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**INFLUENCE OF BUSINESS SURVIVAL STRATEGIES ON GROWTH OF SMALL
AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN NAROK TOWN, NAROK COUNTY**

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MBA/51602/2018

**A RESEARCH DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION (MBA) AT STRATHMORE UNIVERSITY**

OCTOBER 2020

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this dissertation is my original work and has not been submitted for examination in any other institution.

Maureen Wangui

MBA/51602/2018

Sign: 

Date: Friday 2 October 2020

Approval

This research dissertation has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor

Dr. Hellen Otieno

Strathmore University Business School

Sign: 

Date: Friday 2 October 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I recognize the great assistance and support from my supervisor, Dr Hellen Otieno. Her guidance and support have been invaluable. I also thank my fellow MBA classmates for the encouragement, guidance and moral support.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to my family and friends who have been instrumental in offering moral support towards making this study a success. To my mother and grandmother for believing in me, the constant support and pushing me to always do better. To my son and daughter, may you always know that the sky is the limit. To God for His endless grace and provision.

ABSTRACT

The rapid changes in the conduct of business globally has resulted in intense competition within the market which leads to minimal growth among small businesses. This continuous volatility in the business environment has resulted in increasing lack of growth among small businesses in Kenya. This has been more rampant among businesses in Narok Town due to increase land conflicts, community clashes, rampant flooding and further, marginalization of the town has resulted in poor business survival and stunted business growth within the town. Previous empirical evidence has shown that business survival strategies are key to business growth. However, the extant literature has not focussed on Narok Town. Thus, this research sought to establish if business survival strategies influence the growth of small and medium enterprises in Narok town. The current study analysed the effect of innovation strategies, marketing strategies and operational strategies on the growth of these businesses. The study targeted 649 SMEs operating within Narok Town. The sample size for the study was 384 firms with convenience sampling being adopted in selecting participants. The research relied on structured questionnaires in the data collection process with a drop and pick method being employed. Descriptive statistics and inferential analysis were used to analyse the data. The findings were presented using tables and charts. The study results indicated that there was a positive association between innovation strategies, marketing strategies and operational strategies and the growth of SMEs in Narok Town. The study findings also indicated that operational strategies have an insignificant negative effect to the growth of a business. The study concluded that business survival strategies account for 25.3% of variations in growth of SMEs. The study recommends that SMEs review their innovative practices, marketing tools deployment and internal business processes to drive sustainable growth. The study contributed to the County Government of Narok by showing the need to formulate regulations that can support the survival and growth of SMEs within Narok Town. The study was limited to conceptualization of non-financial measures and did not consider financial measures in measuring growth.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ABSTRACT	i
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	ix
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS	xi
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.1.1 Business Growth	2
1.1.2 Survival Strategies and Business Growth	4
1.1.3 Small and Medium Enterprises in Narok Town	5
1.2 Statement of the Problem	6
1.3 Objectives of the Study	8
1.4 Research Questions	8
1.5 Scope of the Study	8
1.6 Significance of the Study	8
CHAPTER TWO	10
LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.1 Introduction	10
2.2 Theoretical Review	10
2.2.1 Contingency Theory	10
2.2.2 The Organizations Theory	11
2.3 Empirical Review	12

2.3.1 Innovative Strategies and Business Growth	12
2.3.2 Operational Strategies and Business Growth	14
2.3.3 Marketing Strategies and Business Growth	16
2.4 Summary of Literature and Research Gaps	18
2.5 Conceptual Framework	20
2.6 Summary	21
CHAPTER THREE	23
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	23
3.1 Introduction	23
3.2 Research Philosophy	23
3.3 Research Design	23
3.4 Population and Sampling	23
3.4.1 Target Population	23
3.4.2 Sampling Technique	24
3.5 Data Collection Instruments and Procedure	25
3.6 Research Quality	26
3.6.1 Reliability Tests of Research Instrument	26
3.6.2 Validity Tests of Research Instrument	27
3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation	27
3.8 Ethical Considerations	28
CHAPTER FOUR	29
PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS	29
4.1 Introduction	29
4.2 Response Rate	29
4.3 Demographic Information	29
4.3.1 Age of Respondents	29
4.3.2 Gender of Respondents	30

4.3.3 Education of Respondents	30
4.3.4 Category of Firm	30
4.3.5 Firm Characteristics	31
4.4 Descriptive Analysis	32
4.4.1 Innovative Strategies	32
4.4.2 Operational Strategies	33
4.4.3 Marketing Strategies	34
4.4.4 Descriptive Statistics for Growth of SMEs	35
4.5 Correlation Analysis	36
4.6 Regression Analysis	37
4.6.1 Effect of Innovative Strategies on Growth of SMEs	37
4.6.2 Effect of Operational Strategies on Growth of SME in Narok Town	38
4.6.3 Effect of Marketing Strategies on Growth of SME in Narok town	40
4.7 Overall Regression Summary	41
CHAPTER FIVE	43
DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	43
5.1 Introduction	43
5.2 Summary	43
5.3 Discussion of Results	44
5.3.1 Effect of Innovative Strategies on Growth of SME	44
5.3.2 Effect of Operational Strategies on Growth of SME	44
5.3.3 Effect of Marketing Strategies on Growth of SME	45
5.4 Conclusions	46
5.5 Recommendations	46
5.5.1 Recommendations for Practice	46
5.5.2 Recommendations for Policy	47
5.6 Limitations of the study	47

5.7 Suggestions for Further Research	47
REFERENCES	49
APPENDICES	58
Appendix I: Ethics Review Approval	58
Appendix II: Questionnaire	59
Appendix III: NACOSTI Research Permit	65
Appendix IV: List of Firms	66

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 Summary of Research Gaps
Table 2.2 Operationalization of Variables
Table 3.1 Target Population

Table 3.2 Sample Size Distribution

Table 3.3 Reliability Results

Table 4.1 Respondents Age

Table 4.2 Respondents Gender

Table 4.3 Category of Business Operations

Table 4.4 Firm Characteristics

Table 4.5 Innovative Strategies

Table 4.6 Operational Strategies

Table 4.7 Marketing Strategies

Table 4.8 Growth of SMEs

Table 4.9 Correlation Results

Table 4.10 Influence of Innovative Strategies of Growth of SMEs in Narok Town

Table 4.11 ANOVA for the influence Innovative Strategies of Growth of SMEs in Narok Town

Table 4.12 Regression Coefficient for Innovative Strategies and Growth of SME

Table 4.13 Regression between Operational Strategies and Growth of SME

Table 4.14 ANOVA for Operational Strategies and Growth of SME

Table 4.15 Regression Coefficient for Operational Strategies and Growth of SME

Table 4.16 Regression between Marketing Strategies and Growth of SME

Table 4.17 ANOVA for Marketing Strategies and Growth of SME

Table 4.18 Regression Coefficient for Marketing Strategies and Growth of SME

Table 4.19 Regression Summary

Table 4.20 ANOVA Summary

Table 4.21 Regression Coefficients

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CBD	Central Business District
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
KMA	Kenya Association of Manufacturers
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Growth	This is a product of an internal process in the development of an enterprise and an increase in quality and /or expansion (Atkinson & Brander-Brown, 2013).
Innovative strategies	The ability of the firm to exploit its technological competencies to create product differentiation, improve efficiency, capture new markets and raise market share through the utilization of new technologies (Kilic, Ulusoy, Gunday, & Alpkay, 2015).
Marketing strategies	This is a process that enables a company to use its limited resources to achieve maximum opportunities through increased sales and thereby giving an organization a competitive edge over other organizations (Baker, 2014).
Operational strategies	These are a set of decisions and plans involving the development and alignment of managerial policies in alignment with allocation of resources aimed towards attaining organizational goals and creating sustainability (Boyer, 2015).
Survival strategies	These are the various practices businesses implement in order to be able to continuously be in operation despite various challenging factors (Iorun, 2014).

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Strategies are long term plans that secure a competitive advantage for organizations in dynamic environments through allocation and utilization of resources and competences so as to realize organizational goals and objectives (Johnson, Scholes, & Whittington, 2008). Strategies are created to devise unique and valuable positions, make competition trade-offs and ensure that organizations' activities interact and reinforce each other (Tanwar, 2013). Survival of businesses entails the firm's capability to remain operational even in harsh business environments. Operating in such environments has led the firms to be in constant lookout for individuals with managerial acumen to formulate and implement plans aimed at satisfying all associated stakeholders (Akindele, Oginni, & Omoyele, 2012). To increase chances of survival, firms are in constant search for adoptable practices and procedures that can enhance the quality of their operations and guarantee their continuity (Kehinde, Idris, & Oluitan, 2014).

Bourletidis and Triantafyllopoulos (2014) posited that survival strategies are the key practices that businesses deploy in order to maintain growth during challenging times. Survival strategies may include technological changes, entrepreneurial practices, operational practices as well as human resource management practices. Iorun (2014) noted that key survival strategies for small businesses include innovative strategies, diversification strategies, marketing strategies, distribution strategies and operational strategies that can be deployed to enhance the firm growth. However, Kehinde et al., (2014) argued that some surviving businesses do not grow by any significant margin because they start small and stay small throughout their entire lifecycle. Matthias, Antje, Thomas and Dennis (2011) posited that adopting operational strategies, product development strategies, marketing and innovative strategies are critical to improving firm competitiveness. Adopting operational strategies and improving the marketing and innovativeness within the firm is key to improving firm performance (Ketema, 2015).

A marketing strategy enables firms to utilize their limited resources to achieve maximum opportunities through increased sales and thereby giving an organization a competitive edge over other organizations (Baker, 2014). A good strategy for marketing merges the development of products, promotion, pricing, distribution, relationship management, and other elements (Gbolagade & Oyewale, 2013). These marketing strategies of an organization are aligned to the process of defining how a firm increases its market share, establishes its presence,

introduces new products and increases sales (Fifield, 2012). According to Dzisi and Ofosu (2014) selecting a good marketing strategy will contribute positively to improved performance of the business; thus, a firm's choice of marketing strategy is very important in determining whether a business will grow or not.

Operational strategies are a set of decisions and plans involving the development and alignment of managerial policies and firm resources in attaining organizational goals (Boyer, 2015). Operational strategy contents are the specific decisions which determine and choose actions that set the role, objectives and engagements of the firm (Gong, 2013). Ketema (2015) posited that early scholars in the areas of operations strategy put more emphasis on the significance of internal capabilities in improving the firms' performance in comparison to the competitors. This offers them a comparative advantage in the marketplace. A good operational strategy ensures a business is sustainable and grows over time (Mutua, 2017). The study therefore sought to find out how the choice of an operational strategy affects the growth of a business.

Innovation strategies are the ability of the firm to exploit its technological competencies to create product differentiation, improve efficiency, capture new markets and raise market share through the utilization of new technologies (Kilic, Ulusoy, Gunday, & Alpkan, 2015). It is widely acknowledged that innovation strategies are significant in improving the firm's competitive positioning and productivity (Baker, 2014). Mensah and Acquah (2015) indicated that innovation strategies positively impact SME performance. The current study analysed how marketing strategies, operational strategies, and innovative strategies influence the growth of SME firms in Narok Town.

1.1.1 Business Growth

Every company has their own strategies by which they can support improved business growth (Ebitu, 2016). The term business growth and business performance have been in some cases used interchangeably since some of the measures such as increased profits, increased market share, productivity and business expansion have been used as proxies of business growth and performance (Chacha, 2016; Ruhui, Ngugi, & Waititu, 2014). Business growth is a multi-dimensional construct. Atkinson and Brander-Brown (2013) indicated that business growth can be measured through comparing change in assets, profitability, and employee retention capability. Penrose, (2006) posited that firm growth results from interactions among internal elements in the organization and is measurable by determining the change in product and service quality and the rate of expansion of the firm to other markets. Penrose further noted

that the size of the firm, its age and the industry in which it operates in are key determinants of growth. SME growth is measured by the use of financial and non-financial measures of performance.

Financial performance is a product of financial efficiency measures such as net profit margin, return on investment and equity and profitability ratios (Adeoye, 2015). Non-financial measures comprise customer fulfilment, growth in sales and employee base, and market share (Sidik, 2012; Fairoz, Hirobumi, & Tanaka, 2010). The current research adopted non-financial metrics to measure growth of SMEs. The study relied on workforce productivity, market expansion and product diversification. Atkinson and Brander-Brown, (2013) indicated that workforce productivity is a measure of how efficient employees are in delivering services and improving task accomplishment. Fairoz, Hirobumi, and Tanaka (2010) noted that market expansion is a series of activities by the firm geared towards serving a larger market population while the product diversification refers to the expansion of the existing product range or leveraging on existing markets to expand the market being served in the firm.

Kiraka, Kobia and Katwalo (2013) opined that most businesses in Kenya operate in an environment that is faced by increased globalization, short product cycles and rapid technological advancement which necessitates the firms to continuously formulate and maintain strategies that can spur growth, competitiveness and survival of SMEs. Mattacks, (2011) argued that rather than follow an industry recipe that would demand to replicate what has been done before, strategies entail following intended courses of action, making tactical moves, aligning competencies with risks and opportunities, establishing the best fit, and tend to materialize from unintended decisions (Mattacks, 2011). Koila (2014) found that many of the SMEs in Narok Town had failed due to poor managerial competencies, financing challenges and lack of innovativeness. Chacha (2016) examined SMEs in Narok Town and revealed that poor execution of firm strategies, lack of capacity building and financial management problems led to poor firm performance in the town.

1.1.2 Survival Strategies and Business Growth

Bourletidis and Triantafyllopoulos (2014) investigated the types of strategies that SMEs had adopted to increase chances of survival in economic hardship and noted that leveraging on financial resources, technological processes, managerial and human capabilities are key to SME success. Tundui and Tundui (2012) studied growth strategies, survival and productivity among SMEs and indicated that business skills, business age, size and separation of resources

predicted firm performance. Akindele et.al. (2012) noted that innovative and operational strategies are essential for the survival of private firms.

Ketema (2015), in a study on drivers of manufacturing firms' performance, indicated there is a positive link between marketing activities, promotional strategies, innovative strategies, and productivity among SMEs. Owomoyela, Oyeniya, and Ola (2013) reported the direct positive impact of market strategies on an SME performance. Alberto and Gianluigi (2013) indicated that marketing strategies significantly impact SME profitability. Baporikar (2017) in his study noted that adoption of operational strategies and implementation of new business models helps to improve efficiency and productivity within small firms.

Fening, Appiah, and Frempong (2017) similarly indicated that changes in the operational strategies, total quality management practices and training practices lead to positive performance of SMEs. Al-Ansari, Pervan, and Xu (2013) found that innovation positively and significantly affected SME performance in Dubai. Kazinguvu (2017) also indicated that innovation management is pivotal to SME growth in Rwanda as a result of increased product development, technological changes and the efficiency brought by digitalizing firm operations. The reviewed strategies affirm that a combination of innovative strategies, marketing strategies and operational strategies can be instrumental in fostering firm performance. However, there is inconclusive evidence on their joint effect on growth of SMEs hence there is need for current study to expand available knowledge.

In an examination of the financial performance of SMEs, Koila (2014) noted that most of the firms in Narok town are involved in trading, farming, and the hotel industry. He further indicated that due to their nature SMEs in the town have suffered from financial constraints thus reducing growth and advancement capabilities. Furthermore, a number of the firms lack creditworthiness, management capacity and faced problems securing funds. Chacha (2016) studied the financial performance of SMEs in Narok Central Business District - CBD and noted that lack of effective implementation of budgetary strategies, poor capacity building, and lack of proper financial management had limited the performance of the firms. Chacha (2016) and Koila (2014) in studies within Narok Town indicated that there is a pattern of poor performance among SMEs due to a number of internal and environmental factors.

SMEs are instrumental in all economies, with most countries ranking them among the key

drivers of economic growth (Amoako, 2013) dating back to the early works of Schumpeter (Adeoye, 2015). Many economies consider SMEs to be the force behind growth and development of countries due to their immense contributions to the manufacturing subsector, diversification of output, and reduction of unemployment (Iorun, 2014). Gamba and Komo (2014) intoned that for high growth and development of the economy, SMEs should have the ability to create new opportunities for employment, maximization of profit margins, harness skills and competencies from the population, create bargaining power, enhance financial accessibility, promote investment, provide access to market, and improve living standards by eradicating poverty. This makes factors that determine the development of SMEs to be of national importance due to their influence in enabling the government to achieve its target of eradicating poverty and developing the economy.

1.1.3 Small and Medium Enterprises in Narok Town

Kenya Association of Manufacturers (2019) found that despite the huge role played by SME in supporting economic growth, their contribution to production and value addition is quite minimal. The report asserted that the sector contributes 40% of the GDP with at least 7.41 million SMEs in existence within the country. Despite this more than 75% of the SMEs are unlicensed which has resulted in poor exploitation of their potential to the country. Deloitte Kenya (2018) report showed that at least 46% of SMEs in Kenya close their business in a year with another 15% closing in the subsequent year. This has been attributed to lack of access to capital, market, and deprived infrastructure, changes in technology, regulatory environment, poor knowledge and skills among the owners/employees.

The last 30 years have witnessed increased awareness of the influence of entrepreneurial development in improving the productivity of SMEs thus highlighting the importance of effective management of SMEs to sustain economic growth and eradication of poverty (Republic of Kenya, 2016). To achieve growth in the economy, the government promotes and supports SME development by creating a healthy operating environment which allows for sustainable competition and linking this with generation of employment and income distribution. However, Ng and Kee (2013) argued that in order to survive and improve productivity in the modern business environment, it is necessary that SMEs continuously acquire and enhance their business survival strategies.

Narok Town is one of the wards in Kenya located 146km from Nairobi with a population of 26,248. 25.9% of these are contracted in different business ventures sprawled across the town

(KNBS & SID, 2013). Tribal clashes were first reported in 1991 and this hampered growth for a number of years due to the harsh operating environment. The area is prone to floods and this has also negatively influenced the rate of investment in the region. Between 2009 and 2011, floods caused damage worth Ksh780 million (The Standard Media Group, 2011). Further, increasing community clashes and the marginalization of the Town presents a key area of interest in examining how various survival strategies can be adopted to enhance the growth of SMEs within Narok Town. Njogu (2014) indicated that small enterprises employ 1-49 people with less than KShs. In the Kenyan context small and medium business are characterized as firms with between 1-99 staff members (Chacha, 2016). According to the Narok County (2018) integrated development plan, there are 198 registered wholesale traders, 86 registered retailers, 245 licenced bars and 120 licenced hotels within Narok Town, who formed the scope of the research.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The MSME report (Republic of Kenya, 2016) showed a high mortality rate of SMEs in Kenya, with a total of 2.2 million businesses having closed from 2012 to 2016. It is argued that the survival rates of Kenyan SME businesses are 10%-20% (Ruhui, Ngugi, & Waititu, 2014). It is this minimal survival rate that continues to attract the attention of researchers with a view to putting more emphasis on survival and growth-oriented parameters (Abdul & Ngugi, 2015). Chacha (2016) pointed to the lack of growth within SMEs in Narok Central Business District and noted that there is poor budgetary strategies adoption, capacity building and financial management while Koila (2014) indicated there is poor growth within the SMEs due to poor access to microfinance services. From the above studies in Narok town it is evident that lack of proper execution of business strategies is among the factors negatively affecting the growth of the firms. Albeit the studies focussing on the business growth in the Town, there is minimal literature linking business survival strategies to the growth of SMEs hence the need for this study.

Fairoz, Hirobumi and Tanaka, (2010) assessed the business performance of small and medium scale enterprises of Hambantota District, Sri Lanka and revealed that businesses that lack proper innovation and operational skills have a tendency to stagnate or fail altogether. Nabintu (2013) assessed factors influencing growth of small and micro enterprises (SMEs) in Abuja, Ghana and found out that the ease of access to financial services, information, and technology significantly impacts SME growth rate. Tundui and Tundui (2012) examined survival strategies and their effect on productivity among SMEs in Ethiopia and asserted that there is a positive

association between the variables. Nderu (2013) studied the link between survival strategies and productivity within Kenya Airways and concluded that the rate of innovation, leadership skills and competencies and HR management capabilities foster organization performance.

Njogu (2014) revealed that new marketing strategies, distribution channels development, and operational strategies improve productivity among SMEs. From the above studies, it is evident that survival strategies play a significant role in determining productivity among SMEs. There is minimal research on business growth and performance in Narok Town; Koila (2014); Chacha (2016). The studies did not explicitly examine the association between business survival strategies and growth of SMEs thus creating an empirical gap which this study sought to assess. Furthermore, there are various survival strategies at the disposal of SMEs which are adopted at various stages of their growth and this makes it harder to determine the link between these strategies and business growth. The current study sought to establish the association between operational strategies, marketing strategies, innovative strategies and SME growth.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main goal of the research was determining how business survival strategies affect growth among SMEs Narok Town.

The study was guided by the following specific objectives

- i. To determine the effect of innovative strategies on the growth of SMEs in Narok Town.
- ii. To analyse the effect of operational strategies on the growth of SMEs in Narok Town.
- iii. To determine the effect of marketing strategies on the growth of SMEs in Narok Town.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What is the effect of innovative strategies on the growth of SMEs in Narok Town?
- ii. What is the effect of operational strategies on the growth of SMEs in Narok Town?
- iii. What is the effect of marketing strategies on the growth of SMEs in Narok Town?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study's geographical scope was limited to a review of SMEs operating in Narok Town. The contextual scope of the research focussed on a review of survival strategies; innovative, marketing, and operational within SMEs. The study focussed on a quantitative review of the growth of SMEs. The theoretical scope was constrained to contingency theory and the organizations theory. A positivism research philosophy and descriptive research design was additionally adopted. The study was conducted from February 2020 to April 2020.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Several key stakeholders within the SME environment will benefit from the findings of this research. To the management team of the SMEs the results will help in the formulation of business policies and guide business decision making at the managerial level. Further the study findings will inform the management on the key survival strategies that they can deploy within the firm to enhance firm growth.

To the County Government, the results of the study will help in formulating regulations that can support the survival and growth of SMEs within Narok Town. Further, the results of this study can be integral in sharpening the development of universal survival strategies that both formal and informal SMEs can adopt in enhancing growth of the business. There have been previously minimal studies that have focussed on the business survival strategies and growth of business in Narok Town. Thus, the findings of the study will help in creating new knowledge on how the two concepts are connected. Furthermore, the results will help in guiding future research work examining the growth of small and medium enterprises. The study will help in moving forward the debate on how SMEs can leverage on business survival strategies to spur growth and help identify the gaps in current strategies being implemented within SMEs.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the previous literature surrounding the variables of the current study are presented and detailed. It focussed on the theoretical and empirical review of the various research studies. The chapter further presents the summary of the research gaps, the conceptual framework and the operationalization of the research variables.

2.2 Theoretical Review

A theory is a set of statements that explain phenomena or are endorsed by proof to explain certain phenomena. Theories provide an in-depth explanation of phenomena occurring (Kombo & Tromp, 2009). The theoretical review is therefore instrumental in enabling the researcher to clearly understand and identify the relevance and relationship among independent and dependent variables of this study. This study was explicitly anchored on two main theories; the contingency theory and the organization theory. The contingency theory was selected as it proposes that various strategic choices impact the organization differently. The organization theory holds that the performance of the organization is grounded on the different actions taken by the management and employees of the firm.

2.2.1 Contingency Theory

Developed by Hickson, Hinings, Lee, Schneck, and Pennings (1971), contingency theory holds the view that there is no perfect strategy that can be followed by all organizations that guarantee success or attainment of organizational goals. All managers have to take into consideration the composition of their internal and external environment before making major decisions which can significantly impact the operations of the firm (Crawford, 2010). The manager has to consider the structures instituted, organizational needs, resources in control, organizational capability and human resources of the institution which they manage (Zeithaml, Varadarajan, & Zeithaml, 2012).

Vastag (2009), argued that when applied correctly, the contingency theory allows firms to maximize their performance capability by empowering them and guiding the management in the best course of action depending on the structural choices and infrastructural factors. The application of the theory thus helps small and medium enterprises in adopting various strategies that support the maximization of their performance (Helkiö, 2008). Given that each strategy is not equally effective under all conditions, certain organizations' actions are more appropriate

than those of other organizations (Crawford, 2010).

The management makes decisions and institutes policies and procedures aimed at enabling the firm to sustain itself even with the existence of complex uncertainties of their situations, so as to improve their performance (Zeithaml, Varadarajan, & Zeithaml, 2012). These uncertainties are a product of the technological and environmental composition which leads to organizations having different strategies, structures, and decision-making procedures. In addition, Zeithaml Varadarajan and Zeithaml (2012) argued that the operationalization of these dimensions has become a norm in the contingency theory development, providing organizations a level of control although its performance is still dependent on its internal composition and capabilities.

The study adopted the contingency theory in examining how various innovative and operational strategies can be critical in fostering the growth of SMEs in Narok Town. Contingency theory was also used to examine how different marketing strategies can increase the growth of SMEs in Narok Town. The theory holds that a single form of management cannot be applied in all organizations and lead to effective execution of organizational processes since all firms face different situations. Hence, managers are expected to examine the various situations and deploy the right marketing, operational and innovative practices to ensure firm performance. This theory informed the study on how various innovative, operational and marketing choices can be utilized by a business to support better organizational growth.

2.2.2 The Organizations Theory

This theory was advanced by Jeffery Pfeffer. The theory focuses on the behaviours and attitudes of different employees, managers and the people within the organization. The central argument of the theory is that the negative behaviour and attitudes that individuals within a company have are responsible for the low employee productivity (Pfeffer, 1997) while positive attitudes and good behaviour of the individuals within the organization will result to the highest levels of firm productivity (Gordon, 2007). The second variable that affects a company's overall performance is the effects of people's actions on the general operations of the company. Also, the environment in which the company operates in both internal and external has a direct impact on levels of productivity (Smit & Cronje, 1992). The environment includes the political, cultural, economic as well as social environment that the company finds itself in (Gordon, 2007). Mento, Locke and Klein (1992) therefore observed that in order for a company to meet its set objectives, it must properly organize itself internally, its workers, the resources, and energies inured to deal with the outside challenges that the environment may have. In other words, the company has to ensure that each employee meets his/her set targets in order for the

company to perform better (Bradford & Burke, 2005).

The theory does not provide effective mechanisms of dealing with those external challenges. It is true that by making a proper internal organization, the company does well, but when that has been left to stand on its own, it cannot shield the company (Marshak, 2006); hence the need for development of critical survival strategies including innovative, operational and marketing strategies. The theory opines that for an organization to achieve positive performance the management should undertake activities and decisions that can effectively contribute to better firm performance. This theory is relevant in the study as it guides how the firm sets policies and adopts new strategies that are expected to impact the business growth. The adoption of this theory to this study was due to the fact that it explained how the SMEs are expected to exploit various strategies with an aim of accomplishing the growth/performance goals of the business.

2.3 Empirical Review

The empirical review focused on an examination of the various gaps in previous studies. The setup of this section is as guided by the variables of the research.

2.3.1 Innovative Strategies and Business Growth

Krishnaswamy, Mathirajan, and Subrahmanya (2014) conducted a study on the effect of technological innovation on growth levels among automotive parts SMEs operating in Bangalore, India. The study adopted a case study research design focusing on 3 SMEs. Questionnaires were the main data collection method. The research indicated that increased product innovations have resulted in gradual growth in the firm's employment, investment and sales turnover. The study revealed that modifying customer-centric services does not significantly enhance the growth of the firm. The research further found out that incremental innovations support better firm growth. The research was conducted in Indian auto motive firms and not on Kenyan SMEs. The current research expanded on this gap and analyzed how innovative strategies influenced the growth of SMEs in Kenya.

Subhan, Mahmood, and Sattar (2014) assessed the impact of innovation on profitability among Pakistani SMEs. The study conducted a panel analysis of the development of Pakistan for the period 1980-2013. The innovation within the SMEs was measured using structured questionnaires. Findings showed the existence of a positive association between process innovation within SMEs and the economic development of Pakistan. The study however did not examine how various innovation strategies affect the growth of SMEs which the current study focussed. Further, the research relied on panel data analysis while the current study

explored SME growth using primary research data collected in Narok Town.

Al-Ansari, Pervan, and Xu (2013) investigated innovation levels and business performance among SMEs operating in Dubai. The study conducted a methodical literature review focusing on 200 SMEs with data collected using structured survey tools. Findings of this study were evaluated with descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings indicated a positive link between innovative characteristics and the profitability among Dubai SMEs. Further, service, product and process innovation significantly influence profitability levels. The study examined Dubai-based SMEs and only focussed on innovative strategies and did not take into consideration the effect of operational, marketing and innovative strategies on business growth.

Kazinguvu (2017) examined management of strategic innovation within Rwandese SMEs. The study adopted purposive sampling in selecting 40 respondents from 7-large manufacturing firms. The study relied on interview schedules in the data collection. The study indicated that strategic innovations have been adopted through redefining the SME's vision, better tolerance of risk, and enhancing service decision making. The research noted that an adaptive culture has been essential to the implementation of strategic innovation. The research, however, did not examine how strategic innovations affect SME growth. The current research expanded on the gap by establishing the relationship between innovative strategies and growth of SMEs in Kenya.

Njogu (2014) studied innovation among SMEs based in Nairobi and their effect on profitability rates and performance. A descriptive research which focused on 180 registered manufacturing SMEs was employed. The study relied on questionnaires to collect data with descriptive and regression analysis being applied. Findings were that strategic introduction of innovative products, development of new business methods, improved production and service delivery as well as innovative marketing and promotion campaigns are all contributors to positive returns on investment among the firms. The study investigated Nairobi-based SMEs and did not investigate the same in Narok Town which is a more marginalized town as compared to Nairobi City.

Martin and Namusonge (2014) examined the impact of innovation on performance of SMEs in Nakuru town. The study focused on garment manufacturing firms operating within Nakuru and relied on purposive sampling in selecting respondents. The study found out that innovation and growth were strongly linked. The study indicated that technological innovation, product innovation, and process innovation all positively contributed to SME growth. The study only

focussed on how innovation affects performance of SMEs while the current study examined the link between business survival strategies and growth of SMEs in Narok Town.

2.3.2 Operational Strategies and Business Growth

Baporikar (2017) studied the link between business excellence strategies and SME sustainability in India. The study used a survey research design and quantitative methodologies. The research concluded that undertaking globalization strategies positively enhanced the attainment of new organization opportunities. The study further indicated that business excellence models enhance decision making which is key to the attainment of sustainability among SMEs. The study did not consider how operational strategies influence the growth of SMEs which the current research investigated.

Fening, Appiah, and Frempong (2017) studied implemented management practices and their influence on SME growth in Ghana. The study adopted descriptive research and utilized a quantitative methodology in data collection. Correlation, descriptive and regression analysis formulas were used. Conclusions were that adoption of training practices, total quality management, planning and control, employee empowerment and top management practices were positively related to SME growth in Ghana. The research, however, did not explicitly examine how other survival strategies impact the growth of SMEs which the current research examined.

Acquaah and Agyapong (2015) assessed the relationship between competitive strategy and productivity among SMEs in Ghana. The study focused further on how managerial and marketing capabilities affect the returns among 581 Ghanaian MSMEs. The findings of the hierarchical regression analysis indicated that product differentiation, quality control, and cost strategies positively influenced productivity and returns on investment. Further, managerial capabilities and marketing capabilities augment the effect of the strategies on productivity. The study noted that contingent decision making is key to adopting competitive strategies. The study focused on firms in Ghana while the current research examined SMEs in Kenya.

Mutua (2017) examined the operational challenges in the growth of SMEs in Kisumu City. The study applied a descriptive research design and targeted seven thousand SMEs. Data was collected using questionnaires and interviews. The findings indicated that efficiency and effectiveness in the product and service offerings were key to the growth of the business. The study further indicated that operational factors in the provision of goods and market outreach were key to SME growth. Conclusions were that it was the management's responsibility to

ensure that the firm's primary location is suitable and appropriate, institute management structures and create an optimum capital base. The review focussed on operational challenges facing SMEs whilst the current study explored how implementing operational strategies influenced the growth of SMEs in Narok Town.

Gure and Karugu (2018) assessed how strategic management practices are related to productivity among SMEs in Nairobi, Kenya. A descriptive research design was applied and the population of the research was drawn from youth-owned SMEs. Semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect the data. Findings revealed that leadership strategy had significant and positive effects on productivity among the firms through cost-effectiveness, operational efficiency and quality provision within the firm. The research focused only on youth-owned SMEs in Nairobi and presented critical evidence on how firms are relying on their strategic capacity to spur growth within the firms. The study only considered nascent youth-owned business supported through government programs. The current research however focused on all SMEs regardless of ownership structure in Narok Town.

Mkala, Wanjau, and Kyalo (2018) assessed the impact of operations management on productivity among manufacturing SMEs in Kenya. Adopting a quantitative approach in collecting primary data from 83 registered firms under the Kenya Association of Manufacturers, findings of the structural equation modelling indicated that operations management and entrepreneurial orientation are positively related. The study indicated that effective deployment of operations management competencies positively improves competitiveness and commercialization among manufacturing SMEs. The study focussed on firm productivity and expounds on how various operational practices can be integral to the performance of SMEs. The current research expanded the available evidence by focusing on how various business strategies influence the business growth which this study sought to determine.

2.3.3 Marketing Strategies and Business Growth

Taiminen and Karjaluo (2015) studied the usage of digital marketing channels in SMEs. The study employed semi-structured research questionnaires to collect data from 437 respondents drawn from SMEs in Finland. Findings determined that most SMEs have adopted new digital tools in marketing, but they have not been able to experience their full potential due to limited adoption. The study also indicated that most SMEs have not digitalized their communication to foster their marketing. The study, however, did not examine how marketing strategies

adopted influences SME growth.

Gbolagade and Oyewale (2013) sought to establish the impact of marketing strategy on returns among selected SMEs in Nigeria. Adopting a survey research design and using self-designed structured questionnaires in collecting data from 103 SMEs, analysis involved correlation coefficient and regression analysis. Findings were that 46.5% variations in business performance are predicted by the product, price, promotion, place, packaging and after-sale services offered by SMEs. Further, increased product quality, competitive pricing, and positioning are key to better performance. The study was however conducted within Nigerian SMEs; hence, results cannot be representative of this research. This research examined the effect of the various marketing strategies on the growth of SMEs in Narok Town, Kenya.

Dzisi and Ofosu (2014) examined the relationship between marketing strategies and performance among Ghanaian SMEs. The study employed a survey research methodology and sampled 363 SMEs in Ghana. Findings indicated that strategic marketing and organization positioning positively influenced SMEs productivity. Firms that stuck to traditional forms of marketing limited their outreach. However, the introduction of modern technological marketing tools such as mobile and internet marketing have improved firm performance. The research however was limited since it did not take into consideration the influence of innovative and operation strategies on the growth of SMEs within the Kenyan context.

Ebitu (2016) studied the link between marketing strategies and the performance among Nigerian SMEs. Relying on a survey research design in collecting data for the study from 240 respondents, analysis involved the utilization of the Pearson Product Moment correlation. Findings indicated that product quality strategies positively increased the market share of the SMEs. The study also showed that advertisements and marketing communication positively impacted productivity among SMEs. The study focused on SMEs from three regions in Nigeria. The findings of the study are integral in the current study however the previous work did not consider Kenyan SMEs and more so did not consider more business survival strategies. This study incorporated more survival strategies and examined their influence on SME growth.

Janet and Ngugi (2014) examined entrepreneurial marketing and its impact on growth among SMEs operating in Kiambu, Kenya. Adopting a descriptive research design and making use of questionnaires in collecting the data, findings indicated that entrepreneurial marketing positively influences SME growth. The research noted that product development strategy, pricing strategies, promotional strategy, and distribution strategies positively and significantly

influence SME growth. The study, however, did not examine how innovative and operational strategies affect SME growth.

Omari and Daniel (2015) assessed marketing strategies adopted by SMEs and their effect on growth among SMEs in Kisii town. A descriptive research design sampling 150 SMEs was utilized. The research relied on descriptive and regression statistics in its analysis. Findings indicated that pricing and market penetration positively enhance growth in sales and assets resulting in better competitive positioning of the firm. The study further indicated that the adoption of technology in marketing is key in improving revenue generation among SMEs. The study, however, focused on quantitative growth metrics while current research conceptualized SME growth using non-financial metrics.

Ndegwa, Ngugi, and Muturi (2017) assessed the impact of entrepreneurial marketing strategies on revenue generation among firms operating within the water bottling company. A descriptive research approach was adopted, utilizing qualitative and quantitative approaches. The research relied on descriptive and inferential statistics in presentation of the study findings. Findings show that promotion, product, pricing and distribution strategies are strongly related with growth among water bottling firms. The study indicated that low-cost strategies and effective marketing strategies are key to SME growth. Contrary to the current study Ndegwa, Ngugi, and Muturi, did not examine the effect of innovative strategies on the business growth which the current study examined.

2.4 Summary of Literature and Research Gaps

From the review of various empirical studies, the research was able to highlight various gaps in the research evidence that the current research aims to look at. The summary of the research gap is presented on the table below;

Table 2.1 Summary of Research Gaps

Author	Title	Findings	Research Gaps
Janet and Ngugi (2014)	Influence of entrepreneurial marketing on the growth of SMEs in Kiambu Town-CBD, Kenya	Findings indicated there is a positive influence of entrepreneurial marketing on the growth of SMEs.	The study, however, did not examine how innovative and operational strategies affect SME growth.
Kazinguvu	Strategic	The research noted that	The research, however,

(2017)	innovation management of small and medium-sized manufacturing companies in Rwanda	an adaptive culture has been essential to the implementation of strategic innovation	did not examine how strategic innovations affect SME growth.
Krishnaswamy, Mathirajan, and Subrahmanya (2014)	Technological innovations and its influence on the growth of auto component SMEs of Bangalore	The research further indicated that incremental innovations support better firm growth	The research was conducted in auto firms in India while the current study focussed on Kenyan SMEs
Mkala, Wanjau, and Kyalo (2018)	Effect of operations management on the performance of manufacturing small and medium enterprises in Kenya	The study indicated that effective deployment of operations management competencies positively improves competitiveness and commercialization in the small and medium firms	The study focus is on large small and medium enterprises registered under KMA, while the current study focussed on small and micro enterprises in Narok Town.
Mutua (2017)	Operational challenges in the growth of small and medium enterprises in Kisumu County	The findings indicated that efficiency and effectiveness in the product and service offerings were key to the growth of the business.	The current study, however, conducted a quantitative analysis of the link between operational strategies and the growth of SMEs.
Omari and Daniel (2015)	Assessment of marketing strategies adopted	The study further indicated that the adoption of technology	The study, however, focused on internal firm growth metrics and did

	by small and micro enterprises for organization growth in Kisii town	in marketing is key to building better financial growth of the SMEs	not examine the external growth metrics of SME
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Source: Researcher (2020)

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The framework is an attempt to define in a diagrammatical from the nature of research (Roumpakis, 2014). The study sought to assess the influence of business survival strategies on the growth of SMEs in Narok County, Kenya.

Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

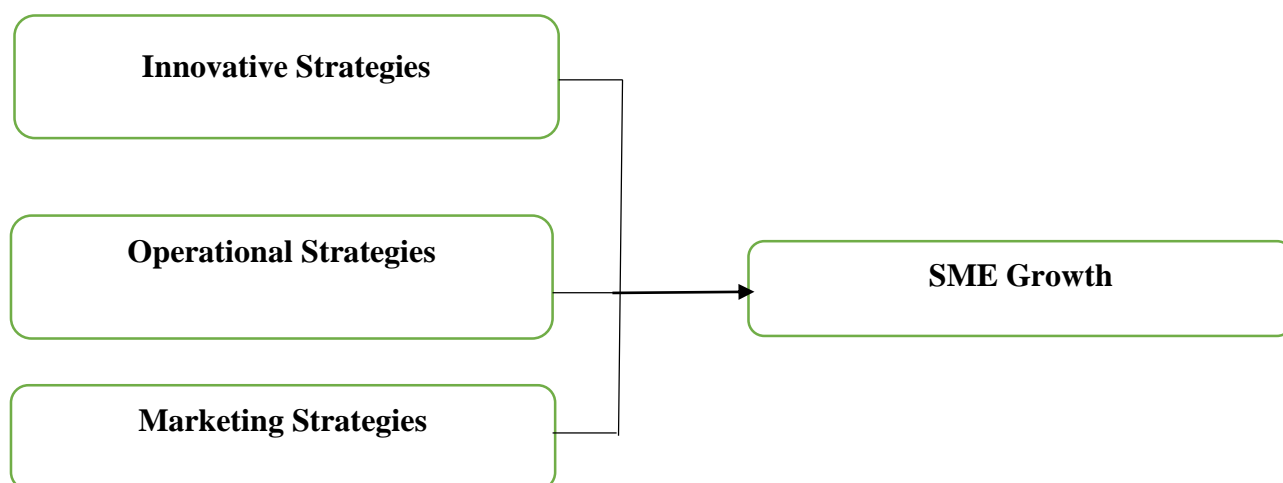


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher (2020)

Above is a hypothetical representation of the interaction between the three selected survival strategies and the growth of SME in Narok County. The survival strategies in this study were conceptualized as the various key practices that businesses deploy in order to maintain growth during challenging times. The current study examined survival strategies based on three main practices; the innovative strategies, the marketing strategies and the operational strategies adopted by the small businesses. The dependent variable for the research was the growth of SMEs. The growth of the firm was measured by utilizing non-financial metrics. The study variables were operationalized as shown in Table 2.2 below;

Table 2.2 Operationalization of Variables

Variable	Constructs	Data Collection Tool	Source	Data Analysis
Innovative Strategies	New product development Digitalization of services Social media engagement Product modifications Collaborative networks	5-point Likert questionnaire	Kilic, Ulusoy, Gunday, & Alphan, (2015); Krishnaswamy, Mathirajan, and Subrahmanya (2014); Njogu (2014)	Descriptive analysis Inferential analysis
Operational Strategies	Customer feedback Decision making Delegation of duty Customer experience & service Efficiency Quality control	5-point Likert questionnaire	Fening, Appiah, and Frempong (2017); Acquaaah and Agyapong (2015); Mutua (2017)	Descriptive analysis Inferential analysis
Marketing Strategies	Unique product offering Market positioning Pricing strategies Store location Promotion After-sale services	5-point Likert questionnaire	Gbolagade and Oyewale (2013); Ndegwa, Ngugi, and Muturi (2017); Janet and Ngugi (2014)	Descriptive analysis Inferential analysis
Growth of SME	Workforces productivity Market Expansion Product diversification	5-point Likert questionnaire	Atkinson and Brander-Brown, (2013); Fairoz, Hirobumi, and Tanaka (2010)	Descriptive analysis Inferential analysis

Source: Researcher (2010)

2.6 Summary

SMEs are key drivers of economic growth within the country. The sector has however been faced with numerous challenges that have affected the growth of the firms. This chapter presented the review of the various theories and the empirical literature that guides the analysis of the association between business survival strategies and SME growth. The contingency theory maintained that different firms need different strategies in managing an organization

hence there is need to constantly review the firm's operational strategies. On the other hand, the organization theories laid emphasis on the need for firms to constantly improve their efficiency and productiveness to ensure sustainable growth and survival. The review of the various empirical studies helped identify the various empirical and contextual gaps that this study sought to solve. Further this chapter presented the conceptualization of the variables which depicts the hypothesized association of the study variables.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the research design that was employed, the target population, the sampling design and sample size, the data collection instruments, and the data collection procedures. The chapter also contains data analysis and the ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Philosophy

The research adopted a pragmatic research philosophy. The pragmatism perspective renders the researcher the freedom to choose the methods, techniques, and procedures that are most preferable in fulfilling the study's objectives. It is not grounded on a firm dualism between the mind and reality (Bashir, Syed, & Qureshi, 2017). Furthermore, the pragmatic approach allowed for a rational examination of the study phenomena. Hence the philosophy was utilized in examining the relationship between business survival strategies and growth of SMEs in Narok Town.

3.3 Research Design

Research design is the blueprint adopted to include the various components of the research in a comprehensible and logical way, thus making it certain that the research problem is excellently addressed (Cooper & Schindler, 2012). Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009) describe research design as the connection and organization of conditions for gathering and analysis of data in relation to the research purpose. Employing a descriptive research design allowed the study to examine the phenomena within the current environment and allowed for the adoption of a quantitative approach in the testing of the relationship between the research variables.

3.4 Population and Sampling

This section introduces the target population and the sampling techniques.

3.4.1 Target Population

Kothari (2009) contends that the population incorporates all elements in any area of inquiry. According to the Narok County (2018) integrated development plan, there are 198 registered wholesale traders, 86 registered retailers, 245 licenced bars and restaurants and 120 licenced hotels within Narok Town who form the scope of the research. The unit of analysis was the 649 small and medium firms within Narok Town.

Table 3.1 Target Population

Category	Number of Firms	Percentage Representation
Registered Wholesalers	198	31%
Registered Retailers	86	13%
Licensed Bars	245	37%
Licensed Hotels	120	19%
Target Population	649	100%

Source: (Narok County, 2018)

3.4.2 Sampling Technique

Sampling involves selection of different subjects to act as a representative of the population when carrying out a study (Kombo & Tromp, 2009). The study utilized convenience sampling in selecting the SMEs that were assessed in Narok Town from different industries. The sampling frame is a description of all the units from which the sample was obtained (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). The sample frame for the research was selected from 649 SMEs licensed and operating within Narok Town. The study utilized the directory of licensed SMEs within Narok Town in selection of the sample respondents.

The Yamane formula (1967), was useful when selecting the sample size. It is a central scientific method for calculating sample populations from a larger population. The following procedure was followed;

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{d^2}$$

Where n= desired sample size; Z= standard normal deviation set at 1.96 (95% confidence level); P= proportion of the targeted population that have the characteristic focusing in the study estimated at 50% (0.5).

$$q = 1 - p \quad (1 - 0.5)$$

d= degree of accuracy set at a 5%-degree proportion of error that should be accepted in the study (0.05) since the study is at a 95% confidence level.

$$\text{Thus, Desired Sample (n)} = \frac{1.96^2 * (0.5 * (1 - 0.5))}{0.05^2}$$

$$\text{Hence; } n = \frac{(1.96 * 1.96) * (0.5 * 0.5)}{(0.05 * 0.05)} = 384$$

Thus, the sample size for the study was 384 firms. The respondents were apportioned within

the different categories of SMEs in Narok. Managers and owners of each of the SMEs were selected as the unit of observation for the current research. The list of the firms that responded in the research is shown in the appendices.

Table 3.2 Sample Size Distribution

Category	Number of Firms	Sample Respondents
Registered Wholesalers firms	198	31%*384 = 119
Registered Retail firms	86	13%*384 = 50
Licensed Bars	245	37%*384 = 142
Licensed Hotels	120	19%*384 = 73
Sample Respondents		384

Source: Researcher (2020)

3.5 Data Collection Instruments and Procedure

Primary data was collected from the SMEs in Narok. The main method used to source data was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaires were selected for the data collection as they are a simple method of collecting quantitative data from a large population efficiently. Additionally, it makes it possible for the researcher to cover large distances faster and at a lower cost. Further, the questionnaire was used as it reduces the chance of respondent bias, as all SME managers/owners are asked the same questions.

The researcher contracted two research assistants who were helpful in distribution of the research questionnaire. They were well trained on the research parameters and how to conduct themselves during the data collection process. The study utilized a drop and pick method in the data collection. This involved dropping the questionnaires to the respondents and picking them up at the agreed time after completion. The researcher visited the business premises and conducted interviews with the manager/business owner on the aim of the study and their willingness to participate in the study. The study targeted one manager/business owner per SME. With their permission to be involved in the study the questionnaires were left at the business premises for a duration of 1-2 working days to facilitate recording of response. The data collection was conducted between February and April 2020.

3.6 Research Quality

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) assert that a pilot study helps in refining the questions by removing some irrelevant items and adding others to genuinely engage with the participants. After collecting the pilot test data, the study conducted reliability test and validity tests of the

questionnaires. The pilot test was conducted among 24 participants not included in the main research.

3.6.1 Reliability Tests of Research Instrument

Reliability in research is the ability of the research instrument to produce consistent results even with several measurements. It is an estimation of the relationship between the data collected and the variables of the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). It ensures that the researcher receives data with as little errors as possible and with no bias (Bashir, Syed, & Qureshi, 2017). A pilot study was instrumental in determining the significance of the research questions in the questionnaire (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). The Cronbach Alpha was adopted to test for reliability.

Table 3.3 Reliability Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Innovation strategies	.784	6
Operational strategies	.860	6
Marketing strategies	.865	8
Growth of SMEs	.815	5

Source: Researcher (2020)

Cooper and Schindler (2012) provide the following criterion for interpreting the alpha scores >0.9 – Excellent, >0.8 – Good, >0.7 – Acceptable, >0.6 – Questionable, >0.5 – Poor and <0.5 – Unacceptable. According to Andy (2014), all values that are higher than 0.7 are suitable for study; hence, this standard was adopted in the research. The above reliability statistics indicate that the variables of the research had a Cronbach alpha of above 0.7 thus indicating internal consistency in the questionnaire

3.6.2 Validity Tests of Research Instrument

Both construct and content validity were employed. The questionnaire was reviewed by a peer expert within SMEs to determine content validity. The supervisor was contacted to ascertain the research’s content validity. Upholding of construct validity was possible by ensuring that all research variables are covered in the questionnaire.

3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation

Collected data was edited and coded into SPSS 25 for analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistics methods were applied coupled with diagnostics tests which ensured accuracy and fitness of the data through hypothesis testing (Sekaran, 2016). The descriptive analysis

comprised the estimation of means, frequencies, and standard deviations. The inferential analysis comprises of correlation analysis, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and regression analysis, utilizing the following regression equation.

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Where: Y = Dependent Variable (growth of SMEs)

Independent variables were:

X₁ is innovative strategies

X₂ is marketing strategies

X₃ is operational strategies

α = the constant

β_1-3 = the regression coefficient or change included in Y by each X

Both descriptive and inferential techniques were applied in analysing the research objectives. The study analysed each objective using descriptive analysis (means, standard deviation and variance), correlation analysis (to determine type of association) and regression analysis (to test magnitude of relationship between variables).

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Clearance from Strathmore University was sought prior to undertaking the study. Further, the researcher sought a research permit from the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation. The researcher further sought the permission of the Narok County Director of Education. The respondents were assured that the collected data was to be used for academic purposes only and that they would remain anonymous. The study ensured informed consent was sought from the respondents before collecting research data and the researcher ensured no harm befalls the respondents as a consequence of responding to the study by ensuring that confidentiality was maintained within the study. The study ensured confidentiality of the participants by not requiring collection of their names during data collection and only utilizing the study data for academic purposes only. The study also ensured upholding of academic honesty by abiding by the guidelines and provisions issued by the University. This was achieved through ensuring all ethical guidelines were observed and necessary research approvals were obtained before conducting the research. The study also ensured that all quoted sources were referenced and plagiarism was avoided in the development of the research project.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The findings drawn from analysing the data collected are presented in this chapter. It presents the response rate, the respondents' demographic profile, the descriptive analysis and the regression analysis as well as the summary of the chapter.

4.2 Response Rate

The study targeted 384 respondents. The study was able to obtain a response rate of 54% (N=206). The research response rate was limited by most businesses having closed their business during the Covid-19 pandemic. This may have been due to the non-availability of business owners in their respective work areas, reduced sales due to most people staying home and/or losing sources of income and possible shortages in stocks due to restriction of non-essential travel. According to Nulty (2008) a response rate of 54% is justified as appropriate as the author opined that response rate of 30%-60% is deemed adequate for quantitative analysis and the results can be generalized to the population from this sample.

4.3 Demographic Information

The respondent's demographic profile was analysed and the findings are presented in this section.

4.3.1 Age of Respondents

In analysing the age distribution of the respondents, findings are as seen in table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Respondents Age

	Frequency	Percent
18-25 years of age	55	26.7
26-35 years of age	107	51.9
36-45 years of age	27	13.1
46 years and above	17	8.3
Total	206	100.0

Source: Researcher (2020)

The responses obtained indicate that the majority of the participants of the study 52% were between the ages of 26-35 years, 27% were between 18-25 years of age, 13% were between 36-45 years while 8% were above 46 years of age.

4.3.2 Gender of Respondents

In reviewing the distribution of the participants' gender, findings are as detailed in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Respondents Gender

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	100	48.5
	Female	106	51.5
	Total	206	100.0

Source: Researcher (2020)

The results shown above indicate that at least 52% of the study participants were female while only 48% of the study participants were male managers within the firms. This indicates that there is increased equality in the business ownership within Narok Town.

4.3.3 Education of Respondents

In analysing the respondents' education profile, results indicated that 46% of the respondents were graduates, 40% held diploma papers, 9% had O-level while 5% had postgraduate level education. This goes to show that business owners/managers have formal education which is critical to managing the business operations.

4.3.4 Category of Firm

The firms were divided into different categories depending on their main operations and results of the analysis are presented below.

Table 4.3 Category of Business Operations

		Frequency	Percent
	Registered Wholesale firms	55	26.7
	Registered Retail Firms	43	20.9
	Licensed Hotels	52	25.2
	Licensed Bar and restaurants	56	27.2
	Total	206	100.0

Source: Researcher (2020)

The research indicates that most of the businesses, 27%, operating within the town were bar/restaurants, 26% were wholesale firms and 25% were hotels while 20% of the participants were retail firms as shown above.

4.3.5 Firm Characteristics

The firm's age, manpower in terms of number of employees, annual volume of sales and the

business ownership were considered as the key dimensional characteristics of the SMEs operating within the town. The analysis of the indicators is as displayed in table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Firm Characteristics

Characteristics	Grouping	Frequency	Percentage
Age of the firm	0-1 year	58	28.1%
	1-3 years	123	59.7%
	Over 3 years	25	12.2%
Number of employees	Less than 5	144	70%
	6-10 employees	43	20.8%
	Over 11 employees	19	9.2%
Annual volume of sales	<100,000	35	16.9%
	100,001-250,000	102	49.5%
	Over 500, 000	69	33.6%
Business ownership	Family-owned	64	31.1%
	Group ownership	44	21.4%
	Sole proprietor	98	47.5%

Source: Researcher (2020)

The above results show that majority of the firms within the town 59.7% had been in operation for between 1-3 years. This shows that the town has very young businesses. 70% of the firms had less than 5 employees. The findings also show that most of the firm's 49.5% had average annual sales of between 100,001-250,000 shillings. The study also shows that 47.5% of the firms were sole proprietorships and 31.1% were family-owned firms.

4.4 Descriptive Analysis

The most common methods of tabulating responses of Likert scale questionnaires are descriptive statistics. The study utilized measures of central tendency such as means, standard

deviation and the variance statistics. This section shows the findings.

4.4.1 Innovative Strategies

The first variable of the study was the innovative strategies deployed within the SME firms in Narok Town. The findings are detailed in table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5 Innovative Strategies

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The firm has assimilated new technologies within the organization operations	206	3.92	1.15
The firm has been able to adopt collaborative networks with other strategic partners in the market	206	3.83	1.18
The firm has been able to continuously introduce new products within the market	206	3.83	.94
There is improved product modification within the organization	206	3.79	1.14
The firm has been able to enhance its supply chain through digitalizing of its inventory management	206	3.76	1.24
The firm has leveraged on social networks sites to increase engagement	206	3.64	1.31
Average		3.79	1.16

Source: Researcher (2020)

The study aimed at determining the innovative strategies utilization in small and medium enterprises. The study indicates agreement that firm has assimilated new technologies within the organization operations as shown by a mean of 3.92 and a deviation of 1.15. The results indicate agreement that the firm has been able to continuously introduce new products within the market as denoted by mean of 3.83 with a moderate deviation of .94. The study also reveals that the firm has leveraged on social networks sites to increase engagement as denoted by the mean value of 3.64 with a high deviation of 1.31. The overall findings show a mean average of 3.79 indicating agreement among participants that firms utilize innovative strategies with a high variation in responses as shown by standard deviation of 1.16.

4.4.2 Operational Strategies

The second variable was the operational strategies deployed within the SME firms in Narok Town. The results are indicated in the table below.

Table 4.6 Operational Strategies

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
There is improved efficiency in the product and service delivery within the firm (cost and waste reduction)	206	3.94	1.21
There is quicker decision making within the firm as results of operational efficiency	206	3.93	1.15
The firm has put in place measures to enhance customer experience within the organization	206	3.89	1.25
The firm has established its customer feedback systems to improve service delivery	206	3.83	.98
The firm has put in place practices and policies geared towards improving quality control	206	3.76	1.37
The management regularly delegates duty to subordinate personnel to enhance firm operations in terms of efficiency and flexibility	206	3.68	1.37
Average		3.84	1.22

Source: Researcher (2020)

The overall findings of the study indicate an overall mean score of 3.84 denoting agreement among respondents that operational strategies were adopted within SMEs with responses having a high dispersion as shown by a standard deviation statistic of 1.22. The results show that there is improved efficiency in the product and service delivery within the firm (cost and waste reduction as denoted by the mean of 3.94 with a deviation of 1.21). The findings indicate agreement that there is quicker decision making within the firm as results of operational efficiency as showed by the mean of 3.93 and high dispersion in response as shown by a deviation of 1.15. Concerning whether the firm has put in place practices and policies geared towards improving quality control there was agreement as noted by a mean of 3.76 and a standard deviation of 1.37. Regarding whether the management regularly delegates duty to subordinate personnel to enhance firm operations in terms of efficiency and flexibility there was agreement as shown by a mean of 3.68 and a deviation of 1.37.

4.4.3 Marketing Strategies

The study's third variable was the marketing strategies deployed within the SME firms in

Narok Town. Findings are indicated in table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Marketing Strategies

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The firm regularly runs advertisements in the digital media to enhance brand recognition and sales	206	3.90	.98
The firm has enhanced its product and/or service offering by being strategically located within the market	206	3.76	1.13
The firm has enhanced its distribution channels in order to serve a larger market share	206	3.74	1.29
The firm leverages on its pricing strategies to increase demand for products and services	206	3.72	1.29
The firm conducts routine promotional campaigns to enhance the firm's brand image	206	3.68	1.25
The firm regularly runs advertisements within local dailies to enhance brand recognition and sales	206	3.63	1.28
The firm offers after-sale services as part of enhancing its customer service experience	206	3.54	1.29
The firm regularly enhances the product offering within the market	206	3.52	1.18
Average	206	3.69	1.21

Source: Researcher (2020)

An aggregate mean of 3.69 and variation statistic of 1.48 denote agreement that marketing strategies have been utilized within the SME. The study notes agreement that the firm regularly runs advertisements in the digital media to enhance brand recognition and sales as denoted by a mean of 3.91 and moderate deviation of .98. With regard to whether the firm has enhanced its product and/or service offering by being strategically located within the market there was agreement among participants as indicated by the mean value of 3.76 and a high variation of 1.13. The results also show agreement that firm offers after-sale services as part of enhancing its customer service experience as denoted by mean of 3.54 with high variation in responses as indicated by a standard deviation of 1.29. Concerning whether the firm regularly enhances the

product offering within the market there was agreement among respondents as indicated by mean of 3.52 and a deviation of 1.18.

4.4.4 Descriptive Statistics for Growth of SMEs

The study's dependent variable was the growth levels exhibited by SME firms in Narok Town. The findings are displayed in table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Growth of SMEs

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
There has been an increase in the number of employees within the firm	206	3.99	1.08
The firm has witnessed an increase in its customer size	206	3.98	1.14
There has been an improvement in the level of sales within the firm	206	3.83	1.18
The firm has been able to maintain the continuity in business operations	206	3.77	1.27
The firm has been able to diversify its product and service offering	206	3.64	1.35
Average	206	3.81	1.20

Source: Researcher (2020)

The results of the study show agreement among participants that firms have been experiencing positive growth as shown by mean of 3.84 and standard deviation of 1.20. The findings indicate agreement that there has been an increase in the number of employees within the firm as indicated by mean of 3.99 and high responses variation as noted by 1.08. The responses show agreement that the firm has witnessed an increase in its customer size as denoted by mean of 3.98 and a deviation of 1.14. Concerning whether the firm has been able to maintain the continuity in business operations there was agreement as shown by mean of 3.77 and a deviation of 1.27. The study also indicates agreement that the firm has been able to diversify its product and service offering as denoted by the mean 3.64 and high variation in responses as indicated by standard deviation of 1.35.

4.5 Correlation Analysis

In determining how the variables are associated, the Pearson correlation was adopted, and its

findings are shown on Table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9 Correlation Results

		Innovative Strategies	Operational Strategies	Marketing Strategies	Growth of SME
Innovative Strategies	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	206			
Operational Strategies	Pearson Correlation	.273**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	206	206		
Marketing Strategies	Pearson Correlation	.345**	.546**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	206	206	206	
Growth of SME	Pearson Correlation	.290**	.254**	.485**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	206	206	206	206

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

Findings indicated the existence of a weak positive and significant association between innovative strategies and growth among SMEs in Narok Town $P=.290$, $Sig = .000 < .05$. Further, the association between operational strategies and the growth of SMEs is weak positive and significant $P=.254$, $Sig = .000 < .05$. Marketing strategies were found to have a moderate positive and significant association with growth among SMEs $P=.485$, $Sig = .000 < .05$.

4.6 Regression Analysis

Ordinary least square regression was used in determination of the strength of the relationship between survival strategies and the growth of SMEs in Narok Town.

4.6.1 Effect of Innovative Strategies on Growth of SMEs

Determining the effect of innovative strategies on the SME growth was objective one.

Table 4.10 Influence of Innovative Strategies of Growth of SMEs in Narok Town

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.290 ^a	.084	.080	3.51507

a. Predictors: (Constant), Innovative Strategies

The study indicates that 8.4% variations in the growth of SMEs in Narok town are determined by the innovative strategies as noted by the $R^2 = .084$.

Table 4.11 ANOVA for the influence Innovative Strategies of Growth of SMEs in Narok Town

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	232.109	1	232.109	18.785	.000 ^b
	Residual	2520.571	204	12.356		
	Total	2752.680	205			

a. Dependent Variable: Growth of SMEs

b. Predictors: (Constant), Innovative Strategies

The findings of the ANOVA analysis show that innovative strategies have a strong and significant relationship with growth of Narok-based SMEs as indicated by F-statistic = 18.785, Sig = .000 < .05.

Table 4.12 Regression Coefficient for Innovative Strategies and Growth of SME

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	10.675	1.154		9.249	.000
	Innovative Strategies	.215	.050	.290	4.334	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Growth of SME

$$Y = 10.675 + .215x_1$$

The regression constant 10.675 is statistically significant as denoted by sig = .000 < .05. The beta coefficient indicates that changing a single unit in innovative strategies results in a .215 (Sig = .000 < .05) change in growth of SME.

4.6.2 Effect of Operational Strategies on Growth of SME in Narok Town

Determining the effect of operational strategies on growth of SMEs was objective two and the findings are as displayed in table 4.13.

Table 4.13 Regression between Operational Strategies and Growth of SME

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.254 ^a	.064	.060	3.55335

a. Predictors: (Constant), Operational Strategies

The findings above indicate a coefficient of determination of .064 indicating that the relationship between operational strategies and SME growth is positive and responsible for 6.4% variations on SME growth.

Table 4.14 ANOVA for Operational Strategies and Growth of SME

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	176.914	1	176.914	14.012	.000 ^b
	Residual	2575.766	204	12.626		
	Total	2752.680	205			

a. Dependent Variable: Growth of SME

b. Predictors: (Constant), Operational Strategies

The analysis of the statistical significance of the regression model shows an F-value of 14.012 and Sig = .000<.05 which shows that operational strategies are positively and significantly related to SME growth.

Table 4.15 Regression Coefficient for Operational Strategies and Growth of SME

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	11.467	1.122		10.220	.000
	Operational Strategies	.178	.048	.254	3.743	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Growth of SME

$$Y = 11.467 + .178x_2$$

The results above indicate a constant of 11.467 which is statistically significant as indicated by sig = .000<.05. The findings indicate that operational strategies significantly influence the growth of SME. Changing one unit in operational strategies leads to a .178 change in SME growth levels (*Sig = .000<.05*).

4.6.3 Effect of Marketing Strategies on Growth of SME in Narok town

Objective three was establishing the effect of marketing strategies on SME growth. Findings are as seen in table 4.16.

Table 4.16 Regression between Marketing Strategies and Growth of SME

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.485 ^a	.235	.232	3.21187

a. Predictors: (Constant), Marketing Strategies

The regression analysis shows that 23.5% ($R^2=.235$) variations in the growth of SME is determined by the marketing strategies.

Table 4.17 ANOVA for Marketing Strategies and Growth of SME

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	648.195	1	648.195	62.833	.000 ^b
	Residual	2104.485	204	10.316		
	Total	2752.680	205			

a. Dependent Variable: Growth of SME

b. Predictors: (Constant), Marketing Strategies

The analysis of the statistical significance of the regression analysis indicate that marketing strategies positively and significantly influence growth of SME according to the F-value = 62.833, Sig = .000<.05.

Table 4.18 Regression Coefficient for Marketing Strategies and Growth of SME

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.150	1.085		6.591	.000
	Marketing Strategies	.285	.036	.485	7.927	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Growth of SME

$$Y = 7.150 + .285x_3$$

The results above indicate a constant of 7.150 which is statistically significant as indicated by sig = .000<.05. Changing one unit in marketing strategies leads to a .285 change in SME growth of SME (Sig = .000<.05).

4.7 Overall Regression Summary

The study's main aim was determining the influence of survival strategies on SME growth in Narok town.

Table 4.19 Regression Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.503 ^a	.253	.242	3.18968

a. Predictors: (Constant), Marketing Strategies, Innovative Strategies, Operational Strategies

After applying regression analysis, findings showed that survival strategies determine 25.3% variations in the growth of SME in Narok Town.

Table 4.20 ANOVA Summary

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	697.522	3	232.507	22.853	.000 ^b
	Residual	2055.158	202	10.174		
	Total	2752.680	205			

a. Dependent Variable: Growth of SME

b. Predictors: (Constant), Marketing Strategies, Innovative Strategies, Operational Strategies

In analysing the statistical significance of the regression model, the study notes that the ANOVA analysis indicates an f-statistic = 22.853 > F- (critical f; 1.162), and a Sig = .000 < .05. This shows that survival strategies are significantly related to SME growth.

Table 4.21 Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.825	1.351		4.313	.000
	Innovative Strategies	.106	.048	.143	2.190	.030
	Operational Strategies	-.023	.051	-.033	-.458	.647
	Marketing Strategies	.267	.044	.454	6.072	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Growth of SME

The resultant regression model is;

$$Y = 5.825 + .106_{\text{InnovativeStrategies}} + -.023_{\text{OperationalStrategies}} + .267_{\text{Marketing-Strategies}} + 1.351$$

The above findings present the output of the overall regression model. The results show that innovative strategies are expected to result in 0.106 change in growth of SME ($\beta_1 = .106$, Sig = .030 < .05). Findings of the study indicate that operational strategies have an insignificant negative effect and a change in operational strategies result in a -.023 change in growth of SMEs ($\beta_2 = -.0236$, Sig = .647 > .05). This indicates that in terms of survival strategies being utilized by SMEs to spur growth operational strategies do not have a significant influence on growth. The results show that marketing strategies have a statistically significant influence on

the growth of SMEs ($\beta_3 = .267$, Sig = $.000 < .05$).

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The findings of the study are discussed in this chapter. The chapter focused on the summary, discussion of findings, conclusions as well as the recommendations. The suggestions for further study are also detailed in this study.

5.2 Summary

This study aimed to determine the association between survival strategies and the growth of SMEs in Narok Town. The research focused on a review of innovative strategies, operation strategies, marketing strategies and growth of SMEs. The contingency theory and the organizations theory formed the basis of this study. The contingency theory holds that a single form of management cannot be applied in all organizations and lead to effective execution of organizational processes since all firms face different situations. The organizational theory indicates that business growth is an outcome of the various actions taken within a firm. A positivism research philosophy was incorporated and a descriptive research design was adopted. The study relied on a quantitative approach in the examination of the study variables with structured questionnaires being utilized in collecting research data from SMEs in Narok Town. The study further utilized quantitative statistical approaches in conducting descriptive and inferential analysis.

More than 70% of the firms in the Town were in operation for more than 1 year. Further, 70% of the firms reported that they had less than 5 employees, mirroring the classification of most SMEs operating in developing economies. More than 50% of the firms had annual sales of over 100, 000 shillings with the majority of the firms, 48% being sole proprietorship and 31% being family-owned. Hence, managers are expected to examine the various situations and deploy the right marketing, operational and innovative practices to ensure firm performance. This was in line with the study which established that different organizations in Narok town have different strategies which work best for them.

The findings of the study further showed there is a positive and significant correlation between operational strategies, innovative strategies, marketing strategies and the growth of SMEs. The regressions results expanded the available evidence by establishing that 23.5% of the changes in the growth of SMEs in Narok Town are determined by the business survival strategies. The regression coefficients indicated that innovative and marketing strategies significantly influence growth of SMEs. The study also revealed that operational strategies did not have a

significant influence on the growth of SMEs.

5.3 Discussion of Results

The regression analysis indicated that survival strategies determine 25.3% variations in the growth of SME in Narok Town.

5.3.1 Effect of Innovative Strategies on Growth of SME

The study results show that continuously introducing new products in the market, assimilating new technologies within the firm, utilization of social media networks, modifying product offering, enhancing supply chain through utilizing digital technologies and utilizing collaborations with stakeholders is key to SMEs. These findings indicate that SME firms will generally experience better survival rates if the management leverages on the available digital tools to increase efficiency and market outreach within the firm. With increasing use of social networks, the SMEs can rely on the networks to promote their business and enhance customer engagement.

The findings of this research are in line with previous empirical studies. This is as postulated by Al-Ansari, Pervan, and Xu (2013) who noted that adoption of innovation within SMEs has been undertaken through service innovation, key product and process innovations and this has been key to performance of the firms. Subhan, Mahmood, and Sattar (2014) noted that improving process innovation has been key to driving SME growth. Kazinguvu (2017) found out that strategic innovations have been introduced within SMEs to drive the firm performance. Martin and Namusonge (2014) also posited that technological innovation, product innovation and process innovation positively contribute to growth of SMEs. Njogu (2014) study also indicated that innovative capacity and improving production influenced performance of SMEs. Contrary to above results Muriithi (2017) found out that most SMEs have failed to leverage on the innovative space due to lack of awareness, poor infrastructural development and management incompetencies.

5.3.2 Effect of Operational Strategies on Growth of SME

The findings of the study showed that operational strategies do not have a significant influence on the growth of SMEs in Narok Town. This implied that in the sample chosen for the study operational strategies was not integral to their survival strategies and overall did not impact their growth. This could further point to the selected effect of the variable being too low to statistically influence the dependent variable (growth of SMEs) within the selected sample.

Findings show that improving customer feedback systems, quicker decision making and enhancing customer experience can be vital to service delivery and operational efficiency. The

study also notes that delegation of duty to subordinate employees, putting in place policies and practices for quality control and waste reduction is critical to SMEs. Findings of the study indicate that operational strategies will lead to a -.023 change in growth of SME ($\beta_2 = -.023$, Sig = .647 > .05). The results showed that the effect of the operational strategies was too low to statistically explain changes in the growth of SMEs in Narok town.

These findings are not in line with previous literature by Mkala, Wanjau, and Kyalo (2018) who found out that operations management are critical to improving competitiveness and performance of SMEs. Acquah and Agyapong (2015) similarly, posited that managerial competencies, quality control and cost strategies are fundamental to performance among SMEs. Gure and Karugu (2018) also indicated that cost-effectiveness, operational efficiency and quality service provision are tied to strategic management practices within SMEs. These results are also inconsistent with Mutua (2017) who noted that operational factors have been key to the expansion of SMEs in Kenya.

5.3.3 Effect of Marketing Strategies on Growth of SME

The study results show that fostering product offering, enhancing strategic positioning in the market, routine promotional campaigns and improving the pricing strategies are key to driving sales and brand image within firms. The research also notes that offering after-sale services, enhancing distribution channels, improving advertisements will help to drive brand recognition and sales volume in SMEs. This shows that SMEs can be able to support better business growth through reliance on their marketing effectiveness. This can be achieved through supporting better product offering, advertising to their niche marketing and offering promotional services.

This is as reported by Taiminen and Karjaluoto (2015) who found out that adoption of digital marketing tools has improved the communication and marketing effectiveness in SMEs. Gbolagade and Oyewale (2013) noted that a combination of product, place, price, promotion, packaging and after-sale services are critical to improving performance of SMEs. Ebitu (2016) found out that marketing strategies significantly predict SME performance. These results are echoed by Omari and Daniel (2015) who found out that marketing strategies are critical to driving competitive edge and growth of SMEs. Ndegwa, Ngugi, and Muturi (2017) similarly concluded that promotions, product and distribution strategies (components of entrepreneurial marketing). However, to the contrary Mogeni and Omwenga (2016) found out that poor market dynamics and utilization of marketing tools has been some of the key challenges to the growth of SMEs in Nakuru Town.

5.4 Conclusions

The findings of the regression analysis indicate that survival strategies account for 25.3% variations in SME growth in Narok Town. Individually all the predictor variables; innovative strategies, operational strategies and marketing strategies positively and significantly affect SME growth in Narok Town. Conclusions were that business survival strategies positively impact growth of SMEs in Narok town. Innovation strategies, operational strategies and marketing strategies positively enhance growth of SMEs. The study concludes that introduction of technologies, utilizing social media, collaborations and product development have driven growth within SMEs. The research further concludes that utilizing better customer feedback, delegation of duties and improving efficiency have contributed to growth of SMEs. The study concludes that pricing levels, promotional practices, after-sale services and better product offering are vital to sustain SME growth.

5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 Recommendations for Practice

The main purpose of this study was to determine how business survival strategies affect growth among SMEs Narok Town. The study has noted that strategies are critical to growth of SMEs; thus, this study recommends that SME owners need to effectively and efficiently apply strategy planning in order for them to reduce incurred costs, improve processes, and to effectively deal with technological and environmental changes. This will be critical to improving firm growth. The study further recommends that the SMEs owners should recruit competent managers who can help to guide operational strategies execution within the firm to support better growth. The study recommends that the firms should develop clear policies to guide their adoption of various technologies and ecommerce platforms that can help in enhancing the efficiency of the firms in service offering and increasing business capacity.

The study results showed that most of the business have not been able to derive the benefits of online marketing, thus this study recommends that the SMEs should review and consult with firms in other urban areas on how best to deploy online networking tools and assimilate them in the internal operations in order to drive better turnover and performance. The study further recommends that the SMEs should re-evaluate their marketing tools deployed within the firm which will help in improving effectiveness of marketing tools. This can be undertaken through better market segmentation and product provision in the SME sector.

5.5.2 Recommendations for Policy

The study recommends that the County Government formulate regulations that can support the

survival and growth of SMEs within Narok Town. This will benefit most or all of the SMEs in the county by ensuring these SMEs are growing constantly. The study further recommends that the county government be integral in the development of universal survival strategies that both formal and informal SMEs can adopt in enhancing growth of the business. Further, the results of this study can be integral in sharpening the development of universal survival strategies that both formal and informal SMEs can adopt in enhancing growth of the business. To the body of knowledge, the findings will be significant in underpinning future research on survival strategies within the SME sector which has not been extensively researched. Academicians, researchers and students will use the findings of this study to increase knowledge on the effect of survival strategies on growth and development of SMEs.

5.6 Limitations of the study

The study was limited to an examination of SMEs operating within Narok Town hence the study results may be limited in the generalizability of the findings of the research to a larger population of SMEs. Further the study only conceptualized non-financial measures hence the results did not incorporate the financial performance/growth of the SMEs.

5.7 Suggestions for Further Research

The research was only limited to Narok Town. This research recommends that this study should be replicated in another town to examine if there are variations in the growth of SMEs across towns in Kenya. This research suggests further studies can analyze how the business environment influences the growth of SME within the County. Further, studies can be conducted on the effect of entrepreneurial skills on the performance of SME in Narok Town. This will expand knowledge on how the management/owner's skills can foster business performance. Further, with the current volatile environment, research can be undertaken to examine how government support programs impact the growth of SMEs. The findings indicated that operational strategies do not have a significant influence on the growth of SMEs in Narok Town. The research recommends that further research work can be undertaken considering a different sample and examine if the effect of operational strategies varies with a different sample selection.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Ethics Review Approval



25th February 2020

Mrs Wangui, Maureen
Maureen.Wangui@strathmore.edu

Dear Mrs Wangui,

RE: An Examination of the Influence of Survival Strategies On Growth of Small and Medium Enterprises in Narok Town, Narok County

This is to inform you that SU-IERC has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is SU-IERC0648/20. The approval period is 25th February, 2020 to 24th February, 2021.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- i. Only approved documents including (informal consents, study instruments, MTA) will be used
- ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by SU-IERC
- iii. Death and life threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to SU-IERC within 72 hours of notification.
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to SU-IERC within 72 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to SU-IERC.

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <http://nscsti.ac.ke> and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,


for Dr. Virginia Gichuru,
Secretary, SU-IERC

Cc: Prof Fred Wace,
Chairperson, SU-IERC



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Email info@strathmore.edu www.strathmore.edu

Appendix II: Questionnaire

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1) Age Bracket

18- 25 years []

26 – 35 years []

36 – 45 years []

46 and above []

2) Gender

Male []

Female []

3) Education Level

O- Level []

Diploma []

Graduate []

Post graduate []

Any other training.....

4) In what subsector does your firm operate within?

Wholesaler firms []

Retail firms []

Hotels []

Bars and Restaurants []

PART B: FIRM PROFILE

5) What is the age of your firm in years?

6) How many employees do you have within the firm?

At business start-up:

Currently:

7) What was the annual volume of sales of the firm?

At business start-up:

Currently:

8) What is the nature of the business ownership?

.....

PART C: Survival strategies of small and medium enterprises in Narok Town, Narok County

Please tick the level of agreement of the following statements.

6. The following statements depict some of the innovation strategies firms use. Please indicate in the table with a tick (√) your level of agreement based on the below scale:

5= strongly Agree 4= Agree 3= Somewhat Agree 2= Disagree 1= Strongly Disagree

N	Innovation Strategies	1	2	3	4	5
0						
1.	The firm has been able to continuously introduce new products within the market					
2.	The firm has assimilated new technologies within the organization operations					
3.	The firm has leveraged on social networks sites to increase engagement					
4.	There is improved product modifications within the organization					
5.	The firm has been able to enhance its supply chain through digitalizing of its inventory management					
6.	The firm has been able to adopt collaborative networks with other strategic partners in the market					
7.	Any other innovative strategy adopted? (please specify)					

8. The following statements depict some of the operational strategies' firms use. Please indicate in the table with a tick (√) your level of agreement based on the below scale:

5= strongly Agree 4= Agree 3= Somewhat Agree 2= Disagree 1= Strongly Disagree

No	Operational Strategies	1	2	3	4	5
9.	The firm has established its customer feedback systems to improve service delivery					
10.	There is quicker decision making within the firm as results of operational efficiency					
11.	The management regularly delegates duty to subordinate personnel to enhance firm operations in terms of efficiency and flexibility					
12.	The firm has put in place measures to enhance customer experience within the organization					
13.	The firm has put in place practices and policies geared towards improving quality control					
14.	There is improved efficiency in the product and service delivery within the firm (cost and waste reduction)					
15.	Any other (please specify)					

16. The following statements depict some of the marketing strategies firms use. Please indicate in the table with a tick (✓) your level of agreement based on the below scale:

5= strongly Agree 4= Agree 3= Somewhat Agree 2= Disagree 1= Strongly Disagree

No	Marketing Strategies	1	2	3	4	5
17.	The firm regularly enhances the product offering within the market					
18.	The firm conducts routine promotional campaigns to enhance the firm's brand image					
19.	The firm leverages on its pricing strategies to increase demand for products and services					
20.	The firm has enhanced its product and/or service offering by being strategically located within the market					
21.	The firm offers after-sale services as part of enhancing its customer service experience					

22.	The firm has enhanced its distribution channels in order to serve a larger market share					
23.	The firm regularly runs advertisements within local dailies enhance brand recognition and sales.					
24.	The firm regularly runs advertisements in the digital media to enhance brand recognition and sales					
25.	Any other (please specify					

26. The following statements depict how the level of growth has been evidenced in your firm. Please indicate in the table with a tick (✓) your level of agreement based on the below scale:

5= strongly Agree 4= Agree 3= Somewhat Agree 2= Disagree 1= Strongly Disagree

No	Growth of SMEs	1	2	3	4	5
27.	There has been an increase in the number of employees within the firm					
28.	The firm has witnessed an increase in its customer size					
29.	There has been an improvement in the level of sales within the firm					
30.	The firm has been able to maintain the continuity in business operations					
31.	The firm has been able to diversify its product and service offering					
32.	Any other (please specify)					

33. What other suggestions would you recommend to other business to support their

survival and growth?

.....
.....

Thank You

Appendix III: NACOSTI Research Permit

 **REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

 **NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

Ref No: **623121** Date of Issue: **19/March/2020**

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Ms. Maureen Wanjiru of Strathmore University, has been licensed to conduct research in Kajiado on the topic: INFLUENCE OF BUSINESS SURVIVAL STRATEGIES ON GROWTH OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN NAROK TOWN, NAROK COUNTY for the period ending : 19/March/2021.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/20/4183**

623121
Applicant Identification Number


Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code



NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

Appendix IV: List of Firms

1. Destiny hotel
2. Palmer's Gen shop

3. Syfy entertainment
4. Downtown movie shop
5. Kanini wholesalers
6. Paulo electronics
7. Kamoja bar
8. Arena bar and restaurant
9. Katajiti shop
10. Katajiti hotel
11. Shepherds hotel
12. Mummys fast foods
13. Jumbo studio electronics
14. Anita cosmetics
15. Nikita cosmetics
16. Sunrise beauty shop
17. Mwangi cutex salon
18. Midways bar and restaurant
19. Supreme bar and grill
20. Nissi Gen shop
21. Al rahma Gen shop
22. Joy beauty salon
23. Pegma Gen shop
24. Digital salon
25. Junior shop and cereals
26. Mama joy shop
27. Shivam wholesalers
28. Lynne's cosmetics
29. Gracious maasai fashions
30. Cozmas dairy
31. Ieon's cereals
32. Sireta chemist
33. Nomads retail shop
34. Sure bet hotel
35. Lenny cafe
36. Tabesam enterprises
37. Tausi Gen shop
38. Vehnon furniture's
39. Chrisjad enterprises
40. Mara shop
41. Benkam general hardware
42. Termont
43. Maralink
44. Park villa
45. Kipenzi smart designer
46. Sakim Gen shop
47. Olosho uniforms
48. Smart house designers
49. Esupat bookshop
50. Olerai Gen traders
51. Osram traders
52. Maish boutique

53. Silver electronics
54. Maendeleo collection
55. Sidai agrovet
56. Soila's cosmetics
57. narok straight bookshop
58. Quinnie bakeries
59. Trafford entertainment
60. Imaan collections
61. Jaslim chemistry
62. Emparnat collections
63. IQ printers
64. Horizon agrovet
65. Amedo electronics
66. Options communication
67. Glado beauty shop
68. Mama shantel mini shop
69. Lizi mitumba shop
70. Favour beauty salon
71. Blessings shop
72. okoa market
73. Lucky studio electronics
74. Glassmatt electronics
75. Genesis barbershop
76. Maasai kinyozi
77. Dilpa wholesalers
78. Topline wholesalers
79. Ebenezar shop
80. Tropical boutique
81. Bomax hardware
82. Mwangaza studio
83. Rafiki hotel
84. Huruma dishes
85. Uhuru Gen shop
86. Faith grain stores
87. Tumaini stores
88. Olosikoe Clinic
89. The grace
90. Namayama
91. Shivam
92. Jamaa fashions
93. Manela stage
94. Exodus shop
95. Bepo shop
96. Malex textiles
97. Olabaani
98. Sarafina
99. Mubarak electronics
100. Jamia shop
101. Shukran kafe
102. Almis uniforms

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 103. Bhirav enterprises | 122. Farmgo enterprises |
| 104. Dabluz collections | 123. Buffalo fashions |
| 105. Neema wholesalers | 124. Jirani fashions |
| 106. Namelok | 125. Royal shop |
| 107. Imani hotel | 126. Al maarif shopv |
| 108. Olalang | 127. Dubai space |
| 109. Joska | 128. Pinkie salon |
| 110. tumaini enter | 129. Choices ventures |
| 111. Ambassador tailors | 130. Oloitip enterprises |
| 112. Hinya plastic stores | 131. Supreme collections |
| 113. Mash stores | 132. Nosim agrovet. |
| 114. Mali ndogo shop | 133. Jostech electronics |
| 115. Salahiya center shop | 134. Faban technology |
| 116. Omom designer | 135. Madina Gen shop |
| 117. Bin Ben | 136. Olchekut agrovet |
| 118. Enkishon boutique | 137. Tours high class hotel |
| 119. Glam collection | 138. Momoms men's wear |
| 120. Midways shop | 139. Veni bookshop |
| 121. Matpharm chemist | |
| 140. Ridgeways Veterinary
clinic | 145. Mummy's fast food |
| 141. Mpaka Vet services | 146. Midrock Café |
| 142. Konin Hotel | 147. Eropito Coffee Lounge |
| 143. Emongi suppliers | 148. Rafiki Hotel |
| 144. Shifaz agrovet | 149. Sabara Coffee House |
| | 150. Gifted hands enterprises |

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 151. Harmony liquor stores | 175. Mulot Narok cabs |
| 152. Club impact | 176. Symo autoglass |
| 153. Narok house of leather | 177. Maish Boutique |
| 154. Abdi shop | 178. Fridah bakery |
| 155. Kewa traders | 179. Razor apparels |
| 156. Kemkai Plaza hotel | 180. Hayson boutique |
| 157. Stage 47 collections | 181. Nenkai medical stores |
| 158. Ensiker gardens | 182. Mara bar and restaurant |
| 159. Emunyan traders | 183. Nangok shop |
| 160. Club Crystal | 184. Safana agrovet |
| 161. Gichuhi collections | 185. Kimelok veterinary shop |
| 162. Lebo chemist | 186. Gikomba elegant furniture |
| 163. Lemzan hotel | 187. Oloiboi distributors |
| 164. Kingstone collections | 188. Klad house |
| 165. Ree hardware | 189. Apex movies |
| 166. Tropical fashions | 190. Mirth fast foods |
| 167. Narok Bonus hardware | 191. Odebash autospars |
| 168. Empiris restarant | 192. Odebash carwash |
| 169. Sotikhotel | 193. Sams furniture |
| 170. Airtel money Sikika shop | 194. Supreme lounge |
| 171. Masters 2 hardware and
electricals | 195. Narok autospars |
| 172. Wa Ngingo Hardware | 196. Narok basabara autospars |
| 173. Sidai fashions | 197. Ole lengai shop |
| 174. Spears hotel | 198. Senti mara car wash |
| | 199. Almasi gen shop |

- | | | | |
|------|--------------------|------|---------------------|
| 200. | Argro Veterinaries | 204. | Emitik dispensary |
| 201. | Timaak agro vet | 205. | Enaribo wholesalers |
| 202. | Helen salon | 206. | Mara summit hotel |
| 203. | Ainaimoi suppliers | | |