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Strategic Management Practices and Productivity in Agribusiness Industry: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research critically analyzed existing literature on the influence of strategic management practices on the productivity of the agribusiness industry.

Methodology: To accomplish this, a critical review of the literature was conducted on several specific objectives including establishing how strategic collaboration affects productivity, how strategic value chain management affects productivity, and how strategic technology adoption affects productivity of agribusinesses in the industry. The study only relied on secondary materials from past researches. The study retrieved and critically analyzed existing qualitative and relevant literature from 2018 to 2024.

Findings: From the reviewed literature, a number of conclusions were drawn. The study found that using strategic collaboration as a strategic management practice is key in enhancing productivity in agribusiness industry. It found that those firms that uses strategic supply chain management a strategic management practice enhanced performance, however, paucity of studies were evident on the influence of strategic supply chain management on productivity in the agribusiness industry. Further, it is concluded that there was strong, direct relationships involving productivity, technology transfer and this is an indication that those agribusinesses that adopted technology are likely to improved productivity.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Future research should prioritize empirically investigating the direct impact of strategic management practices on productivity within the agribusiness sector to effectively bridge the contextual and conceptual gaps identified in this review.

Key Words: *Strategic Collaboration, Strategic Value, Strategic Technology Adoption, Business Productivity*

Background of the problem

Strategic management practices (SMPs) refer to the collection of decisions, activities, and choices made by management to achieve long-term goals and secure a competitive edge (Gulaid, 2024). These practices involve aligning organizational capabilities and resources with external opportunities and threats in the business environment. SMPs encompass strategic planning, analysis, formulation, implementation, control, competitive strategy, and innovation, leadership, and performance management, among others (Udeh, 2023). In contrast, productivity in the agribusiness sector refers to the efficiency with which inputs such as land, labor, capital, and technology are transformed into agricultural products (Chen & Zhang, 2023). Kenya has adapted global and regional strategic management practices (SMPs) to address its agribusiness challenges, particularly those concerning market access, technological deficiencies, and crop yield. For example, the introduction of mobile services like M-Pesa has revolutionized financial accessibility for farmers, while digital farming programs offer immediate market insights and technical assistance (Gulaid, 2024). The Agricultural Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy (ASTGS) has played a crucial role in enhancing value chain efficiency and fostering public-private partnerships to improve market access, thereby aligning Kenya's agribusiness sector with international best practices (Gulaid, 2024). On a global scale, agribusiness serves as a fundamental component of numerous economies, particularly in promoting rural development and job creation (Mrówczyńska-Kamińska & Bajan, 2019). Nevertheless, despite rising population numbers, a significant portion of the agricultural workforce continues to live in poverty, and the sector faces challenges related to underperformance (Kyfyak et al., 2022). Implementing strategic management practices that comprehensively tackle these challenges is vital for establishing a sustainable agribusiness sector. Consequently, this study aims to evaluate the effects of SMPs, including strategic value chain management, technology adoption, and collaboration, on productivity within the agribusiness field.

Several studies have examined strategic management practices. For instance, Ioannis, George, and Socrates (2019) identified challenges like unequal bargaining power and production costs as barriers to sustainable supply chains. Ibrahim, Hassan, and Gusau (2018) noted that disruptive technologies like ICT contribute significantly to agribusiness sustainability. However, despite focusing on agribusiness, their studies did not investigate specific SMPs such as strategic collaboration and value chain management, creating a research gap. Similarly, Aşkın-Uzel (2021) found that agriculture companies use few value-based management tools and recommended further research on strategic factors that influence sustainability in agribusiness. This research contributes to the ongoing discussion by examining the impact of Strategic Management Practices (SMPs) on productivity within the agribusiness sector. Mohammed and Rugami (2019) investigated SMPs as a means to enhance the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Kenya; however, their findings did not address the specific practices that lead to these enhancements. By analyzing existing literature on SMPs, the adoption of

strategic technologies, collaboration, and value chain management, this study aims to fill that void.

Regional initiatives in Africa, particularly in Kenya, focus on enhancing value chain management, embracing new technologies, and promoting strategic partnerships between smallholder farmers and larger agribusiness entities (Kyfyak et al., 2022). These initiatives are vital for transitioning subsistence farming into market-oriented agribusinesses, thereby supporting economic growth and food security. In Nigeria, Chijioke and Olatunji (2018) investigated the link between strategy formulation and strategic performance, while Nyagaki (2022) assessed the impact of SMPs on the performance of parastatals in Kenya. Nyagaki's findings indicated that elements such as environmental scanning, strategy formulation, and execution play a significant role in performance outcomes. Nonetheless, these studies primarily focused on sectors beyond agribusiness.

Gulaid (2024) utilized the PRISMA framework to analyze SMPs in Kenya, revealing a positive effect on organizational performance, yet did not consider aspects like strategic collaboration, value chain management, and technology adoption, highlighting a gap that this study intends to address. Eventually, while prior research has established connections between SMPs and performance or sustainability, the specific effects of SMPs such as strategic collaboration, value chain management, and technology adoption on agribusiness productivity remain underexplored. This study aims to tackle these gaps by conducting a thorough review of secondary sources published between 2018 and 2024, assessing the influence of SMPs on productivity in the agribusiness sector.

Statement of the Problem

Migunov et al. (2023) highlighted that agricultural productivity in sub-Saharan Africa has fallen significantly behind that of other regions worldwide. Between 2000 and 2020, the average annual increase in agricultural productivity for this region was merely 1.5%, in stark contrast to the global average of 3.2%. This sluggish growth is largely due to ineffective farming methods, limited access to modern agricultural technologies, and poorly developed value chains. For instance, in Kenya, staple crops like maize yield an average of only 1.6 tons per hectare, while the global average ranges from 4 to 6 tons per hectare (FAO, 2021). This gap can be attributed to insufficient use of inputs such as fertilizers, subpar farming techniques, and limited access to quality seeds. Furthermore, inefficiencies within value chains play a significant role in hindering productivity. The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) estimates that 30–40% of agricultural output in Kenya is lost between the farm and the market due to inadequate infrastructure, insufficient storage facilities, and ineffective supply chains (Migunov et al., 2023).

These post-harvest losses not only diminish productivity but also worsen food insecurity and lower farmers' incomes. The agribusiness sector functions within a rapidly changing and competitive landscape influenced by evolving consumer preferences, technological innovations,

and variable market conditions (Migunov et al., 2023). To address these challenges, Strategic Management Practices (SMPs) are increasingly acknowledged as essential for sustaining competitive advantage and enhancing productivity in agribusinesses (Raji et al., 2024). However, despite the rising significance of SMPs, there remains a considerable gap in empirical research specifically investigating their effects on agribusiness productivity. Agribusiness companies are increasingly implementing various Strategic Management Practices (SMPs), including innovation management, market positioning, operational efficiency enhancements, strategic collaboration, strategic planning, and supply chain management. However, the specific effects of these practices on productivity have not been thoroughly examined (Onsinyo & Moronge, 2018). There exists a significant gap in detailed research that effectively quantifies and describes the connection between these SMPs and productivity indicators within the agribusiness field. Prior investigations, such as those by Uzel (2021), Mohammed and Rugami (2019), Ramadan and Safavi (2022), and Chijioke and Olatunji (2018), were conducted across various countries, underscoring a contextual research deficiency.

Additionally, studies by Nyagaki (2022), Gulaid (2024), and Gachuhi and Awuor (2019) failed to establish a direct correlation between SMPs and productivity in agribusiness, indicating a conceptual research shortcoming. Moreover, research like Uzel's (2021) has predominantly concentrated on developed nations, resulting in a methodological research gap. While earlier studies have examined the relationships between SMPs and broader performance indicators, competitive advantage, and sustainability, they have not adequately explored the specific impacts of SMPs such as strategic collaboration, value chain management, and technology adoption on productivity in agribusiness. Without a thorough understanding of how SMPs affect productivity, agribusiness firms may find it challenging to refine their strategic initiatives, potentially leading to less than optimal results. To fill this knowledge void, the current study aims to empirically assess the impact of SMPs on productivity within the agribusiness sector. The anticipated findings will offer valuable insights for practitioners and policymakers seeking to improve the performance of the agribusiness industry.

Specific objectives

i To understand the influence of strategic collaboration on productivity in the agribusiness industry
ii To examine the influence of strategic value chain management on productivity in the agribusiness industry
iii To analyze the influence of strategic technology adoption on productivity in the agribusiness industry

Literature Review

Theoretical Review

Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory, projected by R. Edward Freeman in 1984, posits that businesses should generate value for all stakeholders rather than focusing solely on shareholders. This theory is based on the premise that companies operate within a web of relationships that includes employees, customers, suppliers, communities, and the environment. Earlier organizational theorists such as Chester Barnard and Mary Parker Follett, who emphasized the importance of organizational dynamics and human interactions, influenced Freeman's ideas. The theory serves as a response to the conventional shareholder-focused business model, providing a more inclusive viewpoint that considers the interests of all entities impacted by a company's activities (Mahajan et al., 2023). Nonetheless, stakeholder theory has faced criticism regarding its practical application. One major concern is its vagueness and the absence of clear guidelines for implementation, which can lead to confusion and conflicts when attempting to reconcile the varying interests of stakeholders. Xiao (2023) contends that the mechanisms for applying the theory are often impractical, and certain important groups may still be neglected within this framework. Despite these critiques, Lohakare et al. (2022) emphasized the advantages of stakeholder engagement in agribusiness, particularly through public-private partnerships. Such collaborations frequently enhance productivity by providing access to new markets, technologies, and financial resources, thereby aligning the interests of different stakeholders to minimize inefficiencies and promote sustainable growth.

In the agribusiness industry, stakeholder theory is particularly significant due to the complex interactions among farmers, suppliers, processors, distributors, consumers, and regulatory agencies. Traditionally, the sector has faced challenges related to sustainability, ethical farming, and the impact on communities. The implementation of stakeholder theory has fostered more sustainable and inclusive practices, evident in initiatives aimed at enhancing farmer livelihoods, ensuring fair trade, and promoting environmental responsibility. Therefore, engaging with stakeholders to understand their needs and expectations, agribusinesses can develop more resilient and sustainable business models (Sartika et al., 2023). For instance, Holmes et al. (2019) demonstrated that stakeholder collaboration improved innovation and efficiency within agri-food supply chains, enabling companies to swiftly respond to evolving market demands. Stakeholder theory is crucial to this study's emphasis on strategic collaboration as a vital element affecting productivity. By harmonizing the interests of all stakeholders, agribusinesses can create synergies that boost efficiency, reduce costs, and ultimately enhance productivity throughout the value chain.

Value Chain Theory

Michael Porter developed the Value Chain Theory in his 1985 publication, Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance. This theory offers a structured

approach to evaluate a company's internal operations to pinpoint areas that can provide a competitive edge. The value chain categorizes an organization into strategically important activities, which are divided into two main groups: primary activities (including inbound logistics, operations, outbound logistics, marketing and sales, and service) and support activities (such as firm infrastructure, human resource management, technology development, and procurement). By analyzing each activity, companies can determine their impact on cost efficiency or differentiation (Fan et al., 2020). However, Value Chain Theory has been criticized for its limited emphasis on internal processes, potentially neglecting external influences like market trends and consumer behavior. Detractors contend that the model is overly static and linear, failing to reflect the complexities and dynamics of modern business landscapes. This shortcoming is particularly apparent in sectors where external factors play a crucial role in determining organizational success.

In the agribusiness sector, the application of Value Chain Theory is particularly significant due to the industry's dependence on a network of interconnected processes that span from production to the distribution of goods to consumers. Agribusiness encompasses various stages, including cultivation, processing, packaging, distribution, and marketing. Conducting a value chain analysis allows agribusinesses to pinpoint inefficiencies, reduce costs, and increase value at every stage. By assessing and refining each component of the value chain, these businesses can enhance their strategic management practices, which in turn can boost productivity. This methodology equips them to tackle industry-specific issues such as fragmented supply chains and inadequate infrastructure, which frequently impede productivity (Keshelashvili, 2018; Fan et al., 2020). Value Chain Theory is closely aligned with the focus of this study on strategic value chain management, offering a practical framework for understanding how the optimization of each value chain stage can lead to greater productivity in agribusiness. This is achieved by minimizing waste, enhancing efficiency, and ensuring the prompt delivery of agricultural products, ultimately increasing stakeholder value while addressing the distinct challenges within the agribusiness sector.

Technology Orientation Theory

Technology Orientation Theory highlights the importance of a company's proactive stance in adopting and integrating new technologies to foster innovation and secure a competitive advantage. Originating from innovation studies and technology management in the late 20th century, this theory suggests that companies that invest in technological progress are more capable of innovating, streamlining processes, and meeting market needs. Early insights from thinkers like Drucker emphasized the strategic significance of technology in business, while later studies established a connection between technological capabilities and improved business performance (Fegada & Veres, 2024). Nonetheless, some critics argue that the substantial costs and financial risks tied to ongoing technological investments can be particularly challenging for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In the agribusiness sector, Technology Orientation Theory has become increasingly pertinent due to the industry's persistent issues with

productivity, sustainability, and market fluctuations. The implementation of technologies such as precision agriculture, biotechnology, and information technology has proven crucial in tackling these challenges. Therefore, adopting this theory, agribusinesses have been able to boost productivity, efficiency, and sustainability through the use of technological innovations. These advancements have allowed companies to respond more adeptly to market needs, manage risks, and lessen their environmental footprint. Agribusinesses that cultivate an innovative culture are more likely to adjust to global market dynamics and sustain their competitive edge (Kiiru et al., 2022). The Technology Orientation Theory is especially relevant to this study's emphasis on the strategic adoption of technology. This theory suggested that organizations that incorporate advanced technologies into their processes can significantly boost productivity, reduce operational inefficiencies, and enhance decision-making. In the agribusiness sector, embracing technologies like digital platforms, precision instruments, and data-driven decision-making systems has become crucial for achieving productivity improvements (Fegada & Veres, 2024). Finally, this theory highlighted the vital importance of technology integration in enhancing agribusiness performance and securing long-term competitiveness.

Conceptual Framework

Independent variables

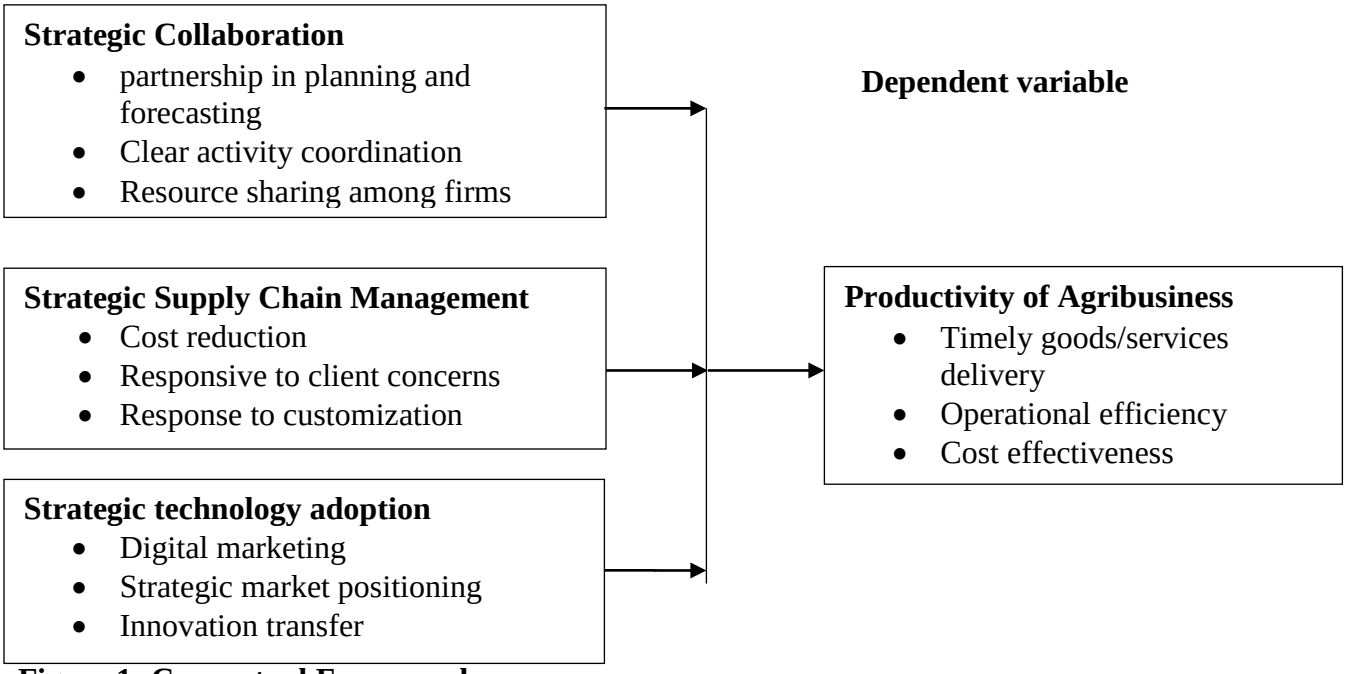

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

This study conducted a comprehensive retrieval and critical evaluation of qualitative literature published from 2018 to 2024. This specific timeframe was chosen to include the latest research, guaranteeing that the reviewed data was pertinent to the current investigation, which examined the impact of strategic management practices (SMPs) on productivity in the agribusiness sector.

The search utilized keywords such as strategic management practices, strategic collaboration, strategic supply chain management, strategic technology adoption, agribusiness industry, and productivity. The literature review led to several significant conclusions. To qualify for inclusion, articles needed to adhere to certain criteria: they must have been published between 2018 and 2024 and written in English. During the data extraction process, articles were evaluated based on the selected keywords and their abstracts, following the established inclusion and exclusion criteria. This screening was performed meticulously and manually, ensuring that only those articles that closely matched the research objectives, as indicated in their abstracts, were selected. This method facilitated a targeted and relevant compilation of literature aligned with the study's goals.

Empirical Review

At Global level, Dania et al. (2018) conducted a global study on the behavioral factors influencing collaboration in sustainable agri-food supply chains, employing Resource Dependency Theory and content analysis. Their research involved a comprehensive literature review to pinpoint critical behavioral elements essential for collaboration within the agri-food sector. By systematically analyzing 30 articles, they identified ten key collaboration factors and emphasized that successful stakeholder collaboration is crucial for achieving sustainability. The authors suggested the incorporation of additional organizational theories, such as Stakeholder Theory or Complexity Theory, to gain a more comprehensive understanding. In a separate study, Madhani (2019) examined strategic supply chain management (SSCM) within the electronics sector in Malaysia and the United States, creating an SSCM framework designed to enhance business value. This research involved 125 firms in Malaysia and 196 in the U.S., revealing that effective SSCM practices significantly improve organizational performance and competitive advantage. The study recommended aligning supply with demand to boost customer satisfaction.

Raji et al. (2024) investigated the role of technology, market strategies, and strategic management within the agricultural sector, with a particular emphasis on innovations like AI, IoT, and drones. Their findings highlighted that the combination of technology and strategic management significantly boosts agricultural productivity, enhances food security, and strengthens climate resilience. The study advocated for increased collaboration among stakeholders and the need to tackle challenges associated with technology adoption, including financial limitations and the need for technical skills. In a separate study, Radjaloa (2024) assessed the effects of technology adoption on corn agribusiness in the South Oba District of Indonesia. Through a quantitative analysis involving 70 corn farmers, the research revealed a high level of technology adoption, yet identified deficiencies in subsystems such as agro-marketing. The conclusion drawn was that enhancing these agribusiness subsystems could lead to improved productivity and sustainability, with recommendations for developing value chains and refining marketing strategies.

At the regional level, Kwamega and Abrokwah (2018) explored the practices of supply chain management (SCMP) and their impact on agribusiness performance in Ghana, focusing on the mediating effect of supply chain integration (SCI). Their findings indicated a positive correlation between SCMP and financial performance, emphasizing the importance of SCI for sustaining competitiveness. The researchers suggested broadening the scope of future studies and promoting the adoption of an SCI culture within agribusiness enterprises. At local level, Mukhongo et al. (2023) investigated how strategic partnerships affect the performance of broadcasters in Kenya's radio and television sector. A survey of 239 managers revealed that strategic partnerships significantly improve organizational performance. The study suggested broadcasting firms implement these findings to enhance profitability and performance. Matokho and Anyieni (2018) assessed strategic partnerships in Kenya's listed commercial banks, finding that such partnerships contribute to resource sharing and market expansion. However, the study concluded that partnerships explain only 28.2% of firm performance, indicating other factors at play. The study recommended that banks ensure strategic alignment and cultural compatibility when forming partnerships.

Mac-Clay and Feeney (2019) performed a systematic review of global agribusiness value chains, highlighting deficiencies in existing methodologies. Their research underscored the importance of context-specific strategies to improve the effectiveness of value chain analysis. Gachuhi and Awuor (2019) investigated strategic management practices and their effects on the sustainability of small agribusinesses in Githunguri, Kenya. Their findings indicated that strategic management plays a crucial role in sustainability, suggesting enhancements to these practices for achieving long-term viability. Chege and Wang (2020) analyzed technology transfer within Kenyan agribusiness, particularly its effects on small enterprises. Their study demonstrated that technology transfers significantly enhance performance, particularly in rural regions, and advocated for government initiatives to create technology transfer strategies aimed at bolstering food security and competitiveness. Mukundi (2019) assessed technological innovation in Kenya's agricultural sector, concluding that innovation moderately affects the competitiveness of export products like tea, coffee, and horticulture. The study recommended government subsidies for technology investments to improve competitiveness in global markets.

Influence of Strategic Collaboration on Productivity in Agribusiness Industry

The agribusiness sector is undergoing rapid transformation, with companies increasingly prioritizing the development and implementation of strategies to maintain their competitive edge. Strategic collaboration has emerged as a vital tactic for many agribusinesses aiming to tackle productivity issues and foster mutual advantages. Holmes et al. (2019) noted a numerous organizations are embracing collaboration to enhance their operational efficiency. This strategic partnership has been effective in addressing various challenges, enabling firms to sustain production while remaining competitive. To establish clear pathways in joint market agreements, businesses are increasingly opting for strategic collaborations. A variety of studies, both quantitative and qualitative, has investigated the effects of strategic collaboration on

organizational performance, frequently utilizing Strategic Management Practices (SMPs) as a benchmark. For instance, Dania, Xing, and Amer (2018) analyzed the factors influencing collaborative behavior in sustainable agri-food supply chains, applying Resource Dependency Theory and content analysis. Their systematic review revealed that collaboration values, shared activities, joint efforts, and adaptability are essential components for sustaining agri-food supply chains. The results indicate that effective collaboration among stakeholders is crucial for sustainability, and that strategic collaboration as an SMP enhances organizational performance, productivity, and competitive advantage.

Mukhongo, Atandi, and Okonda (2023) examined how strategic partnerships affect the performance of broadcasters in Kenya, employing both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Their findings, grounded in stakeholder theory, indicated a strong relationship between strategic alliances and operational performance, demonstrating that such partnerships enhance organizational effectiveness. In a similar vein, Matokho and Anyieni (2018) explored the impact of strategic partnerships on the performance of commercial banks in Kenya. By applying theories including knowledge-based views, competitive advantage, transaction cost theory, and resource dependence, they concluded that strategic partnerships are vital for enhancing organizational performance. Their research highlighted the importance of collaboration, particularly in alleviating the financial challenges associated with technological infrastructure. Moreover, strategic collaboration is essential for boosting organizational performance in the agribusiness sector. However, despite substantial evidence linking strategic collaboration to improved performance, there remains a significant gap in research that directly associates strategic collaboration with productivity in agribusiness. This gap presents both a contextual and conceptual challenge that warrants further exploration. The studies affirm the positive relationship between collaboration and organizational success, but future research is needed to explore its direct impact on productivity in agribusiness.

Influence of Strategic Value Chain Management on Productivity in Agribusiness Industry

Value chain management, as described by Weele (2018), is a strategic tool used to align resources and elements across the value chain, directly influencing customer satisfaction and stakeholder profitability. Effective value chain management connects various players' raw material producers, intermediaries, processing businesses, sales markets, and service providers fostering innovation and maintaining competitiveness within the marketplace. Several studies have explored strategic value chain management in different contexts. Keshelashvili (2018) examined value chain management in Georgia's agribusiness sector, using comprehensive interviews with experts, managers, and stakeholders, along with secondary data analysis. The study highlighted key challenges such as land fragmentation, limited access to modern technologies, inadequate business management skills, disorganized logistics, and restricted agrarian marketing opportunities. Based on these findings, it was recommended that agribusinesses adopt strategic value chain management as part of their strategic management practices (SMPs) to boost productivity.

Mac-Clay and Feeney (2019) performed a comprehensive literature review on agribusiness value chains, emphasizing analytical techniques for evaluating and defining these chains. Their findings indicated that understanding the challenges, opportunities, customer preferences, and value-added processes within the value chain significantly influences the growth of agribusiness. Nonetheless, their research did not specifically explore how strategic value chain management affects productivity, highlighting a gap that future studies should address in the agribusiness sector. Similarly, Madhani (2019) investigated strategic supply chain management (SSCM) and its impact on gaining a competitive edge. Through qualitative analysis, the research revealed that SSCM helps businesses succeed in a competitive global environment by enhancing supply chain responsiveness, adaptability, and efficiency. Madhani pinpointed four essential drivers responsiveness, robustness, reliability, and realignment that are crucial for the effectiveness of SSCM. For agribusinesses, utilizing these drivers can lead to improved productivity and competitiveness.

Similarly, Gachuhi and Awuor (2019) conducted a quantitative analysis on the impact of strategic management on the sustainability of agribusiness in Kenya. Their findings indicated a positive relationship between supply chain management and sustainability, although the study prioritized sustainability over productivity, revealing a research gap in the latter area. In a similar vein, Kwamega and Abrokwah (2018) examined the connection between supply chain management practices (SCMP) and agribusiness performance in Ghana through a quantitative lens. Utilizing SPSS and LISREL for hypothesis testing, their research uncovered a significant association between SCMP and both internal processes and financial performance. Additionally, the study identified that strategic chain integration (SCI) acts as a mediator in the relationship between SCMP and performance, recommending that SCI be integrated as a fundamental organizational strategy to boost agribusiness performance and competitiveness. While both sustainable supply chain management (SSCM) and SCMP are recognized for enhancing competitiveness and performance, there remains a significant gap in research concerning their direct effects on agribusiness productivity. Most existing studies concentrate on competitive advantage and performance indicators, rather than establishing a direct connection between SSCM and productivity results. This gap emphasizes the necessity for additional research to investigate how strategic value chain management affects productivity within the agribusiness sector.

Influence of Strategic Technology Adoption on Productivity in Agribusiness Industry

Technological advancements such as precision agriculture and biotechnology are transforming farming practices by facilitating data-driven decision-making, optimizing resources, and improving overall efficiency (Ladasi et al., 2019). When paired with adaptive market strategies like digital marketing and strategic positioning, these innovations empower agricultural businesses to effectively meet changing customer demands and broaden their market presence. By integrating these technologies and strategies with long-term goals, principles of strategic management promote creativity and resilience within agricultural enterprises. The following

analysis examines various research studies on the adoption of technology in the agricultural sector. Raji, Ijomah, and Eyieyien (2024) conducted a study that investigated the incorporation of technology, market strategies, and strategic management within small-scale agricultural businesses (SSABs) in South Africa and Zimbabwe. Employing a quantitative research methodology through surveys, their results demonstrated strong, direct correlations among productivity, competitiveness, technology transfer, and innovation. Importantly, the study found that the link between innovation and competitiveness in SSABs is entirely mediated by productivity and technology transfer. This highlights the essential role of strategic technology adoption in boosting productivity in agribusiness.

Radjaloa (2024) conducted a quantitative study to explore the relationship between technology adoption and various aspects of corn agribusiness, involving a purposive sample of 70 corn farmers. The research assessed factors such as agro-input systems, seed usage, and soil management. While it revealed a high level of technology adoption, it also highlighted notable deficiencies in subsystems like agro-marketing and agro-industry. The findings prompted recommendations for focused enhancements in agro-production, marketing, inputs, and industry sectors. However, in contrast to the work of Raji et al. (2024), this study did not find a direct correlation between technology adoption and productivity. In Kenya, Chege and Wang (2020) explored how technology transfer affects agribusiness performance. Their research was based on a technology transfer model that takes into account both the capabilities of the recipient and the considerations of the provider. Using a descriptive research design and quantitative methods, including regression and correlation analyses, the study found that technology transfers significantly boost the productivity of small enterprises and foster growth in rural agribusiness. This indicates that effective technology transfer is essential for enhancing the competitiveness and market access of small agribusinesses. The study highlights the necessity for government-supported technology transfer initiatives to improve the performance of small enterprises and ensure food security, aligning with the emphasis on strategic technology adoption for increasing agribusiness productivity as noted by Raji et al. (2024).

In a similar vein, Mukundi (2019) carried out research examining the influence of technological innovation on the competitiveness of agribusiness firms in Kenya. Utilizing a cross-sectional survey approach, the findings indicated that agricultural businesses generally adopted technological enhancements to a moderate extent. Through the application of descriptive statistics and regression analysis, it was determined that 51.1% of the firms experienced minimal price changes due to technological advancements, while a mere 8.9% noted significant effects. The study identified the high costs of technology as the main obstacle to its adoption in the agribusiness sector. Eventually, the research concluded that technological innovations had only a slight to moderate effect on the competitiveness of Kenyan agribusiness firms, suggesting that many businesses had not yet fully capitalized on the advantages of adopting new technologies.

The findings from these studies collectively suggest robust direct relationships between productivity, technology transfer, and innovation. However, most of the research has been

conducted in South Africa and Zimbabwe, highlighting a contextual gap in understanding these dynamics in other regions, particularly Kenya. Additionally, there is a conceptual gap due to a lack of studies explicitly linking technology adoption to productivity in agribusinesses. This gap emphasizes the need for further research to explore the influence of strategic management practices (SMPs) on agribusiness productivity, particularly within the Kenyan context. While there is a strong relationship between technology adoption, productivity, and innovation in agribusiness, the existing literature is heavily skewed toward specific regions, leaving a substantial gap in knowledge regarding how these elements interact within different agricultural contexts, particularly in Kenya.

Implications of the Literature Reviewed

The literature review reveals significant implications for both theory and practice, indicating that the identified gaps necessitate an expansion of existing theories on strategic management practices in agribusiness to directly address productivity outcomes, with stakeholder theory, value chain theory, and technology orientation theory serving as foundational concepts that require further empirical validation within this context, while simultaneously emphasizing the critical importance for practitioners in the agribusiness sector to adopt strategic management practices that enhance productivity through strategic collaborations, optimization of value chains, and the adoption of suitable technologies, supported by policymakers who must establish the necessary infrastructure and regulatory frameworks to facilitate these implementations.

Conclusion

The study concluded that strategic collaboration, as a variable of strategic management practices (SMP), plays a crucial role in agribusinesses; however, most existing research in this area, including works by Mukhongo et al. (2023) and Matokho and Anyieni (2018), has failed to directly link strategic collaboration with the productivity of the agribusiness industry, revealing both contextual and conceptual research gaps that warrant the current investigation; similarly, in the realm of strategic value chain management (SSCM), while firms utilizing this variable exhibit mixed performance and competitive advantages as reported by Madhani (2019), there is a notable scarcity of studies assessing the influence of SSCM on agribusiness productivity, as evidenced by Madhani's focus solely on enhancing competitive advantages and Kwamega and Abrokwah's (2018) exploration of the relationship between supply chain management practices (SCMP) and agribusiness performance, further underscoring the need for research in this area; moreover, regarding technology adoption, the study found strong, direct relationships between productivity, technology transfer, and innovation as indicated by Raji et al. (2024), yet it primarily relied on data from South Africa and Zimbabwe, while Radjaloa (2024) highlighted the dependence of agribusinesses on technology adoption without establishing a link to productivity, thus exposing a significant conceptual research gap that reinforces the necessity for the present study; overall, it is evident that there is a dearth of research on the influence of strategic

management practices on agribusiness productivity, justifying the need for further investigation in this field.

Recommendations

Future research should prioritize empirically investigating the direct impact of strategic management practices on productivity within the agribusiness sector to effectively bridge the contextual and conceptual gaps identified in this review, while agribusinesses are encouraged to adopt an integrated approach that combines strategic collaboration, value chain management, and technology adoption for enhanced productivity, as this holistic strategy is likely to yield superior results compared to focusing on isolated practices; additionally, there is a need for more context-specific research in Kenya and similar regions to better understand how strategic management practices can be tailored to local conditions to improve agribusiness productivity, and policymakers must establish supportive policies that promote the adoption of these practices by investing in technology infrastructure, facilitating market access, and encouraging collaborations among agribusinesses and other stakeholders.

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