correlation of 0.469 at a 0.01 level of confidence. These results indicate that the performance of the organization was moderately improved by the repositioning strategy. These findings show that implementing a repositioning strategy improves an organization's performance.

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.820a	.685	.668	.46925	1.847
a. Predictors: (Constant) Reorganization Strategy, Repositioning Strategy					
b. Dependent Variable: Organization Performance					

In Table 2 above, the model summary results are shown. The findings indicate an R square value of 0.685. This shows that independent variables (reorganization strategy, repositioning strategy, market redefinition strategy, and cost efficiency strategy) explain 68.5% of changes in organizational performance, while factors not included in this model account for 31.5% of those changes. A Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.847 for the model indicates that autocorrelation is not present.

Table 1: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	Do	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.701	2	4.925	22.367	.000b
	Residual	31.489	145	.220		
	Total	51.189	147			
a. Dependent Variable: Organization Performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Reorganization Strategy, Repositioning Strategy						

Table 3 shows the analysis of the variance of the model at a 0.05 confidence level. According to Cooper & Schindler (2011), a Fit model should have an F statistic of 4.276 and a p-value of less than 0.05. The model's statistic in Table 3 is 22.367, and a p-value of 0.00, implying that the model is fit to explain changes in organizational performance. The results indicate that the reorganization strategy, and repositioning strategy, were fit in describing variations in organizational performance. A comprehensive analysis was conducted, resulting in the development of a robust multivariate linear regression equation that effectively demonstrates the association between the dependent variable and the carefully selected four independent variables.

The equation to determine the effect of the different turnover strategies adopted on the performance of NYEWASCO was expressed as

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y= Firm performance

X₁= Reorganization strategy

X₂= repositioning strategy

ε = error term

β₀, β₁, & β₂ are coefficients of determination are presented in Table 4

Table 4: Regression Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.745	.359		2.074	.040
Reorganization Strategy	.264	.078	.246	3.376	.001
Repositioning Strategy	.149	.051	.214	2.932	.004
a. Dependent Variable: Organization Performance					

The resultant equation is;

$$Org.P = 0.745 + 0.264Reorg + 0.147Repo + \varepsilon$$

The observed constant of 0.745, as indicated by the results, presents crucial insights. It conveys that in the absence of any turnaround strategy, the performance of the organization exhibits an incremental rise of 0.745 units. This finding holds significant implications for decision-making processes and emphasizes the potential for further optimization in organizational performance strategies. The research found that the reorganization strategy had a positive, significant effect on organization performance of 0.264 and a p-value of 0.001 which is less than a 0.05 significance level. These findings indicate that the adoption of the reorganization strategy improves organization performance by 0.264 units. The research found that the repositioning strategy had a positive, significant effect on organization performance of 0.147 and a p-value of 0.004 which is less than a 0.05 significance level. These findings indicate that the adoption of

the repositioning strategy improves organizations' performance by 0.147 units.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the reorganization strategy, the study noted the positive significant effect of the reorganization strategy on organizational performance. The study concluded that the reorganization led to increased employee performance and improved employee morale. The reorganization strategy was found to help bring in new blood in the organizations and within the respective departments in the organization. The study concluded that for a reorganization strategy to be successful both the internal and external stakeholders should be involved. On the repositioning strategy, the study observed a positive significant effect on organizational performance. The study further noted that respondents agreed that the repositioning strategy affected the organizational performance. The research concluded that the adoption of the repositioning strategy led to increased organization reach and a significant

increase in customers. The study further concluded that the adoption of a repositioning strategy helped the organization to be forward-looking in investing in areas that serve the increased customer base.

On the reorganization strategy, the study recommended for adoption of the reorganization strategy on not only top management but also internal staff to improve organization efficiency and improve the work culture. The study noted that the majority of the company's workforce is above the age of 45 years hence need to reorganize the workforce and have a mixture of the young and the experienced to improve efficiency and company continuity. On the repositioning strategy, the study recommends that NYEWASCO continue venturing into new markets and increase its customer reach to be able to meet the constitutional requirement of access to water and sanitation services to all. The study further recommends additional investments in water and sewerage infrastructure to meet the demands of all its customers.

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