

## The effect of strategic plan on the organizational performance of private universities in Mogadishu, Somalia

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### Abstract

This study examines the influence of strategic planning on the organisational performance of private universities in Mogadishu, Somalia. Strategic planning is an essential component of management, vital for establishing an organization's direction, aligning objectives, and ensuring its long-term sustainability. The research investigates three essential components—strategic development, execution, and evaluation/control—and assesses their individual effects on institutional performance outcomes. We used structured questionnaires to collect data from administrative and faculty staff at selected private universities. This was done using a quantitative method. The PLS-SEM analysis demonstrates that strategic planning significantly influences an organization's performance. Strategic formulation and execution exert the most significant impact, although evaluation and control also play a considerable role. These results suggest that organisations that clearly define their mission, allocate resources effectively, and regularly evaluate progress are more likely to achieve improved academic quality, administrative efficiency, and institutional development. The study emphasises the imperative for Somali private universities to cultivate internal competencies in strategic management, promote leadership engagement, and employ stringent monitoring tools to enhance performance. The research improves understanding of strategic management in unstable settings and provides practical guidance for policymakers seeking to improve educational outcomes in Somalia's higher education sector.

**Keywords:** Strategic Plan; Organizational Performance; Strategic formulation; Strategic Implementation; Strategic Evaluation and Control.

### 1. Introduction

According to Srivastava and Teo (2012), a strategic plan is a collection of procedures used to create a variety of strategies that will help the business achieve its goals. This necessitates the creation of a cohesive document that will coordinate the activities of all parties involved and specify the organization's goals and plans for achieving them. There are three levels at which strategies can be developed: corporate, business, and functional. In a school setting, the Board of Governors consults with the principal to make long-term decisions and plans. Heads of departments make decisions on business level strategies, offer leadership and play a key role in formulation of strategic plans in their institutions. Farmers being key stakeholders present their interests through the farmer's Association. In addition, they are very critical in strategic implementation. Before strategy formulation is done, the management must analyze the environment using tools such as SWOT analysis, PESTEL analysis, Porters five forces model, competitor analysis, customer analysis and gap analysis among others (Aldehayyat, Al Khattab and Anchor, 2011).

The powerful job of strategic planning to improve organizational performance is very much archived in the strategic management writing (McIlquham-Schmid, 2010). Proof from the written works proposed that strategic planning is one of the components that can improve the organization performance (Sarason and Tegarden, 2003; Efendioglu and

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Karabulut, 2010; Arasa and K'Obonyo, 2012; Chavunduka et al., 2015). A strategic plan is a formal document that outlines an organization's long-term vision, mission, goals, and the strategies it will use to achieve them. It acts as a roadmap, guiding the organization's decision-making and resource allocation over a specific period, usually three to five years (Bryson, 2018). A strong strategic plan not only defines what an organization aims to accomplish but also clarifies how it will compete in its market, respond to changes, and measure success.

Strategic plan is the vision statement. The vision provides a picture of what the organization aspires to become in the future. It inspires and directs all organizational efforts. Along with the vision, the mission statement defines the organization's purpose — why it exists and whom it serves (David & David, 2017). The strategic strategy is built on the vision and mission.

Another important portion of the plan is the strategic objectives and goals. These goals must be SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. This means that they provide clear goals for how well the organization should do (Drucker, 1954). Strategic goals turn the big picture vision and mission into specific results that everyone in the organization can work towards.

A strategic plan also has a full situational analysis, including a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats). This analysis helps the organization figure out what it can do well and what it needs to work on, as well as how to take advantage of opportunities and protect itself from threats (Gürel & Tat, 2017). It is interesting that there aren't many research that use the same criteria and metrics for "organisational performance" (see, Kirby, 2005). Performance is so common in management research that its structure and definition is rarely explicitly justified; instead its appropriateness, in no matter what form, is unquestionably assumed (March & Sutton, 1997).

Organisational performance is how well an organisation meets its aims and objectives. It includes a lot of different results, including as financial performance, customer happiness, internal procedures, staff engagement, and new ideas. Richard et al. (2009) say that organisational performance is a wide term that means the actual production or results of an organisation compared to what it was supposed to produce. Historically, financial metrics such as revenue growth, profitability, and return on investment (ROI) have been employed to evaluate performance. But contemporary methods know that just looking at money isn't enough. Kaplan and Norton (1992) say that to gain a whole picture of performance, businesses need to look at both financial and non-financial measures. For example, they need to look at customer satisfaction, internal company processes, and learning and growth perspectives.

Employee performance and engagement are important parts of how well an organisation as a whole does. A motivated, skilled, and goal-aligned staff greatly increases productivity and innovation (Armstrong, 2012). Companies that put money into training their employees, making sure they understand each other, and having executives who are helpful are more likely to have good results. Another essential thing is how happy customers are. Companies that regularly provide high-quality goods and services meet or exceed client expectations. This builds customer loyalty and a good brand reputation. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) emphasised that service quality strongly influences organisational performance, particularly within service sectors.

Innovation and the ability to change are also very important. In a world that changes quickly, companies that encourage new ideas and are quick to adapt to changes in the market frequently do better than their competitors. Teece, Pisano, and Shuen (1997) coined the term "dynamic capabilities," underscoring that the capacity to assimilate, develop, and reorganise both internal and external competences is essential for enduring exceptional performance. Performance is more and more linked to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and doing the right thing. Companies that act in a socially responsible and ethical way tend to earn the trust and loyalty of their stakeholders, which can lead to long-term performance gains (Porter & Kramer, 2006).

## 2. Literature review

Strategic planning is a methodical way for businesses to set goals, make plans, and use their resources wisely to attain those goals. Strategic planning is very important for private institutions to make sure they are stable and successful in the long run. It helps organisations figure out what they're good at, adapt to changes in the outside world, and make sure that everything they do is in line with their overarching goal and vision. Johnson et al. (2011) say that strategic planning means improving long-term plans by taking into account both the organization's strengths and weaknesses and the opportunities and dangers that could come up.

In the case of private colleges, strategic planning means creating clear goals, looking at the school's strengths and weaknesses, looking at the outside world, coming up with strategies, putting those strategies into action, and constantly

reviewing and changing plans based on what people say. Research supports the idea that strategic planning is a key factor that can improve organizational performance (Sarason and Tegarden, 2003; Efendioglu and Karabulut, 2010; Arasa and K'Obonyo, 2012; Chavunduka et al., 2015).

**Formulation of a Strategy** In order to accomplish the objectives of the organization, strategies must be developed and chosen. Traditionally, the process of formulating a strategy requires using highly structured processes and analytical tools (Mintzberg, 1994).

It entails assessing both internal and external influences, spotting possibilities and dangers, and establishing goals. While analysis of the internal environment helps to identify strengths, weaknesses, and the essential personnel needed within the organization to fulfil its objectives, analysis of the external environment aids in identifying potential threats and opportunities (Kanter, 2002). In private institutions, developing a strategy entails identifying the institution's vision, mission, and core values, as well as setting goals and objectives for research, academic programs, student support services, and overall organizational development (Bryson, 2018).

Strategy implementation is the process of carrying out planned strategies so that performance can be moved from the existing position to a future desired position (Johnson and Scholes, 2008). According to Aladwani (2003), strategy implementation means executing the results of planning through operationalization of the day to day activities so that an organization can achieve its competitiveness.

Strategy implementation is the process of putting strategies into practice, which includes planning and delivering services, developing the efficiency and effectiveness of operations, and designing organizational structures, evaluation systems and cultures required to fit the new strategy (Hill and Jones, 2008). **Implementing a Strategy** This is a reference to the steps and endeavours made to implement the developed strategies. The process of implementing a strategy involves enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of operations, planning and executing services, and creating the organizational structures, assessment systems, and cultures needed to match the updated approach (Hill and Jones, 2008). It entails putting plans into action, coordinating activities across many departments and functions, and aligning resources. . Implementing a strategy at a private university would entail setting aside funds, recruiting and preparing instructors and staff, creating and delivering curricula, carrying out research, and offering student support services. The challenges and problems faced in implementing strategies and the key attributes of successful strategy implementation have been widely investigated (Alashloo et al., 2005; Elbanna et al., 2015).

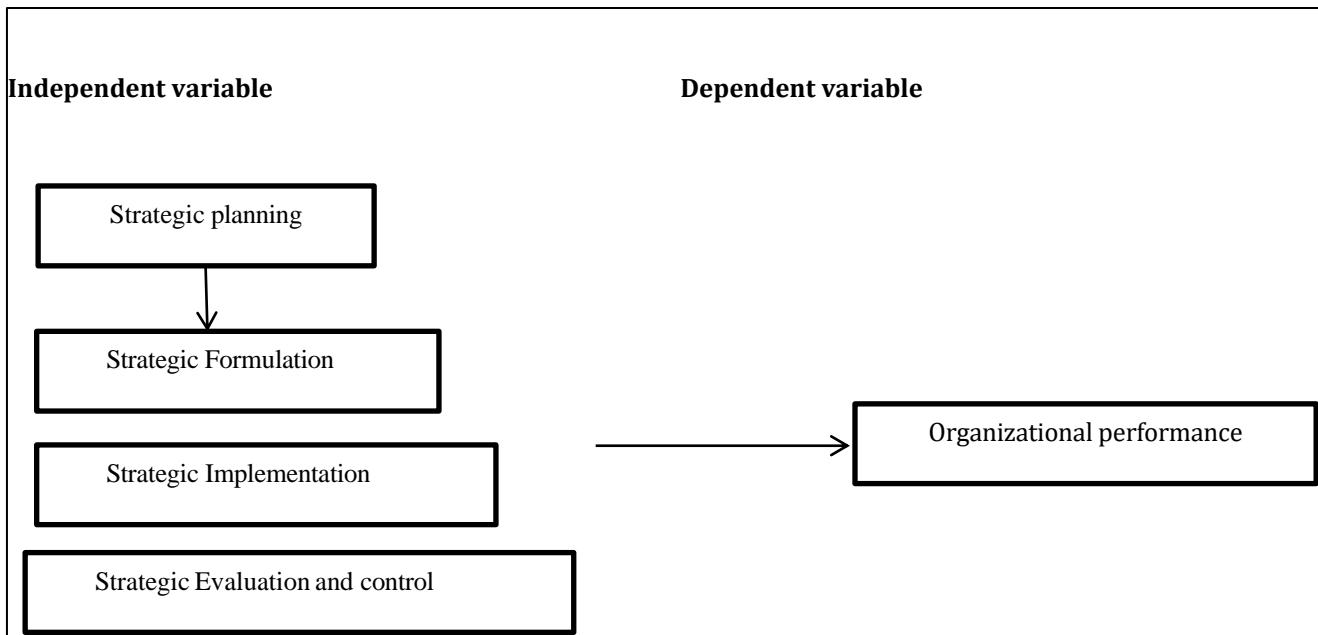
Strategy evaluation is a crucial tool for managers to understand the reasons behind both successes and failures with respect to certain objectives, performance standards, and/or other performance indicators (Strydom, 2011). **Strategic Evaluation and Administration** This alludes to the process that is employed to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the tactics that have been implemented. Establishing standards for benchmarking with peers requires evaluating approach in accordance with universities.

Pearce and Robinson (2009) state that the purpose of strategic control is not to draw attention to past mistakes but rather to determine what needs to be changed to steer the university in the right path. the advantages of strategy evaluation for organizational performance. These consist of guidance on benchmarking, direction setting, and encouragement. An essential component of strategic evaluation and management in private colleges is tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) related to academic excellence, student success, financial stability, stakeholder satisfaction, and other performance characteristics. Evaluation gives members of an organization the much-needed feedback they need to measure and meet their performance goals, claims Lunenburg (2011). Ajelabi and Tang's (2010) empirical study, which viewed strategy evaluation as a means for strategic benchmarking, supports the assertions made. The methodical approach involves evaluating alternatives, implementing strategies, and improving performance by understanding and adapting successful tactics from external partners engaged in an ongoing commercial collaboration.

The main focus of organisational performance is how well an organisation meets its goals and objectives (Kootz, 2006). It means that the organisation can reach its goals. For private schools, success can be measured by a number of things, including their financial health, reputation, research accomplishments, faculty performance, and student success. According to Upadhyaya, Munir, and Blount (2014), organisational performance is the difference between what an organisation actually does and what it expects to do. You can measure financial performance by looking at things like revenue growth, cost efficiency, profitability, and how well resources are used. Outcomes related to students may include graduation rates, retention rates, and overall student happiness. Faculty productivity is often evaluated by their teaching quality, research contributions, and involvement in professional development. The strategic management field highlights the significant role strategic planning plays in boosting organizational performance (McIlquham-Schmid, 2010).

### 3. Conceptual framework

Conceptual frame work is a diagram of proposed causal linkage among asset of variables believed to be related to a particular problem. The variables are in the boxes.



**Figure 1** Conceptual framework

### 4. Methodology

This study adopted an explanatory research approach to investigate the effect of strategic planning on the organizational performance of private universities in Mogadishu, Somalia. The study focused on strategic planning and decision-making. Using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) method, the sample size was chosen to make sure it was representative. A systematic questionnaire was used to collect data on different parts of strategic planning and how it affects performance. The answers were rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

We used SPSS to look at the data we obtained and find descriptive statistics like frequencies, percentages, and means. SmartPLS was also utilised for more in-depth analysis, using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to look at the links between strategic planning and how well an organisation does. The PLS algorithm was used to check the constructs' reliability and validity, including convergent validity, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Cronbach's alpha. This gave strong and reliable results.

### 5. Results and discussions

#### 5.1. Demographic data

According to the demographic information of the people who answered, most of them were men (90%), and only 10% were women. The most people (42%) were between the ages of 31 and 40. The next most people (36%) were under 30, and the least people (22%) were between the ages of 41 and 50. Most of the people who answered were married (52%), but a lot of them were single (32%) and a small number were divorced (16%). Most of the people (76%) had a Master's degree, followed by 14% who had a Bachelor's degree and 10% who had a PhD. 46% of the people who took part had worked for 5 to 10 years, 42% had worked for 1 to 5 years, and 12% had worked for less than a year. In the end, 84% of the people who answered were faculty members, and only 16% were in administrative roles.

**Table 1** Respondents profile

variable	category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	5	10
	Male	45	90
Age	31_40 yrs	21	42
	41_50 yrs	11	22
	Less than 30	18	36
Marital Status	Divorced	8	16
	Married	26	52
	Single	16	32
Educational Level	Bachelor degree	7	14
	Master	38	76
	PhD	5	10
Expreience	1-5 years	21	42
	5-10 years	23	46
	Less than one year	6	12
Position	Administrative staff	8	16
	Faculty staff	42	84

## 5.2. Measurement Model

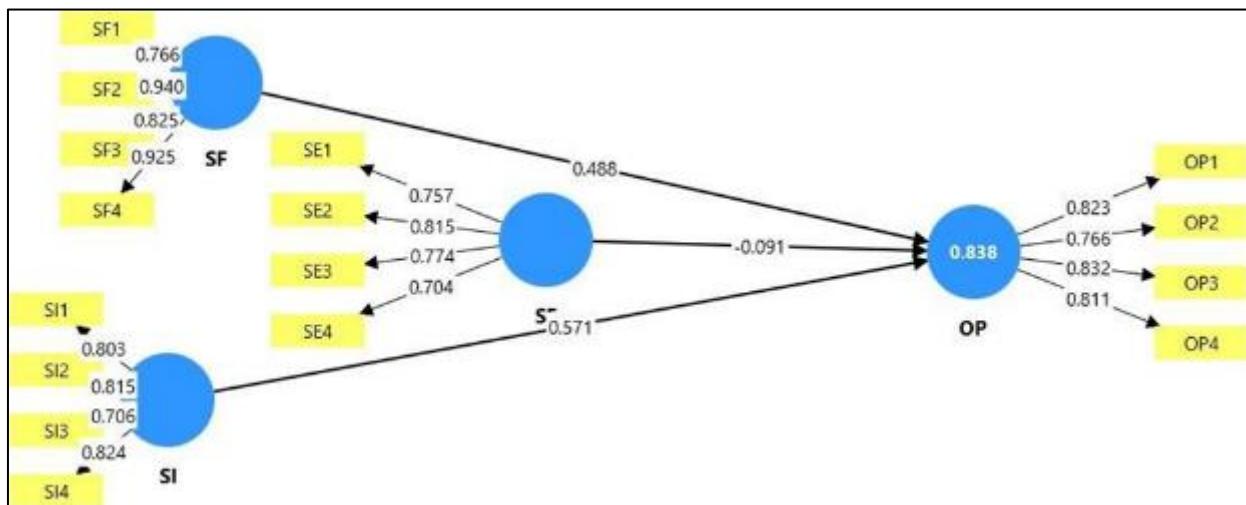
**Figure 2** Structural model

Table 2 presents the results of the PLS-SEM measurement model analysis, showing the factor loadings for the latent constructs: Organizational Performance (OP), Strategy Evaluation (SE), Strategy Formulation (SF), and Strategy Implementation (SI). Each construct is measured by four items, and all factor loadings exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming strong indicator reliability and convergent validity. Organizational Performance (OP) is measured by four items (OP1-OP4), with factor loadings ranging from 0.766 to 0.832, indicating that all items effectively represent the underlying construct. Strategy Evaluation (SE) is measured by four indicators (SE1-SE4), with loadings between 0.704 and 0.815, all above the minimum acceptable level. Strategy Formulation (SF) includes four items (SF1-SF4), with strong factor loadings ranging from 0.766 to 0.940, demonstrating high measurement reliability. Strategy

Implementation (SI) is represented by four items (SI1–SI4), with loadings ranging from 0.706 to 0.824, confirming that each item accurately reflects the intended construct.

**Table 2** Outer loadings

Variable	Op	SE	SF	SI
OP1	0.823			
OP2	0.766			
OP3	0.832			
OP4	0.811			
SE1		0.757		
SE2		0.815		
SE3		0.774		
SE4		0.704		
SF1			0.766	
SF2			0.94	
SF3			0.825	
SF4			0.925	
SI 1				0.8
SI 2				0.82
SI3				0.71
SI4				0.82

Table 3 shows the construct validity results for four variables: Organisational Performance (OP), Strategic Engagement (SE), Strategic Flexibility (SF), and Strategic Innovation (SI). The Cronbach's alpha values range from 0.761 to 0.887, indicating that all constructions exhibit strong internal consistency. Most of the time, values higher than 0.7 are thought to be reliable. The composite reliability values ( $\rho_a$  and  $\rho_c$ ) also show good reliability because all of the constructs are above the acceptable level of 0.7. This means that the items do a good job of representing the constructs. All of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are above 0.5, which is the threshold. They range from 0.583 to 0.751. This means that the constructs are responsible for a lot of the differences in their indicators. In general, these results support the strength and reliability of the measurement model.

**Table 3** Construct validity

Variable	CA	CR	AVE
OP	0.823	0.826	0.654
SE	0.761	0.769	0.583
SF	0.887	0.9	0.751
SI	0.802	0.809	0.622

Table 4 shows how the variables Organisational Performance (OP), Strategic Engagement (SE), Strategic Flexibility (SF), and Strategic Innovation (SI) are related to each other. The diagonal values show the square roots of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct: OP = 0.808, SE = 0.764, SF = 0.867, and SI = 0.789. The off-diagonal values show how the constructs are related to each other. The Fornell-Larcker criterion says that for discriminant validity to be proven, the square root of the AVE for each construct must be bigger than the correlations between that construct

and other constructs. The square roots of AVE for each construct in this table are larger than the correlations between any two constructs. This shows that the constructs have good discriminant validity. This indicates that each variable is separate from the others, which supports the validity of the measurement model.

**Table 4** Fornell-Larcker criterion

Variable	OP	SE	SF	SI
OP	0.808			
SE	0.608	0.764		
SF	0.839	0.505	0.867	
SI	0.844	0.79	0.705	0.789

The table 5 presents the results of hypothesis testing, showing the standardized beta ( $\beta$ ), t-value, and p-value for the relationships between Strategic Engagement (SE), Strategic Flexibility (SF), Strategic Innovation (SI), and Organizational Performance (OP). The relationship between SE and OP has a  $\beta$  value of 0.091, a t-value of 0.961, and a p-value of 0.337, indicating that the effect of SE on OP is not statistically significant, as the p-value is greater than the common significance level of 0.05. In contrast, the relationships between SF and OP ( $\beta = 0.488$ ,  $t = 4.641$ ,  $p = 0$ ) and SI and OP ( $\beta = 0.571$ ,  $t = 4.043$ ,  $p = 0$ ) are both statistically significant, with p-values less than 0.05. This suggests that both Strategic Flexibility and Strategic Innovation have a significant positive impact on Organizational Performance, while Strategic Engagement does not.

**Table 5** Structural model results

Hypothesis	$\beta$	T value	P value
SE -> OP	0.091	0.961	0.337
SF -> OP	0.488	4.641	0
SI-> OP	0.571	4.043	0

## 6. Discussion

The results of this study show that there is a statistically significant and positive link between strategic formulation, which is a key part of strategic planning, and how well private colleges in Mogadishu, Somalia, do their jobs. The statistics show that organisations with well-defined strategic formulation processes see a measurable increase in performance outcomes, as shown by a path coefficient of 0.229. Strategic formulation is when organisations figure out what their mission is, set long-term goals, look at both their internal and external environments, and come up with plans that will help them reach those goals. This relationship isn't very strong, but it shows how important it is for an organisation to be clear, have a plan, and be on the same page. The observed effect—about a 6.3% rise in organisational performance for every unit rise in strategic formulation shows how important it is to carefully and thoughtfully create strategies in higher education settings.

This finding is consistent with established literature that has acknowledged the impact of strategic formulation on performance indicators, including efficiency, stakeholder satisfaction, and institutional adaptability (Ansoff, 1987; Bryson, 2018). In contexts characterised by scarce resources, competition, and socio-political intricacies exemplified by the Somali higher education sector strategic formulation delivers the strategic clarity and coherence essential for operational resilience and enduring sustainability.

The findings reinforce the notion that strategic formulation is not merely a technical procedure, but a leadership-oriented function that requires stakeholder engagement, data-informed decision-making, and adaptability to evolving conditions. Universities that spend money on participatory planning processes are more likely to get people to commit, use their resources, and work towards a common goal. All of these things help the organisation do better.

The results of this study are important because they have effects that go beyond just confirming a theory. The results

show that politicians and school leaders in Somalia need to learn how to manage their resources better right away. Teaching academic leaders and administrative teams how to make strategies, look at the environment, and align resources could greatly improve the results of the institution. Also, putting strategic formulation into bigger governance frameworks might make decisions clearer, more accountable, and easier to deal with outside problems.

In conclusion, strategic formulation is a key factor that affects how well private universities in Mogadishu do. It might work with other strategic parts like execution and assessment, but its most important job is to set the institution's direction and focus. As higher education in Somalia continues to change, it will be important to promote effective strategic planning methods to build academic institutions that are competitive, mission-driven, and high-performing.

This study finds a small but positive link between strategic implementation, which is an important part of strategic planning, and how well private universities in Mogadishu, Somalia, do their jobs. With a path coefficient of 0.185, the findings suggest that the process through which strategic plans are translated into concrete actions and institutional practices has a meaningful, though comparatively limited, influence on how well universities achieve their performance objectives.

Strategic implementation involves the operationalization of strategic intentions—allocating resources, establishing responsibilities, and executing plans in alignment with institutional goals. In the context of Somali higher education, where systemic challenges such as resource scarcity, capacity constraints, and governance issues persist, successful implementation requires not only technical efficiency but also organizational adaptability and leadership commitment.

The observed relationship, though statistically marginal ( $p = 0.052$ ), underscores that the execution gap—the distance between strategy design and on-the-ground action—may hinder performance gains if left unaddressed. While private universities in Mogadishu may possess strategic plans, the effectiveness of implementation mechanisms—such as monitoring systems, communication channels, and accountability structures—ultimately determines whether those plans translate into performance improvement.

Strategic implementation also helps operations work together by closing the gap between policy and practice. In places like Somalia when things are unstable and there isn't much infrastructure, solid implementation procedures may protect institutions from outside shocks and make sure that academic and institutional services keep going.

In conclusion, strategic implementation may not have the most impact compared to other parts of planning, like evaluation or formulation, but it is still necessary to achieve strategic goals. For private universities in Mogadishu, enhancing implementation capacity is not merely a technical requirement but a strategic necessity capable of fostering sustainable performance, improving academic outcomes, and cultivating institutional resilience in an increasingly competitive and challenging higher education landscape.

Strategic evaluation and control is the ongoing process by which organisations keep an eye on, measure, and change their strategic actions to make sure they are in line with the goals of the institution. This function is not only important but also necessary for the survival and growth of institutions in higher education, especially in Somalia, where funding, infrastructure, and policy are often unstable. Private colleges and universities in Mogadishu operate in a dynamic environment characterised by the repercussions of war, constrained resources, and heightened competition. In this case, strong systems for evaluation and control are what make flexibility, responsibility, and progress possible.

The strength of the relationship (43.3%) shows that strategic evaluation and control is not just something managers do on the side; it's the main thing that keeps an organisation running smoothly. Regular performance reviews, feedback loops, and corrective action can help institutions stay focused, make the most of their resources, and deal with problems both inside and outside the organisation. This corroborates findings in the literature on global strategic management, which emphasises the necessity of integrating performance tracking and governance frameworks into the organisation (Kaplan & Norton, 2004; Bryson, 2018).

In conclusion, strategic evaluation and control acts as a strategic compass, ensuring that universities not only develop pertinent strategies but also implement them efficiently and responsively. This process is necessary for long-term success in Mogadishu's private universities, which are hard to run and don't have many resources. Universities can improve their flexibility, accountability, and long-term success by making evaluation and control a part of their culture and governance.

## 7. Conclusions

Globalisation has made it harder for businesses in all fields, including higher education, to compete and meet expectations. In new places like Mogadishu, Somalia, private schools have to keep up their good work while also dealing with difficult problems both inside and outside the school. In this competitive world, having a good strategy plan is very important for a business to be successful.

The primary objective of this study was to examine the impact of strategic planning specifically its core components: strategic formulation, strategic execution, and strategic evaluation and control—on the performance of private colleges. The study aimed to assess the impact of each factor on the improvement of institutional outcomes, encompassing staff efficacy, service quality, and goal achievement.

In conclusion, the study confirms that effective strategic planning—anchored in meticulous formulation, stringent execution, and continuous evaluation—is vital for enhancing the performance of private universities in Mogadishu. These strategic activities make schools more adaptable, accountable, and performance-oriented, which makes them more likely to survive and compete in a changing higher education landscape.

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## Compliance with ethical standards

### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

### *Statement of informed consent*

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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