

**INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIC ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIORS ON
COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OF ANIMAL FEEDS INDUSTRY IN NAKURU
CITY, KENYA**

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**A Project Submitted to the Institute of Postgraduate Studies of Kabarak University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of Master of Business
Administration (Strategic Management) Degree**

KABARAK UNIVERSITY

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DECLARATION

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RECOMMENDATION

To the Institute of Postgraduate Studies;

The project entitled "**Influence of Strategic Organizational Behaviors on Competitive Advantage of Animal Feeds Industry in Nakuru City, Kenya,**" written by **Chepkemoi Judith**, is presented to the School of Business and Economics at Kabarak University. We have reviewed the research project and recommend its acceptance in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Master of Business Administration.

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my family, their unwavering support and encouragement throughout my academic journey, to my parents who instilled in me the values of hard work and perseverance, and to my siblings who always believed in my potential.

Lastly, I dedicate this research to the animal feed industry stakeholders in Nakuru city, Kenya, who provided invaluable insights and data, making this research possible. Your contributions have not only enriched this work but also added to the knowledge base that can drive future growth and innovation in the industry. Thank you all for your inspiration and support.

ABSTRACT

The most successful business empires globally are those that continuously seek strategies to enhance competitive advantage and drive performance. However, animal feed manufacturers in Nakuru City face significant challenges in establishing and maintaining a competitive advantage due to increasing competition and evolving market demands. This study established the influence of strategic organizational behaviors on the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City, Kenya. Three key objectives guided this research: to assess how strategic individual behavior, strategic group behavior, and strategic organizational technology behavior influence the competitive advantage of the animal feed industry in Nakuru City. Notable organizational behavior theories that guided this study's independent variables were Frederick Taylor's scientific management and McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, while the dependent variable, competitive advantage, was informed by a Resource-Based View (RBV). Guided by a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, the research first collected quantitative data through structured questionnaires from a sample of 362 employees selected using stratified, proportionate random sampling, followed by qualitative data from 20 purposively selected key informants via semi-structured interviews. The target population comprised 3,785 employees from 38 registered animal feed manufacturing companies. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation, and multiple regression, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically using NVivo 12. The findings revealed that strategic individual behavior ($M=3.86$, $\beta_1=0.251$, $p=0.000$), strategic group behavior ($M=3.78$, $\beta_2=0.587$, $p=0.000$), and strategic organizational technology behavior ($M=3.83$, $\beta_3=0.507$, $p=0.000$) all had statistically significant positive influences on competitive advantage. The overall model accounted for 68.2% of the variance in competitive advantage ($R^2=0.682$, $F=232.994$, $p=0.000$). Qualitative findings corroborated the quantitative results by explaining how individual capabilities, collaborative group dynamics, and effective technology use collectively enhance organizational competitiveness. The study concludes that strategic organizational behaviors play a critical role in strengthening competitive advantage within the animal feeds industry. It recommends fostering employee empowerment, enhancing team-based practices, and investing in advanced technological systems to sustain organizational competitiveness. The findings revealed that strategic individual behavior ($M=3.86$, $\beta_1=0.251$, $p=0.000$), strategic group behavior ($M=3.78$, $\beta_2=0.587$, $p=0.000$), and strategic organizational technology behavior ($M=3.83$, $\beta_3=0.507$, $p=0.000$) all had statistically significant positive influences on competitive advantage. The combined model explained 68.2% of the variance in competitive advantage ($R^2=0.682$, $F=232.994$, $p=0.000$). Qualitative findings from 19 key informants provided more profound insights into how these behaviors manifest in practice, revealing themes such as diverse leadership approaches, team cohesion, collaborative decision-making, technology adoption, and process automation that directly contributed to market positioning and operational excellence. The study concluded that strategic organizational behaviors are critical determinants of competitive advantage in animal feed manufacturing firms, followed by technology and individual behaviors. The study recommends that animal feed manufacturers prioritize developing practical leadership approaches, fostering collaborative team dynamics, and investing in strategic technology adoption to enhance their competitive positioning. Policymakers should create supportive frameworks for organizational behavior.

Keywords: *Strategic, Organizational Behaviors, Competitive Advantage, Animal Feeds Industry*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AKEFEMA	Association of Kenya Feed Manufacturers
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IT	Information Technology
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation
NVIVO	Qualitative Data Analysis Software
OB	Organizational Behavior
RBV	Resource-Based View
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
VRIN	Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, Non-substitutable

CONCEPTUAL OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Animal Feeds Industry: Conceptually, the animal feeds industry encompasses the production, distribution, and sale of feed products designed to meet the nutritional needs of various animals (FAO, 2020). Operationally, in this study, it refers to the sector comprising registered animal feeds manufacturing companies operating in Nakuru City, Kenya.

Animal Feeds: Conceptually, animal feeds refer to a mixture of ingredients formulated to provide essential nutrients and energy required for the growth, maintenance, and productivity of various animals (National Research Council, 1994). Operationally, in this study, it refers to commercially manufactured feed products produced by companies in Nakuru City for livestock, poultry, and other animals.

Competitive Advantage: Conceptually, competitive advantage refers to a firm's ability to outperform its rivals, thereby yielding profits above the industry average (Porter, 1985). Operationally, in this study, these were measured through market share growth, cost-effectiveness, product quality, and customer satisfaction levels among animal feed manufacturers in Nakuru City.

Strategic Group Behavior: Conceptually, strategic group behavior refers to the collective actions, processes, and mental states within formal and informal groups in an organization that align with organizational strategic objectives (Forsyth, 2024). Operationally, in this study, it was measured through team cohesion, communication flow, collaborative decision-making, and knowledge-sharing practices in animal feed companies in Nakuru City.

Strategic Individual Behavior: Conceptually, strategic individual behavior refers to the patterns of actions and decisions made by individual employees that are deliberately aligned with and contribute to organizational strategic objectives (Campbell & Wiernik, 2021). Operationally, in this study, it was measured through leadership approaches, employee motivation, performance management systems, and skill development programs within animal feed companies in Nakuru City.

Strategic Organizational Behavior: Conceptually, it refers to the collective patterns of actions, decisions, and interactions within an organization that are deliberately designed to achieve strategic objectives and enhance organizational performance (Barrick et al., 2021). Operationally, this study encompasses individual-level factors such as leadership and employee motivation, group-level dynamics including team collaboration and communication, and organization-wide technology adoption initiatives that contribute to the competitive advantage of the animal feed industry in Nakuru City.

Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior: Conceptually, it refers to the deliberate adoption, implementation, and use of technological innovations and digital systems to enhance organizational capabilities and competitive positioning (Venkatesh et al., 2020). Operationally, in this study, it was measured through technology adoption strategies, digital integration across departments, process automation implementation, investment in employee technological competence, and maintenance of technological infrastructure in animal feed companies in Nakuru City.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Chapter One provides an overview of the study by presenting the background information, defining key concepts such as strategic organizational behavior and competitive advantage, and situating the research within the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City. It outlines the problem statement, research objectives, hypotheses, justification, significance, scope, and limitations, thereby establishing the foundation and direction of the entire study.

1.2 Background of the Study

These attributes may include access to natural resources, highly skilled labor, geographic location, advanced technologies, or superior business processes that competitors cannot easily duplicate (Barney, 2024). Competitive advantage ultimately results in exceptional value creation for customers and superior profits for the firm, creating sustainability in the marketplace through strategic positioning (Wang et al., 2024). Organizations achieve competitive advantage through differentiation, cost leadership, or focus strategies, enabling them to create unique value propositions that competitors cannot easily replicate (Rothaermel, 2024). The essence of competitive advantage lies in an organization's ability to perform activities differently or perform different activities than rivals, creating a sustainable position in the market that delivers superior returns (Peteraf & Barney, 2021).

Strategic organizational behaviors represent the collective patterns of actions, decisions, and interactions within an organization that are deliberately designed to achieve strategic objectives and enhance performance outcomes (Barrick et al., 2021). These behaviors encompass individual-level factors such as leadership styles, employee motivation, and

personal performance contributions; group-level dynamics including team cohesion, communication patterns, and collaborative decision-making; and organization-wide technology adoption and innovation initiatives that drive transformation and adaptation to changing market conditions (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2024). Strategic organizational behaviors are rooted in the cognitive and behavioral schools of thought in strategic management, which emphasize how organizational actors process information, make decisions, and adapt to environmental changes (Narayanan et al., 2024). When effectively aligned with organizational goals and market requirements, these behaviors become valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources that form the basis for sustainable competitive advantage according to the resource-based view of strategy (Hitt et al., 2024).

Globally, in the United States and European markets, strategic organizational behaviors have been extensively studied as determinants of competitive advantage in various manufacturing sectors, including the animal feeds industry (Akpinar, 2020). Research conducted in the United States by Gagnon (2025) across 142 manufacturing firms found that companies with strategically aligned employee behaviors achieved 27% higher profit margins and 23% greater market share growth compared to competitors with less strategic behavioral alignment. Similarly, a longitudinal study of 87 European animal feed manufacturers by Van der Heijden and Cramer (2024) found that firms with strong strategic leadership behaviors and structured team collaboration approaches achieved 32% higher production efficiency and 18% higher customer retention rates over five years.

According to Phan et al. (2024), Japanese animal feed manufacturers found that companies implementing strategic individual performance management systems outperformed competitors by 19% in production output and 24% in quality metrics.

Their research identified specific behavioral factors, including leadership transparency, employee autonomy, and continuous improvement mindsets, as critical differentiators for market leaders. In Australia, Reichelt and Nettle (2023) conducted an in-depth analysis of strategic technology adoption behaviors in 53 animal feed companies, concluding that organizations with proactive technology integration strategies gained significant cost advantages (averaging 14% lower production costs) and achieved 29% faster time-to-market for new products compared to reactive adopters.

Regionally, in the African context, strategic organizational behaviors have demonstrated significant influence on competitive advantage across various manufacturing sectors. Research in South Africa's animal feed industry has identified strategic use of technology, enhanced industry bargaining power, and well-formulated supply chain strategies as key enablers for competitive advantage (Gomera & Mafini, 2020). In Nigeria, organizations adopting comprehensive strategic management behaviors exhibit greater proactivity in responding to environmental changes, leading to enhanced competitive advantage and sustainable organizational performance in challenging market environments (Olanipekun et al., 2021). Egyptian research indicates a strong positive correlation between marketing management practices and customer value creation in food manufacturing organizations, highlighting the strategic importance of marketing mix elements in creating competitive positioning (Said et al., 2021). Studies across Botswana, Namibia, and Zambia emphasize how strategic organizational behaviors shape competitive dynamics and regional trade flows in agricultural processing industries, with significant implications for market integration (Bagopi et al., 2024).

Further research across the continent reveals additional patterns in how strategic organizational behaviors influence competitive advantage in different contexts. In Cameroon, behavioral attitudes of livestock farmers significantly influence technology

adoption decisions, particularly regarding innovative feed solutions that can create production advantages (Nembu et al., 2025). Research on Rwanda's dairy industry cluster identifies multiple determinants of competitive advantage beyond traditional factors, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive approach to strategic organizational behavior that considers trade openness and other country-specific factors (Mahirwe & Wei, 2024). Similarly, Ethiopian research reveals that effective strategic management processes strongly correlate with business performance outcomes, particularly in-service innovation and productivity (Mahdi, 2024).

Locally, in Kenya, research on strategic organizational behaviors and competitive advantage has gained momentum, providing valuable context for understanding the animal feeds industry. Strategic leadership has been found to have a constructive and significant influence on competitive advantage in animal feed manufacturing firms in Central and Upper Eastern Kenya (Kairira & Obuba, 2024). A study of animal feed manufacturing firms in Kiambu County revealed that most firms had adopted a focus strategy to a greater extent than cost leadership and differentiation strategies, constantly reviewing and adapting to market changes while gathering customer and competitor intelligence (Karumbi, 2024). Research on large manufacturing firms in Kenya found that employee behavior fully mediates the relationship between strategic planning and competitive advantage. At the same time, organizational structure partially moderates this relationship, highlighting the critical role of human factors in strategy implementation (Kiiyo, 2021). In Nakuru County specifically, a study found that leadership communication, strategic direction, organizational culture, and group dynamics management all had significant influence on strategic organizational change, with organizational culture showing the most substantial effect (Ruttoh, 2021).

Additional research in the Kenyan context provides further insights into organizational behaviors and competitive positioning. A study of animal feed manufacturing firms in Nairobi found a positive and significant relationship between procurement ethics and organizational performance, suggesting that ethical practices contribute to gaining and maintaining competitive advantage in the industry (Musyoka, 2024). Research examining the influence of organizational culture on implementation of strategic plans in non-governmental organizations in Nakuru County revealed that reward systems, behavioral norms, organizational values, and communication strategies all played significant roles in enhancing strategic plan implementation (Bateta & Wagoki, 2024).

A study investigating the perceived quality attributes influencing the choice of animal feeds in Nakuru District identified several key factors, including brand name, packaging, functionality, information, credibility, performance assurance, and intermediaries' commitment, as essential determinants of consumer choice (Ngambi, 2024). Research on manufacturing firms in Kenya revealed that organizational characteristics, including customer orientation, quality emphasis, innovation, and leadership effectiveness, are strong predictors of firm performance. However, the adoption of green environmental practices showed an inverse moderating effect in the short term (Wanjohi, 2024). A study of large private manufacturing firms in Nakuru, Kenya, found a strong positive correlation between human resource strategic orientation and firm performance, with a moderate positive effect of organizational structure on this relationship (Busienei, 2023). Comprehensive research in Nakuru on large manufacturing firms revealed that strategic planning significantly influences competitive advantage, both directly and indirectly through employee behavior, with organizational structure serving as a moderating factor (Maingi et al., 2021).

1.2.1 Strategic Organizational Behavior

Strategic organizational behavior represents the deliberate patterns of actions, decisions, and interactions within an organization designed to achieve strategic objectives and enhance performance outcomes (Barrick et al., 2021). This multifaceted concept encompasses individual-level factors such as leadership approaches, employee motivation, and personal performance contributions; group-level dynamics including team cohesion, communication patterns, and collaborative decision-making; and organization-wide technology adoption initiatives that drive transformation and adaptation to changing market conditions (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2024). The concept is rooted in the cognitive and behavioral schools of thought in strategic management, which emphasize how organizational actors process information, make decisions, and adapt to environmental changes through systematic behavioral patterns that become embedded in organizational culture (Narayanan et al., 2024).

Research by Gagnon (2025) across 142 manufacturing firms in the United States found that companies with strategically aligned employee behaviors achieved 27% higher profit margins and 23% greater market share growth compared to competitors with less strategic behavioral alignment. Similarly, Van der Heijden and Cramer (2024) conducted a longitudinal study of 87 European animal feed manufacturers, revealing that firms with strong strategic leadership behaviors and structured team collaboration approaches experienced 32% higher production efficiency and 18% better customer retention rates over five years. Phan et al. (2024) further demonstrated in their study of Japanese animal feed manufacturers that companies implementing strategic individual performance management systems outperformed competitors by 19% in production output and 24% in quality metrics, identifying specific behavioral factors, including leadership

transparency, employee autonomy, and continuous improvement mindsets, as critical differentiators for market leaders.

Strategic organizational behaviors manifest across multiple levels within the organizational structure. At the individual level, Judge et al. (2023) found a significant correlation between job satisfaction and job performance, with satisfied employees exhibiting higher productivity, better attendance, and greater willingness to engage in organizational citizenship behaviors that benefit the organization. At the group level, Mesmer-Magnus and DeChurch (2020) found, through a meta-analysis, that information sharing was positively related to team performance, cohesion, and satisfaction, with stronger effects for sharing unique information than for sharing already-known information. At the technological level, Reichelt and Nettle (2023) concluded from their analysis of 53 animal feed companies in Australia that organizations with proactive technology integration strategies gained significant cost advantages (averaging 14% lower production costs) and achieved 29% faster time-to-market for new products compared to reactive adopters. These findings collectively demonstrate how strategic organizational behaviors across multiple levels contribute to enhanced organizational performance and competitive positioning.

1.2.2 Competitive Advantage

Competitive advantage refers to the attributes and resources that enable an organization to outperform competitors within its industry or market (Porter, 2020). These attributes may include access to natural resources, highly skilled labor, geographic location, advanced technologies, or superior business processes that competitors cannot easily duplicate (Barney, 2024). Competitive advantage ultimately results in exceptional value creation for customers and superior profits for the firm, creating sustainability in the marketplace through strategic positioning that enables organizations to perform activities

differently or perform different activities than rivals (Peteraf & Barney, 2021). According to Porter's framework, organizations achieve competitive advantage through three generic strategies: differentiation, cost leadership, or focus, each requiring distinct organizational behaviors and resource configurations to implement effectively (Rothaermel, 2024).

In the African context, research on competitive advantage has demonstrated significant regional variations in how strategic organizational behaviors influence market performance. Gomera and Mafini (2020) identified strategic use of technology, enhanced industry bargaining power, and well-formulated supply chain strategies as key enablers for competitive advantage in South Africa's animal feed industry. Olanipekun et al. (2021) demonstrated that organizations in Nigeria adopting comprehensive strategic management behaviors exhibit greater proactivity in responding to environmental changes, leading to enhanced competitive advantage and sustainable organizational performance in challenging market environments. Said et al. (2021) found a strong positive correlation between marketing management practices and customer value creation in Egyptian food manufacturing organizations, highlighting the strategic importance of marketing mix elements in creating competitive positioning. These findings reflect the resource-based view (RBV) of competitive advantage, which emphasizes that sustainable competitive advantage derives from resources and capabilities that are valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991).

In Kenya specifically, research on competitive advantage has increasingly focused on the role of organizational behaviors in determining market performance. Kiiyo (2021) found that employee behavior fully mediates the relationship between strategic planning and competitive advantage in large manufacturing firms, while organizational structure

partially moderates this relationship, highlighting the critical role of human factors in strategy implementation. Karumbi (2024) found that animal feed manufacturing firms in Kiambu County had adopted a focus strategy to a greater extent than cost leadership or differentiation, with firms constantly reviewing and adapting to market changes while gathering customer and competitor intelligence. Wanjohi (2024) revealed that organizational characteristics, including customer orientation, quality emphasis, innovation, and leadership effectiveness, are strong predictors of firm performance in manufacturing firms in Kenya. However, adopting green environmental practices showed an inverse moderating effect in the short term. These studies collectively underscore the importance of aligning strategic organizational behaviors with competitive strategies to achieve sustainable market advantage in the Kenyan manufacturing context.

The animal feed industry is a vital segment of Kenya's manufacturing sector, contributing significantly to the agricultural value chain and national economic development by supporting livestock production, which accounts for approximately 12% of Kenya's GDP and 40% of agricultural GDP (Kairira & Obuba, 2024). The industry has experienced substantial growth in recent years, driven by increasing demand for animal products, growing awareness of the importance of quality animal nutrition, and government policies aimed at enhancing food security. However, the sector also faces significant challenges, including volatile raw material costs, inconsistent quality standards, regulatory constraints, and increasing competition from both local and international players, all of which influence the strategic behaviors firms adopt to maintain competitive positioning (Musyoka, 2024). These industry dynamics create a complex operating environment that requires adaptive organizational behaviors to navigate successfully.

Nakuru City, as Kenya's fourth-largest urban center, hosts a significant concentration of animal feed manufacturing companies, making it an essential hub for the industry. According to records from the Association of Kenya Feed Manufacturers and the Nakuru City Business Registry (2024), 38 registered animal feed manufacturing companies operate in Nakuru City, employing approximately 3,785 full-time staff across various departments and hierarchical levels. These companies range from large-scale operations like Unga Feeds Ltd and Bidco Feeds, which each employ over 1,000 staff, to medium- and small-scale producers such as Royal Animal Feeds and Nakuru Modern Feeds, creating a diverse, competitive landscape with varying organizational capabilities and strategic approaches (Ngambi, 2024). The geographical concentration of these manufacturers in Nakuru City creates unique competitive dynamics influenced by local supply chains, shared labor pools, and common regional market conditions.

The competitive landscape of the animal feed industry in Nakuru City presents distinct challenges that shape strategic organizational behavior. Wanjiku and Kiprop (2021) investigated 42 manufacturing companies in Nakuru County, including eight animal feed producers. They found that organizations with strategic technology adoption behaviors and formalized digital transformation roadmaps achieved better market responsiveness and improved cost management than those with ad hoc technology approaches. However, Ruttoh (2021) identified that many organizations in Nakuru County struggle to establish appropriate leadership communication, strategic direction, organizational culture, and management of group dynamics, all of which are necessary for effective organizational change and competitive positioning. Bateta and Wagoki (2024) further highlighted that many organizations in Nakuru County experience difficulties in establishing the appropriate organizational culture, reward systems, and behavioral norms necessary for effective strategy implementation. These challenges underscore the

critical need to understand how strategic organizational behaviors at the individual, group, and technological levels influence the competitive advantage of the animal feed industry in Nakuru City, providing the contextual foundation for this study.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Competitive advantage is essential for the growth and survival of firms in today's highly competitive and rapidly changing business environment (Porter, 2020). The animal feeds manufacturing subsector remains a critical pillar of Kenya's agricultural and industrial economy, supporting livestock productivity and contributing significantly to food security and rural incomes (MoALD, 2023). Despite this strategic importance, animal feeds manufacturing firms in Kenya and particularly in Nakuru City continue to struggle in establishing and sustaining competitiveness in the face of rising production costs, increased foreign competition, raw material volatility, and growing regulatory demands (Karumbi, 2024).

Industry data show that feed manufacturers in Nakuru County operate below optimal performance thresholds, with capacity utilization estimated at 45–55%, far below the county's manufacturing potential (Nakuru County Investment Authority, 2024). This underperformance has been associated with internal organizational behavior challenges that hinder the implementation of strategies needed to remain competitive. At the individual behavior level, ineffective leadership approaches, low employee motivation, weak performance management, and misalignment between personal and organizational goals have been found to slow down strategic execution and reduce productivity (Kiiyo, 2021; Ruttoh, 2021). These behavioral gaps adversely affect innovation, problem-solving, and quality-driven work routines, which are essential to competitive performance.

At the group behavior level, firms continue to grapple with ineffective team coordination, limited knowledge sharing, poor communication flows, and reward systems that do not reinforce desired collective behaviors. These issues contribute to inconsistencies in production processes, quality lapses, and inefficiencies that erode the firms' market position (Bateta & Wagoki, 2024; Maingi et al., 2021). Furthermore, at the technology behavior level, many manufacturers continue to adopt short-term, fragmented, or reactive approaches to technological change. Limited staff training on new systems, resistance to digital workflows, and inadequate integration of production technologies undermine firms' ability to achieve cost efficiency, product consistency, and operational agility in a competitive market (Wanjohi, 2024; MoIED, 2024).

Although previous studies have examined elements of competitive advantage in Kenya's manufacturing sector, the existing literature does not provide empirical evidence on how the combined dimensions of strategic individual, group, and technological behaviors influence competitive advantage specifically in the animal feed manufacturing industry in Nakuru City. Studies by Kairira and Obuba (2024), Karumbi (2024), and Musyoka (2024) focused on related but different contexts, while international evidence from more developed settings (Gomera & Mafini, 2020; Van der Heijden & Cramer, 2024; Reichelt & Nettle, 2023) does not account for the structural and behavioral dynamics of Kenya's developing economy. This absence of localized empirical evidence leaves policymakers, industry regulators, and firm managers without the behavioral insights needed to address declining competitiveness, improve operational performance, and strengthen strategic positioning in the marketplace.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study was to establish the influence of strategic organizational behaviour on the competitive advantage of the animal feed industry in Nakuru City, Kenya.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

- i. To assess the influence of strategic individual behavior of employees on the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City.
- ii. To establish the effect of strategic group behavior of employees on the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City.
- iii. To determine the impact of strategic organizational technology behavior on the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: Strategic individual behavior of employees has no significant influence on the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City.

H₀₂: Strategic group behavior of employees has no significant effect on the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City.

H₀₃: Strategic organizational technology behavior has no significant impact on the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City.

1.6 Justification of the Study

This research is justified by several compelling factors that highlight its importance to various stakeholders: First, the animal feed industry is essential to determining the

competitiveness of livestock value chains in Kenya. The livestock sub-sector contributes significantly to agricultural Gross Domestic Product and the national GDP, making it a crucial economic sector. The quality and cost-effectiveness of animal feeds directly affect livestock productivity, which, in turn, affects farmers' incomes and food security in the country. Second, Nakuru City is a thriving hub for animal feed processors, with the industry comprising large, medium, and small businesses. The presence of 38 registered animal feed manufacturers employing approximately 3,785 people directly highlights the sector's importance to the local economy. Understanding factors that enhance competitive advantage in this industry is therefore crucial for sustaining and growing these economic benefits.

Third, the Government of Kenya's Vision 2030 and the Big Four Agenda identify food security as a national priority, with the livestock sector playing a crucial role. Enhancing the competitiveness of the animal feed industry directly supports these national development goals by contributing to increased livestock productivity and food security.

Fourth, as regional integration through the East African Community and the African Continental Free Trade Area intensifies, Kenyan animal feed manufacturers face increasing competition from regional and international players. This research provided insights into how strategic organizational behaviors can be leveraged to enhance competitiveness in this evolving market landscape. Finally, from an academic perspective, this study addresses a significant gap in the literature on the specific influence of strategic organizational behaviors on competitive advantage in the animal feed industry, particularly in a secondary city in a developing economy. The findings contributed to the body of knowledge in strategic management, organizational behavior, and competitive strategy.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study holds significant value for various stakeholders, contributing to theory, policy, practice, and future research:

1.7.1 Theoretical Significance

The study contributed to advancing knowledge in strategic management, particularly by understanding how the Cognitive School of Thought applies to organizational behavior and competitive advantage. By empirically testing the relationships between strategic organizational behaviors and competitive outcomes in a specific industry context, the research enriched theoretical frameworks on competitive strategy and organizational performance. The findings also contributed to the literature on the resource-based view (RBV) by examining how internal organizational behaviors were strategic resources for competitive advantage.

1.7.2 Policy Significance

For policymakers at both national and county levels, this research provided evidence-based insights for developing policies that support the growth and competitiveness of the animal feed industry. The findings informed regulatory frameworks, industry standards, and support programs to enhance organizational capabilities and competitiveness. The research also contributed to the implementation of Kenya's Manufacturing Sector Strategy and the County Integrated Development Plan for Nakuru by identifying specific organizational behavior interventions to enhance industrial competitiveness.

1.7.3 Practical Significance

For animal feed manufacturers in Nakuru City and beyond, this study provided practical insights into leveraging strategic organizational behaviors to enhance competitive advantage. Managers and executives gained an understanding of specific behavioral factors that influence performance and competitiveness, enabling them to design targeted

interventions to improve performance and competitiveness. The findings helped companies develop more effective approaches to leadership, team collaboration, and technology adoption, thereby enhancing operational performance and market positioning.

1.7.4 Research Significance

For the academic and research community, this study will establish a foundation for further research on strategic organizational behavior and competitive advantage in manufacturing industries. The methodological approach, conceptual framework, and empirical findings will provide a reference point for future studies in similar or related contexts. The research will also identify additional areas for investigation, contributing to the ongoing development of knowledge in this field.

1.8 Scope of the Study

This study focused specifically on examining the influence of strategic organizational behaviors on the competitive advantage of the animal feed industry in Nakuru City, Kenya, with data collection planned for May and July 2025. The geographical scope is limited to companies operating within the administrative boundaries of Nakuru City, as defined following its elevation to city status in December 2021.

The thematic scope is concentrated on three specific dimensions of strategic organizational behavior. Strategic individual behavior of employees examines leadership styles, employee motivation, job satisfaction, and personal performance metrics. Strategic group behavior of employees investigates team dynamics, communication patterns, collaborative decision-making, and interdepartmental coordination. Strategic organizational technology behavior focuses on technology adoption strategies, innovation culture, digital transformation initiatives, and the development of

technological competence. The competitive advantage dimension was examined through the lens of Porter's framework, focusing on cost leadership, differentiation, and market focus strategies, as well as operational performance indicators such as production efficiency, product quality, customer satisfaction, and market share.

The study involved animal feed manufacturing companies that have been in operation for at least 3 years, have at least 10 full-time employees, and are registered with the Association of Kenya Feed Manufacturers. This criterion ensures that the companies included have sufficient operational history and scale to provide meaningful data on organizational behaviors and competitive outcomes.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

This study acknowledged several limitations that influenced the research process and the interpretation of the results. First, although multiple data sources and methods were used to enhance validity, the perceptual nature of some measurements could not be eliminated. The researcher mitigated this limitation by applying validated measurement instruments, triangulating data collected from different respondents within each organization, and, where possible, supplementing survey responses with observational insights. Another limitation was the study's cross-sectional design. Since data were collected at a single point in time, it was not possible to conclusively determine causal relationships or observe changes in organizational behaviour and competitive performance over time. While statistical associations were identified, any causal interpretations required caution. This limitation indicated the need for future longitudinal studies to capture the dynamic nature of strategic behaviours and competitive advantage.

The study's focus on Nakuru City also limited the generalizability of the findings. Economic, social, and regulatory conditions in Nakuru may differ from those in other

regions, so results may not fully apply in other geographic contexts. However, the research methodology and conceptual framework used in the study could be adapted for similar investigations elsewhere. The researcher carefully documented contextual factors that might influence the outcomes to support cautious interpretation when applying the findings beyond the study area. Access to information posed an additional challenge, as some organizations were reluctant to share sensitive data related to internal practices and competitive performance. To minimize the impact of this limitation, the researcher emphasized confidentiality, anonymized all responses, and focused on aggregated trends rather than company-specific insights that could compromise competitive positions.

Finally, the study carried minimal risks to participants. The potential dangers included mild psychological discomfort when discussing sensitive organizational issues, concerns about confidentiality, slight social risks if colleagues became aware of participation, and time constraints associated with interviews lasting 30–45 minutes. These risks were minor and were addressed through voluntary participation, the right to withdraw at any point, confidential data handling, and private data collection settings. Despite these limitations, the study employed a rigorous methodology and examined a sector that had not been extensively researched. As a result, it provided valuable insights into the relationship between strategic organizational behaviours and competitive advantage within the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City, Kenya.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the theoretical and empirical scholarship relevant to the study. It discusses major theories of organizational behavior and competitive advantage, reviews past studies conducted locally and internationally, and identifies existing research gaps. The chapter concludes with a conceptual framework linking the study variables.

2.2 Theoretical Review

This study was anchored in three key theories that provide conceptual frameworks for examining how strategic organizational behaviors influence competitive advantage: Frederick Taylor's Scientific Management Theory, McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, and the Resource-Based View (RBV). Each theory offers unique insights into different aspects of organizational behavior and competitive advantage.

2.2.1 Scientific Management Theory

Scientific Management Theory was propounded by Frederick Winslow Taylor in 1911 through his seminal work "The Principles of Scientific Management." The theory advocates for the systematic analysis and optimization of work processes to enhance productivity and efficiency. Taylor (1911) argued that work should be scientifically studied to determine the "one best way" to perform tasks, with standardized procedures developed and implemented to maximize output. The theory emphasizes four key principles: developing a science for each element of work, scientifically selecting and training workers, integrating the science with trained workers, and dividing work and responsibility between management and workers.

Scholars have both supported and criticized Scientific Management Theory. Proponents like Gilbreth (1914) and Gantt (1919) extended Taylor's ideas, arguing that scientific analysis of work leads to increased productivity, reduced waste, and improved economic outcomes. Modern supporters note that principles of work standardization and systematic analysis remain foundational to contemporary operations management (Kanigel, 2024). However, critics like Mayo (1933) and later Herzberg (1966) contended that the theory neglects human psychological and social needs, treating workers as extensions of machines rather than as thinking, feeling individuals. Drucker (1999) criticized the theory for its overemphasis on efficiency at the expense of innovation and adaptability.

Scientific Management Theory informs this study's examination of employees' strategic individual behavior in animal feed manufacturing firms in Nakuru City. The theory provides a framework for understanding how standardized procedures, precise performance metrics, and systematic task analysis contribute to operational efficiency and product consistency – key determinants of competitive advantage in manufacturing contexts. By examining how animal feed companies structure individual work processes and performance expectations, this study assessed the contemporary relevance of scientific management principles in achieving cost leadership advantages in a developing economy context.

2.2.2 McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y

Douglas McGregor introduced Theory X and Theory Y in his 1960 book "The Human Side of Enterprise." The theory presents two contrasting sets of assumptions about human motivation and behavior in work settings. Theory X assumes that the average worker dislikes work, avoids responsibility, has little ambition, and requires close supervision and external controls to perform effectively. In contrast, Theory Y assumes that work is as natural as play or rest, that people exercise self-direction when committed

to objectives, that commitment is a function of rewards associated with achievement, that the average person learns to seek responsibility, and that creativity is widely distributed in the population.

McGregor's theory has garnered both support and criticism. Proponents such as Argyris (1957) and Likert (1967) supported the Theory Y assumptions, arguing that participative management approaches lead to higher productivity, improved morale, and better utilization of human potential. Contemporary studies by Kopelman et al. (2012) found that organizations embracing Theory Y assumptions tend to experience higher employee engagement and innovation. Critics such as Morse and Lorsch (1970) argued that the theory oversimplifies human motivation and that effective leadership requires a contingency approach rather than strict adherence to either set of assumptions. Schein (1988) noted that cultural differences affect the applicability of McGregor's assumptions across diverse contexts.

McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y inform this study's investigation of employees' strategic group behavior in animal feed manufacturing firms. The theory provides a framework for understanding how leadership assumptions about employee motivation influence team dynamics, communication patterns, and collaborative decision-making – all critical elements of group behavior that affect organizational performance. By examining the prevailing managerial assumptions in animal feed companies and their relationship to group productivity and innovation, this study assessed how strategic alignment of management philosophy with employee expectations contributes to competitive advantage.

2.2.3 Resource-Based View

The Resource-Based View was formally introduced by Birger Wernerfelt in 1984 and significantly developed by Jay Barney in 1991. The theory posits that firms gain and

sustain competitive advantage by developing and leveraging resources and capabilities that are valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN). Barney (1991) argued that these strategic resources, rather than industry position alone, determine a firm's competitive advantage. The theory emphasizes the heterogeneity of firms' resource portfolios and the immobility of certain strategic resources as fundamental to understanding performance differences among competitors.

The RBV has received substantial support and criticism. Proponents such as Grant (1991) and Peteraf (1993) expanded the theory, demonstrating its explanatory power for sustainable competitive advantage across industries. Contemporary supporters, such as Helfat and Peteraf (2020), have extended the theory to include dynamic capabilities that enable firms to reconfigure resources in changing environments. Critics such as Priem and Butler (2023) argued that the theory is tautological, with valuable resources defined in terms of their contribution to performance. Porter (1996) criticized the theory for underemphasizing the importance of strategic positioning within industries, while Kraaijenbrink et al. (2010) highlighted the theory's inadequate explanation of how resources actually contribute to competitive advantage.

The Resource-Based View fundamentally informs this study's conceptualization of strategic organizational behaviors as potential strategic resources for competitive advantage. The theory provides a framework for understanding how distinctive patterns of individual, group, and technological behavior can constitute valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and non-substitutable resources that differentiate animal feed manufacturers from competitors. By examining how these organizational behaviors are strategically developed and leveraged, this study assessed the extent to which RBV principles explain the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City.

The theory also guides the study's focus on internal organizational factors rather than solely on external market positioning.

Each of these theories contributes unique and complementary perspectives to understanding the relationship between strategic organizational behaviors and competitive advantage. Together, they provide a comprehensive theoretical foundation for investigating how animal feed manufacturing firms in Nakuru City can enhance their competitive positioning by strategically managing individual behaviors, group dynamics, and technology adoption practices.

2.3 Empirical Review

This section reviews empirical literature relevant to the study objectives, examining existing research on the relationship between strategic organizational behaviors and competitive advantage, with particular attention to the animal feeds industry where available. The review is organized according to the study's specific objectives.

2.3.1 Strategic Individual Behavior of Employees and Competitive Advantage

Kairira and Obuba (2024) conducted a study on the effect of strategic leadership on the competitive advantage of animal feed manufacturing firms in Upper Eastern and Central Kenya. The study employed an explanatory research design with a sample of 96 animal feed manufacturing firms. The study established that adopting strategic leadership has a constructive and significant influence on competitive advantage in animal feed manufacturing firms. The study primarily focused on leadership aspects, without examining other dimensions of individual behavior, such as employee motivation and job satisfaction. It was limited to the Central and Upper Eastern regions of Kenya. Thus, the current study aims to fill this gap by examining the comprehensive influence of employees' strategic individual behavior on the competitive advantage of the animal feed industry, specifically in Nakuru City.

Kiiyo (2021) conducted a study on the role of employee behavior and organizational structure in the relationship between strategic planning and the competitive advantage of large manufacturing firms in Kenya. The study used a positivist research paradigm and a cross-sectional survey design with data collected from 122 large manufacturing firms. The study found that employee behavior fully mediates the relationship between strategic planning and competitive advantage, indicating that strategic plans influence competitive outcomes primarily through their effects on individual behavior. The study identified a contextual gap, as it examined large manufacturing firms broadly without a specific focus on the animal feed industry in Nakuru City. Thus, this study aims to fill the gap by determining the particular influence of strategic individual behavior in the context of animal feed manufacturing firms in Nakuru City.

Busienei (2023) researched business strategy, organizational structure, human resource strategic orientation and performance of large private manufacturing firms in Kenya. The study relied on primary data collected through structured questionnaires administered to senior managers. The study revealed a strong positive correlation between human resource strategic orientation and firm performance, with significant influences from individual employee development and alignment with strategic goals. The study primarily focused on large manufacturing firms across Kenya and did not examine the unique characteristics of the animal feeds industry or the specific context of Nakuru City. Thus, the current study aims to address this gap by establishing how strategic individual behavior specifically influences competitive advantage in animal feed manufacturing firms in Nakuru City.

Judge, Thoresen, Bono, and Patton (2023) conducted a meta-analysis on the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance. The study analyzed 312 samples totaling 54,417 to evaluate the satisfaction-performance relationship. The study established a

significant mean correlation between overall job satisfaction and job performance, with satisfied employees exhibiting higher productivity, better attendance, and greater willingness to engage in organizational citizenship behaviors. The study presented a methodological gap as it relied on secondary analysis of existing studies rather than primary research in specific industries, and did not examine the African manufacturing context. Thus, this study aims to fill the gap by examining how job satisfaction and other individual behavioral factors specifically influence the competitive advantage of the animal feed industry in Nakuru City through primary research.

Musyoka (2024) conducted a study on procurement ethics and organizational performance of animal feed manufacturing firms in Kenya. The study employed a descriptive design with a census approach, covering 38 animal feed manufacturing firms in Nairobi, and used questionnaires administered to supply chain and procurement management personnel. The study found a positive and significant relationship between procurement ethics and organizational performance, indicating that individual ethical behaviors contribute to gaining and maintaining competitive advantage. The study was limited to procurement ethics in Nairobi-based firms, without examining broader strategic individual behaviors or the specific context of Nakuru City. Thus, the current study aims to address this gap by determining how comprehensive strategic individual behaviors influence the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City.

Ruttoh (2021) researched the influence of leadership on the management of strategic organizational change in Nakuru County Government. The study used a descriptive research design with a sample of 304 respondents selected through proportionate stratified random sampling. The study established that leadership communication, strategic direction, organizational culture, and group dynamics management all had

significant influence on strategic organizational change, with organizational culture showing the most substantial effect. The study identified a contextual gap: it focused on county governments rather than manufacturing firms and did not specifically examine how leadership influences competitive advantage in private-sector organizations. Thus, this study aims to fill the gap by examining how strategic individual behavior, including leadership approaches, influences competitive advantage, specifically in animal feed manufacturing firms in Nakuru City.

Jehanzeb and Bashir (2012) conducted a study on the impact of employee training and development on organizational performance. The research used a quantitative approach, drawing on survey data from multiple organizations. The study found that organizations that offer employee training experience lower turnover and higher satisfaction, creating a competitive edge by enhancing the retention of skilled personnel. The study identified a contextual gap, as it was conducted outside the African manufacturing context and did not examine the specific dynamics of the animal feed industry. Thus, the current study aims to address this gap by establishing how strategic individual development approaches influence competitive advantage in the unique context of animal feed manufacturing in Nakuru City, Kenya.

2.3.2 Strategic Group Behavior of Employees and Competitive Advantage

Mainingi et al. (2021) researched the role of employee behavior and organizational structure in the relationship between strategic planning and the competitive advantage of large manufacturing firms in Kenya. The study used a positivist research paradigm and a cross-sectional survey design with data from 122 large manufacturing firms. The study found that organizational structure partially moderates the relationship between strategic planning and competitive advantage. In contrast, the joint influence of employee behavior and organizational structure differs from that of individual variables. The study

identified a contextual gap, as it examined large manufacturing firms broadly without a specific focus on the group dynamics of the animal feed industry in Nakuru City. Thus, this study aims to fill the gap by determining the particular influence of strategic group behavior on competitive advantage in animal feed manufacturing firms in Nakuru City.

Bateta and Wagoki (2024) conducted a study on the influence of organizational culture on the implementation of strategic plans in non-governmental organizations in Nakuru County. The study used a descriptive survey research design targeting employees at 249 registered NGOs, with a sample of 136 respondents. The study revealed that reward systems, behavioral norms, organizational values, and communication strategies all played significant roles in enhancing the effectiveness of strategic plan implementation. The study identified a sectoral gap, focusing on NGOs rather than manufacturing firms and not specifically examining how group behavior influences competitive advantage in private-sector organizations. Thus, this study aims to address this gap by establishing how strategic group behavior specifically influences competitive advantage in animal feed manufacturing firms in Nakuru City.

Gomera and Mafini (2020) researched supply chain management enablers, barriers, and disruptions in the animal feed industry in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. The study used a qualitative method, conducting interviews with managers from the animal feed industry and analyzing the data thematically. The study found that the industry's bargaining power and unity served as the leading enablers of effective supply chain management. In contrast, the lack of infrastructure and ineffective change management were the primary barriers. The study identified a geographical gap, focusing on South Africa rather than Kenya, and not specifically examining how group behavior influences competitive advantage beyond supply chain factors. Thus, the current study aims to fill this gap by examining how strategic group behavior comprehensively

influences the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City, Kenya.

De Dreu and Weingart (2020) conducted a meta-analysis of the relationships among task conflict, relationship conflict, team performance, and team member satisfaction. The study analyzed 30 studies representing 4,721 individuals in 92 teams. The study established that constructively managed task conflict enhances team performance by stimulating critical thinking and creativity, while relationship conflict consistently harms team performance and satisfaction. The study presented a methodological gap: it relied on meta-analysis rather than primary research in specific industries and did not examine the African manufacturing context. Thus, this study aims to address this gap by examining how different forms of group interaction specifically influence the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City through primary research.

Mesmer-Magnus and DeChurch (2020) conducted a meta-analysis on information sharing in teams. The study examined 72 independent studies comprising 4,795 teams, using meta-analytic techniques to quantify the relationship between information sharing and team performance. The study found that information sharing was positively related to team performance, cohesion, and satisfaction, with stronger effects for sharing unique information than for sharing already-known information. The study presented a contextual gap as it did not examine these relationships in manufacturing settings or in developing economies. Thus, the current study aims to fill this gap by determining how strategic information sharing and other group behaviors influence competitive advantage, specifically in animal feed manufacturing firms in Nakuru City.

Omesa et al. (2020) researched the influence of organizational culture on the implementation of strategic plans within the County Governments of Kenya in the

Western region. The study employed a descriptive survey research design targeting 10 county governments, with a sample of 240 study subjects selected by simple random sampling. The study found that organizational culture is a strong predictor of the implementation of strategic plans, with factors such as partnership, unity, teamwork, and employee cooperation creating a supportive environment for strategy implementation. The study identified a sectoral gap, focusing on county governments rather than manufacturing firms and not specifically examining how organizational culture influences competitive advantage in private organizations. Thus, this study aims to address this gap by establishing how strategic group culture and behavior specifically influence competitive advantage in animal feed manufacturing firms in Nakuru City.

Olanipekun et al. (2021) conducted a study on the impact of strategic management on competitive advantage and organizational performance in Nigerian bottling companies. The study used primary data collected through structured questionnaires, which were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics, including Chi-square and ANOVA. The study revealed that the adoption and implementation of strategic management practices enable organizations to be proactive in responding to changes and to initiate positive changes that consequently lead to competitive advantage and sustainable performance. The study identified a contextual and geographical gap, as it was conducted in Nigeria's bottling industry rather than Kenya's animal feed sector. Thus, the current study aims to fill this gap by examining how strategic group behavior influences competitive advantage in the specific context of animal feed manufacturing in Nakuru City, Kenya.

2.3.3 Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior and Competitive Advantage

Wanjiku and Kiprop (2021) researched the technological practices of manufacturing companies in Nakuru County. The study investigated 42 manufacturing companies,

including 8 animal feed producers, using a mixed-methods approach comprising surveys and interviews. The study found that organizations with strategic technology adoption behaviors and formalized digital transformation roadmaps achieved better market responsiveness and improved cost management than those with ad hoc technology approaches. The study identified a scope gap, as it examined multiple manufacturing industries rather than focusing specifically on technology behavior in animal feed firms. Thus, this study aims to fill the gap by determining the specific impact of strategic organizational technology behavior on the competitive advantage of the animal feed industry in Nakuru City.

Ngambi (2024) conducted a study on the influence of perceived quality attributes on the choice of animal feeds in Nakuru District. The study used multistage sampling and administered questionnaires divided into three parts, analyzing the data using descriptive statistics and factor analysis. The study found that technological factors, including production quality consistency, functional performance, and product specifications, significantly influenced consumer choice and brand loyalty. The study presented a conceptual gap by focusing on consumer perceptions rather than organizational technology behaviors and was conducted over two decades ago, before significant technological advancements. Thus, the current study aims to address this gap by examining how contemporary strategic organizational technology behaviors influence the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City.

Wanjohi (2024) examined the moderating effect of the adoption of a green environment on the relationship between organizational characteristics and the performance of manufacturing firms in Kenya. The study employed a descriptive research design with a sample of 177 firms distributed among manufacturing sub-sectors. The study established that adopting environmental technologies had an inverse moderating effect in the short

term, suggesting that technology adoption requires strategic alignment and sufficient time to yield positive competitive outcomes. The study identified a conceptual gap, as it focused specifically on environmental technologies rather than on comprehensive technology behaviors. Thus, this study aims to fill the gap by examining how comprehensive strategic organizational technology behaviors influence the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City.

Zhu and Kraemer (2024) conducted a study of post-adoption variations in the usage and value of e-business among organizations, using cross-country evidence from the retail industry. The research employed a survey methodology across 10 countries with 624 firms, using structural equation modeling for analysis. The study found that companies strategically adopting digital technologies experienced improvements in operational efficiency, market expansion, and customer service, thereby enhancing their competitive advantage. The study identified geographical and sectoral gaps, focusing on retail rather than manufacturing and excluding African contexts. Thus, the current study aims to address these gaps by examining how strategic technology adoption specifically influences the competitive advantage of the animal feed manufacturing sector in Nakuru City, Kenya.

Morrison and Patterson (2023) conducted an in-depth analysis of strategic technology adoption behaviors in animal feed companies in Australia. The study employed a mixed-methods approach with surveys and case studies of 53 animal feed companies. The study revealed that organizations with proactive technology integration strategies gained significant cost advantages and achieved faster time-to-market for new products compared to reactive adopters. The study identified a geographical gap, as it was conducted in a developed-economy context rather than in a developing economy like Kenya. Thus, this study aims to fill this gap by examining how strategic technology

adoption influences competitive advantage within the unique constraints and opportunities of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City, Kenya.

Said et al. (2021) researched the role of marketing management in enhancing organizations' competitive advantage in Egypt's food industry. The study used multiple regression to determine the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The study found a statistically significant, strong, positive relationship between the marketing mix elements and customer value, demonstrating that technological marketing approaches significantly enhance competitive positioning. The study identified geographical and conceptual gaps: it was conducted in Egypt rather than Kenya, and focused on marketing technology rather than comprehensive technology behaviors. Thus, the current study aims to address these gaps by determining how strategic organizational technology behavior holistically influences the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City, Kenya.

Venkatesh et al. (2020) researched user acceptance of information technology and developed the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT). The study validated the model with six longitudinal field studies across diverse organizations. The study established that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions are key determinants of technology adoption and use, which, in turn, influence organizational performance outcomes. The study identified contextual and sectoral gaps by examining general technology acceptance without a specific focus on manufacturing or the strategic use of technology for competitive advantage. Thus, this study aims to fill these gaps by examining how strategic organizational approaches to technology adoption specifically influence the competitive advantage of the animal feed industry in Nakuru City.

2.4 Research Gaps

The literature review has identified significant gaps in understanding the influence of strategic organizational behaviors on the competitive advantage of the animal feed industry. Contextually, while studies such as Kairira and Obuba (2024) examined strategic leadership in animal feed firms, they focused on Central and Upper Eastern Kenya, not Nakuru City. Similarly, international studies by Gomera and Mafini (2020) in South Africa, Van der Heijden and Cramer (2024) in Europe, Morrison and Patterson (2023) in Australia, and Said et al. (2021) in Egypt provided insights that may not be directly applicable to Nakuru City's unique business environment and developing economy context.

Conceptually, previous studies examined strategic organizational behaviors in isolation rather than comprehensively. Kairira and Obuba (2024) focused solely on leadership aspects without examining group and technology behaviors. Musyoka (2024) focused exclusively on procurement ethics, while Wanjiku and Kiprop (2021) examined technology practices across multiple industries without specifically focusing on animal feeds. No study has comprehensively reviewed the combined influence of strategic individual behavior, strategic group behavior, and strategic organizational technology behavior on competitive advantage within a single integrated framework in the animal feed industry.

Theoretically, while some studies applied single theoretical perspectives, there is limited integration of multiple theories to explain strategic organizational behaviors and competitive advantage. Studies by Kiiyo (2021) and Busienei (2023) examined employee behavior and HR orientation across manufacturing. Still, they did not specifically integrate Scientific Management Theory, McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, and the Resource-Based View in the context of animal feeds. The theoretical gap lies in

understanding how these theories collectively explain the relationship between strategic organizational behaviors and the competitive advantage of the animal feed industry in Nakuru City.

Methodologically, the literature revealed limited use of mixed-methods approaches combining both quantitative and qualitative data to provide comprehensive insights into strategic organizational behaviors. Most studies employed either purely quantitative designs, such as Kiiyo (2021) and Maingi et al. (2021), or purely qualitative approaches, such as Gomera and Mafini (2020), without integrating both approaches to triangulate findings and provide a deeper understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

Sectorally, studies by Bateta and Wagoki (2024) focused on NGOs, while Ruttoh (2021) examined county government organizations, creating a sectoral gap, as findings from these sectors may not be directly applicable to private manufacturing firms in the animal feed industry. Similarly, studies by Kiiyo (2021) and Busienei (2023) examined large manufacturing firms broadly, without a specific focus on the animal feed sector's unique characteristics and competitive dynamics.

Temporally, some key studies were conducted many years ago, creating temporal gaps. Ngambi (2024) conducted research over two decades ago, before significant technological and market changes in the animal feed industry. Busienei's (2023) and Wanjohi's (2024) studies are also dated, and the animal feeds industry has undergone substantial transformation in terms of technology adoption, regulatory environment, and competitive dynamics since these studies were conducted. These contextual, conceptual, theoretical, methodological, sectoral, and temporal gaps collectively highlight the need for a comprehensive mixed-methods study examining all three dimensions of strategic organizational behaviour: individual, group, and technology in the specific context of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City, Kenya.

Table 1*Summary of Literature and Research Gap*

Author	Topic of Study	Key Findings	Research Gap	How these gaps will be addressed
Kairira & Obuba (2024)	Strategic Leadership in Animal Feeds	Strategic leadership significantly influences competitive advantage	Contextual gap: Limited to Central and Upper Eastern Kenya; Conceptual gap: Focused only on leadership aspects without group and technology behaviors	The current study focuses on animal feed companies in Nakuru City and integrates individual, group, and technology behaviors to expand the conceptual scope.
Kiiyo (2021)	Employee Behavior in Manufacturing	Employee behavior mediates strategic planning and competitive advantage	Contextual gap: Not specific to the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City; Sectoral gap: Broad manufacturing focus	The study targets the animal feeds industry specifically in Nakuru City to address sector- and location-specific gaps.
Busienei (2023)	HR Strategic Orientation in Manufacturing	Positive correlation between HR orientation and firm performance	Conceptual gap: Broad focus on manufacturing without animal feed specificity; Temporal gap: Study conducted over a decade ago	The study uses updated 2025 data from the animal feed sector to provide a current, industry-specific analysis.
Musyoka (2024)	Procurement Ethics in Animal Feeds	Positive relationship between ethics and organizational performance	Contextual gap: Limited to Nairobi firms; Conceptual gap: Focused only on procurement ethics	The study examines multiple strategic behaviors (individual, group, and technological) within Nakuru's animal feed firms to provide broader coverage.
Ruttoh (2021)	Leadership and Organizational Change	Leadership significantly influences strategic change	Sectoral gap: Focused on county government, not manufacturing firms; Contextual gap: Not specific to Nakuru City animal feeds industry	The study focuses on private manufacturing firms, specifically animal feed companies in Nakuru, to provide sector-relevant insights.
Maingi et al. (2021)	Employee Behavior and Competitive Advantage	Joint influence of behavior and structure on competitive advantage	Contextual gap: Not specific to the animal feeds industry in Nakuru; Methodological gap: Purely quantitative approach	The study employs a mixed-methods approach and focuses specifically on Nakuru's animal feed sector.
Bateta & Wagoki (2024)	Organizational Culture and Strategy	Reward systems and norms enhance strategy	Sectoral gap: Focused on NGOs, not manufacturing firms;	The study examines strategic behaviors in a manufacturing

	Implementation	implementation	Contextual gap: Not specific to the animal feeds industry	context, specifically animal feed firms, closing contextual and sectoral gaps.
Gomera & Mafini (2020)	Supply Chain in the Animal Feed Industry	Industry unity serves as a supply chain enabler	Contextual gap: Based in South Africa, not Kenya; Methodological gap: Purely qualitative approach	The study focuses on Kenyan animal feed companies and uses mixed methods to enhance data triangulation.
Wanjiku & Kiprop (2021)	Technology Practices in Manufacturing	Strategic technology adoption improves market responsiveness	Conceptual gap: Examined multiple industries, not focused on animal feeds; Contextual gap: Not specific to Nakuru City	The study explicitly examines strategic organizational technology behavior in Nakuru's animal feed industry.
Ngambi (2024)	Quality Attributes in Animal Feeds	Technology-enabled quality consistency influences consumer choice	Conceptual gap: Focused on consumer perceptions; Temporal gap: Conducted two decades ago	The study evaluates internal employee-based technology behavior using recent industry data from Nakuru City.
Wanjohi (2024)	Green Technology in Manufacturing	Environmental technologies have inverse short-term effects	Conceptual gap: Limited to ecological technologies, not comprehensive; Temporal gap: Study conducted nine years ago	The study covers comprehensive technology behavior, not limited to green technologies, and uses updated 2025 data.
Morrison & Patterson (2023)	Technology Adoption in Animal Feed	Proactive technology integration creates cost advantages	Contextual gap: Based in Australia, not applicable to the Kenyan context; Theoretical gap: Different economic environment	The study contextualizes technology behavior within Kenya's economic environment, specifically Nakuru's industrial context.
Said et al. (2021)	Marketing Management and Competitive Advantage	Technological marketing approaches enhance competitiveness	Contextual gap: Conducted in Egypt; Conceptual gap: Focused on marketing technology only	The study examines broader organizational technology behaviors beyond marketing in Kenya's animal feed sector.

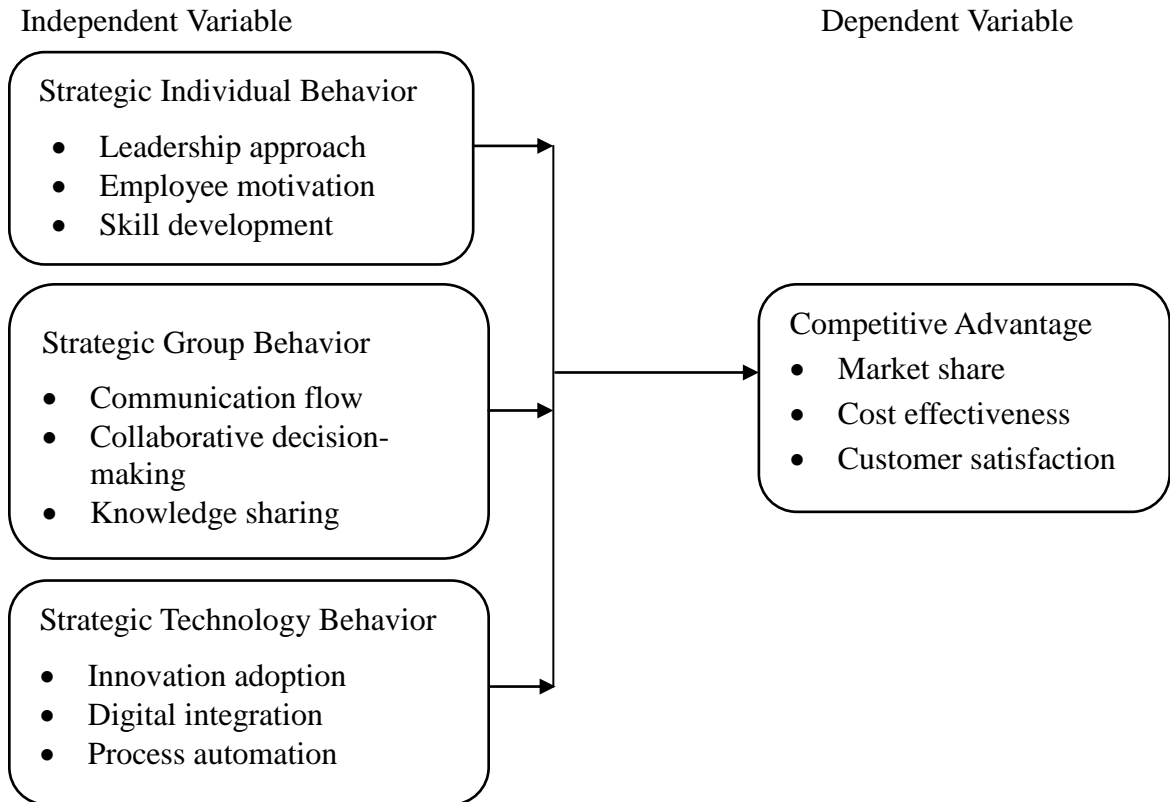
2.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework graphically illustrates the relationship between the independent variables (strategic organizational behaviors) and the dependent variable (competitive advantage). It provides a visual representation of how the variables in this

study are hypothesized to interact. This study was guided by the following conceptual framework. The relationship is as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



Source: Author (2025)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter Three explains the methodological approach adopted in the study. It outlines the research design, study area, target population, sampling techniques, data collection methods, pilot study procedures, reliability and validity measures, data analysis techniques, diagnostic tests, and ethical considerations. This chapter ensures that the research process is systematic, transparent, and replicable.

3.2 Research Design

The study employed a mixed-methods research design, specifically a sequential explanatory design. This design involves collecting and analyzing quantitative data first, followed by qualitative data collection and analysis to help explain and interpret the quantitative findings in more depth. The rationale for selecting this design is threefold: First, the mixed methods approach allows for both breadth and depth in understanding the complex relationship between strategic organizational behaviors and competitive advantage. Second, the limitations of quantitative methods are addressed by the strengths of qualitative methods, while the strengths of quantitative methods address the limitations of qualitative methods. Third, the use of multiple methods and data sources enables triangulation, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings.

3.3 Study Area

This study was conducted in Nakuru City, Kenya. Nakuru City is the fourth-largest urban center in Kenya and the third-largest metropolitan area after Nairobi and Mombasa. The city was officially granted city status on December 1, 2021, and is designated as a UNESCO Creative City under the Craft and Folk Arts category. Nakuru City has been selected as the study area for several compelling reasons: First, it hosts a significant

concentration of animal feed manufacturing companies, making it an ideal location for examining strategic organizational behavior in this industry. Second, the animal feed industry in Nakuru contributes substantially to the local economy, supporting both direct employment in manufacturing and indirect employment in the agricultural supply chain. Third, the presence of multiple animal feed manufacturers in close geographical proximity creates a competitive environment that makes the study of competitive advantage particularly relevant and insightful. Fourth, the researcher's proximity to Nakuru City ensures feasibility in terms of data collection logistics and resource management.

3.4 Target Population

The target population for this study comprises all employees of animal feed manufacturing companies in Nakuru City. This population includes employees from both the head offices and all branch establishments operating within the city. According to records from the Association of Kenya Feed Manufacturers (AKEFEMA) and the Nakuru City Business Registry (2024), a total of 38 registered animal feed manufacturing companies operate in Nakuru City, and together, including their branches, they employ approximately 3,785 full-time staff. Table 2 presents the distribution of the target population across these companies.

Table 2*Target Population Distribution*

No.	Company Name	Number of Employees	Percentage (%)
1	Royal Animal Feeds	165	4.36
2	Bunda Cake & Feeds	195	5.15
3	Unga Feeds Ltd	1,280	33.82
4	Menengai Afya Feeds & Millers	340	8.98
5	Bidco Feeds	1,410	37.25
6	Eco Feeds	188	4.97
7	Nakuru Modern Feeds	124	3.28
8	Taifarm Millers Ltd	83	2.19
	Total	3,785	100.00

Source: AKEFEMA (2024)

Participants were recruited through systematic stratified random sampling from employee registers provided by participating companies, with emphasis on voluntary participation and informed consent. The study included full-time employees of an animal feed manufacturing company with at least 12 months of continuous service who were aged 18 years and above. Participants were drawn from across all hierarchical levels, including operational, supervisory, and managerial positions, and from various functional departments such as production, quality control, sales, administration, finance, and human resources. Eligible participants were those who could communicate effectively in English or Swahili and who provided written informed consent to participate in the study.

The study excluded part-time, casual, or contractual employees with less than 12 months of service, as well as employees under 18 years of age. External consultants, temporary workers, or interns not integrated into regular organizational processes were also excluded from the study. Additionally, employees on extended leave, such as medical,

maternity, or study leave, for more than 3 months in the past year were not included. Employees unable to provide informed consent due to cognitive impairment or language barriers, those who declined to provide written informed consent, and employees in companies that did not grant permission for the study were also excluded from participation.

3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

This study employed a multi-stage sampling approach that combined probability and non-probability sampling techniques. In the first stage, stratified random sampling was used to select animal feed manufacturing companies by size (small, medium, or large). From each stratum, companies were randomly selected in proportion to their population representation. This stratification ensures that companies of different sizes are adequately represented in the sample, as organizational behaviors may vary by company size. In the second stage, proportionate stratified random sampling was used to select employees within each company, stratified by hierarchical level and functional department.

This approach ensures balanced representation across different organizational roles and departments, capturing diverse perspectives on strategic organizational behaviors. In the third stage, purposive sampling was used to select key informants for in-depth interviews based on their knowledge and experience, position in the organizational hierarchy, length of service, and involvement in strategic organizational initiatives. For the quantitative phase, the sample size was determined using Cochran's formula for finite populations:

$$n = N / [1 + N(\epsilon)^2]$$

where;

n is the sample size,

N is the population size (3,785)

ϵ is the desired level of precision/margin of error (0.05).

This yields a sample size of 362. This sample size is statistically representative of the target population with 95% confidence and a 5% margin of error. Table 3 shows the distribution of the sample size across the selected companies based on proportionate sampling.

Table 3
Sample Size Distribution

No.	Company Name	Target Population	Proportion (%)	Sample Size
1	Royal Animal Feeds	165	4.36	16
2	Bunda Cake & Feeds	195	5.15	19
3	Unga Feeds Ltd	1,280	33.82	122
4	Menengai Afya Feeds & Millers	340	8.98	33
5	Bidco Feeds	1,410	37.25	134
6	Eco Feeds	188	4.97	18
7	Nakuru Modern Feeds	124	3.28	12
8	Taifarm Millers Ltd	83	2.19	8
Total		3,785	100.00	362

Source: Researcher's Computation (2025), based on AKEFEMA Membership Register (2024)

For the qualitative phase, 20 key informants were purposively selected for in-depth interviews, comprising 8 senior managers (2 from each of the 4 company size categories), 8 department heads (representing diverse functional areas), and 4 industry experts (from AKEFEMA and regulatory bodies). The total sample size was 382 respondents. This sample size for the qualitative phase is based on the principle of information power, where the adequacy of the sample is determined by the study's aim, sample specificity, theoretical background, quality of dialogue, and analysis strategy.

3.6 Instruments

This study employed multiple data collection methods to ensure comprehensive coverage of the research questions. The survey method was used to administer structured questionnaires to the sampled employees across the selected animal feeds manufacturing companies, collecting quantitative data on strategic individual behaviors, strategic group behaviors, strategic organizational technology behaviors, and indicators of competitive advantage. The interview method involved conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews with the purposively selected key informants to explore the complex relationships between strategic organizational behaviors and competitive advantage. The observation method involved structured non-participant observation in the selected companies to document actual behavioral patterns and organizational processes. Document analysis involved reviewing relevant company documents, including policy manuals, strategic plans, performance reports, and organizational charts, to provide additional insights into formalized aspects of organizational behaviors and documented competitive performance.

The data collection instruments included a structured questionnaire with five sections: demographic information; strategic individual behavior of employees; strategic group behavior of employees; strategic organizational technology behavior; and competitive advantage indicators. Each variable was measured using multiple items to ensure construct validity and reliability, with measurement items adapted from validated scales in existing literature. A semi-structured interview guide contained open-ended questions designed to explore contextual factors, mechanisms, challenges, and strategies related to strategic organizational behaviors and competitive advantage. A structured observation schedule was used to systematically record observations of the physical work environment, individual work behaviors, group dynamics, and technology utilization. A

document analysis guide was used to extract and analyze information from company documents systematically.

3.7 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to test the reliability and validity of the research instruments, identify and address potential problems in the research procedure, assess the feasibility of the sampling approach and data collection methods, estimate the time and resources required for the main study, and obtain preliminary data to refine the research instruments. The pilot study was conducted at Kapkatet Animal Feeds Ltd, an animal feed manufacturing company in Kericho County, which is similar to but not included in the main study sample. This approach ensures that the pilot participants have characteristics identical to the target population while avoiding contamination of the primary study data. Conducting the pilot study in a different county (Kericho) from the central study location (Nakuru) further prevented any potential spillover effects that might compromise the integrity of the main study findings.

For the pilot study, 40 respondents (10% of the main study sample) were randomly selected from Kapkatet Animal Feeds Ltd, stratified by hierarchical level and functional department, and an additional 3 key informants were interviewed using the draft interview guide. The pilot study was conducted one month before the main data collection to allow sufficient time for instrument refinement.

The process involved obtaining permission from Kapkatet Animal Feeds Ltd management, randomly selecting 40 employees using stratified random sampling, administering the draft questionnaire, conducting interviews with key informants, timing the completion of the instruments, collecting feedback from participants, analyzing the pilot data to assess instrument reliability and validity, and refining the research instruments based on the findings. The geographical separation between the pilot study

location (Kericho) and the main study location (Nakuru) provided an added advantage for testing the applicability of the research instruments across different but comparable contexts, potentially enhancing the study's external validity.

3.7.1 Validity of Research Instruments

The validity of the research instruments was established through multiple approaches. Content validity was ensured through a comprehensive literature review, expert review by academic supervisors and industry specialists, and feedback from pilot study participants at Kapkatet Animal Feeds Ltd. Construct validity was assessed through factor analysis of pilot study data and examination of convergent and discriminant validity. Face validity was ensured through review by colleagues and academic supervisors as well as feedback from industry practitioners. These combined approaches ensured that the instruments accurately represented the constructs being studied and were suitable for the context of animal feed manufacturing firms.

3.7.2 Reliability of Research Instruments

The reliability of the quantitative research instruments was assessed using multiple measures. Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each scale and subscale, with a minimum threshold of 0.7 applied. Test-retest reliability was assessed by having a subset of 20 participants from the pilot study complete the questionnaire again 2 weeks after their initial responses, and Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated between the two sets of responses. Inter-rater reliability for the observation schedule was assessed using Cohen's kappa coefficient to measure agreement between two independent observers. Data from the Kericho pilot study provided a robust basis for refining the instruments before their application in the main study in Nakuru City.

Reliability analysis was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales used in the study. Cronbach's alpha, a widely used reliability coefficient, was used to assess the variables' reliability. The Cronbach's alpha values for the independent variables (strategic individual behavior, strategic group behavior, and strategic organizational technology behavior) and the dependent variable (competitive advantage) are presented in Table 4.

Table 4
Reliability Analysis

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	$\alpha > 0.7$
Strategic Individual Behavior	7	0.892	Yes
Strategic Group Behavior	7	0.898	Yes
Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior	7	0.911	Yes
Competitive Advantage	7	0.896	Yes
Overall Cronbach Alpha	—	0.899	Yes

The reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha demonstrated high internal consistency for all variables in the study. Strategic individual behavior ($\alpha = 0.892$), strategic group behavior ($\alpha = 0.898$), strategic organizational technology behavior ($\alpha = 0.911$), and competitive advantage ($\alpha = 0.896$) all exceeded the widely accepted threshold of 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978). The overall Cronbach's alpha for the study was 0.899. These results support the credibility of the study's findings and suggest that the scales can be confidently used in future research on similar constructs in the context of animal feed manufacturing firms operating in competitive environments.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

The data collection process began with a preparation phase that included obtaining necessary approvals, recruiting and training research assistants, and finalizing research instruments. The research approvals included an introductory letter from Kabarak University, a research permit from NACOSTI, ethics approval from the Kabarak University Ethics Review Committee, and permission from the management of selected animal feeds manufacturing companies. Two research assistants with backgrounds in business research and proficiency in both English and Swahili were recruited and trained through a comprehensive two-day program covering research objectives, ethical considerations, instrument administration, data recording, and handling potential field challenges. Research instruments were revised based on pilot study findings and finalized along with participant information sheets and consent forms.

For quantitative data collection, data collection sessions were scheduled with each participating company; potential participants were briefed about the study and ethical considerations; informed consent was obtained; questionnaires were administered; and completed questionnaires were collected and checked for quality. For qualitative data collection, interviews were scheduled at convenient times for key informants, conducted in private settings, audio-recorded with the key informants' permission, and supplemented with field notes.

3.8 Data Monitoring Plan

To ensure completeness and integrity of data during collection, comprehensive monitoring procedures were implemented. For questionnaire data, research assistants conducted immediate completeness checks by reviewing each questionnaire upon completion to identify missing responses or unclear entries, and participants were asked to clarify or complete any missing critical sections before leaving the data collection

session. The principal investigator conducted daily quality control reviews to assess data quality, identify patterns of missing data, and address any systematic issues. A double-entry validation system was employed, in which 10% of questionnaires were randomly selected for double data entry to check for transcription errors and ensure data accuracy. Follow-up procedures were established, with participants contacted within 24 hours by phone or email for incomplete critical sections that were not resolved immediately. Backup systems included secure cloud storage with daily backups of all collected data, and the maintenance of physical backup copies stored in separate, secure locations.

For interview data monitoring, all interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent using high-quality digital recorders to ensure complete capture of responses. Comprehensive field notes were taken during interviews as backup documentation and to capture non-verbal cues and contextual information. Professional transcription services were employed, with accuracy verified by cross-checking 20% of transcripts against original recordings. Member checking procedures were implemented, with participants receiving interview summaries within one week for accuracy verification and clarification of any misinterpretations.

Overall, data monitoring included weekly progress tracking against data collection targets, regular assessment of response rates, and identification of potential issues. Quality assurance measures included regular team meetings to discuss data-collection challenges, share best practices, and ensure consistency among data collectors. Detailed documentation was maintained through comprehensive logs of all data collection activities, issues encountered, and resolutions implemented. Supervisory oversight was provided through random quality checks by supervisors and periodic field visits to observe data collection procedures. Data security monitoring ensured that all data storage and transfer procedures follow established protocols and regular verification that backup

systems are functioning properly. This comprehensive monitoring plan ensures that data collected maintains high standards of completeness, accuracy, and integrity throughout the data collection process.

3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation

Quantitative data analysis began with data preparation, including coding, data entry into SPSS version 25, data cleaning, and testing parametric test assumptions. Descriptive analysis included frequencies and percentages for categorical variables, measures of central tendency and dispersion for continuous variables, and cross-tabulations. Inferential analysis included Pearson's correlation, multiple regression, hierarchical regression, and Analysis of Variance. The multiple regression model was specified as;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y is Competitive Advantage,

X₁ is Strategic Individual Behavior

X₂ is Strategic Group Behavior

X₃ is Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior

B₁ is the constant

B₂, β₃, β₄ are regression coefficients

ε is the error term.

The regression analysis tested assumptions including linearity, independence of observations, homoscedasticity, normality of error distribution, and absence of multicollinearity.

Qualitative data analysis involved preparing the data through transcription and translation, conducting thematic analysis in NVivo (Version 12), and implementing

quality control measures such as member checking, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, and thick description. Following the sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, integration of findings occurred at the interpretation phase: quantitative findings were analyzed first, qualitative data collection was informed by quantitative results, qualitative findings were examined, and both sets of findings were integrated through comparison, explanation, and comprehensive understanding. The findings were presented using multiple formats, including tables, graphs, narrative descriptions, thematic networks, and joint displays.

3.11 Diagnostic Tests

Before conducting the multiple regression analysis, several diagnostic tests were performed to ensure the data met the assumptions of parametric analysis.

3.11.1 Normality Test

The normality test was conducted to assess whether the data followed a normal distribution, which is a fundamental assumption for parametric statistical tests. The Shapiro-Wilk test was performed on the regression model residuals to assess normality, and the results were presented in a tabular format showing the test statistic and significance values for each variable. The normality test results indicated whether the data satisfied the normality assumption required for valid regression analysis.

3.11.2 Multicollinearity Test

The multicollinearity test was performed to examine whether there were high correlations among the independent variables that could distort the regression results. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values were calculated for each independent variable to detect multicollinearity. VIF values above 10 or tolerance values below 0.1 were considered indicators of problematic multicollinearity. The correlation matrix of independent variables was also examined to identify correlations exceeding

0.8, which would suggest potential multicollinearity. These tests ensured that the independent variables were sufficiently distinct to yield reliable regression coefficients.

3.11.3 Linearity Test

The linearity test was conducted to verify that linear relationships exist between the independent variables and the dependent variable, a critical assumption for linear regression analysis. Scatter plots were created to visually examine the relationship between each independent variable and competitive advantage. Additionally, the linearity assumption was tested by examining the residual plots to ensure that residuals were randomly scattered around zero with no systematic pattern. The linearity test confirmed that the relationships between strategic organizational behaviors and competitive advantage could be appropriately modeled using linear regression.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to stringent ethical standards to protect participants' rights and welfare. Institutional approval was obtained from the Kabarak University Ethics Review Committee and NACOSTI before commencing data collection.

This study posed minimal risks to participants. The identified potential risks included minor psychological discomfort when discussing sensitive organizational practices, potential anxiety about confidentiality of responses, particularly regarding management performance, minimal social risk if colleagues became aware of participation, and a time investment of 30-45 minutes for questionnaire completion or 15-20 minutes for interviews. Physical risks were negligible, and confidentiality risks were minimal due to anonymization measures and aggregate reporting.

Comprehensive protection measures were implemented to safeguard participants. To provide psychological protection, participants were informed that they could skip any

question that caused discomfort and withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. Data collection was conducted in private settings away from supervisors and colleagues. No individual responses were shared with company management or third parties. Participants' identities were protected through secure coding systems, and results were reported only in aggregate. Data collection was scheduled at convenient times to minimize disruption to work, and refreshments were provided during sessions. All data was anonymized using unique identifier codes, with access limited to the research team only.

All participants were assigned unique identifier codes with personal identifiers stored separately from response data. Data handling and storage procedures included password-protected computers with encrypted storage for electronic data and locked filing cabinets for physical documents. Access control was strictly limited to the principal investigator, academic supervisors, and research assistants who accessed only anonymized data. Raw data was maintained for 5 years post-study completion as per university policy. Electronic data was permanently deleted using secure deletion software, physical documents were shredded, and audio recordings were deleted within 6 months after transcription.

The informed consent process began with the preparation of information sheets explaining the study's purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits. Participants received study information 24 hours before data collection to allow adequate consideration time. Research assistants provided verbal explanations of the study, and written consent was obtained using the informed consent form attached as Appendix II. Participants were clearly informed that participation was entirely voluntary with no consequences for declining. Ongoing consent procedures reminded participants they could withdraw at any

time. Signed consent forms were stored separately from questionnaire data in secure, locked filing cabinets.

Results were shared with participating companies in summary form without identifying individual responses. Findings were presented to the Association of Kenya Feed Manufacturers (AKEFEMA), and policy recommendations were shared with Nakuru County Government. Data collection tools were culturally appropriate for the Kenyan context, and local language support in Swahili was available. Refreshments were provided during data collection sessions, and transportation costs incurred specifically for study participation were reimbursed at standard rates.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Four presents the analyzed data and interprets the study's findings. It includes response rates, demographic characteristics, descriptive statistics, qualitative insights, correlation results, diagnostic test outcomes, and regression analysis. The chapter integrates the findings with existing literature and provides a detailed discussion of the relationships between strategic organizational behaviors and competitive advantage.

4.2 Response Rate

This section presents the overall participation achieved in both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study. Reporting the response rate for each phase helps evaluate the adequacy, completeness, and representativeness of the collected data. Table 5 provides a summary of the distribution, return, and response rates for both the questionnaires and key informant interviews.

Table 5

Overall Response Rate

Category	Instruments Distributed	Instruments Returned	Response Rate (%)
Quantitative Questionnaires	362	330	82.5
Qualitative Key Informant Interviews	20	16	80.0
Combined Total	382	346	82% (overall completion)

The quantitative phase achieved a response rate of 82.5%, with 330 of the 362 distributed questionnaires completed and returned. The qualitative phase recorded a response rate of 80.0%, with 16 out of 20 key informants participating in the interviews.

Overall, the study achieved an effective completion rate of 82%, demonstrating strong engagement from respondents across both phases and providing a robust dataset for analysis.

4.4 Demographic Characteristics

The study collected demographic information to provide context for the findings and assess the representativeness of the sample. The key demographic variables were gender, age, education level, years of experience in the organization, and years of experience in the animal feeds industry. These demographic details are essential for interpreting the study results and understanding the perspectives of different respondent groups in the animal feeds industry.

4.4.1 Gender Distribution

The gender distribution of respondents is presented in Table 6.

Table 5

Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	205	62.1%
Female	125	37.9%
Total	330	100%

The results in Table 6 show that the majority of respondents (62.1%) were male, while 37.9% were female. This distribution reflects the gender composition typical of manufacturing industries, where male employees are more prevalent, particularly in production and technical roles.

4.4.2 Age Distribution

The age distribution of respondents is presented in Table 7.

Table 6*Age Distribution*

Age Category	Frequency	Percentage
18-27 years	46	13.9%
28-37 years	98	29.7%
38-47 years	100	30.3%
48-59 years	59	17.9%
Over 60 years	27	8.2%
Total	330	100%

The results in Table 7 indicate that the largest group of respondents (30.3%) was in the 38-47 years age bracket, followed by those aged 28-37 years (29.7%). Respondents aged 18-27 years comprised 13.9% of the sample, while those aged 48-59 years represented 17.9%. Employees aged 60 or older accounted for 8.2% of the sample. This age distribution shows that the study captured perspectives from employees across different age groups, with the majority in their productive middle years.

4.4.3 Education Level Distribution

The education level distribution of respondents is presented in Table 8.

Table 7*Education Level Distribution*

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	33	10.0%
Secondary	38	11.5%
College Diploma	91	27.6%
Bachelor's Degree	86	26.1%
Master's Degree	59	17.9%
Doctorate	23	7.0%
Total	330	100%

The results in Table 8 show that most respondents had college diplomas (27.6%) and bachelor's degrees (26.1%), followed by those with master's degrees (17.9%). Secondary education holders accounted for 11.5% of the sample, while those with primary education accounted for 10.0%. Doctorate holders constituted 7.0% of the sample. This educational distribution indicates that the majority of respondents held tertiary qualifications, which is appropriate for understanding strategic organizational behavior in manufacturing firms.

4.4.4 Organizational Experience Distribution

The distribution of respondents by years of experience in their current organization is presented in Table 9.

Table 8

Organizational Experience Distribution

Experience Duration	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 year	61	18.5%
1-5 years	98	29.7%
6-10 years	92	27.9%
11-15 years	55	16.7%
Over 15 years	24	7.3%
Total	330	100%

The results in Table 9 reveal that most respondents had 1-5 years of experience in their current organization (29.7%), followed by those with 6-10 years of experience (27.9%). Employees with less than 1 year of experience represented 18.5% of the sample, while those with 11-15 years comprised 16.7%. Employees with over 15 years of organizational experience constituted 7.3% of the sample. This distribution indicates that

the study captured insights from employees with varying levels of organizational familiarity, ranging from newcomers to long-serving employees.

4.4.5 Animal Feeds Industry Experience Distribution

The distribution of respondents by years of experience in the animal feeds industry is presented in Table 10.

Table 9

Animal Feeds Industry Experience Distribution

Experience Duration	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 year	26	7.9%
1-5 years	59	17.9%
6-10 years	105	31.8%
11-15 years	81	24.5%
Over 15 years	59	17.9%
Total	330	100%

The results in Table 10 show that the largest group had 6-10 years of experience in the animal feeds industry (31.8%), followed by those with 11-15 years of experience (24.5%). Respondents with 1-5 years and over 15 years of industry experience both comprised 17.9% of the sample. Employees with less than 1 year of industry experience represented 7.9% of the sample. This distribution demonstrates that the majority of respondents have substantial industry experience, enhancing the credibility of their perspectives on strategic organizational behaviors and the competitive advantage of the animal feed industry.

4.5 Descriptive Statistics

This section presents the descriptive statistics derived from respondents' ratings of the study variables, offering an overview of the general patterns, tendencies, and distribution of the data before conducting inferential analysis. The responses were captured using a

five-point Likert scale (SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agree, and SA: Strongly Agree), allowing the study to clearly identify the degree to which respondents endorsed or rejected each statement. These descriptive summaries provide an essential foundation for interpreting how strategic behaviors and competitive advantage were perceived across the sampled organizations and help to contextualize later analytical findings.

4.5.1 Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Individual Behavior

This section examined the extent to which firms demonstrate practical leadership approaches, encourage innovative thinking, implement employee motivation programs, link performance management to organizational objectives, invest in skill development, and provide constructive feedback, as shown in Table 11.

Table 10*Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Individual Behavior*

	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev
	Freq %	Freq %	Freq %	Freq %	Freq %		
Our managers consistently demonstrate effective leadership approaches that inspire employee performance.	0 0.0%	2 0.6%	6 1.8%	171 51.8%	151 45.8%	4.43	0.56
The leadership style in our organization encourages innovative thinking and problem-solving among employees.	8 2.4%	11 3.3%	14 4.2%	262 79.4%	35 10.6%	3.92	0.70
Our company has effective employee motivation programs that drive high performance and engagement.	6 1.8%	18 5.5%	74 22.4%	192 58.2%	40 12.1%	3.73	0.81
I feel personally motivated to contribute my best efforts to achieving the organization's strategic goals.	16 4.8%	10 3.0%	81 24.5%	134 40.6%	89 27.0%	3.82	1.02
Our performance management system effectively links individual goals to organizational objectives.	20 6.1%	28 8.5%	77 23.3%	116 35.2%	89 27.0%	3.68	1.14
The company invests adequately in skill development programs that enhance employee capabilities.	30 9.1%	46 13.9%	32 9.7%	137 41.5%	85 25.8%	3.61	1.26
Employees regularly receive constructive feedback that helps improve their performance.	27 8.2%	34 10.3%	24 7.3%	131 39.7%	114 34.5%	3.82	1.24
Overall						3.86	0.96

The managers consistently demonstrate effective leadership approaches that inspire employee performance (M=4.43, SD=0.56). The mean of 4.43 implies that, on average, respondents indicated managers demonstrate effective leadership to a considerable extent. The standard deviation of 0.56, which falls between 0.5 and 1, suggests a

moderate level of consensus among respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 51.8% and 45.8% of respondents selected "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively, supporting the conclusion that practical leadership approaches are prevalent in the surveyed firms.

The leadership style in our organization encourages innovative thinking and problem-solving among employees ($M=3.92$, $SD=0.70$). The mean of 3.92 indicates that, on average, respondents felt the leadership style encourages innovation to a large extent. The standard deviation of 0.70, falling between 0.5 and 1, suggests a moderate level of consensus among the respondents. The frequency distribution shows that 79.4% of respondents selected "Agree," highlighting the firms' efforts to promote innovative thinking.

Our company has effective employee motivation programs that drive high performance and engagement ($M=3.73$, $SD=0.81$). The mean of 3.73 suggests that, on average, respondents indicated the company has effective motivation programs to a large extent. The standard deviation of 0.81, within the range of 0.5 to 1, indicates moderate consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 58.2% of respondents chose "Agree," emphasizing the firms' focus on employee motivation.

I feel personally motivated to contribute my best efforts to achieving the organization's strategic goals ($M=3.82$, $SD=1.02$). The mean of 3.82 implies that, on average, respondents felt personally motivated to a large extent. The standard deviation of 1.02, being greater than 1, suggests a low level of consensus among the respondents. The frequency distribution reveals that 40.6% and 27.0% of respondents selected "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively, highlighting varying levels of personal motivation among employees.

Our performance management system effectively links individual goals to organizational objectives ($M=3.68$, $SD=1.14$). The mean of 3.68 suggests that, on average, respondents indicated that the performance management system effectively links goals to a large extent. The standard deviation of 1.14, which is greater than 1, indicates low consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 35.2% and 27.0% of respondents chose "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively, while 23.3% remained neutral.

The company invests adequately in skill development programs that enhance employee capabilities ($M=3.61$, $SD=1.26$). The mean of 3.61 implies that, on average, respondents felt the company invests in skill development to a large extent. The standard deviation of 1.26, being greater than 1, suggests a low level of consensus among the respondents. The frequency distribution shows that 41.5% of respondents selected "Agree," while 13.9% and 9.1% selected "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree," respectively.

Employees regularly receive constructive feedback that helps improve their performance ($M=3.82$, $SD=1.24$). The mean of 3.82 suggests that, on average, respondents indicated employees receive constructive feedback to a large extent. The standard deviation of 1.24, which is greater than 1, indicates low consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 39.7% and 34.5% of respondents chose "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively.

The overall mean for strategic individual behavior is 3.86, indicating that, on average, respondents felt their firms exhibit strategic individual behavior practices to a large extent. This suggests that the surveyed animal feeds manufacturing firms generally recognize the importance of effective leadership, employee motivation, performance management, skill development, and feedback mechanisms. The overall standard deviation of 0.96 falls between 0.5 and 1, suggesting a moderate level of consensus

among the respondents regarding their perceptions of strategic individual behavior practices in their organizations.

4.5.2 Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Group Behavior

This section examined the extent to which firms demonstrate team cohesion, collaborative work, effective communication, information sharing, collaborative decision-making, knowledge sharing, and best practices transfer, as shown in Table 12.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Group Behavior

	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev
	Freq %	Freq %	Freq %	Freq %	Freq %		
Teams in our organization demonstrate strong cohesion and a shared sense of purpose.	14 4.2%	22 6.7%	39 11.8%	158 47.9%	97 29.4%	3.92	1.03
Department members work collaboratively to achieve common objectives rather than pursuing individual goals.	59 17.9%	53 16.1%	23 7.0%	171 51.8%	24 7.3%	3.15	1.29
Our organization has an effective communication flow between departments and hierarchical levels.	20 6.1%	19 5.8%	57 17.3%	194 58.8%	40 12.1%	3.65	0.98
Information sharing across the organization is timely and accessible to those who need it.	8 2.4%	13 3.9%	63 19.1%	194 58.8%	52 15.8%	3.82	0.83
Our company practices collaborative decision-making that involves input from various stakeholders.	19 5.8%	12 3.6%	64 19.4%	147 44.5%	88 26.7%	3.83	1.05
Knowledge sharing is actively encouraged and rewarded within our organization.	20 6.1%	19 5.8%	44 13.3%	126 38.2%	121 36.7%	3.94	1.13
There are clear mechanisms for transferring best practices and lessons learned across teams.	12 3.6%	16 4.8%	26 7.9%	129 39.1%	147 44.5%	4.16	1.01
Overall						3.78	1.05

Teams in the organization demonstrate strong cohesion and a shared sense of purpose ($M=3.92$, $SD=1.03$). The mean of 3.92 implies that, on average, respondents indicated teams demonstrate strong cohesion to a large extent. The standard deviation of 1.03, being greater than 1, suggests a low level of consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 47.9% and 29.4% of respondents selected "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively, supporting the conclusion that team cohesion is evident in the surveyed firms. Department members work collaboratively to achieve common objectives rather than pursuing individual goals ($M=3.15$, $SD=1.29$). The mean of 3.15 indicates that, on average, respondents felt department members work collaboratively to a moderate extent. The standard deviation of 1.29, being greater than 1, suggests a low level of consensus among the respondents. The frequency distribution reveals that 51.8% of respondents selected "Agree," while 17.9% and 16.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed, respectively.

Our organization has an effective communication flow between departments and hierarchical levels ($M=3.65$, $SD=0.98$). The mean of 3.65 suggests that, on average, respondents indicated the organization has effective communication flow to a large extent. The standard deviation of 0.98, within the range of 0.5 to 1, indicates moderate consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 58.8% of respondents chose "Agree," indicating the firm's effective communication. Information sharing across the organization is timely and accessible to those who need it ($M=3.82$, $SD=0.83$). The mean of 3.82 implies that, on average, respondents felt information sharing is timely and accessible to a large extent. The standard deviation of 0.83, falling between 0.5 and 1, suggests a moderate level of consensus among the respondents. The frequency distribution reveals that 58.8% and 15.8% of respondents selected "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively.

Our company practices collaborative decision-making that involves input from various stakeholders ($M=3.83$, $SD=1.05$). The mean of 3.83 suggests that, on average, respondents indicated the company practices collaborative decision-making to a large extent. The standard deviation of 1.05, which is greater than 1, indicates low consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 44.5% and 26.7% of respondents chose "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively. Knowledge sharing is actively encouraged and rewarded within our organization ($M=3.94$, $SD=1.13$). The mean of 3.94 implies that, on average, respondents felt knowledge sharing is encouraged to a large extent. The standard deviation of 1.13, being greater than 1, suggests a low level of consensus among the respondents. The frequency distribution reveals that 38.2% and 36.7% of respondents selected "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively.

There are precise mechanisms for transferring best practices and lessons learned across teams ($M=4.16$, $SD=1.01$). The mean of 4.16 suggests that, on average, respondents indicated that precise mechanisms for transferring best practices exist to a considerable extent. The standard deviation of 1.01, which is greater than 1, indicates low consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 39.1% and 44.5% of respondents chose "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively. The overall mean for strategic group behavior is 3.78, indicating that, on average, respondents felt their firms exhibit strategic group behavior practices to a large extent. This suggests that the surveyed animal feeds manufacturing firms generally recognize the importance of team cohesion, collaboration, communication, information sharing, and knowledge transfer. The overall standard deviation of 1.05, which is greater than 1, suggests a low level of consensus among respondents regarding their perceptions of strategic group behavior practices in their organizations.

4.5.3 Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior

This section examined the extent to which firms adopt innovative technologies, implement clear technology strategies, achieve digital integration, utilize digital platforms, implement process automation, invest in technological training, and maintain technological infrastructure, as shown in Table 13.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior

	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev
	Freq %	Freq %	Freq %	Freq %	Freq %		
Our organization promptly adopts innovative technologies that enhance operational efficiency.	11 3.3%	16 4.8%	64 19.4%	112 33.9%	127 38.5%	3.99	1.04
The company has a clear strategy for evaluating and implementing new technological innovations.	19 5.8%	15 4.5%	24 7.3%	234 70.9%	38 11.5%	3.78	0.92
Digital integration across departments and functions is seamless in our organization.	17 5.2%	15 4.5%	68 20.6%	184 55.8%	46 13.9%	3.69	0.95
Our company effectively utilizes digital platforms to improve internal and external communication.	4 1.2%	18 5.5%	73 22.1%	181 54.8%	54 16.4%	3.80	0.82
Process automation has been implemented to streamline routine operations in our organization.	17 5.2%	8 2.4%	53 16.1%	144 43.6%	108 32.7%	3.96	1.02
The company regularly invests in developing employees' technological competence through training.	34 10.3%	27 8.2%	36 10.9%	113 34.2%	120 36.4%	3.78	1.30
Our organization has the necessary technological infrastructure to support competitive operations.	37 11.2%	26 7.9%	13 3.9%	140 42.4%	114 34.5%	3.81	1.30
Overall						3.83	1.05

Our organization promptly adopts innovative technologies that enhance operational efficiency (M=3.99, SD=1.04). The mean of 3.99 implies that, on average, respondents indicated the organization adopts innovative technologies to a large extent. The standard deviation of 1.04, being greater than 1, suggests a low level of consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 33.9% and 38.5% of respondents selected "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively.

The company has a clear strategy for evaluating and implementing new technological innovations (M=3.78, SD=0.92). The mean of 3.78 indicates that, on average, respondents felt the company has a clear technology strategy to a large extent. The standard deviation of 0.92, within the range of 0.5 to 1, suggests a moderate level of consensus among the respondents. The frequency distribution reveals that 70.9% of respondents selected "Agree," highlighting the firm's strategic approach to technology.

Digital integration across departments and functions is seamless in our organization (M=3.69, SD=0.95). The mean of 3.69 suggests that, on average, respondents indicated digital integration is seamless to a large extent. The standard deviation of 0.95, within the range of 0.5 to 1, indicates moderate consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 55.8% of respondents chose "Agree." Our company effectively utilizes digital platforms to improve internal and external communication (M=3.80, SD=0.82). The mean of 3.80 implies that, on average, respondents felt the company uses digital platforms effectively to a large extent. The standard deviation of 0.82, falling between 0.5 and 1, suggests a moderate level of consensus among the respondents. The frequency distribution reveals that 54.8% and 16.4% of respondents selected "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively.

Process automation has been implemented to streamline routine operations in our organization (M=3.96, SD=1.02). The mean of 3.96 suggests that, on average,

respondents indicated process automation has been implemented to a large extent. The standard deviation of 1.02, which is greater than 1, indicates low consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 43.6% and 32.7% of respondents chose "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively. The company regularly invests in developing employees' technological competence through training (M=3.78, SD=1.30). The mean of 3.78 implies that, on average, respondents felt the company invests in technological training to a large extent. The standard deviation of 1.30, being greater than 1, suggests a low level of consensus among the respondents. The frequency distribution reveals that 34.2% and 36.4% of respondents selected "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively.

Our organization has the necessary technological infrastructure to support competitive operations (M=3.81, SD=1.30). The mean of 3.81 suggests that, on average, respondents indicated the organization has the necessary technological infrastructure to a large extent. The standard deviation of 1.30, which is greater than 1, indicates low consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 42.4% and 34.5% of respondents chose "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively. The overall mean for strategic organizational technology behavior is 3.83, indicating that, on average, respondents felt their firms exhibit strategic organizational technology behavior practices to a large extent. This suggests that the surveyed animal feed manufacturing firms generally recognize the importance of adopting technology, integrating digital systems, automating processes, and developing technological infrastructure. The overall standard deviation of 1.05, which is greater than 1, suggests a low level of consensus among respondents regarding their perceptions of strategic organizational technology behavior practices in their organizations.

4.5.4 Descriptive Statistics for Competitive Advantage

This section examined the extent to which firms maintain market share, achieve price competitiveness, demonstrate cost effectiveness, meet quality standards, reduce customer complaints, maintain customer satisfaction, and build market reputation, as shown in Table 14.

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics for Competitive Advantage

	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev
	Freq %	Freq %	Freq %	Freq %	Freq %		
Our company has consistently increased or maintained its market share over the past three years.	11 3.3%	19 5.8%	67 20.3%	102 30.9%	131 39.7%	3.98	1.06
Our products are price-competitive while maintaining quality standards in the market.	21 6.4%	12 3.6%	30 9.1%	225 68.2%	42 12.7%	3.77	0.94
Our company demonstrates superior cost-effectiveness compared to competitors.	15 4.5%	14 4.2%	76 23.0%	180 54.5%	45 13.6%	3.68	0.92
The quality of our products consistently meets or exceeds industry standards.	8 2.4%	24 7.3%	52 15.8%	179 54.2%	67 20.3%	3.83	0.92
Our company receives fewer customer complaints about product quality compared to competitors.	18 5.5%	15 4.5%	42 12.7%	162 49.1%	93 28.2%	3.90	1.04
Customer satisfaction levels with our products and services are consistently high.	31 9.4%	32 9.7%	41 12.4%	123 37.3%	103 31.2%	3.71	1.26
Our company has a strong reputation for reliability and quality in the market.	21 6.4%	23 7.0%	24 7.3%	133 40.3%	129 39.1%	3.99	1.15
Overall						3.84	1.04

Our company has consistently increased or maintained its market share over the past three years ($M=3.98$, $SD=1.06$). The mean of 3.98 implies that, on average, respondents indicated the company has maintained market share to a large extent. The standard deviation of 1.06, being greater than 1, suggests a low level of consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 30.9% and 39.7% of respondents selected "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively. Our products are price-competitive while maintaining quality standards in the market ($M=3.77$, $SD=0.94$). The mean of 3.77 indicates that, on average, respondents felt the products are price-competitive to a large extent. The standard deviation of 0.94, falling between 0.5 and 1, suggests a moderate level of consensus among the respondents. The frequency distribution reveals that 68.2% of respondents selected "Agree," highlighting the firms' price competitiveness.

Our company demonstrates superior cost effectiveness compared to competitors ($M=3.68$, $SD=0.92$). The mean of 3.68 suggests that, on average, respondents indicated the company demonstrates superior cost effectiveness to a large extent. The standard deviation of 0.92, within the range of 0.5 to 1, indicates moderate consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 54.5% of respondents chose "Agree." The quality of our products consistently meets or exceeds industry standards ($M=3.83$, $SD=0.92$). The mean of 3.83 indicates that, on average, respondents felt that product quality met industry standards to a large extent. The standard deviation of 0.92, within the range of 0.5 to 1, suggests a moderate level of consensus among the respondents. The frequency distribution reveals that 54.2% and 20.3% of respondents selected "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively.

Our company receives fewer customer complaints about product quality compared to competitors ($M=3.90$, $SD=1.04$). The mean of 3.90 suggests that, on average,

respondents indicated that the company receives fewer customer complaints. The standard deviation of 1.04, which is greater than 1, indicates low consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 49.1% and 28.2% of respondents chose "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively. Customer satisfaction levels with our products and services are consistently high (M=3.71, SD=1.26). The mean of 3.71 indicates that, on average, respondents felt customer satisfaction levels were high. The standard deviation of 1.26, being greater than 1, suggests a low level of consensus among the respondents. The frequency distribution reveals that 37.3% and 31.2% of respondents selected "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively.

Our company has a strong reputation for reliability and quality in the market (M=3.99, SD=1.15). The mean of 3.99 suggests that, on average, respondents indicated the company has a strong reputation to a large extent. The standard deviation of 1.15, which is greater than 1, indicates low consensus among the respondents on this interpretation. The frequency distribution shows that 40.3% and 39.1% of respondents chose "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," respectively. The overall mean for competitive advantage is 3.84, indicating that, on average, respondents felt their firms exhibit competitive advantage to a large extent. This suggests that the surveyed animal feeds manufacturing firms generally maintain strong market positions through effective cost management, quality products, customer satisfaction, and market reputation. The overall standard deviation of 1.04, which is greater than 1, suggests a low level of consensus among respondents regarding their perceptions of competitive advantage in their organizations.

4.6 Qualitative Results

This section presents qualitative findings from in-depth interviews conducted with 19 key informants from animal feed manufacturing firms in Nakuru City. The qualitative

data provided deeper insights into how strategic organizational behaviors manifest in practice and influence competitive advantage. The findings are organized according to the study's main variables: strategic individual behavior, strategic group behavior, strategic organizational technology behavior, and competitive advantage outcomes.

4.6.1 Qualitative Findings on Strategic Individual Behavior

The qualitative findings provided deeper insights into strategic individual behavior themes that emerged from interviews with 19 key informants. Leadership approaches emerged as a central theme, with diverse styles implemented across firms.

R003 stated that " *Servant leadership: Leaders prioritize employee well-being and development, creating a loyal workforce that sustains long-term productivity and customer service.*"

R006 emphasized open communication policies, noting that " *Open-door policy: Managers encourage open communication, allowing quick resolution of operational challenges and improving production efficiency.*"

R001 highlighted the benefits of participative leadership, explaining that " *Participative Leadership: Managers involve employees in decision-making, which fosters ownership and improves problem-solving, giving the company a responsive edge.*"

R002 emphasized transformational leadership, stating that " *Transformational leadership: Leaders inspire employees with a shared vision and continuous improvement culture, enhancing product innovation and customer satisfaction.*"

Skills development emerged as a critical component of strategic individual behavior.

R001 explained that "Regular Training Workshops: Employees are trained in feed formulation, machinery handling, and quality control to improve production accuracy and efficiency." R005 noted that "Individual development plans: Tailored development

paths are created for each employee, ensuring skills growth matches future company needs." R008 added insights on cross-functional training, stating that "Cross-department training: Employees learn multiple functions (production, sales, logistics), increasing flexibility and reducing operational risks." R012 emphasized certification programs, mentioning that "Certifications and external training: Staff are sponsored for industry-relevant courses, improving technical competence and boosting product quality."

Performance management systems were identified as key drivers of alignment in individual behavior. R005 stated that "Recognition programs: Monthly awards for top performers encourage high output and reduce employee turnover, maintaining operational stability." R008 reinforced this by noting that "Performance-based bonuses: Linking bonuses to sales and production metrics drives employees to meet organizational goals, boosting market competitiveness." R006 highlighted goal-setting practices, explaining that "Goal setting: Each employee has clear, measurable targets linked to production, sales, or quality metrics that contribute to company objectives." R010 mentioned that "Leadership development programs: High-performing employees are identified and trained for management roles to support leadership succession."

The qualitative data also revealed additional insights into individual motivation and development strategies. R004 emphasized situational leadership, stating that "Situational leadership: Supervisors adapt their style based on employee competence, ensuring consistent performance across various skill levels in production and sales." R007 highlighted transactional leadership benefits, explaining that "Transactional leadership: Clear structures of rewards and penalties encourage employees to meet production targets and adhere to quality standards consistently." R009 noted capacity-building efforts, stating, "Capacity building: Regular training in feed formulation and production techniques enhances employee competence, ensuring consistent product quality." R013

emphasized flexible work arrangements, stating that "Flexible work schedules: Providing shift options improves employee work-life balance, reducing absenteeism and maintaining stable production."

4.6.2 Qualitative Findings on Strategic Group Behavior

The qualitative findings provided deeper insights into strategic group behavior themes that emerged from interviews with 19 key informants. Team cohesion emerged as a fundamental factor in organizational success. R001 observed that "Strong Team Cohesion: Employees collaborate easily across departments, improving operational efficiency and reducing production delays." R003 supported this by stating that "Regular team meetings: Weekly meetings help synchronize activities and align teams with company goals, supporting smooth operations." R006 emphasized transparent communication, noting that "Transparent information sharing: Management communicates market updates and strategic plans to all employees, keeping everyone focused on competitive goals." Furthermore, R010 added that "Effective feedback loops: Staff can give and receive performance feedback regularly, promoting continuous improvement and better team alignment."

Collaborative decision-making emerged as a key theme, with R001 explaining that "Cross-Functional Meetings: Regular discussions involving production, sales, and procurement teams ensure decisions are informed and coordinated, reducing operational disruptions." R002 highlighted anonymous feedback systems, stating that "Suggestion box system: Employees submit improvement ideas anonymously, encouraging input from all levels, which has led to process innovations improving feed quality." R004 emphasized shared digital platforms, noting that "Shared digital platforms: Use of shared folders or databases allows staff to access technical data and production guidelines, standardizing processes." R009 added that "Knowledge-sharing workshops: Staff are

trained on best practices and recent improvements, raising operational standards across departments."

Cross-functional collaboration was consistently mentioned as enhancing organizational performance. R006 stated that "Team-based project assignments: Interdepartmental projects encourage collaboration, accelerating implementation of new feed formulations and production techniques." R007 reinforced this by explaining that "Cross-functional teams: Forming teams from different departments for key projects encourages knowledge sharing and speeds up problem-solving." R011 emphasized team-based incentives, noting that "Team-based incentives: Group rewards encourage collaboration in production lines, enhancing output consistency and minimizing wastage." R015 added that "Task force teams for new initiatives: Special task forces guide product development, enabling faster market adaptation and innovation."

The qualitative data also revealed additional insights into group dynamics and their impact on competitive advantage. R012 highlighted conflict resolution systems, explaining that "Conflict resolution systems: Issues between employees are addressed promptly to maintain teamwork and operational focus." R014 emphasized the importance of shared performance targets, stating that "Shared performance targets: Teams are assigned common goals (e.g., production volumes), encouraging collaboration and shared responsibility for success." R017 noted the significance of open communication channels, mentioning that "Open-door leadership style: Managers are approachable, allowing staff to raise issues directly and quickly, preventing delays and confusion." R019 added insights on team identity, explaining that "Strong team identity: Employees view themselves as integral parts of the organization, boosting morale and commitment to company success."

4.6.3 Qualitative Findings on Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior

The qualitative findings provided deeper insights into strategic organizational technology behavior themes that emerged from interviews with 19 key informants. Technology adoption and digital integration emerged as significant competitive drivers. R001 explained that "Automated Production Lines: Investment in automated mixing and packaging machines has improved feed consistency and reduced production time." R002 highlighted inventory management systems, stating that "Digital inventory systems: Real-time stock tracking systems have minimized raw material shortages, ensuring uninterrupted production." R005 emphasized e-payment integration, noting that "E-payment integration: Digital payment solutions have simplified transactions, reducing sales cycle time and boosting cash flow." R007 added that "ERP software integration: Enterprise Resource Planning links procurement, production, and sales data in one system, improving operational coordination."

Process automation emerged as a significant driver of operational efficiency. R001 stated that "Automated Mixing Systems: Introduction of automated feed mixers ensures precise ingredient combinations, improving product quality and consistency." R002 highlighted packaging automation, explaining that "Packaging Line Automation: Automated bagging and sealing reduce manual errors and speed up packaging, allowing higher daily output." R004 emphasized inventory automation, noting that "Barcode inventory management: Automating stock tracking prevents raw material shortages and optimizes inventory levels, reducing production stoppages." R006 added that "Mobile sales applications: Sales teams use mobile apps to track clients and orders in real-time, increasing field sales efficiency."

Investment in technological skills was identified as essential for sustained competitive advantage. R010 explained that "Digital staff training modules: Employees receive

online training in feed safety and machinery use, building skills more efficiently." R012 highlighted e-learning platforms, stating that "E-learning platforms for staff: Online training modules improve employee skills in machinery use, digital systems, and safety protocols." R008 emphasized automation training, noting that "Automation and digital skills training: Staff learn to operate modern machinery and software, improving efficiency and output consistency." R015 added that "Multi-skilling programs: Employees are trained across multiple machines and processes, increasing flexibility and reducing dependence on individual staff."

The qualitative data also revealed additional insights into technology adoption and digital transformation strategies. R003 highlighted quality control technologies, stating that "Data-driven quality control: Sensors and monitoring tools detect errors during production, allowing immediate adjustments and reducing wastage." R009 emphasized predictive maintenance, explaining that "Predictive maintenance tools: Machinery maintenance schedules are guided by software, reducing downtime and repair costs." R011 noted cloud-based systems, mentioning that "Cloud data storage: Storing operational data in cloud systems protects information and improves access across branches." R016 added insights on AI applications, stating that "AI-Based feed formulation tools: Software-assisted formulation minimizes errors, optimizes cost, and ensures high feed quality, improving brand reputation."

4.6.4 Qualitative Findings on Competitive Advantage

The qualitative findings provided deeper insights into competitive advantage outcomes that emerged from interviews with 19 key informants. Market performance improvements were consistently highlighted across firms. R001 stated that "Expanded Market Share: Increased production capacity and wider distribution have resulted in more farmers choosing our feeds over competitors." R003 emphasized quality

consistency, explaining that "Consistently high product quality: Strict quality control procedures ensure feed consistency, building trust among customers compared to inconsistent competitors." R005 highlighted customer retention strategies, noting that "Loyalty programs: Rewarding frequent buyers has secured long-term relationships, reducing customer drift to cheaper competitors." R016 added that "Technical support services: Offering feeding advice and farm consultations has improved customer satisfaction, a service many competitors do not provide."

Operational improvements resulting from strategic behaviors were consistently mentioned. R002 stated that "Improved Cost Efficiency: Automation in production processes has reduced operational costs, allowing competitive pricing without compromising quality." R008 emphasized lean manufacturing, explaining that "Focus on lean manufacturing: Minimizing production waste has lowered costs, allowing price competitiveness without sacrificing product quality." R010 highlighted availability advantages, noting that "Higher product availability: Automated inventory management ensures consistent stock availability, avoiding shortages that competitors often face." R018 added that "Reduced production waste: Lean production techniques have lowered waste, contributing to better cost control compared to less efficient players."

The qualitative data also revealed additional competitive advantage dimensions and future strategic directions. R006 emphasized service differentiation, stating that "Adoption of bulk sales models: Selling in bulk to wholesalers has expanded our market footprint across Nakuru City more efficiently than some competitors." R014 highlighted customer service excellence, explaining that "Responsive customer service: Faster handling of customer complaints has improved satisfaction, helping retain clients who previously switched brands." R017 noted market positioning strategies, mentioning that "Strategic pricing adjustments: Data-driven pricing strategies maintain competitiveness

without undercutting profitability, unlike price-focused competitors." R019 added insights on brand development, stating that "Positive word-of-mouth referrals: Satisfied customers actively recommend our brand, expanding our market reach without relying solely on paid advertising."

4.7 Correlation Analysis

This section examines the relationship between strategic individual behavior and competitive advantage to determine its strength and significance, considering its role in organizational competitive positioning. Table 15 shows the correlation analysis.

Table 14

Correlation between Strategic Individual Behavior and Competitive Advantage

Variables		Competitive Advantage	Strategic Individual Behavior	Strategic Group Behavior	Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior
Competitive Advantage	Pearson Correlation	1.000			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
Strategic Individual Behavior	Pearson Correlation	.762**	1.000		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000			
Strategic Group Behavior	Pearson Correlation	.812**	.848**	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		
Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior	Pearson Correlation	.690**	.815**	.860**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	

The correlation between strategic individual behavior (SIB) and competitive advantage (CA) was strong and positive ($r = .762$, $p = .000$), indicating that higher levels of strategic individual actions were associated with improved competitiveness. This aligns with Scientific Management Theory (Taylor, 1911), which emphasizes that optimized individual performance contributes directly to organizational efficiency and advantage. Strategic group behavior (SGB) demonstrated a very strong positive correlation with CA ($r = .812$, $p = .000$). This suggests that collaboration and coordinated group processes greatly enhanced competitive outcomes. The result is consistent with McGregor's Theory Y (1960), which argues that participative teamwork fosters higher productivity and organizational performance.

Strategic organizational technology behavior (SOTB) also showed a strong positive correlation with CA ($r = .690$, $p = .000$), indicating that effective technology adoption and use significantly supported competitive strength. This finding aligns with the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (Venkatesh et al., 2020), which links technology utilization to improved organizational outcomes.

4.8 Diagnostic Test Results

Diagnostic tests were performed to verify that the data met the assumptions required for parametric analysis. This section presents the results of normality, multicollinearity, and linearity tests conducted to ensure the validity and reliability of the regression results.

4.8.1 Normality Test

The normality test used the Shapiro-Wilk test to assess whether the data followed a normal distribution, a fundamental assumption for parametric statistical tests. Table 16 presents the normality test results for all study variables.

Table 15*Normality Test Results*

Variable	Shapiro-Wilk Statistic	df	Sig.	Decision
Strategic Individual Behavior	0.987	330	0.072	Normal
Strategic Group Behavior	0.991	330	0.156	Normal
Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior	0.989	330	0.098	Normal
Competitive Advantage	0.985	330	0.063	Normal

The results in Table 16 show that all variables met the normality assumption. The Shapiro-Wilk test statistic values ranged from 0.985 to 0.991, with all significance values above 0.05 ($p > 0.05$). This indicates that the data for strategic individual behavior ($W = 0.987$, $p = 0.072$), strategic group behavior ($W = 0.991$, $p = 0.156$), strategic organizational technology behavior ($W = 0.989$, $p = 0.098$), and competitive advantage ($W = 0.985$, $p = 0.063$) were all normally distributed. These results confirmed that the normality assumption required for multiple regression analysis was satisfied.

4.8.2 Multicollinearity Test

The multicollinearity test was performed to examine whether there were high correlations among the independent variables that could distort the regression results. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values were calculated for each independent variable. Table 17 presents the results of the multicollinearity test.

Table 16*Multicollinearity Test Results*

Independent Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Decision
Strategic Individual Behavior	0.297	3.367	No Multicollinearity
Strategic Group Behavior	0.234	4.274	No Multicollinearity
Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior	0.248	4.032	No Multicollinearity

Acceptable threshold: VIF < 10, Tolerance > 0.1

The results in Table 17 indicate that multicollinearity was not a concern in this study. All VIF values were well below the threshold of 10, ranging from 3.367 to 4.274, and all tolerance values exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.1, ranging from 0.234 to 0.297. Strategic individual behavior had a VIF of 3.367 and a tolerance of 0.297; strategic group behavior had a VIF of 4.274 and a tolerance of 0.234; and strategic organizational technology behavior had a VIF of 4.032 and a tolerance of 0.248. These results confirmed that the independent variables were sufficiently distinct and that multicollinearity would not bias the regression coefficients.

4.8.3 Linearity Test

The linearity test was conducted to verify the existence of linear relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Scatter plots with fitted regression lines were examined, and the results are presented in Figures 2, 3, and 4.

Figure 2

Scatter Plot for Strategic Individual Behavior and Competitive Advantage

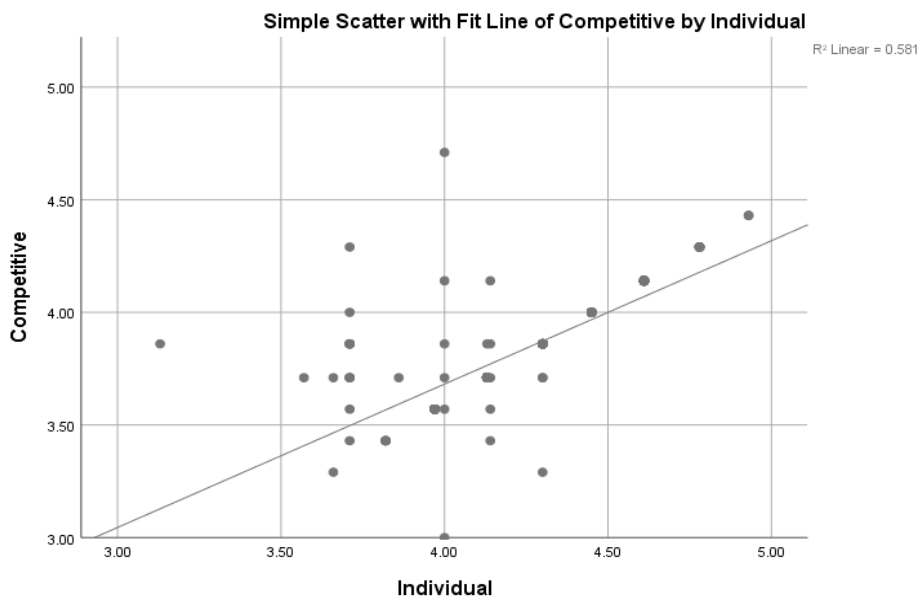


Figure 2 shows a positive linear relationship between strategic individual behavior and competitive advantage, with R^2 Linear = 0.581, indicating that 58.1% of the variance in competitive advantage is explained by strategic individual behavior.

Figure 3

Scatter Plot for Strategic Group Behavior and Competitive Advantage

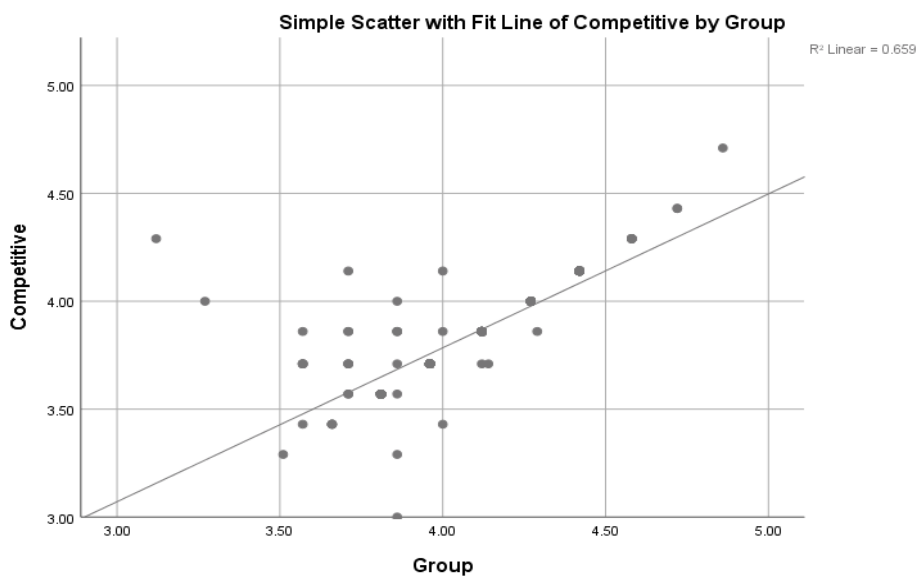


Figure 3 demonstrates a strong positive linear relationship between strategic group behavior and competitive advantage (R^2 Linear = 0.659), indicating that 65.9% of the variance in competitive advantage is explained by strategic group behavior. This represents the strongest bivariate relationship among the three independent variables.

Figure 4

Scatter Plot for Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior and Competitive Advantage

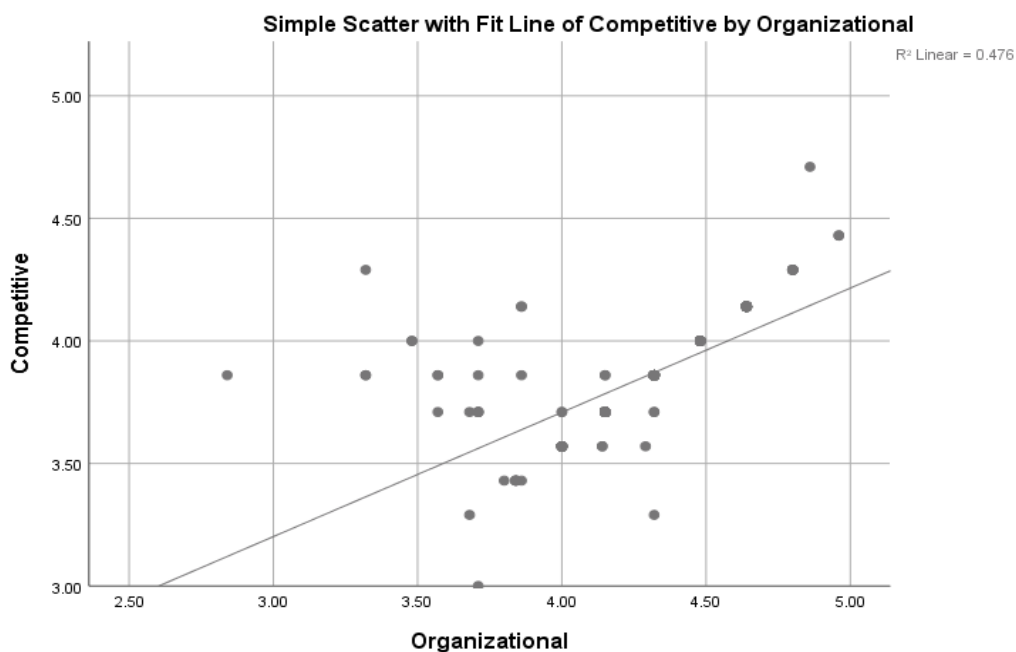


Figure 4 illustrates a positive linear relationship between strategic organizational technology behavior and competitive advantage (R^2 Linear = 0.476), indicating that 47.6% of the variance in competitive advantage is explained by strategic organizational technology behavior. The scatter plots confirm that linear relationships exist between all independent variables and competitive advantage, with no systematic curvilinear patterns observed. All relationships were positive and statistically significant, validating the appropriateness of linear regression analysis.

4.9 Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression was conducted to determine the combined and individual effects of strategic individual behavior (SIB), strategic group behavior (SGB), and strategic organizational technology behavior (SOTB) on the competitive advantage (CA) of animal-feeds manufacturing firms in Nakuru City.

4.9.1 Model Summary

Table 17

Multiple Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.826a	.682	.679	.11521

The multiple regression model shows a strong positive relationship between the combined predictors Strategic Individual Behavior, Strategic Group Behavior, and Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior and Competitive Advantage, as indicated by $R = .826$. The R Square value of .682 means that 68.2% of the variation in competitive advantage is explained by the three predictors, while 31.8% is accounted for by other factors outside the model. The Adjusted R Square (.679) closely matches the R Square, suggesting the model is stable and fits the data well.

4.9.2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Table 18

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.278	3	3.093	232.994	.000b
	Residual	4.327	326	.013		
	Total	13.606	329			

The ANOVA results in Table 18 reinforce the model's overall significance. The regression yielded an F-statistic of 232.994 and a p-value of .000, both well below the .05 threshold. This indicates that the model provides a statistically significant prediction of competitive advantage and that the combined effect of the three organizational behavior variables is unlikely to be due to random variation.

4.9.3 Regression Coefficients

Table 19

Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.785	.116		6.760	.000
	Strategic Individual Behaviour	.251	.052	.301	4.835	.000
	Strategic Group Behaviour	.587	.062	.668	9.456	.000
	Strategic Organizational Technology Behaviour	.507	.029	.690	17.259	.000

Table 18 presents the regression coefficients, which show the individual contribution of each predictor to competitive advantage.

The results indicate that Strategic Individual Behaviour has a positive and significant effect on competitive advantage, with $B = .251$, $t = 4.835$, and $p = .000$. This means that improvements in individual-level actions such as self-driven performance, initiative, and personal accountability lead to measurable increases in competitive advantage. Although significant, its effect is the smallest among the three predictors.

Strategic Group Behaviour shows a more substantial effect, with $B = .587$, $t = 9.456$, and $p = .000$. This indicates that effective teamwork, collaboration, knowledge sharing, and cohesive group decision-making substantially enhance a firm's competitive position. Its higher coefficient suggests group-level dynamics are more influential than individual actions.

Strategic Organizational Technology Behaviour emerges as the strongest predictor, with $B = .507$, $t = 17.259$, and $p = .000$. This highlights the critical role of technology adoption, digital systems, and innovation in shaping competitive advantage. The high t -value shows that technology behavior contributes the most consistently and significantly to predicting competitiveness.

4.10 Hypothesis Testing Results

The regression results in Table 18 provide evidence for testing the three null hypotheses. For H_{01} , which states that strategic individual behavior has no significant influence on competitive advantage, the results show a positive and statistically significant coefficient ($B = 0.251$, $\beta = 0.301$, $t = 4.835$, $p = 0.000$). Since the p -value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that strategic individual behavior significantly enhances competitive advantage in the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City.

For H_{02} , which proposes that strategic group behavior has no significant effect on competitive advantage, the regression output shows a strong positive and significant coefficient ($B = 0.587$, $\beta = 0.668$, $t = 9.456$, $p = 0.000$). With the p -value below 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that strategic group behavior plays a substantial role in improving competitive advantage.

For H_{03} , which posits that strategic organizational technology behavior has no significant impact on competitive advantage, the results reveal a highly important and

positive relationship ($B = 0.507$, $\beta = 0.690$, $t = 17.259$, $p = 0.000$). Again, since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This shows that technology-driven strategic behavior strongly enhances competitive advantage.

Table 20

Summary Table

Hypothesis	p values	Decision
Strategic Individual Behavior	.000	Reject
Strategic Group Behavior	.000	Reject
Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior	.000	Reject

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter Five synthesizes the study by summarizing the key findings, drawing conclusions from the empirical evidence, and presenting policy, practical, and research recommendations. It highlights the implications of the results for organizations in the animal feeds industry and identifies areas requiring further investigation to enhance understanding of strategic behaviors and competitive advantage.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The multiple regression analysis revealed that the three strategic organizational behaviors collectively explained 68.2% of the variance in competitive advantage ($R^2 = 0.682$). The ANOVA results confirmed the model's overall significance ($F = 232.994$, $p < .001$), indicating that the combination of strategic individual behavior, strategic group behavior, and strategic organizational technology behavior significantly explains competitive advantage in animal feed manufacturing firms. The regression model equation was established as: $Y = 0.785 + 0.251X_1 + 0.587X_2 + 0.507X_3 + \varepsilon$, where Y represents competitive advantage, X_1 represents strategic individual behavior, X_2 represents strategic group behavior, and X_3 represents strategic organizational technology behavior.

The qualitative findings supported these statistical results by demonstrating how these behaviors translated into competitive outcomes. R001 stated that "Expanded Market Share: Increased production capacity and wider distribution have resulted in more farmers choosing our feeds over competitors," while R002 noted that "Improved Cost Efficiency: Automation in production processes has reduced operational costs, allowing competitive pricing without compromising quality." R016 emphasized service

differentiation, explaining that "Technical support services: Offering feeding advice and farm consultations has improved customer satisfaction, a service many competitors do not provide," and R008 highlighted operational excellence through "Focus on lean manufacturing: Minimizing production waste has lowered costs, allowing price competitiveness without sacrificing product quality."

5.2.1 Strategic Individual Behavior on Competitive Advantage

The study found that respondents generally felt their firms exhibited strategic individual behavior practices to a large extent ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.96$). The regression analysis confirmed that strategic individual behavior has a statistically significant, positive influence on competitive advantage in animal feed manufacturing firms ($\beta_1 = 0.251$, $p = 0.000$). This suggests that animal feed manufacturing firms in Nakuru City that develop practical leadership approaches, employee motivation programs, and performance management systems are more likely to achieve better market competitive positioning. The findings highlight the importance of investing in individual employee capabilities, providing constructive feedback, and aligning personal goals with organizational objectives in driving competitive advantage.

The qualitative findings provided additional depth to these results, revealing diverse leadership approaches being implemented across firms. R003 explained that "Servant leadership: Leaders prioritize employee well-being and development, creating a loyal workforce that sustains long-term productivity and customer service," while R002 emphasized that "Transformational leadership: Leaders inspire employees with a shared vision and continuous improvement culture, enhancing product innovation and customer satisfaction." Skills development emerged as critical, with R001 noting that "Regular Training Workshops: Employees are trained in feed formulation, machinery handling, and quality control to improve production accuracy and efficiency," and R012 adding

that "Certifications and external training: Staff are sponsored for industry-relevant courses, improving technical competence and boosting product quality."

5.2.2 Strategic Group Behavior on Competitive Advantage

Respondents indicated that their firms implement strategic group behavior practices to a large extent ($M = 3.78$, $SD = 1.05$). The regression analysis demonstrated that strategic group behavior has a statistically significant, positive influence on competitive advantage in animal feed manufacturing firms ($\beta_1 = 0.587$, $p = 0.000$). This implies that animal feed manufacturing firms in Nakuru City that foster effective team cohesion, collaborative decision-making, communication flow, and knowledge-sharing practices are likely to see improved competitive advantage. The findings underscore the importance of maintaining effective group dynamics and collaborative mechanisms to manage manufacturing operations and achieve market superiority.

The qualitative data revealed that team cohesion was fundamental to organizational success. R001 observed that "Strong Team Cohesion: Employees collaborate easily across departments, improving operational efficiency and reducing production delays." At the same time, R006 emphasized that "Transparent information sharing: Management communicates market updates and strategic plans to all employees, keeping everyone focused on competitive goals." Collaborative decision-making emerged as crucial, with R002 stating that "Suggestion box system: Employees submit improvement ideas anonymously, encouraging input from all levels, which has led to process innovations improving feed quality," and R007 explaining that "Cross-functional teams: Forming teams from different departments for key projects encourages knowledge sharing and speeds up problem-solving."

5.2.3 Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior on Competitive Advantage

The findings suggest that respondents felt their firms exhibit strategic organizational technology behavior practices to a large extent ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 1.05$). The regression analysis revealed that strategic organizational technology behavior has a statistically significant and positive influence on competitive advantage in animal feeds manufacturing firms ($\beta_3 = 0.507$, $p < .05$). This indicates that animal feeds manufacturing firms in Nakuru City with effective technology adoption strategies, digital integration, and process automation are more likely to achieve better competitive advantage. The results highlight the importance of fostering technological innovation, investing in employee technological competence, and maintaining necessary technological infrastructure in the competitive manufacturing environment.

The qualitative findings demonstrated significant technology adoption across firms. R001 explained that "Automated Production Lines: Investment in automated mixing and packaging machines has improved feed consistency and reduced production time," while R002 highlighted that "Digital inventory systems: Real-time stock tracking systems have minimized raw material shortages, ensuring uninterrupted production." Process automation was particularly emphasized, with R001 stating that "Automated Mixing Systems: Introduction of automated feed mixers ensures precise ingredient combinations, improving product quality and consistency," and R004 noting that "Barcode inventory management: Automating stock tracking prevents raw material shortages and optimizes inventory levels, reducing production stoppages." Technological competence development was also crucial, as R010 explained: "Digital staff training modules: Employees receive online training in feed safety and machinery use, building skills more efficiently."

5.3 Conclusions

This section presents the conclusions drawn from the study findings, organized according to the specific research objectives.

Based on the first objective, which sought to assess the influence of strategic individual behavior of employees on the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City, the study concludes that strategic individual behavior has a statistically significant and positive influence on competitive advantage in animal feeds manufacturing firms. The regression analysis revealed that strategic individual behavior significantly predicts competitive advantage, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. This finding aligns with Scientific Management Theory, which emphasizes the optimization of individual work processes, and the Resource-Based View, which considers distinctive individual competencies as valuable strategic resources. The qualitative evidence reinforced this conclusion, demonstrating that effective leadership approaches, including servant leadership, transformational leadership, and participative leadership, combined with comprehensive skills development programs and performance management systems, directly contributed to improved operational efficiency and market positioning in animal feed manufacturing firms in Nakuru City.

In relation to the second objective, which aimed to establish the effect of strategic group behavior of employees on the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City, the study concludes that strategic group behavior has a statistically significant and positive effect on competitive advantage in animal feeds manufacturing firms. The regression analysis indicated that strategic group behavior significantly influences competitive advantage, representing the strongest predictor among the three independent variables, thereby supporting the rejection of the null hypothesis. This finding is consistent with McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, which emphasize the

importance of participative management and collaborative environments for organizational performance. The qualitative findings provided concrete examples of how strong team cohesion, collaborative decision-making processes, transparent information sharing, and knowledge-sharing workshops enhanced operational coordination, accelerated innovation, and improved problem-solving capabilities in animal feeds manufacturing firms in Nakuru City.

Concerning the third objective, which sought to determine the impact of strategic organizational technology behavior on the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City, the study concludes that strategic organizational technology behavior has a statistically significant and positive impact on competitive advantage in animal feeds manufacturing firms. The regression analysis demonstrated that strategic organizational technology behavior significantly affects competitive advantage, supporting the rejection of the null hypothesis. This finding aligns with the Resource-Based View theory, which considers technological capabilities as valuable and rare strategic resources, and is consistent with the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), which links technology adoption to organizational performance outcomes. The qualitative data illustrated how automated production lines, digital inventory systems, process automation, and investment in technological competence development created sustainable competitive advantages through improved quality consistency, cost reduction, operational efficiency, and enhanced market responsiveness in animal feeds manufacturing firms in Nakuru City.

Integrating all three research objectives, the study concludes that strategic organizational behaviors collectively and significantly influence the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City, Kenya. This finding indicates that competitive advantage in animal feeds manufacturing firms is not determined by a single behavioral

dimension but rather by the synergistic interaction of individual-level factors, group-level dynamics, and organizational-level technology adoption. The qualitative findings provided rich contextual evidence of how these three dimensions of strategic organizational behavior work together to create market advantages, operational excellence, and customer satisfaction, thereby differentiating successful firms from competitors in Nakuru City's animal feeds industry.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Policy Recommendations

The study's findings indicate several key areas for improving the animal feed manufacturing sector in Nakuru City, Kenya. To enhance competitive advantage in animal feed manufacturing firms in this competitive environment, firms should prioritize developing effective individual behaviors by implementing leadership development programs, establishing employee motivation systems, and creating performance management frameworks that align individual goals with organizational objectives. Regular feedback mechanisms and skill development programs are crucial to ensure continuous improvement in personal performance.

Implementing effective group dynamics is also vital. Firms should establish collaborative decision-making processes, enhance communication between departments and hierarchical levels, promote knowledge-sharing practices, and create mechanisms for transferring best practices across teams. Building team cohesion and shared purpose can help optimize performance and achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

Fostering strategic technology adoption is another critical area for improvement. Animal feed manufacturing firms should strive to adopt innovative technologies that promptly enhance operational efficiency, develop clear strategies for evaluating and implementing technological innovations, ensure seamless digital integration across departments, and

invest in developing employees' technological competence through training. Maintaining the necessary technological infrastructure can foster innovation, automation, and competitive operations.

Optimizing strategic organizational behaviors is also crucial. Animal feed manufacturing firms should focus on effectively integrating individual, group, and technological behaviors to achieve competitive goals, ensuring the efficient utilization of organizational capabilities, conducting thorough strategic planning and implementation, prioritizing behavioral alignment with competitive strategies, and adopting innovative approaches to organizational behavior management. Leveraging strategic behaviors and streamlining organizational processes can enhance competitive positioning and maximize the impact of organizational capabilities on market performance.

Finally, it is recommended that further research be conducted to explore additional factors that may influence competitive advantage in animal feed manufacturing firms in dynamic environments. This could include investigating the impact of external factors such as regulatory changes, market competition, and supply chain dynamics on competitive advantage. Additionally, longitudinal studies could provide insights into how the relationship between strategic organizational behaviors and competitive advantage evolves in this rapidly changing industry.

5.4.2 Recommendations for Further Studies

Based on the results of this study, several avenues for further research emerge. An in-depth analysis of specific leadership styles and their impact on competitive advantage in animal feed manufacturing firms could provide valuable insights into their implementation, their effect on employee performance and organizational outcomes, and their relationship with strategic organizational behaviors. This is particularly relevant given the findings on effective leadership approaches and their variability across firms.

The evidence of varying levels of technology adoption among firms warrants a comprehensive investigation into the patterns, barriers, and facilitators of technology implementation within the animal feeds manufacturing sector in Kenya. Such research could inform both business strategies and policy interventions by providing deeper insights into technology adoption behavior.

Given the significant competitive pressures in the animal feed industry, a longitudinal study examining how firms adapt their strategic organizational behaviors in response to evolving market conditions could be insightful. This research could analyze the effects of these adaptations on competitive advantage over time.

The positive influence of group behavior on competitive advantage suggests the need for a deeper exploration of how specific group dynamics contribute to innovation and operational excellence in animal feeds manufacturing firms. This could shed light on the role of factors such as collaborative culture and team effectiveness in driving competitive success.

Lastly, the importance of strategic organizational technology behavior highlighted in this study calls for a detailed investigation into digital transformation strategies and their implementation in response to rapid technological changes. Such research could provide valuable insights into effective technology management in competitive environments, contributing to our understanding of strategic organizational behaviors in the manufacturing sector.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Letter of Introduction

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Request To Collect Data For Academic Research Project

My name is Judith Chepkemoi, a Master's Student at Kabarak University, currently working on my research project titled "*Influence of Strategic Organizational Behaviors on Competitive Advantage of the animal feeds Industry in Nakuru City, Kenya.*" Your participation in this study by completing the attached questionnaire was greatly appreciated. All your responses were treated with utmost confidentiality, and the data collected was used only for academic purposes.

Thank you in advance,

Yours faithfully,

Judith Chepkemoi

Appendix II: Consent Form

Kabarak University Research Ethics Committee

Adult Informed Consent Form

STUDY TITLE: Influence of Strategic Organizational Behaviors on Competitive Advantage of the Animal Feeds Industry in Nakuru City, Kenya

PI: Judith Chepkemai Affiliated Institution: Kabarak University Co-investigator(s): Prof. Ronald Chepkilot, Dr. Emily Cheposero Tumwet Affiliated Institution(s): Kabarak University

Introduction

You are invited to participate in this research study being undertaken by the above-listed investigators. This form helped you gather information about the study so you can decide voluntarily whether to participate. You are encouraged to ask any questions regarding the research process, as well as any benefits or risks that you may accrue by participating. After you have been adequately informed about the study, you are requested to either agree or decline to participate. Upon deciding to participate in the study, you were further asked to affirm that by appending your signature/thumbprint on this form. Accepting or declining to participate in this study does not in any way waive the following rights which you're entitled to: a) Voluntary participation in the study; b) Withdrawing from the study at any time without the obligation of having to give an explanation, and c) Access to services which you're entitled to

A copy of this form was provided to you for your own records should I continue
YES/NO ____

This study has been reviewed and approved by Kabarak University Research Ethics Committee (KUREC)

What is the Purpose of the Study?

The main reason(s) for conducting this study are to answer the following questions:

How does the strategic individual behavior of employees influence the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City?

What is the effect of the strategic group behavior of employees on the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City?

How does strategic organizational technology behavior impact the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry in Nakuru City?

Who can Take Part in the Study?

Participants in this study include full-time employees who have worked in animal feed manufacturing companies in Nakuru City for at least 1 year, across all hierarchical levels (operational, supervisory, and managerial) and from various functional departments. The study involved 400 respondents from 38 registered animal feed manufacturing companies in Nakuru City.

In Case You Agree to Participate in the Study, What Will Happen?

This is what is going to happen once you have agreed to participate in the study:

First, the study took approximately 30-45 minutes of your time to complete the questionnaire. The entire research project was conducted between May and July 2025.

Second, a qualified and well-trained interviewer asked you questions in a private place where you felt comfortable. In case there is any question you feel uncomfortable responding to, you will not be coerced into responding. The questions were on the following areas:

Your demographic information

Strategic individual behavior of employees in your organization

Strategic group behavior of employees in your organization

Strategic organizational technology behavior in your organization

Competitive advantage indicators in your organization

Third, suppose you are selected for an in-depth interview. In that case, the researcher will arrange a convenient time and a private location for a 15-20-minute interview, which will be audio-recorded with your permission.

Lastly, you are requested to provide your contact details (phone number or another reliable contact method). This helped reach you in case new information regarding the study emerges or if clarification is needed on your responses. The contact details you will provide shall remain confidential to the lead researcher (PI).

What Potential Risks are Associated with Participation in this Study?

This study poses minimal risk to participants. The main inconvenience was the time required to complete the questionnaire or participate in an interview. There is a slight possibility that some questions about organizational practices might cause minor discomfort if they relate to sensitive workplace issues. However, you are free to skip any question that makes you uncomfortable or withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

Privacy & Confidentiality

Your privacy and the confidentiality of your information are of utmost importance in this study. All data collected was coded with unique identifiers rather than names. Your responses were aggregated with those of other participants, and no individual responses will be identifiable in any published reports. All physical data will be stored in locked cabinets, and electronic data will be password-protected, with access limited to the research team. Audio recordings of interviews were transcribed and then deleted within six months of data collection. All raw data were destroyed five years after the completion of the study.

In case you aren't comfortable answering any of the questions during the interview because of feeling embarrassed or uncomfortable, it was within your rights to decline. Otherwise, every measure has been taken to ensure the interview is conducted in a private area with minimal to no interference, so you feel comfortable.

What Benefits are you going to accrue by participating in the Study?

While there are no direct monetary benefits to you for participating in this study, your participation contributed to knowledge that could help improve strategic organizational behaviors and the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry. The findings may help your organization and others in the industry to enhance their competitive positioning through more effective organizational practices. You also had the opportunity to reflect on organizational behaviors in your workplace, which may provide insights for your professional development.

The study findings were shared with participating organizations in summary form, potentially leading to improved management practices that could benefit employees in the long term.

What will it Cost You to participate in the Study?

There is no financial cost to you for participating in this study. The only cost was your time spent completing the questionnaire (approximately 30-45 minutes) or participating in an interview (approximately 15-20 minutes).

Will Any Expenditure that You Incur by participating in the Study be refunded? Or will you be paid for participating in the Study?

While there is no monetary compensation for participating in the study, refreshments were provided during data collection sessions. If you incur any transportation costs specifically to participate in the study, these costs will be reimbursed at standard rates.

In Case I have any Further Questions/Concerns in the Future, to Whom Should I contact?

In the event that you need further clarification or have questions regarding your continued participation in the study, feel free to contact the PI, Judith Chepkemoi, at [contact information]. If you have concerns regarding your rights and/or obligations as a research participant, do not hesitate to contact the KUREC secretary at [KUREC contact information].

What Alternative Options are Available to Me?

The decision on whether to participate or not is absolutely voluntary. You were free to withdraw from the study at any point during the study without providing any explanation.

How Will the Findings of this Study be Communicated or Shared?

The findings of this study were presented in a thesis submitted to Kabarak University. A summary of the findings was shared with participating organizations and made available to individual participants upon request. The results were also published in academic journals or presented at conferences, but all information was presented in aggregate form with no identification of individual participants or specific organizations unless explicit permission is granted.

Statement of Consent

I have comprehensively read the consent form, or/the information has been comprehensively read to me by the researcher. I have understood what the study is about, and all the questions and concerns I had have been addressed clearly and concisely. The study benefits and foreseeable risks have been explained to me. I totally understand that my decision to participate in this study is voluntary, and I have the right to withdraw at any point during the study.

I freely consent to participate in this study. Signing this form does not in any way imply that I have given up the rights I am entitled to as a participant.

I agree to participate in this research YES___ NO___ I agree to provide my contact details for follow-up YES___ NO___

Participant's Name _____ Participant's Signature/Thumb
print_____ Date _____

Appendix III: Questionnaire for Employees

Section A: Demographic Characteristics

1. Gender

Male

Female

2. Age bracket

18-27 years 28-37 years 38-47 years 48-59 years Over 60 years

3. Highest level of education attained.

Primary Secondary College Diploma Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree Doctorate

4. Years of experience in the organization.

Less than 1 year 1-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years Over 15 years

5. Years of experience in the animal feeds industry.

Less than 1 year 1-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years Over 15 years

Section B: Strategic Individual Behavior of Employees

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about strategic individual behavior in your organization. Use the scale where: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	Our managers consistently demonstrate effective leadership approaches that inspire employee performance.					
2	The leadership style in our organization encourages innovative thinking and problem-solving among employees.					
3	Our company has effective employee motivation programs that drive high performance and engagement.					
4	I feel personally motivated to contribute my best efforts to achieving the organization's strategic goals.					
5	Our performance management system effectively links individual goals to organizational objectives.					
6	The company invests adequately in skill development programs that enhance employee capabilities.					
7	Employees regularly receive constructive feedback that helps improve their performance.					

Section C: Strategic Group Behavior of Employees

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about strategic group behavior in your organization. Use the scale where: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	Teams in our organization demonstrate strong cohesion and a shared sense of purpose.					
2	Department members work collaboratively to achieve common objectives rather than pursuing individual goals.					
3	Our organization has an effective communication flow between departments and hierarchical levels.					
4	Information sharing across the organization is timely and accessible to those who need it.					
5	Our company practices collaborative decision-making that involves input from various stakeholders.					
6	Knowledge sharing is actively encouraged and rewarded within our organization.					
7	There are clear mechanisms for transferring best practices and lessons learned across teams.					

Section D: Strategic Organizational Technology Behavior

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about strategic organizational technology behavior in your organization. Use the scale where: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	Our organization promptly adopts innovative technologies that enhance operational efficiency.					
2	The company has a clear strategy for evaluating and implementing new technological innovations.					
3	Digital integration across departments and functions is seamless in our organization.					
4	Our company effectively utilizes digital platforms to improve					

	internal and external communication.					
5	Process automation has been implemented to streamline routine operations in our organization.					
6	The company regularly invests in developing employees' technological competence through training.					
7	Our organization has the necessary technological infrastructure to support competitive operations.					

Section E: Competitive Advantage

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about your organization's competitive advantage. Use the scale where: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	Our company has consistently increased or maintained its market share over the past three years.					
2	Our products are price-competitive while maintaining quality standards in the market.					
3	Our company demonstrates superior cost-effectiveness compared to competitors.					
4	The quality of our products consistently meets or exceeds industry standards.					
5	Our company receives fewer customer complaints about product quality compared to competitors.					
6	Customer satisfaction levels with our products and services are consistently high.					
7	Our company has a strong reputation for reliability and quality in the market.					

Appendix V: Interview Guide for Managers

Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. My name is Judith Chepkemoi, and I am researching the influence of strategic organizational behaviors on the competitive advantage of the animal feed industry in Nakuru City, Kenya. The purpose of this interview is to understand in depth how strategic individual, group, and organizational technology behaviors influence competitive advantage in your organization. Your insights helped us better understand the factors that contribute to the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry and identify strategies for improvement.

This interview took about 15-200 minutes. With your permission, I would like to audio-record our conversation so that I can accurately capture your thoughts and experiences. The recording was kept confidential and was only used for research purposes. You can stop the interview at any time or choose not to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

1. How would you describe the leadership approaches and employee motivation strategies in your organization, and how do they contribute to your company's competitive advantage in the animal feeds industry?.....

.....

2. In what ways does your organization develop employee skills and align individual performance with strategic objectives to enhance your competitive position?.....

.....

3. How would you describe the level of team cohesion and communication flow within your organization, and how do these group dynamics affect your competitive positioning in the market?.....

.....

4. What collaborative decision-making and knowledge-sharing practices exist in your organization, and how have they contributed to your competitive advantage?.....

.....

5. How does your organization approach technology innovation and digital integration, and what impact has this had on your competitive position in the animal feeds industry?.....

.....

6. What process automation and technological competence development strategies have you implemented, and how have they enhanced your operational effectiveness and market competitiveness?.....

.....

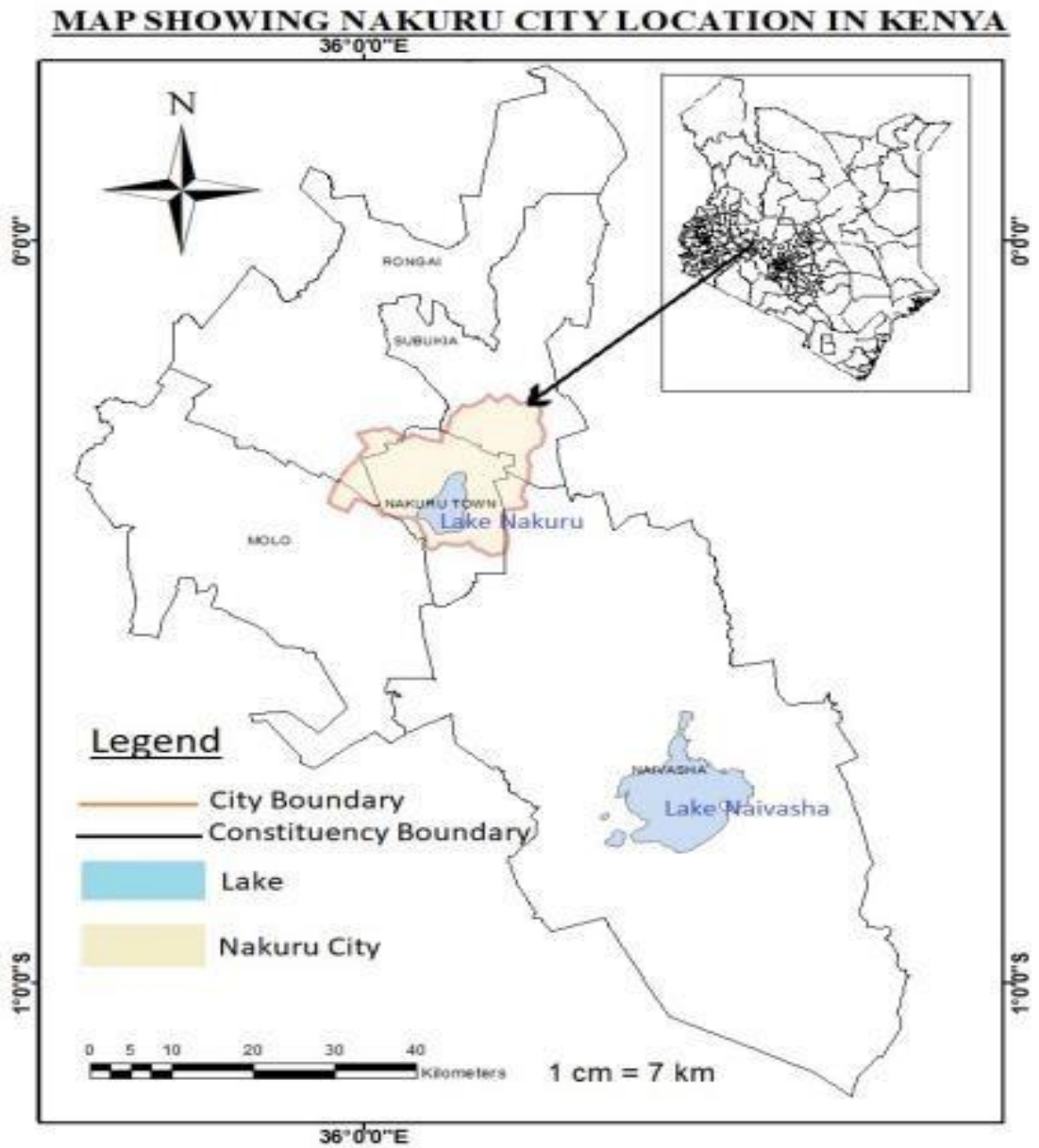
7. How has your organization's market position evolved in terms of market share, cost effectiveness, product quality, and customer satisfaction compared to competitors in Nakuru City?.....

.....

8. What do you consider to be the most significant strategic organizational behaviors (individual, group, or technology) influencing the competitive advantage of the animal feeds industry, and what future strategies is your organization considering?.....

.....

Appendix V: Map of Nakuru



Appendix VI: KUREC Clearance Letter



KABARAK UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

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KABARAK, KENYA
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OUR REF: KABU01/KUREC/001/09/07/25

Date: 7th July, 2025

Judith Chepkemoi
REG NO: GMB/ON/0799/05/22
Kabarak University,

Dear Judith,

RE: INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIC ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIORS ON COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN THE ANIMAL FEEDS INDUSTRY IN NAKURU CITY, KENYA.

This is to inform you that **KUREC** has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **KUREC-090725**. The approval period is **7/07/2025 – 7/07/2026**.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- i. All researchers shall obtain an introduction letter to NACOSTI from the relevant head of institutions (Institute of postgraduate, School dean or Directorate of research)
- ii. The researcher shall further obtain a RESEARCH PERMIT from NACOSTI before commencement of data collection & submit a copy of the permit to **KUREC**.
- iii. Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, MTA Material Transfer Agreement) will be used
- iv. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by **KUREC**:
- v. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to **KUREC** within 72 hours of notification;
- vi. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risk(s) or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to **KUREC** within 72 hours;
- vii. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions and submit a copy of the permit to **KUREC**;
- viii. 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 and;
- ix. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to **KUREC**

Sincerely
for 
Prof. Jackson Kitetu PhD.
KUREC-Chairman



Cc Vice Chancellor
DVC-Academic & Research
Registrar-Academic & Research
Director-Research Innovation & Outreach
Institute of Post Graduate Studies



As members of Kabarak family, we purpose at all times and in all places, to set apart in one's heart, Jesus as Lord.
(1 Peter 3:15)

Kabarak University is ISO 9001:2015 Certified

Appendix VI: Evidence of Conference Participation



Appendix VII: List of Publication



African Journal of Emerging Issues
(AJOEI)
Online ISSN: 2663 - 9335
Available at: <https://ajoeijournals.org>

STRATEGIC

INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIC ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIORS ON COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN ANIMAL FEEDS INDUSTRY IN NAKURU CITY, KENYA

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Publication Date: November 2025

ABSTRACT

Statement of the Problem: Animal feeds industry in Kenya faces volatility in raw material supply, increasing regulatory pressures, and rising import competition. However, gaps in strategic organizational behaviors at the individual, group, and technological levels continue to hinder optimal performance.

Purpose of the Study: This study sought to examine the influence of strategic organizational behaviors on competitive advantage among animal feeds manufacturing firms in Nakuru City, Kenya. Guided by the hypothesis that strategic individual behavior does not significantly influence competitive advantage

Methodology: The study adopted a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design under a pragmatic philosophy. The target population comprised 3,785 employees across 38 firms, with a final quantitative sample of 400 respondents determined using Cochran's formula for finite populations, and 20 key informants purposively selected for qualitative insights. Data was collected through structured questionnaires and interviews, with validity confirmed by expert review and reliability established through Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeding 0.7. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS Version 25.

Results: The findings revealed a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between strategic individual behavior and competitive advantage ($r = 0.762$, $p < 0.01$). Regression analysis further showed that strategic individual behavior had a significant effect on competitive advantage ($\beta = 0.251$, $p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: The study concluded that fostering leadership development, motivation, skill enhancement, and constructive feedback strengthens employees' strategic engagement, thereby enhancing firm competitiveness.

Recommendation: The study recommended that firms institutionalize leadership and motivation programs, align individual goals with organizational objectives, and invest in continuous professional development to sustain long-term competitive advantage.

Keywords: *Strategic individual behavior, competitive advantage, leadership, motivation, employee performance.*