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COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE OF LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS (LPG) COMPANIES IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA.

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to examine the impact of competitive strategies on the performance of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) companies in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The independent variables were marketing, survival, internal resources and flexibility strategies. The dependent variable was organizational performance. The study was supported by the competitive strategic theory, survival-based theory, resource-based theory, and dynamic capabilities theory. The study targeted the employees of all levels and owners of all 79 companies in the County. 79 semi-structured questionnaires were issued and 57 were responded to, which was 72% response rate. Quantitative data were collected using the Likert Scale. Means, frequency tables and multiple regression analysis were used to analyze the collected data. The main findings of the study were that competitive strategies had a low impact on the performance of LPG companies in Nairobi County. Additionally, marketing strategies had a higher influence on performance compared to survival, internal resources, and flexibility strategies. Based on the findings, the study recommended higher application of marketing strategies such as product differentiation, niche targeting, unique distribution, and products quality in order to improve performance.

Key words: Competitive strategies, Performance, Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), Nairobi City County, Kenya

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Competitive strategies are long-term plans that organizations apply in order to survive and compete successfully. Proper implementation of competitive strategies helps a firm define its position relative to its rivals, which in turn contributes to a competitive advantage (Islami et al, 2020). The ability of a business to create a strategy that enables it to stay ahead of the competition long enough results in high sales of its goods and services, superior profits, and more wealth to the owners and shareholders (Boyles, 2022). Subsequently, organization's performance is measured by how well a firm is achieving its goals and objectives. Some of the ways of measuring performance are return on equity, assets, and on investments (Boyles, 2022). Many countries in the world are facing energy crisis, forcing people to rely on dirty fuels such as charcoal, wood, and kerosene for cooking, with very few having access to clean energy (Birol, 2022). 2.8 billion People in the developing countries have no access to clean cooking (GLPGP, 2019). African governments are being encouraged to come up with policies that reduce deforestation in order to curb climate change through providing more access to clean energy (George, 2020). Based on the foregoing, the Government of Kenya set a national policy goal of at least 35% of the population to use the LPG product for cooking by 2030, up from 20% in 2016. (GLPGP, 2019) by encouraging citizens to use the product as an alternative to kerosene, charcoal, and firewood (KNBS, 2021). As of 2019, its consumption in Kenya was 2.5 kilograms per capita (PIEA, 2021); that being the average that each Kenyan consumed the whole year. With a population of 47.56 million people (KNBS, 2021) the figures showed that only 118.9 million kilograms of were consumed for the whole year, depicting low consumption whereas there is a big market opportunity for the product.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The effects of global warming are felt all over the world by increased temperatures, rising water levels, as well as extreme weather conditions. Many governments of the world are focusing on managing climate change, and one of the ways is in using clean energy to reduce the carbon footprint in the environment. There is a global focus on clean cooking. It is projected that the global LPG market size will be valued at USD 164.36 billion by 2027, and it is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 4.4% between the years 2020 and 2027 (GVR, 2020). In Kenya, LPG consumption has been growing in recent years as imports and distribution infrastructure have improved. Nevertheless, market penetration of the product still remains low. LPG usage started growing rapidly in 2014, and by 2017 consumption in the residential/commercial sector had grown three times, from 2013 levels to about 124,000 tons. Still, this was only about a 0.7% portion of the fuels consumed (Douglas, 2021). It is noted that even with higher imports of LPG and infrastructural developments, the penetration of the product to the market is still low, which has resulted in low consumption.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study had the following objectives:

i. To assess the marketing strategies that LPG companies in Nairobi City County apply.

ii. To examine the survival strategies applied by LPG companies in Nairobi City County.

iii. To study the internal resources strategies applied by LPG companies in Nairobi City County.

iv. To assess the flexibility strategies LPG companies employ in Nairobi City County.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The study variables were supported by competitive strategic theory, survival-based theory, resource-based theory, and dynamic capabilities theory. Porter, (1990) developed the competitive strategic theory which stated that a business that has competitive advantage performs better than its competitors. Among the strategies in this preposition include the cost leadership, which enables a firm to produce its goods and services at a lower cost than its competitors, and is effectively able to offer the products at a lower price to its customers. The other strategy is differentiation. This occurs when a firm offers something unique to customers. The uniqueness may be in terms of innovation, brand presentation, customer experience, pricing, or emotional response. A successfully differentiated product is one that competitors cannot copy with ease. Another strategy in this theory is the focus strategy, which involves the selection of a niche market and focusing on it. The segment may be in terms of customer group, product category or a geographical area. Application of the above strategies was found to enhance a firm's performance (Islami et al, 2020). Further, Spencer (1985) developed this theory which states that only the best and the fittest of competitors will win. Further, it states that organizations are supposed constantly adapt to the changing environment in order to continue performing well. Survival strategies highlighted in the theory include diversification, revenue increase, cost reduction, proper cash flow management, and forming strategic alliances. Hausman (2022) offering quality customer service, having good management team, creativity, sound financial health, and not being bureaucratic are other survival strategies that can help a business survive.

On the other hand, Penrose (2009) developed this theory stating that organizations that have strategic resources perform better than those that are deprived of them. Strategic resources are valuable to the extent that they help enhance a firm's effectiveness and efficiency, and still able to fight competitor threats off. They are also not common to many competitors. Additionally, they are difficult to imitate. Firms protect themselves from imitations through trademarks, patents, copyrights, and brand names. Resources are considered strategic if they are not easily substitutable by competitors (Barney 1991). Firm's resources, categorized into physical, human and organizational, were found to help the organization gain a competitive advantage against the competitors (Utami & Alamanos, 2022). This is what this study seeks to find out. Moreover, Teece and Pisano (1994), formulated the dynamic capability theory which states that dynamic capabilities consist of the ability to integrate, build and transform internal and external competencies. These capabilities can help an organization to achieve innovative forms of competitive advantage through integration, building and transformation of internal and external competencies, as to respond to changes in the environment. The elements of dynamic capabilities are adaptive, absorptive, innovative, and innovation. Adaptive capability is the ability to identify and exploit new market opportunities through inherent resource possession and flexibility in the use of the resources. Additionally, absorptive capability enables the firm to recognize the value of new, external information, absorb it, and use it. This capability, which helps in allocation of resources, includes innovative capability, knowledge acquisition, knowledge assimilation, knowledge transformation and knowledge exploitation. Innovative capability refers to new products and markets development, and it manifests through the creation of products and services, introducing new ways of production, the taking of various risks, market revolution, and innovative strategic focus. Moreover, innovation capability is the ability to continuously transform knowledge and ideas into new products, processes and systems for the benefit of the firm and its stakeholders. This capability includes new product and new process development. Innovative capability helps firms survive in this constantly changing environment. This is theory is therefore relevant to this study in finding out if being dynamic has any effect on the performance of LPG companies in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

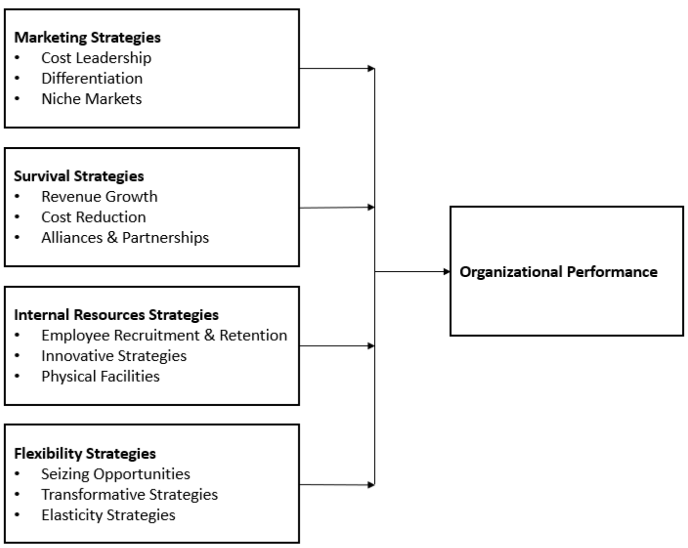
The writings of previous researchers were reviewed including Kago (2018) who conducted a study on the relationship between competitive strategies and performance of petroleum companies in Kenya, focusing on pricing, differentiation and focus strategies. The researcher used descriptive research to analyze the data collected form a sample of 46 respondents derived from a population of all 59 petroleum companies in Kenya. She found out that cost reduction enhanced companies' performance. The investigator also noted that companies differentiated products by way of branding and they were able to create customer loyalty. However, the researcher did not find a positive relationship between focus strategies and performance. Akeem (2017) carried out a study using a sample of 50 respondents, through stratified random sampling, on the effect of cost control and cost reduction techniques in organizational performance. Using regression analysis, he found out that cost control and reduction techniques are important for a business to survive and grow in a competitive world. He also noted that employees should be motivated and incentivized to achieve the desired cost objectives. Failure to do this was found to have a negative effect on the cost control and reduction measures being implemented. He also noted that budgets and key performance indicators (KPIs) were important in tracking and monitoring the progress of the measures being employed.

Mang'eni & Nzulwa (2018) conducted a case study on the effect of competitive strategies on firm's performance, on National Oil Corporation of Kenya (NOCK). The product of interest was LPG. They analyzed data collected from a sample of 64 respondents using descriptive statistics. The researchers observed that Michael Porter's competitive strategies – cost leadership, focus, and differentiation- had a positive effect on the company's performance. In conclusion, the researchers recommended that LPG companies should consider differentiation strategies through innovation. Liu et al (2018) conducted a study on absorptive capacity and business performance, mediating effects of innovation and mass customization. They collected data from 278 Chinese firms in four (4) manufacturing industries. They observed that absorptive capability can directly enhance the financial performance and indirectly through innovation and mass customization. They found out that knowledge acquisition, knowledge assimilation and knowledge exploitation enabled firms to be adopt absorptive strategies through innovation and mass customization (the ability to market products that are modified to meet a specific customer's needs).

Ndunguru (2021) carried out a research study on the practicability of pay-as-you-go pricing model as a way of differentiation of LPG products in Tanzania. She used purposive sampling in one of the three municipalities within Dar es Salaam that had access to pay-as-you-go smart metering of LPG and noted substantial customer growth arising from the sale of gas using smart meters. She concluded that there was potential for business growth through technology to segment the market. Jayasankar & Mayakkannan (2020) conducted a study on the factors influencing cost and pricing strategy and to determine the perception of consumers towards in LPG in India. They collected Primary data collection-sampling through 400 questionnaires. The further collected secondary data collection- government publications, newspapers, press releases, Internet, periodicals, television and bulletins. All the collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. They found out that challenges of illegal practices in the LPG market existed, creating unfair competition, which discouraged new investors leading to poor growth. The researchers also identified that high costs led to poor performance of the companies and recommended that they should create ways of lowering costs in order to compete with substitutes effectively.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Conceptual framework is a representation of the relationship of the independent and dependent variables of the study. The independent variables in this study were marketing strategies, survival strategies, internal resources strategies, and flexibility strategies. The dependent variables were financial performance, sales performance and customer growth.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research design was used in this study, since it helped the researcher collect and tabulate data about the prevailing conditions (Aggarwal & Ranganathan (2019) accurately and with ease. The population of study comprised 79 individuals from all the LPG companies in Nairobi City County. The individuals comprised of owners, and employees in senior, middle-level and junior categories. A register was maintained to record and track the issuing, receiving, filling, and sending of the filled questionnaire back to the sender. The collected data were processed and analyzed using descriptive statistics. SPSS (Version 29) was used to calculate the means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages. The information was presented in graphs, tables, and charts. A multiple regression analysis was used to show the relationship between the research variables as indicated below:

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

Where: -

Y= Performance of LPG companies in Nairobi County, Kenya

B_0 - intercept coefficient

ε_i – error term (extraneous variables)

X_1 – Marketing Strategies

X_2 – Survival Strategies

X_3 – Internal Resource Strategies

X_4 – Flexibility Strategies

β_1, β_2, β_3 and β_4 = regression coefficients

The Qualitative information was analyzed to obtain quantitative data by using a Likert scale of 1 to 5 to measure the weight of influence of the independent variables against the dependent variable. 1 was for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for neither agree nor disagree, 4 for agree, and 5 for strongly agree.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Of all 79 semi-structured questionnaires sent to collect data from the respondents, 57 were filled responded to, which was 72% of the population. 28% of the respondents did not respond. The researcher sought to find out to what extent LPG companies in Nairobi County adopted marketing strategies. The respondents were asked the extent to how they agreed with the statements on a scale of 1-5, where (5) was strongly agree, (4) was agree, (3) was neutral, (2) disagree, and (1) was strongly disagree. The Likert scale produced ordinal data which end results of the analysis produced interval data. The analysis began with data entry, coding and editing. After the interval data were generated, the mean and standard deviation were calculated as tabulated in table 1 below.

Marketing Strategies

Table 1: Extent of the Application of Marketing Strategies

Marketing Strategy	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Selling prices lower than competitor prices	57	3.35	1.14
Products unique from others in the industry	57	2.98	1.26
Distribution model different from others in the	57	3.42	1.00

industry			
Serving own niche market exclusively without competition	57	2.30	1.36
Offering high quality products that customers are willing to pay more for	57	2.98	1.08

Table 1 shows that all the respondents were either neutral or disagreed with the application of various marketing strategies in their organizations. All the responses had a significant standard deviation of at least 1, indicating varied responses around agreeing and disagreeing. With a mean of 3.42 (1.00), the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that their companies have a different distribution model. Additionally, with a mean of 3.35 (1.14), they were neutral about their companies selling their products lower than their competitors. With a mean of 2.98 (1.26), the respondents disagreed with the strategy of selling unique products. Respondents disagreed that customers were willing to pay higher prices due to high quality products, with a mean of 2.98 (1.08), as well as serving niche markets exclusively without competition, with a mean of 2.30 (1.36).

Survival strategies

Table 2: Survival Strategies Application

Survival Strategy	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Increasing the number of customers	57	3.79	0.98
Clear roadmap for revenue growth	57	4.00	0.87
Developing new products and services to meet new customer needs	57	3.74	1.26
Conducting promotional activities to boost revenue	57	4.02	0.95
Forms strategic alliances to thrive in the changing business environment	57	3.91	0.95
Monitoring all expenses and taking timely corrective measures	57	4.05	1.09
Regular inventory checks and avoiding unnecessary overstocking	57	4.18	1.07

Table 2 indicated that majority of companies embraced survival strategies. With a mean of 3.74 (1.26), respondents were neutral on whether their companies developed new products to meet customer needs. Additionally, respondents were neutral about increasing the number of customers, with a mean of 3.79 (0.98). Similarly, they were neutral about forming strategic alliances to thrive in the changing business environment. Respondents agreed that there was a clear roadmap for revenue growth with a mean of 4.00 (0.87), conducting promotional activities to boost revenue with a mean of 4.02 (0.95), monitoring all expenses and taking timely corrective measures with a mean of 4.05 (1.09), and conducting regular inventory checks to avoid unnecessary overstocking with a mean of 4.18 (1.07). Businesses with good survival strategies are resilient and are able to thrive during difficult times, (Katare, *et al* (2021).

Internal resources strategies

Table 3: Internal Resources Strategies Application

Internal Resources Strategy	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Hiring of competent employees	57	4.12	0.68
Having a clear plan of retaining good employees	57	3.60	1.13
Recognizing and rewarding best performing employees	57	3.33	1.20
The company encourages employees to be innovative	57	3.86	0.95
Recognizing and appreciating innovative employees	57	3.32	1.07
Embracing innovations to bring a positive change in the company	57	3.74	0.90
Availing appropriate physical facilities to offer best products	57	3.88	0.96
Providing a safe and comfortable working environment	57	4.11	1.03
Ensuring that the company's assets are in good working condition	57	4.19	0.88

With a mean of 4.12 (0.68) in table 3, the respondents agreed that their companies hired competent employees. They also agreed that the working environment was safe and comfortable, with a mean of 4.11 (1.03), and that the companies' assets were in good working condition with a mean of 4.19 (0.88). The respondents were neutral on strategies involving employees, such as plans to retain good employees, recognition of best performing employees, encouraging employees to be innovative, and recognizing innovative employees. Employee recognition and reward is considered instrumental in enhancing organizational performance, Ondhowe, *et al* (2021). The respondents were neutral about the strategy of having appropriate physical facilities to offer best products with a mean of 3.88 (0.96).

Flexibility strategies

Table 4: Flexibility Strategies Application

Flexibility Strategy	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Keenness in pursuing new opportunities	57	4.00	0.93
Ability to seize new opportunities in a timely manner	57	3.60	1.00
Prioritizing on opportunities with higher and better returns	57	3.88	0.83
Embracing technology in operations	57	4.12	0.91
Transforming with the changing business environment	57	4.05	0.87

Companies making big positive changes	57	3.98	1.01
Employees made fully aware of change whenever it happens	57	3.77	0.96
Updating key strategies to respond to changes in a timely manner	57	3.63	0.86

Table 4 showed that the respondents agreed that their companies were keen in pursuing new opportunities with a mean of 4.00 (0.93), embracing technology in operations with a mean of 4.12 (0.91), and transforming with the changing business environment with a mean of 4.05 (0.87). They were however neutral on the ability to seize new opportunities in a timely manner with a mean of 3.60 (1.00), prioritizing on opportunities with higher and better returns with a mean of 3.88 (0.83), making big and positive changes with a mean of 3.98 (1.01), employees being fully aware of change whenever it happened with a mean of 3.77 (0.96), and in the updating of strategies to respond to changes in a timely manner with a mean of 3.63 (0.86). Companies are encouraged to be dynamic since they operate in an environment where competition is increasing continually, (Okechukwu & Aljuhamni (2019).

Organizational performance

Table 5 Organizational Performance

Performance Indicator	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sales for the last five years	57	3.60	0.70
Sales growth rate for the last five years	57	3.72	0.82
Profit for the last five years	57	3.32	0.83
Profit growth for the last five years	57	3.30	0.87
Customer base in the last five years	57	3.56	0.91
Customer growth rate in the last five years	57	3.68	0.83
Overall company performance in the past five years	57	3.61	0.82

Table 5 showed the means and the standard deviations of the responses concerning organizational performance. All the means fell between 3.32 and 3.72, and standard deviations between 0.70 and 0.91 depicting average performance.

CORRELATION ANALYSIS

The researcher sought to determine the strength of relationship between the variables used in the study using Pearson Correlation. Pearson correlation (r) shows the extent of linear relationship between variables, and how the change of one will affect the other. Pearson Correlation (r) ranges from -1 to +1, where a negative value depicts a negative relationship, zero depicts no relationship and a positive value depicts a positive relationship, Turney (2022). All the competitive strategies returned positive correlation with varying correlations, the highest being between internal resources and survival strategies, with r (0.498); $p < 0.01$. This was followed by marketing strategies and organizational performance, with r (0.236); $p < 0.01$, followed by internal resources and marketing strategies, with r (0.214); p <

(0.01). Survival and marketing strategies had a correlation of r (0.177); p < (0.01), followed by flexibility and survival strategies with a correlation of r (0.152); p < (0.01). Flexibility and internal resources strategies had a correlation of r (0.078); p < (0.01), followed by flexibility and marketing strategies with a correlation of r (0.043); p < (0.01). Organizational performance and flexibility strategies had a correlation of r (0.035); p < (0.01), followed by organizational performance and survival strategies with a correlation of r (0.028); p < (0.01). The variables with the lowest correlation were organizational performance and internal resources strategies, with r (0.022); p < (0.01). The results showed only one significant correlation between internal resources and survival strategies. The correlation between the other variables is low, as shown on table 6 below.

Table 6: Correlation Analysis

		Marketing Strategies	Survival Strategies	Internal Resources Strategies	Flexibility Strategies	Organizational Performance
Marketing Strategies	Pearson Correlation	1				
Survival Strategies	Pearson Correlation	0.177	1			
Internal Resources Strategies	Pearson Correlation	0.214	.498**	1		
Flexibility Strategies	Pearson Correlation	0.043	0.152	0.078	1	
Organizational Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.236	0.028	0.022	0.035	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression analysis

table 7: model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.239	0.057	-0.015	0.65947	1.951

Table 7 showed the model summary. The findings gave a correlation R of 0.239, R square of 0.057 and adjusted R Square of -0.015. An R Square of 0.057 implies that 5.7% of the changes in the organizational performance of the LPG companies in Nairobi County, Kenya, are explained by the independent variables of this research. The analysis shows that 94.3% of the changes in the organizational performance, of the LPG companies could not be explained by the independent variables of this study. An R of 0.239 signifies a weak positive correlation between the variables of the study.

ANOVA

Table 8: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.374	4	0.344	0.79	.537
	Residual	22.615	52	0.435		
	Total	23.989	56			

The overall regression model was not statistically significant $F(4,52) = 0.79$. The p value was greater than 0.01.

Regression Coefficients

Table 9 Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.873	0.821		3.498	<.001
	Marketing Strategies	0.229	0.131	0.242	1.749	0.086
	Survival Strategies	-0.004	0.166	-0.004	-0.025	0.98
	Internal Resources Strategies	-0.03	0.157	-0.03	-0.193	0.848
	Flexibility Strategies	0.029	0.143	0.027	0.2	0.842

The derived regression equation is $\mathbf{Y = 2.87 + 0.23X_1 + 0.00X_2 - 0.03X_3 + 0.03X_4}$

Where Y is the organizational performance of LPG companies in Nairobi City County, Kenya; β0, β1, β2, β3 and β4 are the regression coefficients and X1, X2, X3 and X4 represent marketing, survival, internal resources and flexibility strategies respectively.

DISCUSSIONS

Marketing Strategies and Organizational Performance

LPG companies in Nairobi County, Kenya, applied marketing strategies- lower prices than competitors, unique products from others in the industry, applying different distribution models, having exclusive niches, and offering high quality products that customers are willing to pay a higher price for- and they had a positive impact on the organizational performance.

Survival Strategies and Organizational Performance

The researcher found that survival strategies such as increasing customer numbers, having a clear roadmap for revenue growth, developing new products and services to meet new customer needs, conducting market activities boost revenue, forming strategic alliances to thrive in changing business environment, monitoring expenses and taking corrective measures in a timely manner, and conducting regular inventory checks and avoiding overstocking had no effect on organizational performance.

Internal Resources Strategies and Organizational Performance

The study found a near-zero inverse relationship between internal resources strategies and organizational performance in a low scale. Strategies such as hiring competent employees, having a clear plan of retaining good employees, recognizing and rewarding best performing employees, encouraging employees to be innovative, recognizing and appreciating innovative employees, embracing innovation, investing in appropriate physical facilities to offer best products, providing a safe and comfortable working environment and ensuring that assets are in good working condition had no positive impact on organizational performance.

Flexibility Strategies and Organizational Performance

A positive relationship between flexibility strategies and performance was identified. Strategies such as keenness in pursuing new opportunities, ability to seize new opportunities in a timely manner, prioritizing opportunities with higher and better returns, embracing technology in operations, transforming systems with the changing business environment, making big positive changes, making employees fully aware of change whenever it happens, and updating key strategies to respond to changes in a timely manner had a positive effect on the organizational performance.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that there existed a low relationship between competitive strategies and the performance of LPG companies in Nairobi County, Kenya. Increase in marketing strategies by one unit led to 0.23 increase in the organizational performance. A unit increase in survival strategies caused no change in the organizational performance. A unit increase in internal resources strategies led to a near-zero decrease in performance by negative 0.03. An increase in flexibility strategies with one unit caused an increase in performance by 0.03. Majority of the LPG companies in Nairobi County, Kenya, were neither positive nor negative on being unique by offering lower prices in the market as well as having different distribution models than their competitors. Most of them did not sell unique products that were different from their competitors, did not serve own niche markets, and the customers were not willing to pay a higher price for a higher quality product. On internal resources strategies, most companies hired competent employees, provided safe and comfortable working environments, and had the assets in good working condition. Most lacked clear plans of retaining good employees, recognizing and rewarding the employees, encouraging staff to be innovative, employing innovations that brought big positive changes, as well has having physical facilities that enabled them to offer best products.

On flexibility strategies, most LPG companies in Nairobi County, Kenya, were found to be keen in pursuing new opportunities, embraced technology in their operations, and they transformed with changing business environment. However, most neither agreed nor disagreed that they were able to seize opportunities in a timely manner, prioritizing on the opportunities with higher and better returns, as well as updating their strategies to respond to changes in a timely manner. The performance of the LPG companies in Nairobi County, Kenya, -which was measured in terms of sales and sales growth rate, profit and profit growth, customer base and customer growth rate, as well as the overall performance- was average for five years. Overall, the performance of LPG companies in Nairobi County, Kenya is influenced by competitive strategies on a small scale. Majority of the companies had an average performance over the last five years, indicating that the need to embrace competitive strategies in order to increase their performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study identified low application of competitive strategies in LPG companies in Nairobi County. Additionally, it found out that the performance was average for five years. The researcher recommends more application of competitive strategies, especially marketing and flexibility, in order to improve their performance.

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Pharis Kariuki wrote the Concept Paper, Proposal, Seminar 1, Seminar 2, and this article. Under the guidance and supervision of Rev. Dr. John Karihe, he sought permission from relevant institutions, collected the data, analyzed it, and finally published this article.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

The author declares that there exists no conflict of interest concerning this publication. High ethical standards were observed in the course of the whole research.

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