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STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES CONTRIBUTING TO COMPETITIVENESS OF THE KENYAN NATIONAL MUSEUMS: THE CASE OF NAIROBI NATIONAL MUSEUMS

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: The study sought to determine competitive strategies contributing to competitiveness of the Kenyan National Museums in a case of Nairobi National Museums. In particular, the study investigated the impact of cost leadership, differentiation and niche strategy on the competitiveness of NMK.

Statement of problem: The influx of new privately owned museums in the industry has posed a considerable competitive threat to the National Museum of Kenya. Introduction of such museums have resulted in NMK losing some of its clients particularly cultural clients who prefer themed museums. A review of the firm's collective revenue collection also indicates a reduction as the firm recorded reduced revenues in the last three consecutive years.

Research methodology: A descriptive research design was adopted. The investigation targeted the management at NMK who are drivers of strategy at the organization. In total, 80 respondents were selected using the census approach.

Findings: Competitive strategies investigated had a positive impact on the competitiveness of NMK. Cost leadership was observed to have the most significant impact on the competitiveness of NMK. On the other hand, differentiation was demonstrated to have the second most significant impact on NMK competitiveness. Finally, niche strategy was observed to have the least significant impact on the competitiveness of NMK.

Conclusions: The study concluded that for the organization to realize the desired competitiveness, it has to adopt effective cost leadership. The study also concluded that cost leadership strategies, focus/niche strategies and differentiation strategies had a positive effect on competitiveness.

Recommendations: It was recommended the firm need to discontinue or outsource services that do not meet the demands of cost leadership strategy. Additional recommendation was made for the firm to reduce marginal costs of advertising and marketing to enhance their business performance.

Keywords: *Competitive strategy, Competitiveness, cost leadership strategies, focus/niche strategies, differentiation strategies, National Museum of Kenya.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Strategy is a term that refers to a course of action established with the goal of achieving long-and-short-term goals of an organization (Mantere, 2013). Porter and Heppelmann (2017) consider the term strategy as a patter or plan developed by a firm to help it realize its objectives. Additionally, Porter and Magretta (2014) define the term as the long-term direction taken by a firm in achieving its organizational goals by leveraging its resources and addressing consumer demands. It is therefore, argued that strategy is a composition of managerial plan used in spearheading operations within a firm. Bhakar, Kaurav, Parashar and Sankpal (2016) define sustainable competitive advantage as the development that meets current needs without interfering with the demands of tomorrow. It is the prolonged advantage in using given unique resources internal to the firm in meeting its objectives. Huang, Dyerson, Wu & Harindranath (2015) term SCA as an edge held by firms allowing them to survive and perform better than its competitors in the long run. In today's competitive environment, organizations management have to embrace competitive strategies that are instrumental in helping them achieve desired sustainable competitive edge.

Therefore, SCA is a management approach that focuses on the mission, objectives and the identification of unique opportunities (Tanwar, 2013). The term can be used in reference to both radical and incremental changes in operations as well as approach in meeting client needs. A competitive edge is only realized when such changes are positive given that the objective of achieving it is to enhance consumer satisfaction through the value of the product or service. It is through competitive strategy that an organization is able to achieve desired competitive advantage. Huang, Dyerson, Wu &Harindranath (2015) observes that an organization has a competitive advantage when it has the edge over its competitors in securing clients as well as defending itself from the competition. Sustainable competitive advantage is realized out of core competencies that result in long-term benefits for the organization.

Competitive strategies have been well researched with most empirical studies indicating their usefulness in realizing desired competitive advantage or performance. For example, while investigating the effect of competitive strategies on the performance of an organization Olson and Slater (2015) found that various product market strategies such as niche market significantly impacted the performance of a firm. Similarly, Munyiri (2014), Mwangi and Ombui (2013), and Kiprop (2014) in their studies demonstrated that competitive strategies including brand leadership, marketing portfolio, strategic partnership, differentiation, as well as niche marketing helped firms realize desired competitive edge over their competition.

Various competitive strategies have also singularly been studied and most investigations indicate that they have a positive correlation with the realization of desired competitive edge. For example, Hilman and Kaliappen (2014), Gorondutse& Gawuna (2017), and Ruto & Ayuo (2019) in their studies observed that cost-leadership had a significant positive relationship with the performance of firms in Asian, African and Kenya respectively. On the other hand, Gorondutse&

Hilman (2017), Dirisu, Iyiola, & Ibidunni, (2013), and Adimo (2018), demonstrated that product differentiation strategies had a positive relationship with organization performance. Similarly, while investigating the impact of focus strategy on organizational performance, Akbar, Bin Omar & Wadood (2015), Odunayo (2018), and Onyango (2017), found out that focusing on a niche market played an instrumental role in the realization of desired competitive advantage among firms in Malaysia, Nigeria and Kenya respectively.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

For any organization to be successful, it needs to compete effectively and outdo its rivals in the challenging and unstable environment (McGrath 2013). To achieve this, the firm needs to realize desired strategies that are instrumental in the creation of additional value for its clients. Teeratansirikool, Siengthai, Badir & Charoenngam (2013) explains that effective strategies are not sets of prescriptions but rather a road map that shows where the company is now; where it wants to head and what adjustments the company needs to make so that their map addresses the real-world challenges to face.

As a not for profit firm, the stakeholder's preferences are constantly changing and the technologies for providing services to the firm are constantly evolving. The National Museums of Kenya has over the years gone through eras of transformation and business development as a firm that is operating in an extremely competitive environment. Over the years there has been an influx of new privately owned museums in the market. Some of these museums include Maa Museum, owned by Enashipai Resort and Spa in Naivasha which showcases the Maasai culture. There is also the Treasures of Africa Museum found in Kitale which is a personal collection of Mr. Wilson who was a former colonial officer in Uganda. There are also a number of peace museums such as the Lari Peace Museum which tells a story of commitment to fight the hatred, pain and unhealed wounds in the Lari community since the 1953 Lari massacre. The influx of new privately owned museums in the industry has posed a considerable competitive threat to the National Museum of Kenya. Apart from being themed and catering to a given segment of the market, the private museums also offer competitive prices and additional services such as options to stay and dine within the museum. Introduction of such museums have resulted in NMK losing some of its clients particularly cultural clients who prefer themed museums. A review of the firm's collective revenue collection also indicates a reduction as the firm recorded reduced revenues in the last three consecutive years (NMK, 2019).

In as much as NMK is a not for profit organization, for it to remain relevant as well as sustain its operations, it is essential for the organization to fend off emerging competition by realizing sustainable competitive edge that will set it apart from its competitors. Emerging museums have caused a major competition to NMK which in return calls for continuous development as well as the implementation of competitive strategies. Competitive strategies have been studied by various investigations including those by Olson and Slater (2015), Akingbade (2015), Ndunge (2012), Munyiri (2014), Mwangi and Ombui (2013) and Kiprop (2014). The studies all demonstrated that the strategies were key in enhancing a firm's competitiveness. However, none of the studies focused on not-for-profit organizations such as NMK.

Over the years, NMK has tried to spur its operations and fend off competition by putting in place various approaches such as enhanced human resource management, superior product design, enhanced customer service, as well as looking into the needs and demands of the market. However, little seems to have changed and or worked despite the efforts as indicative of the firm's financial records (NMK 2019). This begs the question, "are there strategies that NMK need to adopt or have already adopted in its bid towards achieving sustainable competitive edge in its market?" The current study investigates the strategies that could be crucial and be adopted by National Museums of Kenya in its bid to compete effectively in its market.

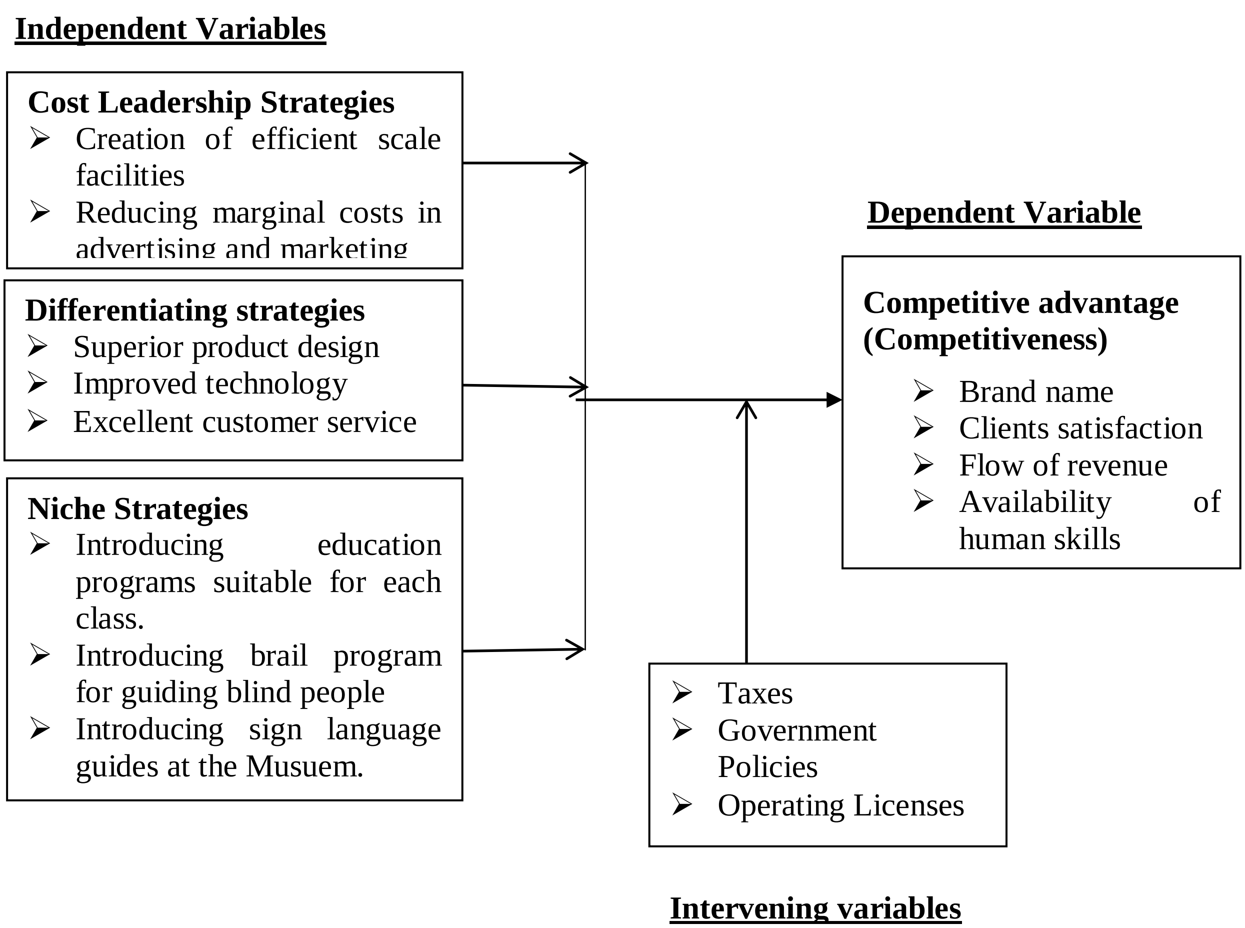
1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

i. To identify the cost leadership strategies that the National Museum of Kenya can adopt to enhance their competitive edge.
ii. To investigate the focus/niche strategies that the National Museum of Kenya can adopt to increase their competitive advantage.
iii. To identify the differentiation strategies that The National Museum of Kenya can adopt to enhance their competitive edge

1.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between cost leadership strategies, differentiation strategies, niche strategies and competitive advantage.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Review of Theories

2.1.1 Porter's Five Forces

Developed in 1979 by Michael Porter, the five forces model is critical in helping every organization identify the weaknesses as well as strength of the industry they are operating in. Firms have used this model in determining the structure of an industry in order to inform strategy. The model can be applied in any industry or sub-sector of a market to help realize an in-depth understanding of the extent of competition as well as assist a firm achieve long-term sustained competitive advantage. According to Gerard (2018), the model is made of business analysis tools essential in helping businesses explain and determine their competitiveness in relation to environmental forces. In coming up with the model, Porter identified five forces that impact the operations of an organization including bargaining power of suppliers, bargaining power of buyers, competition within the industry, the threat of new entry as well as the threat of substitute products.

Baburaj and Narayanan (2016) argues that the bargaining power of buyers is used in reference to the power's clients have over businesses. Based on the model, the higher the number of consumers the higher their power in determining prices in the market. On the other hand, the smaller the client base, the smaller power they have in determining the prices of goods or services in the market. Similarly, the power of suppliers also depends on their numbers. According to Mukherjee (2018), the higher the number of suppliers the lower their ability to control prices of their raw materials to businesses they serve. The smaller their number, the higher their ability to control and determine prices in the market. As such, a conducive market for businesses is where they have a wide range of suppliers to rely on from whom they can control prices to.

In relation to competition within the market, Arshed and Pancholi (2016) observes that it is utilized in relation to the number of rival firms operating in the same industry offering similar products or services. The higher the number of these rival firms, the lower the competitive nature or power or an organization to exert control over an industry. This is because consumers are likely to seek for goods or services from competitors whenever they feel they are being offered better deals or services by rival firms. As for the threat of new entrant, Juliana and Nyoman (2019) argues that the competitive nature of an organization always comes under threat with the entry of a new rival into the market. The easier it is for organizations to set up shop and compete within a given market, the lower the power of firms within the market to determine prices and exert control. As such, conducive environments for organizations are those where barriers to entry are stringent thus offering them a competitive edge and business acumen.

Finally, the threat of substitute products is related to the number of products or services within the market that can be used in place of another product or service already in the market. Substitute products are always a threat to existing products given that consumers can easily switch to using them and replace already existing products. When a market is characterized by goods that serve similar purposes, consumers are given the opportunity to forgo one product in place of the other thus weakening the power of an organization to determine prices for its products.

The national museum can use this model to measure its external environment and determine the external forces that are highly likely to affect its operations. The model can be utilized in determining the power of suppliers as well as consumers within the market NMK operates in. Additionally, the organization can utilize the model in analyzing the rivalry within its industry as well as the availability of substitute products available in the market that offers considerable competition to its efficient operation and profit-making capabilities. Finally, the model can also be used in determining the threat of new entrants by determining how easy it is for one to set up and establish a museum within the Kenyan market.

2.1.2 Resource-Based View Theory

The primary premise of this theory is that the performance of an organization significantly depends on the resources and capabilities that the firm has. Hitt, Xu& Carnes (2016) observes that the theory has an intra-organizational focus with the argument being that the performance of a firm is resource and capability specific. Also referred to as RBV, the resource-based theory is considered to be the foundation for the competitive advantage of an organization relying on the bundle of valuable tangible as well as intangible resources at the disposal of the organization. Warnier, Weppe & Lecocq (2013) notes that the theory isolates idiosyncratic resources that are a complication, not tangible, and lively within a given firm that can be used by the organization in gaining as well as sustaining competitive advantage. It is the bundles of resources within the reach of an organization that provides it with an edge that other businesses may find challenging to copy thus offering sustainability of the realized competitiveness.

The foundation of the RBV is that organizations that are successful are likely to find their future competitiveness on the development of unique and distinct capabilities that may often be implied or intangible in nature. According to Szymaniec-Mlicka (2014), it is the firm's unique and distinct resources as well as capabilities that offer it the spirit of strategy. Akingbola (2013) notes that if every organization were equal in terms of the number of resources as well as capabilities, then there would be no differences among them with regards to profitability given that any strategy can be adopted and implemented by any organization within the same industry. It is suggested in the RBV that competitive advantage and organizational performance are dues to the effects of firm-specific resources as well as capabilities which are challenging and costly to imitate by other organization. As such, for organizations to gain competitive advantage, it is essential to realize the resources that it owns as well as how these resources can be leveraged for the firm's competitive advantage.

2.1.3 Dynamic Capabilities

This theory was first proposed by David J. Tecce, Gary Pisano, and Amy Shuen in their publication on Dynamic Capabilities and Strategic Management. According to the three, the theory can be taken as a firm's ability to purposefully adapt its resource base. It can be taken as the firm's ability to integrate, develop, as well as reconfigure both external as well as internal abilities and resources to rapidly change based on its environmental changes. It is essential to distinguish operational capabilities from dynamic capabilities. By contrast, dynamic capabilities is used in reference to the capacity of a firm to purposefully develop, create, extend, or modify its resources based on environmental changes. The theory assumes that a firm's core competencies should be utilized in modifying short-term competitiveness that can be used in developing longer competitive advantage.

There are a number of processes that firms have to go through in order to meet new challenges. In using this theory to realize competitive advantage, it has to have the ability to learn quickly as well as develop strategic assets as required. Vogel& Güttel (2013) argues that it is critical for firms to integrate new strategic assets including technologies, capability as well as consumer feedback in addressing new environmental changes. Additionally, existing resources or assets within the organization needs to be transformed or reconfigured while meeting the demands of the market. According to Teece, the notion of dynamic capabilities is of the notion that what is critical for firms in becoming successful is corporate agility. This can be taken to be a firm's capacity to quickly realize and shape opportunities as well as threats, take advantage of existing opportunities, enhance competitiveness by increasing, coupling, protecting, and when required, reconfiguring the business enterprise's intangible as well as tangible assets. It is only by being ready to take advantage of existing opportunities and acting quickly in addressing the changes in the market that a firm is able to sustain its competitive edge.

The foundation of this theory is that for firms to be successful, it must be able to adapt its available resources to the environmental changes that may affect its operations. In line with the current investigation, this theory will be help in highlighting the approaches organizations needs in order to achieve desired competitive edge. Lin& Wu (2014) observes that this theory is an extension of the resource-based view where the resources of a firm determines its competitive edge. In this case, it is how an organization adjusts its resources in responding to environmental changes that influences its success or failure.

2.1.4 Porter's Generic Forces

Proposed by Michael Porter in the 80s, porter's generic strategies is a framework that describes the pursuit of a competitive advantage by organizations using different approaches. Cavaleri and Shabana (2018) note that porter proposed three strategies that were essential in helping firms achieve desired competitive edge including differentiation, cost leadership and niche strategies. According to the model, the relative position of an organization is critical in determining the direction a firm takes. It is this ideology that Cavaleri and Shabana (2018) further note that the model is based on as it proposes three strategies that offer organizations a path to beating their competition. According to Tanwar (2013) cost leadership is founded on the notion that an organization can achieve desired competitive edge by being low-cost producers in the industry. By adopting low-cost leadership, organizations reduce their production costs and therefore gain the ability to set the prices of their goods lower than that of the competition. Organizations can derive cost leadership from various sources including economies of scale, leveraging new innovations, as well as have desired access to raw materials needed for production. Firms that adopt such an approach have to take advantage of such sources of cost leadership which makes them better than their rivals.

Conversely, differentiation is used in reference to a firm offering unique product or service feature compared to that of its rivals. According to Islami, Mustafa and Latkovikj (2020), differentiation is about a firm giving its clients unique value on its products which makes them different from the competition. It is founded on realizing attributes that client's value in relation to a product or service being offered by a firm. Firms that adopt such an approach are therefore rewarded from the unique feature they offer to clients whom they charge premium fees.

Finally, the niche strategy as cited by Moon, Hur, Yin and Helm (2014) is about focusing on a given segment of the market. It is founded on the need of a firm to realize a narrow competitive platform in a given market. Using this approach, a firm has to realize and focus on a given segment of the market which it then serves based on their needs. The model is driven by two key constants including cost focus which is about cost advantage on targeted market and differentiation that seeks to differentiate an organization in a given market.

2.2 Empirical Review

Kingbade (2015) investigated the implementation of competitive strategies in enhancing consumer satisfaction, retention as well as loyalty. The study came up with three null hypothesis investigation the link between reduced prices and consumer satisfaction, continuous truck services and consumer loyalty, as well as client complains and retention. The study that was carried out in Lagos Nigeria only utilized respondents that were using telephone services. From the investigation, it was realized that there is a relationship between competitive strategies and consumer satisfaction, retention and loyalty. The study indicated that there is a positive relationship between competitive strategies and the performance of Telcos. Given that this study was carried out in Nigeria, its findings cannot also be used within the local settings particularly in the investigation carried out on the National Museum of Kenya.

Further, Ndunge (2012) investigated response strategies to challenges of competition by horticultural export organizations in Kenya. The aim of this study was to realize the challenges of competition that horticultural organizations in Kenya faced as well as establish the response strategies that such firms can adopt in coping with such challenges. The investigation noted that the horticultural industry in Kenya faces a number of challenges including competition within the industry, rivalry for the source of suppliers, rivalry for warehousing, as well as rivalry for distributors. To address the challenges facing them, the study argued that horticultural firms need to deal with the competition from rivals within the industry. Various strategies were identified to being used by different firms including diversifications, new market penetrations, e-commerce technologies, outsourcing of services, differentiation, low-cost strategy as well as focusing business operations on a given market segment. Given that the study reviewed the horticultural industry, its findings cannot be used in the current investigation which focuses on not for profit firms and in particular the performance of Museums.

Munyiri (2014) also looked into how competitive strategies are influential in consumer retention among commercial banks in Kenya. The objective of the study was to identify how effective competitive strategies were at influencing customer retention. Through a descriptive survey design, the study targeted all forty commercial banks in Kenya collecting its data using questionnaires. It found out that there is a positive relationship between cost leadership and consumer retention. Additionally, it noted that banks utilize cost leadership in attracting average customers whom they develop new products in order to meet their demands. The study also noted that banks utilized a differentiation strategy by categorizing their clients and providing services or products tailored made to suit their needs. This study focused on commercial banks; therefore, its findings cannot also be used to inform the current publication that focuses on not for profit firms and in particular the National Museum of Kenya.

A study by Kiprop (2014) also looked at the effects of competitive strategies on the performance of not for profit firms with a case on PACT Incorporation. The study observed that the resources an organization has significantly affected its ability to compete and thus its general performance. It argued that for organizations to be successful, it needs to have unique resources that enable it to compete. Additionally, it is observed in the publication that strategic partnership, differentiation and focusing on a given market segment plays an important role in enhancing the competitive edge of an organization and thus its performance.

Dirisu, Iyiola, and Ibidunni, (2013) also investigated the role of product differentiation on the performance of organizations with a case study on Sameer Africa Nigeria. The investigation adopted the survey research design where it administered questionnaires as its preferred instrument for data collection. Simple random sampling was used in the investigation to identify its population. The study observes that differentiation is realized when an organization is able to outperform its competition by providing unique features. It argues that by being different organizations are able to not only attract a given set of clients but also retain loyalty from the clients as long as their products keep offering the unique feature identified.

Adimo (2018) investigated the relationship between product differentiation and the performance of an organization with a case study on Sameer Africa Kenya. The target population for the investigation was made of 134 respondents realized from Sameer Africa Kenya limited. The population was identified through stratified random sampling technique while the data collection was achieved using self-administered questionnaires. The investigation found that product differentiation had a significant positive relationship with organizational performance. It concludes that incorporating product differentiation strategies through specific product attributes relevant to rivals and variety products to match the need of various customers results in enhanced performance.

Moreover, Odunayo (2018) investigated the effects of market focus strategy on the performance of telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt. A cross sectional research design that involved executives of 4 telecommunication companies in Port Harcourt was used in the investigation. Simple random sampling was used to realize a population of 134 realized through the Taro Yamane formula. The study also made use of the Crombach Alpha coefficient to ensure the reliability of the study instruments. Empirical results realized from the study also indicated a positive relationship between focus marketing and organizational performance. The investigation therefore concluded that there is a positive and significant correlation between a firm’s competitiveness and market focus strategy. It made the recommendations that organizations that look to adopt market focus strategy have to concentrate on a narrow segment as well as see to it that within the segment identified, it tries to realize either cost advantage or differentiation.

Furthermore, Onyango (2017) looked into the effects of competitive strategies including cost leadership, differentiation and focus strategies on the performance of the firm. Basing its research on Porter’s five forces model, the investigation utilized a correlational research design targeting 56 employees from Telkom Nakuru involved in marketing, finance, as well as operations. The investigation also used the Cronbach alpha coefficient to test for the reliability of the study instrument. From its findings, the publication indicated that these strategies were instrumental in realizing competitive advantage among firm in Kenya. With a case study on Telkom Kenya limited, the study observed that focus strategy among other competitive strategies significantly influenced the performance of the organization.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher adopted the descriptive research survey design. According to Bell, Bryman and Harley (2018), a descriptive research design is a scientific technique involving the observation as well as description of behavior of a study participant without having any influence on them in any manner. The target population was 80 individuals in management positions at the organization in Nairobi region. The units of observations were director general, director human resource management, human resource managers, director antiquities sites and monuments, principal curator, chief financial controller, deputy financial controller, principal administrator, department heads, department heads assistants, station heads and station heads assistants. The researcher conducted a census, where all 80 participants were included in the study.

4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Descriptive Statistics on Variables

4.1.1 Impact of cost leadership on the competitiveness of NMK

Data collected on the impact of cost leadership on the competitiveness of NMK was analyzed and results presented in Table 1 below

Table 1: Effects of cost leadership on NMK competitiveness

Items	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Moderate (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
Does NMK create efficient scale facilities as a competitive approach	28.6	54.5	16.9		
Does NMK outsource or discontinue various services that it does not have a low-cost strategy	14.3	61	24.7		
Does NMK reduce marginal costs in advertising and marketing as a competitive approach		26	14.3	59.7	

Findings from Table 1 show that a significant number of the respondents, 54.5% disagreed with the statement that NMK creates efficient scale facilities as a competitive approach. 28.6% strongly disagree with the statement while 16.9% took a neutral position. It was also found that a majority (61%) disagreed with the statement that the firm outsources or discontinues services that do not have low-cost strategy. 14.3% strongly disagreed with the statement while 24.7% took a neutral position. 59.7% of the participants agreed that the firm reduced marginal costs in marketing and advertisement as a competitive approach while 26% disagreed with the statement. 14.3% of the respondents took a moderate view on the statement.

The results demonstrated that the firm did not practice creation of efficient scale facilities. Most of the participants also noted that the firm rarely outsources or discontinues services that do not have low cost strategy citing the fact that they are keepers of artifacts and traditional items. However, the firm was observed to reduce marginal costs in advertisement and marketing as competitive approaches. The findings are in line with those observed by Gorondutse and Gawuna (2017) who demonstrated that creation of efficient scale was instrumental in helping firms realize desired competitive advantage. Similarly, the findings are also supported by Ruto and Ayuo (2019)) who noted that cutting of marginal costs from marketing and advertisement was a key part of cost leadership that helped firms achieve a competitive edge over their rivals. Additionally, Hilman and Kaliappen (2014) also cited that outsourcing or discontinuing of services without cost leadership can be instrumental in increasing competitiveness, a fact that is not realized in this investigation.

4.1.2 Effects of differentiation of NMK competitiveness

The results of the effects of differentiation of NMK competitiveness is depicted in Table 2

Table 2: Effects of differentiation on competitiveness of NMK

Items	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Moderate (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
Does NMK use superior product design to achieve its competitive edge		13	59.7	27.3	
Does NMK adopt enhanced technology to help it achieve a competitive advantage		61	9.1	29.9	
Does NMK practice excellent customer service to help it realized desired performance		62.3	3.9	33.8	

Based on the results in Table 2, majority (59.7%) of the study subjects held a moderate view on the statement that the firm used superior product design to realize competitiveness with 27.3% agreeing. 13% of the subjects took a disagreed with the statement. A significant number of the participants 61% disagreed with the statement that the firm adopts enhanced technology to realize desired competitiveness. 9.1% took a neutral viewpoint while 29.9% agreed with the statement. Finally, the study also noted that a majority of the subjects 62.3% disagreed with the statement that the organization practices excellent customer services to enhance its competitiveness. 33.8% agreed with the statement while 3.9% took a neutral stand on the statement.

The findings demonstrate that the firm did not practice excellent customer services as an approach to realizing competitiveness. Similarly, it rarely leverages its superior products as a technique to achieving competitiveness. It was also observed to not adopt desired technologies that can help it realize enhanced competitive advantage over its rivals. The findings of the investigation match those realized by Dirisu, Iyiola, and Ibidunni (2013) who demonstrated that organizations that did not adopt superior quality were rarely competitive in the market. Similarly, the findings by Adimo (2018) also back the observations made in this investigation as they argue that without excellent customer services, organizations are likely to struggle competing in the industry. Gorondutse and Hilman (2017) also back the findings of the study as they argued that to achieve competitive advantage in today's dynamic market place, organizations have to adopt enhanced technologies that are essential in helping them be different from its rivals.

4.1.3 Effects of niche strategy on competitiveness of NMK

The findings of effects of niche strategy on competitiveness of NMK is shown in Table 3

Table 3: Effects of niche strategy on the competitiveness of NMK

Items	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Moderate (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
Does NMK introduces education programs to help achieve competitiveness		51.9	32.5	15.6	
Does NMK introduces specialized services to cater for a given group of market		31.2	40.3	28.6	
Does NMK focuses its service provision to given segments of the market		22.1	18.2	59.7	

Table 3 illustrates that a significant number of the subjects, 51.9% disagreed with the statement that the organization introduced education programs that were key in helping it achieve competitiveness. 32.5% had a moderate view while 15.6% agreed with the statement. A majority of the participants 40.3%, however, held a neutral viewpoint on whether the firm introduces specialized services to cater for given groups in the market. 31.2% disagreed with the statement while 28.6% agreed with it. Finally, most of the study subjects 59.7% agreed with the statement that the firm focuses its service provision on given segments of the market. 22.1% disagreed with the statement while 18.2% had a moderate view about it.

The results demonstrated that the firm rarely introduces distinct educational programs that would help it realized desired competitive approaches. Similarly, most of the study participants held a neutral view on whether the firm introducers specialized services. This means that the organization is most likely never involved in the realization of distinct services to carter for given groups in the market. It should however, be noted that the firm has attempted to provide distinct services for special groups which increases its competitiveness. The results of the findings are backed by those realized by Odunayo (2018) who argued that to effectively practice the niche strategy and remain competitive, an organization has to identify given market needs and strive to address them which NMK is currently failing to do. Similarly, Onyango (2017) also observed that focusing service provision to given segments of the market is likely to enhance the performance of an organization such as NMK.

4.1.4 Effects of Competitive Strategies on Competitiveness of NMK

Table 4 illustrates the effects of competitive strategies on competitiveness of NMK

Table 4: Effects of competitive strategies on competitiveness of NMK

Items	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Moderate (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
The strategies adopted by NMK has helped it increase its brand name			10.4	62.3	27.3
The competitive strategies adopted by the organization have been instrumental in achieving increased consumer satisfaction			13	55.8	31.2
Competitive strategies adopted by NMK has been instrumental in helping the firm increase its CSR performance			11.7	61	27.3
The client base of the organization has increased due to the adopted competitive strategies			22.1	18.2	59.7

As per the results in Table 4, majority (62.3%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that the adoption of competitive strategies in the firm enhances its brand name. 27.3% of the subjects strongly agreed with the statement while 10.4% took a neutral stand. 55.8% of the participants also agreed with the statement that competitive strategies helped the firm realize enhanced customer satisfaction. 31.2% of the subjects strongly agreed with the statement with only13% taking a moderate position. Similarly, a significant number of the study subjects 61% noted that competitive strategies helped the firm increase its CSR performance. 27.3% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement while 11.7% took a neutral stand. Finally, most of the respondents 59.7% also observed that as a result of the adopted competitive strategies, the organization realized an increase in its customer base. 18.2% further agreed with the statement while 22.1% held a moderate view.

The results indicate that the adoption of competitive strategies is instrumental in helping firms realized competitive advantage. It is apparent from the findings that competitive forces are key in enhancing an organization's brand image as well as customer satisfaction. Similarly, competitive strategies are observed to be key in helping firms realize enhanced CSR performance as well as an increased customer base. The findings backed up by the observations realized by Olson and Slater (2015) in their investigation as they argued that competitive strategies are important in increasing an organization's brand image. The findings of Akingbade (2015) also back the results realized in this investigation as they observed that as a results of competitive strategies organizations are able to realize enhanced customer satisfaction as well as an increased customer base.

4.2 Inferential Statistics

4.2.1 Regression Analysis

The regression model summary of competitive advantage predictors is presented in Table 5

Table 5: Regression model summary of competitive advantage predictors

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.284a	0.081	0.043	0.39802

Table 5 demonstrates a correlation between the firm's competitiveness and competitive strategies as shown in the multiple correlation coefficient embodied by the R-value of 28.4%. The coefficient determination of 4.3% as indicated by the R-square demonstrated some variation in the competitiveness of NMK variable as expounded by the competitive strategies' variable. The regression model summary demonstrated that the competitiveness at NMK is influenced by the predictor variables. However, it is apparent that some percentage remains which could be attributed to other unspecified variables, or random fluctuations including the stochastic error term. The findings therefore show a regression model with a significant $p<0.05$.

The research findings of analysis of variance (ANOVA) is depicted in Table 6

Table 6: analysis of variance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.014	3	.338	2.133	.031[a]
	Residual	11.564	73	.158		
	Total	12.578	76			

From the results presented in Table 6, it is apparent that the analysis of variance is accounted for in the model. Findings demonstrate that the p-value 0.031 was lesser than the alpha value of 0.05. The study's F statistics can also be observed to be significant at F (2.133) with a significance level of 0.031. The findings demonstrate that the model was a good fit for the data. From the table, it can be argued that the independent variables statistically significantly predict the dependent variable $F(3,95) = 2.133$, $p<.0.031$ indicating that the model is a good descriptor of the data.

The coefficient of the predictors of NMK competitiveness is illustrated in Table 7

Table 7: Coefficient of the predictors of NMK competitiveness

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	3.358	.353		9.501	.000
	cost	.154	.079	.219	1.943	.005
	differentiation	.098	.057	.196	1.718	.009
	niche	.053	.085	.072	.629	.053

The multiple regression model is presented below;

Competitiveness=3.358 + 0.154 cost leadership + 0.098 differentiation + 0.053 niche +0.353

Table 7 illustrates the findings of the coefficients of the predictors of NMK competitiveness determining whether competitive strategies contributed statistically significantly to the model. All the three competitive variables including cost leadership, differentiation, and niche strategy were found to influence competitiveness at NMK. From the findings in Table 7, the first most significant predictor of NMK competitiveness was cost leadership strategy (Beta =0.219, t=1.943, p value=0.056). The findings were in line with those realized by Hilman and Kaliappen (2014) who demonstrated that organizations that adopt cost leadership are more likely to realize desired competitive edge. Similarly, Gorondutse and Gawuna (2017)) also revealed that adopting cost leadership approaches was instrumental in helping firms enhance their performance and competitiveness.

The second most significant predictor of competitiveness at NMK from the results was differentiation (Beta=0.196, t=1.718, p value=0.009). The study by Dirisu, Iyiola, and Ibidunni, (2013) support the results as it establishes that firms that adopt differentiation strategies are likely to realize enhanced competitiveness in the markets, they operate in. Further, the investigation by Gorondutse and Hilman (2017) also observed a positive correlation between differentiation strategy and organizational competitiveness. Additionally, Adimo (2018) demonstrated a strong relationship between differentiation and organizational performance. From the results, niche strategy was the least most significant predictor of competitiveness at NMK (Beta=0.072, t=0.629 p value=0.053). The results are in line with those realized by Onyango (2017) who noted that the adoption of niche strategy has a positive correlation with achieving desired competitive edge. Additionally, Odunayo (2018) also demonstrated that niche strategy was key in helping firms a competitive edge over their rivals. Akbar, Bin Omar and Wadood (2015) also observed a positive correlation between niche strategy and organizational competitiveness.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

From the findings, the investigation concluded that niche strategy is positively related to the realization of competitive edge at NMK in Nairobi County. A majority of the study subjects indicated that the organization rarely introduced educational programs or focused on the provision of specialized services for special groups of people. The study further concluded that differentiation was also positively related to competitiveness of NMK Nairobi County. A majority of the study subjects took a neutral stand that the firm used superior products design as a competitive approach. The study further concluded that cost leadership was the most significant predictor of competition at NMK. Most of the study subjects disagreed that the organization adopts desired efficient scale facilities to achieve competition. It is also the conclusion of the current investigation that competitive strategies are likely to have an impact on the performance of NMK.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions, the study made the recommendation that the firm needs to start introducing education programs to help it achieve desired competitive edge. Similarly, for the firm to achieve enhanced competition compared to its rivals, it must also look to introduce specialized training and services that target given needs in the market. The investigation also recommended the adoption of differentiation as a key approach for the firm to enhance its competitiveness. From the observations made, it is the recommendation of the study that the firm should start adopting superior product designs to help it achieve desired competitive advantage. Similarly, it is recommended that the organization need to leverage advanced technologies in the Museum business as a key approach to enhancing its competitiveness. The study also recommended training of employees to offer effective customer services which are better than those of its rivals to help it achieve a competitive edge over them.

Given that cost-leadership was the most significant predictor of competition at the organization, it is the recommendations of the study that the organization should look into effective cost leadership strategies that can help it enhance its organizational performance. The firm should adopt efficient scale facilities as an approach to enhancing competition while also discontinuing or outsourcing key services that are not in line with the cost-leadership approach. It is also the recommendation of the current investigation that the organization should keep its practice of reducing marginal costs in advertising and marketing to help it remain competitive in its industry.

Moreover, it is recommended that firm need to relooks at its strategic positioning and adopt desired competitive strategies that would be instrumental in aiding its realization of competitive edge. It is the recommendation of the study that the organization need to adopts cost leadership strategies where it would cut down on production costs to help it achieve desired competitive advantage. Differentiation is also another competitive approach that the organization can adopt to help it be different from other organizations in the same industry.

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