INFLUENCE OF COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES ON PERFORMANCE OF MEDIA HOUSES IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT
The Kenyan media sector has become very volatile following increased liberalization of the sector, the much technological appreciation, heightened competition and also the rapid changes in the consumer buyer behaviors. The available opportunities have overwhelmed the threats in the sector therefore providing market growth a possibility in the sector. All these have made media groups in Kenya find it hard to identify sets of competitive strategies that would ensure that it earns and sustains its competitive strategies. In Kenya media sector to be successful one need to identify sets of competitive strategies that would both identify and sustain competitive strategies. It’s impossible for broadcasting media groups to insulate itself against the major environmental changes affecting the sector and also to shy away from market segmentation and targeting in the present century. Poor cost efficiency practices and also lack of positioning can post serious failures towards identification of competitive strategies. Media groups therefore are expected to advance efforts towards rightful cost efficiency practices as a source of cost controls for a high output from them therefore seeking a competitive advantage as a result. To manage an understanding on how well to adopt cost efficiency practices the Porter’s five forces model is to be provided. Resource based view model offers the best fit theory on how broadcasting media houses can respond well to the challenges of rapid changes in the business environment. Industrial Organization model offers a deep insight towards the best approach of limiting chances of losing track towards understanding the current trends in the market. This study is meant to fill this gap by seeking to establish the influence of competitive strategies on the performance of media houses in Kenya. The study was anchored on Porter’s five forces model, resource based view model, market segmentation and targeting theory and the industrial organization model. The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey. The target population of this study comprised of five major media houses in Kenya that includes Kenya broadcasting corporation, Nation media group, Standard media group, Radio Africa group, Royal media service, Nairobi community media house limited and mediamax communication group. The unit of analysis comprised of 384 employees working for the major media groups in Kenya. A sample of 196 respondents is selected for this study. The questionnaire is the selected instrument or tool for data collection for the study. Quantitative data collected was analyzed by the use of
descriptive statistics using SPSS (version, 21) and presented through percentages, means, standard deviations and frequencies. Multiple regressions were used to determine the influence of competitive strategies on the performance of media houses in Kenya. The results of the study revealed that Hybrid strategy cost leadership strategy, Differentiation strategy and focus strategy positively and significantly influence the performance of media houses in Kenya. The study recommends the media houses in Kenya to investing more in customer benefits to enable the discovery of what customers define as value. The study further recommends for flexible pricing policy to support the growth of the media house market share. There is also need to position products to facilitate the delivering innovative customer services. In addition the study recommends media houses in Kenya to adopt Low cost leadership to improve cost control skill. Further, the study recommends the media houses in Kenya to offer more quality services to enable them to analyze the product profiles frequently. There is also need for innovation to help media house identify the opportunities for new product development.

Key words: Cost Leadership Strategy, Differentiation Strategy, Market Focus Strategy, Hybrid Strategy, Performance of Media houses

Background of the study
As Tom Streeter (2007) insightfully observed, the institutional structure of commercial broadcasting derives from the dual nature of the airwaves (spectrum) as a public resource and as private property. The idea that broadcasting is essentially a direct relationship between broadcasters and their audiences is thus always mediated by the institutional arrangements that enable that broadcaster to have access to the broadcasting spectrum. The constitution of the airwaves as a scarce resource, and as property, is thus intimately bound up with their constitution as a public resource. As a result, broadcasters necessarily engage not only with audiences as a public but also with regulatory agencies that have responsibility for spectrum allocation and management but also for ensuring that broadcasters as the users of powerful technologies of public communication meet certain “public interest” or “affirmative” obligations as a condition of relatively exclusive access to scarce and public spectrum space. Streeter has termed broadcast licenses a form of soft property, that is “neither a thing nor a natural condition of human existence, but is rather a shifting flexible bundle of rights, a set of contingent political decisions about who gets what in what circumstances” (Streeter 2007).

Under such conditions, state regulatory agencies have the capacity to determine the legal and institutional arrangements attached to private property rights of the broadcast spectrum. Formulation of strategy is a process that involves searching for available possibilities and getting a fit between the firm’s internal weaknesses and the dictates of the external environment (Yabs, 2010). A strategy is the determination of the basic long-term goals and objectives of an enterprise and the adoption of course of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out those goals (Cole, 2007). According to Johnson (2007) a strategy is the direction of an organization over long term, which achieves advantage for the organization through its configuration of resources within a changing environment and to fulfill stakeholder expectations. Competitors are organizations which supply similar products to similar range of existing and potential buyers in the marketplace (Johnson, 2007). This therefore provides the demand to establish a specific definition of competitive strategy considering similar range of products plus existing and potential buyers. According to Johnson (2007) competitive strategy is the bases on which a business unit might achieve competitive advantage in the market. Strategic decisions are normally about trying to achieve some advantage for the organization over competition. Organizations are expected to take
note of competitive rivals that include organizations’ with similar products and services aimed at the same customer group. Competitive strategy is aimed at creating defensive position in an industry and generates a superior return on investments. As a result of competitive strategy being specific entailing similar markets and similar products, strategists also refer to this strategy as Business level strategy. The dynamism of the environment implies that organizations have to constantly redesign their strategies in order to remain competitive, (Porter, 2006).

Statement of the problem

The growth of the mainstream media industry in Kenya has been immense in the last two few decades. This has been driven by the growth of the country democratically as well as the hunger for information from an enlightened and more aware population. As a result the country has seen expansion of media houses as well as the cropping of new ones all seeking to respond to the demand. It is thus inevitable that competition continues to be stiffer each passing day as the various players in the market struggle to outdo each other. To do this, there is need for every media house to assess the environment and find the best competitive strategy to catapult it ahead of the others. The competition in the media houses has been glaring with the various organizations not only fighting for the advertisement revenue but also key media personalities in the country.

In order to have a competitive edge various strategies have been adopted. Njeri (2013) for instance explore the various strategies adopted by various television stations in Kenya. According to this reasearch, cost leadership were used to moderate extent. Under these, low price cost production, low advertising rates, use of technology, outsourcing of production as well as low price of acquiring international content were among the various approaches employed. Differentiation as a competitive strategy was also found to be used at a great extent. Among the tactics employed under this strategy include technology supports, use of non tape formats, running tv station on digital system, news and current affairs presented differently among other tactics.

The print media has also employed various competitive strategies as studied by (Mungai, 2006). Differentiation strategy, cosy-leadership, cost focus strategy as well as differentiation strategies were found to be common in the daily print media firms.According to this study, the various competitive strategies were employed at varying degrees and were effective to different levels. However, these strategies face different strategies which inhibit their effectiveness (Wekesa, 2013). As such the various strategies employed might bring different outcomes depending on their appropriateness, execution as well as the ability to deal with the various challenges that are faced when implementing them.

One of the most important objectives of any organization is to improve its performance. As such, in seeking to have a competitive edge, companies want to see improved performance as one of the main outcomes of the competitive strategies put in place. Though there are various studies that have been done to explore the various competitive strategies, information linking these strategies to the growth being exhibited in the Kenyan mainstream industry remain thin and sketchy. Additionally given the various challenges that have been identified in employing the various strategic maneuvers in this industry, it is not clear whether the various strategies actually contribute towards the performance in the firms of this industry. Hence, trying to find the link between these two variables was the basis of this research.

Specific Objectives

i. To establish the influence of overall cost leadership on the performance of media houses in Kenya.
ii. To establish the influence of differentiation strategy on the performance of media houses in Kenya.

iii. To determine the influence of focus competitive strategy on the performance of media house in Kenya

iv. To determine the influence of hybrid competitive strategy on the performance of media houses in Kenya.

Research Questions

i. What are the influence of overall cost leadership on the performance of media house in Kenya?

ii. How does differentiation strategy influence the performance of media houses in Kenya?

iii. To what extent does focus strategy influence the performance of media houses in Kenya?

iv. To what extent does hybrid strategy influence the performance of media houses in Kenya?

Literature Review

Porter’s five forces model

Porter (2008) identifies five forces of competition as fierce rivalry, threat to entry, threat of substitutes, power of suppliers and power of buyers. The primary determinants of a firm’s profitability are the attractiveness of the industry in which it operates and another determinant is its position within the industry (Njeri, 2013). Porter’s generic strategies can effectively correlate to organisation performance by using key strategic practices (Sifuna, 2014). Porter advocates that if the forces are extreme, no organisation earns striking returns on investment and if the forces overcome, most of the companies are profitable. The composition of the five forces varies by industry and that an organisation needs a separate strategy for every distinct industry such as media houses. Kitoto (2005) observed that a correct analysis of the five forces will assist a firm to choose one of the generic strategies that will successfully enable the organisation to compete profitably in an industry. Managers of media houses hence can only develop and choose winning strategies by first identifying to competitive pressures that exists.

Measuring the virtual strength of each and gaining a profound understanding of the industry’s whole competitive structure. Scholars have since postulated theories that argue against Porter’s point of view, proposing that low cost and differentiation may really be independent dimensions that should be strongly pursued concurrently (Fournier, 2008). The idea that pursuing multiple sources of competitive advantage is both feasible and desirable has also been supported by researchers (White, 2008). Porter’s value chain approach allows for the determination of attractiveness of the industry. The winning strategy selected can change the impact of competitive forces on the firm. Porter’s model is an influential tool for methodically diagnosing the main competitive pressure in a market and assessing how strong and significant each one is.

Media houses with knowledge about intensity and power of competitive forces can therefore develop options to influence them in a way that improves their competitive position. Media houses are expected to adapt their strategies to suit the dynamic market place. Although numerous companies pursuing cost and differentiation concurrently may become trapped in the middle, there is patent evidence to suggest that is at least some companies have been triumphant in achieving higher economic performance by pursuing both advantages (Bresnahan& Reiss, 2010). Empirical research using the management information system database by Miller & Dess (2010) suggests that the generic strategy frame work could be enhanced by viewing cost, differentiation and focus as three dimensions of strategic
positioning other than as three discrete strategies. Thus, the research in strategic management following Porter does not provide explicit support for Porter’s original formulation.

Resource Based View
The resource based view of the firm draws attention to the firm’s internal environment as a driver of competitive advantage and emphasizes the resources that firms have developed to compete in the environment. The idea of the resource based view is credited to Penrose (2008) from her description of the importance of firm’s use of resources to gain competitive advantage. The resource-based view argues that competitive advantage lie in the heterogeneous firm’s specific resources possessed by the firm (Njeri, 2013). From a resource based view of the firm, it is of high importance to take a close look at the internal organisation of a company and its resources in order to understand how competitive advantage is determined within firms. The resource based view combines the internal (Core competence) and external (Industry structure) perspectives on strategy. The resource based perspective of firms is based on the concept of economic rent and the notion of organisation as a collection of capabilities (Kay, 2000). The resource based view of the firm draws attention to the firm’s internal environment as a driver for competitive advantage and emphasises the resources that firms have developed to compete in the environment. According to this perspective it lays greater emphasis on the internal resources available to a firm as a major factor of enforcing a competitive advantage. This was a very popular view during the initial development of theories on competitive advantage (Mburugu, 2015). According to Jiang (2002), a firm that wants to obtain strategic competitive advantage should posses the capabilities to adapt its operations to the dynamics of the market environment in which it positioned. Major concern in RBV is that it is focused on the ability of the firm to maintain a combination of resources that cannot be possessed or built up in a similar manner by competitors. Besanko et al., (2001) argues that based on the empirical writings, RBV provides the understanding that certain unique existing resources will result in superior performance and ultimately build a competitive advantage.

Hokinsson’s theory relied heavily on the significance of an organisation’s internal environment as part of its competitive advantage. Researchers like Ansoff and Chandler also made significant contribution towards enhancing the resource based view of competitive strategies. The origin of this theory dates back to the work of Penrose 1959, who suggested that if an organisation possess or deploys its resources effectively, it is better placed to compete in its industry as compared to the factors without the firm’s external environment. Other researchers, Prahalad and Hamel (1990) introduced the element of core competencies. This mainly emphasises on the firm’s capabilities as its most crucial internal resources which can act as its competitive advantage. Another scholar, Barney (1991) also contributed to the theory. He postulates that organisation resources are its primary sources of competitive advantage. Resource based view hence attribute priority to the content aspect of strategy and leaves the managerial aspects that underlies creation and management of resource based strategies.

Targeting and segmentation theory
Market segmentation is the process of dividing the target market into groups to better understands their current behaviours, evaluating each segment and selecting target markets and then developing an appropriate marketing mix for these segments which includes developing messages and tailoring programs to meet their specific needs (Jones, Rees & Hall, 2005). Segmenting target markets helps us to group those with commodities as well as gain a better understanding their specific wants, needs, barriers and behaviours (Kotler, Robert & Lee, 2002). Targeting refers to the process of selecting specific groups of people or
organisations to which company promotes its products and services (Wagner, 1998). Firms or businesses exist when there is a market to serve or when there is demand to fill. Expansion for existing firm is a complex process much less starting from scratch. Profitability is a primary consideration when deciding to choose a market either at corporate level or business level.

Targeting markets now are as primal as ever. It’s no longer an isolated and personal company objective like earlier periods of market surges. Targeting a market segment that is in line with expectations, preferences and objectives gives a firm competitive advantage. Kotler and Armstrong (2009) outline the essence of market segmentation as a method to differentiate how consumers have and what they need by using socioeconomic and psychographic variables. The key to deciding which segmentation strategy to utilise is to identify which best guide for specification of the product requirements (Dibb, Simkin, Pride & Ferrell, 2001). Consumers are also complex as the process of finding the right market. Sophisticated customers are as a result of being much informed therefore they have already a form of bias for or against certain products.

Selecting the market segment and meeting the needs of the customers are very important facets of a successful product in a niche market. Upon selecting which markets to target, brand development, packaging and marketing strategies are prepared. For more exhaustive and efficient niche market targeting especially with high technology era, producers would prefer market research studies or demand studies to secure a more data-led market demand. This ensures customers’ needs are met and that no production errors are encountered due to wrong market segmentation strategies or identification.

**Industrial Organisation (IO) Perspective**

The first view is based upon industrial organisational economics and is aptly named the industrial organisational (IO) perspective. This view suggests that competitive advantage can be realised by placing organisational analysis emphasis on global competition, as best demonstrated by Porter’s (1980) ‘Five forces’ framework of industrial analysis. The inference is that opportunities will be greater and threats less, in industries where the environmental conditions and attributes are attractive. This in turn leads to a greater like hood of higher organisational performance.

According to this paradigm, external industry structure influences the strategy of an organisation, which in turn determines the organisation’s economic performance (Scherer & Ross, 1990). Industrial organisation analysis places the attention on choosing the ‘right industries’ and within them, the most attractive competitive positions. The industrial organisation model does not ignore the internal characteristics of organisation; however, the emphasis is firmly placed on attributes at the industry level. The industrial organisation framework advocates that competitive advantage is sustained by exploiting an organisation’s strengths while avoiding internal weakness. Barney (1991) suggests that firms obtain sustained competitive advantage by implementing strategies that exploit their own internal strengths, through responding to environmental opportunities, while neutralizing external threats and avoiding internal weaknesses. Industrial Organisation model, pioneered by Edward H Mason and J. Bain, provides a useful conceptual framework for analyzing the structure of real world market.
### Conceptual Framework

#### Research Methodology

**Research Design**

A research design describes how the research strategy addresses the specific aims and objectives of the study. Mugenda (2012) defines research design as a strategic plan that sets out the broad outline and key features of the work to be undertaken in the research study. This research adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey which was used in giving information on contemporary occurrences by selecting samples and analyzing it. This involved carrying out a survey on broadcasting houses in Nairobi, Kenya. According to Salant and Dillman (1994), surveys can be very essential in assessing needs, evaluating demands, and analyzing impact. Cross-sectional survey is meant to obtain a representative random sample who will respond to a number of questions. According to Frankfort-Nachmias (2009), to overcome the methodological limitations of cross-sectional designs, researchers use statistical analysis to approximate some of the operations that are naturally built into experimental design. Mugenda (2012) suggests that descriptive research design provides factual, accurate and systematic data but such data cannot be used to explain what caused the situation. This research design fits the profile of the study as the objectives of the study is to establish the challenges that media houses in Kenya face in selecting competitive strategies. Descriptive cross-sectional research in nature is a type of study conducted to generate explanatory information or characteristics about a specific phenomenon (Mugenda, 2012). The research design takes the form of a descriptive cross-sectional survey which involves selecting a sample and analyzing it.
was aimed at selecting the challenges that media houses face in selecting competitive strategies.

**Target Population**
The target population is the entire set of units for which the study data are to be used to make inferences, the target population thus defines those units for which the findings of the study are meant to generalise (Dempsey, 2003). The study population was 384 main employees working at broadcasting houses located within Nairobi. The enlisted major broadcasting houses in Nairobi include but not limited to Kenya broadcasting Corporation, the nation media group, the standard media group, royal media service, Mediamax communication group, Nairobi community media house limited and radio Africa group. These broadcasting house employees as well as their directors/managers formed the target population for the simple reason that the employees of these media houses are presumed to be the busiest in terms of content generation, marketing strategies and viewership management/competitive analysis due to the high number of ever demanding and changing clients seeking customized services due to the number of available broadcasting array to choose from and that most of these broadcasting houses are offering more or less the same content.

As a result, these broadcasting houses employ the use of different content generation models, marketing models and more of customized services to their target markets, these is done through positioning staff around the market i.e. in each county, more use of social media as to reach youths who access these platforms easier than watching tv and lastly different flexible work arrangements in order to meet clients’ demands as well as the employees respective work-life schedules so as to motivate the staff. Director/Managers are also included in this study as they are better placed to evaluate the performance of their employees and judge whether any practices being employed by the broadcasting houses has any effect on not only the performance of the employees but also the competitive strategies being used in the respective media houses. The research stratifies media groups into public broadcasting, commercial broadcasting and community broadcasting on the basis of there establishment as indicated in Table below this is according to CAK report of 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Target population</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Broadcasting</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Broadcasting</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Broadcasting</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>384</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public broadcasting media have 49.2%, Commercial broadcasting media have 21.3% while the Community broadcasting media houses have 9.8%

**Sampling Frame**
Mugenda (2012) defines sampling frame as a complete list of all units of the population, which is purposely used to draw random samples. A list of broadcasting houses for survey was prepared, from which the study participants are drawn. This ensured that each broadcasting house employees had an equal opportunity to participate in the study. This was important as different broadcasting houses apply different types of competitive strategies depending on the nature of market being targeted. On the other hand, in every broadcasting house studied, a director who was in charge of marketing was interviewed.
Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The target population comprised 384 employees working at the enlisted broadcasting houses in Nairobi with an inclusion of 100 marketing/directors. The researcher used questionnaires for employees while the managers are interviewed. The researcher used a Simplified Formula for Proportions by Yamane (1967) to determine the sample size. This formula was used to calculate the sample size as shown below. A 95% confidence level and Precision (e) = 0.05 are assumed.

\[
n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}
\]

Where \( n \) is the sample size, \( N \) is the population size and \( e \) is the precision

\[
n = \frac{384}{1 + 384(0.05)^2} = 195.9 \sim 196 \text{ employees}
\]

Stratified random sampling used in this study. This means that the 196 respondents are picked from these strata. The first step involved the population being split into strata. The various media houses that are used in this study represented these strata. The strata was chosen to divide the population into important categories relevant to the study, that was, each broadcasting house used is different from the other in regard to how they employ competitive strategies work. The next step involved randomly choosing respondents from these strata (broadcasting house) to be used in the study. This way a randomized probabilistic sample is selected within each stratum. Stratified random sampling is important as it ensures all the broadcasting houses in Nairobi are chosen to be studied and none is left out. This method is usually used in cases where every strata are thought to be too distinct and too important for research interest as it is in this case. The participants are drawn in such a way to represent all the enlisted broadcasting houses as shown in table below.

### Distribution of Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strata</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Sample Proportion</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Broadcasting</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>51.04</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Broadcasting</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>51.04</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Broadcasting</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>51.04</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>384</strong></td>
<td><strong>51.04</strong></td>
<td><strong>196</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On top of this, purposive sampling is used in collecting data from marketing manager/directors. Purposive sampling is appropriate in this case as it is only marketing managers and directors that will have objective opinions pertaining the competitive strategies put in place. Whereas the use of employees was important, the managers’ input was essential as well for objectivity sake. In each broadcasting house, one marketing manager was interviewed meaning, 25 managers are to be interviewed in all. Due to the fact that each manager gave their opinion based on recorded facts, one manager was deemed sufficient as well as efficient as it was not easy to secure interview schedules in broadcasting houses.

Data collection instruments

The study collected primary data at sources using questionnaires administered to the respondents. Mugenda (2012) defines questionnaire as a commonly used tool in data...
collection and contains questions that cover all the information that the researcher is interested in obtaining from the subject. According to Kothari (2009) quite often questionnaires was considered as the heart of a survey operation hence carefully constructed. Each member of the target population was administered with a questionnaire which contained both open ended and closed ended questions. Open ended questions are to provide detailed additional information as the respondent was not limited to opinion. The open-ended questions also provided a chance to capture data that closed ended questions would not. The close ended questions are provides more structured responses which in many cases facilitates tangible recommendations. The closed ended questions are to avoid questions that provide “yes” or “No” responses because of the biasness as a result of “affirmation syndrome”. People are more likely to say “yes” than “No” which biases the results of any question where yes a possible answer is (Rukwaru, 2007).

Data collection procedure
The questionnaire was mailed to respondents who are expected to read and understand the questions and write down the reply in the space meant for the purpose in the questionnaire itself. The researcher administered the questionnaire individually including those who were reached physically and those through the mail which includes the email too. Questionnaires was coded and registered so that the researcher can exercise control when administering questionnaire through research assistants. The assistants maintained a register too to capture the number of questionnaires that had been issued out. The questionnaires was issued by research assistants and controlled by the researcher.

Pilot test
A pilot test study was undertaken to pre-test data collection instruments for validity and reliability. Respondents were selected randomly from different media houses and questionnaires were improved based on pretesting results. A pre-test was done prior to main study to determine the accuracy of the research instrument, (Mugenda, 2012). Pilot test also helped the researcher to determine whether the proposed procedures in the collection of data are appropriate including the time taken to complete each tool and the study environment. The researcher selected a pilot group of 30 individuals from the target population to test reliability of the research instrument which provides 10% of the study population. This pilot data included in the actual study to enrich the study.

Reliability of instrument
According to Kothari (2009) a measuring instrument is reliable if it provides consistent results. Reliable measuring instrument does contribute to validity, but a reliable instrument needs to be valid instrument. The researcher will perform a pilot study to pre-test research instruments for reliability. This encourages correction any inconsistency that may be provided by the research instruments. This also ensured that what is intended is measured to clarity therefore enhancing instruments reliability. The researcher also included similar items on a measure to improve reliability not forgetting testing diverse sample of individuals plus the use of testing procedures that are uniform. Cronbach’s Alpha was used to measure reliability on the questionnaires which provide internal consistency. SPSS application was applied to calculate the Cronbach’s Alpha for reliability analysis. A higher value shows a more reliable generated scale that the alpha coefficient produces that ranges from 0-1. This was used to describe reliability of factors extracted either from dichotomous or multi-point formatted questionnaire or scales.
Validity of instrument
Validity is the most critical criterion and indicates the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Kothari, 2009). It’s the extent to which differences found with measuring instrument reflect true differences among those being tested. Mugenda (2012) provides validity to be the degree to which the data collected in a study accurately represents variables being measured. It’s therefore the accuracy, truthfulness and meaningfulness of the data and all inferences that are made from the data. In this research the test qualify the question in the questionnaire if they in meeting the study objectives and the provisions of the research purpose. The test also provided a control measure that sought if the study measures are provided rightfully. The researcher provided 30 questionnaires to respondents that helped to get the desired information provided or not through the questionnaires.

Data Analysis and Presentation
Data that was collected which was quantitative was analyzed by the use of descriptive statistics using SPSS (Version, 21) and presented through percentages, means, standard deviations and frequencies. The information was displayed by use of bar charts, graphs and pie charts and in prose-form. This was done by tallying up responses, computing percentages of variations in response as well as describing and interpreting the data in line with the study objectives and assumptions through use of SPSS (version 21) to communicate research findings. Content analysis was used to test data that is qualitative in nature or aspect of the data collected from the open ended questions.

Correlation analysis provides statistical relationship denoting the degree of dependence between two variables (Mugenda, 2012). They indicate predictive relationships that were exploited in practice. The study conducted a correlation analysis to establish the strength of the relationship between the independent and the dependent variable. A correlation value of zero shows that there was no relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. On the other hand, a correlation of ±1.0 means there was a perfect positive or negative relationship (Hair et al., 2010). The values was interpreted between 0 (no relationship) and 1.0 (perfect relationship). The relationship was considered small when \( r = \pm 0.1 \) to \( \pm 0.29 \), while the relationship was considered medium when \( r = \pm 0.3 \) to \( \pm 0.49 \), and when \( r = \pm 0.5 \) and above, the relationship was considered strong.

Multiple regressions were done to determine the challenges of selecting competitive strategies among media houses in Kenya. Data was presented using tables and pie charts for ease in interpretation. In addition, a multiple regression was used to measure the quantitative data and was analysed using SPSS too. The regression equation was:

\[
Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon
\]

Where
- \( Y \) is the dependent variable (competitive strategies),
- \( \beta_0 \) is the regression constant,
- \( \beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3 \) and \( \beta_4 \) are the coefficients of independent variables,
- \( X_1 \) is Definition of competitors,
- \( X_2 \) is Dynamic business environment,
- \( X_3 \) is Target marketing
- \( X_4 \) is positioning

ANOVA was used to establish the level of significance of the established model.
Quantitative data was presented through statistical tools such as frequency distribution tables, pie-charts, bar-graphs and in prose form for easy understanding. The study interpreted the research findings from the evidence presented by the data collected. Conclusion was based on the findings.
Results

Response Rate

The study sought to determine the response rate of the study. The total number of questionnaires that were administered was 196. A total of 151 questionnaires were filled and returned. This represented an overall successful response rate of 77.04% as shown in Figure According to Kothari (2004), a response rate of 50% or more was adequate for a descriptive study. Therefore, a response rate of 77.04% was good for the study.

Response Rate

Reliability Analysis

The study conducted pilot test to determine reliability of the of the research instruments. The pilot study involved a sample of 30 respondents from the sample population that represent 10%. The Reliability analysis test was done using Cronbach’s Alpha that measured the internal consistency by establishing the degree to which a particular measuring procedure gives equivalent results over a number of repeated trials. A Cronbach Alpha value of 0.7 is the threshold for reliability. The Cronbach alpha values for each variable were higher than 0.7. Therefore, the questionnaires were reliable for the study. This agrees with Cooper and Schindler (2011) who inicated an alpha value of 0.7 as a threshold.

Reliability test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid strategy Cost leadership</td>
<td>0.819</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost leadership strategy</td>
<td>0.752</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiation strategy</td>
<td>0.741</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Focus strategy</td>
<td>0.737</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic Characteristics

This section presents the basic characteristics of the respondent. They include gender, working duration in the organization and the position in the organization. The gender was established in order to establish the gender distribution of the employees in management positions in media firms and establish whether it means the constitutional requirements of not more than a third being from same gender. The working duration was established in order to know whether respondents had institutional knowhow.

Respondents Gender

The study sought to determine the gender of the employees working in media houses in Kenya. The results of the study revealed that the 45% of the respondents were female while
the majority 55% of them was male. The results of the study indicate that the ratio of the employees at the media houses in Kenya meets two-third gender constitutional threshold (Constitution of Kenya, 2010) that requires females to be a third of the whole population in an organization.

Respondents Gender

Respondents Working Experience
The study sought to determine the working experience of the staff at media houses in Kenya. The results of the study revealed that the 26.5% of the respondents had worked for over 12 years, 25.2% of them had worked for between 8 and 11 years, 26.5% of them had worked for between 4 and 7 years while 21.9% had worked for less than 3 years. The results of the study implies that majority of the staff had worked for over 3 years.

Respondents Working Experience

Respondents Position in the Organization
The study sought to examine the position held by the employees at media houses in Kenya. The findings of the study revealed that majority 39.7% of the employees were in management positions while those who were holding senior positions were 29.8% and 30.5% of them were holding other positions in the company.
Respondents Position in the Organization

Inferential analysis
The study also conducted inferential analysis tests using correlation and regression to establish the influence of competitive strategies on the performance of media houses in Kenya. The study used significance of the coefficients to determine whether their association was significant.

Correlation analysis
The study conducted correlation analysis tests to establish the influence of competitive strategies on the performance of media houses in Kenya. Correlation indicates the direction in one variable if another variable changes. A negative Pearson correlation value indicates negative correlation while a positive Pearson correlation value indicates a positive correlation. The strength of the association increases as the value approaches either -1 or +1. The correlation findings are as presented in Table below.

The summary of the correlation analysis results shows that there was a strong positive and significant association between hybrid strategy and the performance of media houses in Kenya as shown by a Pearson coefficient of 0.544 and significance level of 0.000. This shows that an increase in hybrid strategies such as Investing in customer benefits, investment in customer benefits in the media house to enable the discovery of what customers define as value, having pricing policy which is competitive enough to other media houses so as to increase the number of customers, flexible pricing policy to support the growth of the media house market share and positioning of products to facilitate the delivering innovative customer services leads to a positive and significant effect on the performance of media houses in Kenya.

Moreover, the findings of a study indicated that cost leadership strategy had a positive and significant association with the performance of media houses in Kenya as shown by a Pearson coefficient of 0.326 and significance level of 0.000. This shows that an increase in cost leadership strategy such as Carrying out in-house training to learn about cost efficiency, adopting Low cost leadership to improving cost control skill, encouraging workforce commitment so as to inculcate the sense of team work, presence of low cost production programs with other regional branches to improve on quality and productivity and offering short training in form of seminars which improve customer service leads to a positive and significant effect on the performance of media houses in Kenya.
consistent with the findings of a study by Atikiya (2015) who found out that 43.5% of the firms charge lower prices compared to their competitors.

Further, the findings of a study indicated that differentiation strategy had a positive and significant association with the performance of media houses in Kenya as shown by a Pearson coefficient of 0.409 and significance level of 0.000. This shows that an increase in differentiation strategy such as quality of services enable the media house to analyze the product profiles frequently, adoption of innovation to help media house identify the opportunities for new product development, putting in place excellent Customer service to enable media house to increase the number of customers, Customer response time to improve the identity of the media house over time leads to a positive and significant effect on the performance of media houses in Kenya. The study findings are consistent with the findings of a study by Mutunga (2014) which revealed that 56.2% of the firms embrace duo strategies of cost leadership and differentiation simultaneously while 25% were exclusively on cost leadership and 18.8% were exclusively using differentiation.

Lastly, the findings of a study indicated that focus strategy had a strong positive and significant association with the performance of media houses in Kenya as shown by a Pearson coefficient of 0.538 and significance level of 0.000. This shows that an increase in Segmentation of customers, target marketing, embracing Service differentiation to increase profitability as well as market share leads to a positive and significant effect on the performance of media houses in Kenya. The study findings are consistent with Meyers (2014) findings which shed light on the role that both realm of consumption of the featured product and its cultural relevance plays on the reception of marketing communication efforts.

**Correlation Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Hybrid strategy</th>
<th>Overall Cost leadership</th>
<th>Differentiation strategy</th>
<th>Focus strategy</th>
<th>Performance of media houses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid strategy</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>0.232**</td>
<td>-0.154</td>
<td>0.314**</td>
<td>0.544**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Cost leadership</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiation strategy</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus strategy</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>0.326**</td>
<td>0.409**</td>
<td>0.538**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance of media houses</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>0.151</td>
<td>0.151</td>
<td>0.151</td>
<td>0.151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Regression analysis
The study used a multivariate regression model to establish the influence of competitive strategies on the performance of media houses in Kenya. The overall regression model was

\[ Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon \]

Where: \( Y \) = Performance of media houses, \( X_1 \) = Hybrid strategy, \( X_2 \) = cost leadership strategy, \( X_3 \) = Differentiation strategy, \( X_4 \) = focus strategy, and \( \varepsilon \) = Error term. The results for model summary are as shown in Table below.

The study findings showed that Hybrid strategy, cost leadership strategy, Differentiation strategy and focus strategy all account for 62.2% of the variation in the performance of media houses in Kenya. This is shown by a by an R-square value of 0.622. Regression results also show that R was 0.789 that shows that the correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable was positive.

Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.789</td>
<td>0.622</td>
<td>0.612</td>
<td>0.259</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Predictors: (Constant), Focus strategy, Cost leadership strategy, Hybrid strategy, Differentiation strategy

The results of the study revealed that the overall regression model linking Focus strategy, Cost leadership strategy, Hybrid strategy, Differentiation strategy and the performance of media houses in Kenya was significant as indicated by F statistic \((4,146) = 60.163\) as indicated by (0.000) significance level which was less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance. F calculated is 60.163 while f critical is 2.434. F calculated is greater than the F critical \((60.163 > 2.434)\), this showed that the overall model was statistically significant at 5% significance level. The model fit well on the data. The results of the study are as shown in Table below.

ANOVA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>16.14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.035</td>
<td>60.163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>9.792</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25.932</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Performance of media houses
Predictors: (Constant), Focus strategy, Cost leadership strategy, Hybrid strategy, Differentiation strategy

The study also used regression coefficients to establish the effect of each variable that is Focus strategy, Cost leadership strategy, Hybrid strategy, Differentiation strategy on the performance of media houses in Kenya as indicated in table below.

Beta coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.311</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>0.928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hybrid strategy</td>
<td>0.428</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>8.229</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cost leadership strategy</td>
<td>0.180</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td>7.525</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Differentiation strategy</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td>4.773</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus strategy</td>
<td>0.310</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>4.452</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Performance
The overall regression model therefore is as shown below

\[
\text{Implementation of Preference and Reservation Procurement Policies} = 0.028 + 0.428 \times \text{Hybrid strategy} + 0.180 \times \text{cost leadership strategy} + 0.138 \times \text{differentiation strategy} + 0.310 \times \text{Focus strategy}
\]

The summary of the results shown in Table above revealed that hybrid strategy had a positive and significant effect on the performance of media houses in Kenya (\(\beta=0.428, \text{Sig}=0.000\)). This implies that a unit increase in hybrid strategy will lead to a 0.428 unit increase in the performance of media houses in Kenya. The effect is significant since the significance is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. The results are consistent with the findings of a study by Ouma (2015) which established that out of the 28 bus companies, 34.82% adopted cost leadership strategy, 42.85% adopted differentiation strategy, 42.52% focus strategy while 36.57% hybrid strategy.

Moreover, the findings of the study also showed that cost leadership strategy had a positive and significant influence on the performance of media houses in Kenya (\(\beta = 0.18, \text{Sig}=0.000\)). This implies that an increase cost leadership strategy by one unit, leads to a 0.180 unit increase in performance of media houses in Kenya. The effect is significant since the significance is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. The findings agree with the findings of a study Ngugi (2017) who revealed a positive relationship between competitive strategies and sustainable competitive advantage of SACCOs in Mombasa County.

The findings of the study also revealed that differentiation strategy had a positive and significant effect on the performance of media houses in Kenya (\(\beta = 0.138, \text{Sig}=0.000\)). This implies that a one unit increase in differentiation strategy leads to 0.138 unit increase in performance of media houses in Kenya. The effect is significant since the significance is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. The findings agree with the findings of a study by Nolega (2015) who demonstrated that product differentiation influence market dominance.

The findings of the study also showed that focus strategy had a positive and significant effect on the performance of media houses in Kenya (\(\beta = 0.31, \text{Sig}=0.000\)). This implies that a one unit increase in focus strategy leads to 0.310 unit increase in the performance of media houses in Kenya. The findings agree with the findings of a study by Yabs (2014) which indicated that there is still room for further studies in market segmentation.

Summary of the Findings
The summary of the findings of competitive strategies affecting the performance of media houses in Kenya have been presented based on each study objective. From the summary, the study detailed conclusions that enabled the study to come up with the recommendations.

Hybrid Competitive Strategy
The study revealed that there was a positive and significant correlation between Hybrid Competitive Strategy and the performance of media houses in Kenya. Some of the Hybrid Competitive Strategies include Investing in customer benefits, investment in customer benefits in the media house to enable the discovery of what customers define as value, having pricing policy which is competitive enough to other media houses so as to increase the number of customers, flexible pricing policy to support the growth of the media house market share and positioning of products to facilitate the delivering innovative customer services. The regression results also indicated that Hybrid Competitive Strategy influences performance of media houses in Kenya positively and significantly.
Overall Cost leadership strategy
The study revealed that there was a positive and significant correlation between overall cost leadership strategy and the performance of media houses in Kenya. Some of the overall cost leadership Strategies include Carrying out in-house training to learn about cost efficiency, adopting Low cost leadership to improving cost control skill, encouraging workforce commitment so as to inculcate the sense of team work, presence of low cost production programs with other regional branches to improve on quality and productivity and offering short training in form of seminars which improve customer service. The regression results also indicated that overall cost leadership influences performance of media houses in Kenya positively and significantly.

Differentiation strategy
The study revealed that there was a positive and significant correlation between Differentiation strategy and the performance of media houses in Kenya. Some of the differentiation strategies include offering of quality services to enable the media house to analyze the product profiles frequently, adoption of innovation to help media house identify the opportunities for new product development, putting in place excellent Customer service to enable media house to increase the number of customers, Customer response time to improve the identity of the media house over time. The regression results also indicated that Differentiation strategy influences performance of media houses in Kenya positively and significantly.

Market Focus strategy
The study revealed that there was a positive and significant correlation between Market Focus strategy and the performance of media houses in Kenya. Some of the Market Focus Strategies include segmentation of customers, target marketing, embracing Service differentiation to increase profitability as well as market share. The regression results also indicated that Market Focus strategy influences performance of media houses in Kenya positively and significantly.

Conclusion
Hybrid Competitive Strategy has a positive and significant effect on the performance of media houses in Kenya. Investing in customer benefits, investment in customer benefits in the media house to enable the discovery of what customers define as value, having pricing policy which is competitive enough to other media houses so as to increase the number of customers, flexible pricing policy to support the growth of the media house market share and positioning of products to facilitate the delivering innovative customer services positively influences the performance of media houses in Kenya. Overall cost leadership strategy has a positive and significant association with the performance of media houses in Kenya. Carrying out in-house training to learn about cost efficiency, adopting Low cost leadership to improving cost control skill, encouraging workforce commitment so as to inculcate the sense of team work, presence of low cost production programs with other regional branches to improve on quality and productivity and offering short training in form of seminars which improve customer service positively influences the performance of media houses in Kenya. Differentiation strategy has a positive and significant association with the performance of media houses in Kenya. Offering of quality services to enable the media house to analyze the product profiles frequently, adoption of innovation to help media house identify the opportunities for new product development, putting in place excellent customer service to enable media house to increase the number of customers, customer response time to improve
the identity of the media house over time positively influences the performance of media houses in Kenya.

Market Focus strategy has a positive and significant relationship with the performance of media houses in Kenya. Segmentation of customers, target marketing, embracing Service differentiation to increase profitability as well as market share positively influences the performance of media houses in Kenya.

**Recommendations of the Study**

The section presents recommendations of the study to various stakeholders in the media industry. The findings of the study as well as the conclusions guided formulation of the study recommendations. This section presents the recommendations of the study per objective. After the recommendations, areas for further study are presented.

**Hybrid Competitive Strategy**

The study recommends the media houses in Kenya to invest more in customer benefits to enable the discovery of what customers define as value. There is also need to adopt competitive pricing policy to other media houses so as to increase the number of customers. The study further recommends for flexible pricing policy to support the growth of the media house market share. There is also need to position products to facilitate the delivering innovative customer services.

**Overall Cost leadership strategy**

The findings of the study led to the recommendation that the media houses in Kenya carry out more in-house training to learn about cost efficiency. In addition the study recommends media houses in Kenya to adopt Low cost leadership to improve cost control skill. There is also a need to improve the workforce commitment of the staff through training and mentorship programmes.

**Differentiation strategy**

The study recommends the media houses in Kenya to offer more quality services to enable them to analyze the product profiles frequently. There is also need for innovation to help media house identify the opportunities for new product development. Furthermore, the study recommends the media houses to put in place excellent customer service to enable media house to increase the number of customers.

**Market Focus strategy**

There is a need for the segmentation of customers. Additionally, there is need for target marketing as well as more service differentiation to increase profitability and market share. The findings of the study further led to the recommendation that there is a need for media firms to practice target marketing as a way of focusing their services.

**Acknowledgement**

My special thank you goes to the Almighty God for having given me the opportunity and grace to maneuver through the study. I pay gratitude to my cousin Boniface Mwebi for his valued contribution in providing guidelines and tips to pursue this study. My supervisor Dr Susan Were and fellow scholars who have provided the relevant advice and content that registered success to the study.
References


