



Influence of Project Management Practices on The Competitive Advantage of Convenience Stores in Kenya: A Case of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County

Mohammed Tamam Daib¹, Dr. Johnbosco Kisimbi²

¹Management of the University of Nairobi

²Lecturer, Faculty of Business (FOB) University of Nairobi

Abstract – Project management practices are the fundamental guidelines that should be followed for the effective management of processes, initiatives or projects in organizations. Project management practices have largely been applied by firms to improve their performance, sustainability and competitive advantage. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the influence of project management practices on the competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya. The study selected Mombasa County since it had experienced poor performance and closure of various convenience stores in the past five years. The study sought to establish the influence of project leadership, project communication, project risk management and teamwork amongst project staff on the competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya. This study applied a descriptive survey research design. The target population was 112 employees in four branches of the supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya. The sample size for this study was 88 employees that were selected using stratified random sampling technique. The study used a structured questionnaire to collect the quantitative data required. Prior to the final data collection, the designed questionnaire was subjected to a pilot test that was conducted on 9 employees of Carrefour Supermarket, Mombasa. Data was collected using the drop-and-pick method. The analysis of collected data was done using descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations and regression analysis. The study findings determined that project leadership ($\beta = 0.747$, $t = 8.089$, $p < 0.05$) project communication ($\beta = 0.944$, $t = 10.388$, $p < 0.05$), project risk management ($\beta = 0.455$, $t = 2.845$, $p = 0.006$) and teamwork amongst project staff ($\beta = 0.744$, $t = 11.259$, $p < 0.05$) all had a significant influence on competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County. The study concludes that project leadership, teamwork amongst project staff, project communication, and project risk management were all essential project management practices for the competitive advantage of convenience stores in Mombasa County, Kenya. The study recommends to organizations such as Retail Trade Association of Kenya (RETRAK) to ensure that they have a policy that binds organizations in the retail sector into adopting project management practices such as project leadership, teamwork amongst project staff, project risk management and project communication. Moreover, the study makes recommendations to other convenience stores in Mombasa County and also in other parts of the country to adopt project management practices like those adopted by Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County. The study provides a recommendation for further research to assess the influence of other project management practices such as project planning, project resource allocation, project culture and project management structure on competitive advantage in the retail sector. This study makes significant contribution to knowledge as it provides empirical evidence of the influence of four project management practices on competitive advantage of a firm in the retail sector. This is because most of the available empirical literature on project management practices is mostly on construction companies that mostly deal with projects. This study therefore provides evidence that firms that are not project oriented can also apply project management practices to enhance their competitiveness in the fast-paced environment.

Keywords – Project management practices, competitive advantage, project leadership, project communication, project risk management, teamwork, retail sector, convenience stores, Naivas Supermarkets, Mombasa County, Kenya.

I. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

As competition increases in the market place, organizations are seeking ways to remain competitive and relevant. Project management practices are the fundamental guidelines that should be followed for the effective management of processes, initiatives or projects in organizations to enable the organization attain its objectives and achieve competitive advantage. Badewi (2019) provides a list of practices of project management that organizations in all sectors adopt to have successful outcomes. These include formal project management structure, engaged project leadership, clarity in goals, objective and expected outcomes, formality in responsibilities and roles, risk management, project communication, teamwork amongst project staff, delivery capabilities and performance management baseline. According to Zulu (2017), these practices have been applied

by firms in all sectors which manage projects or which have project like management processes.

Project management practices have largely been applied by firms to improve their performance, sustainability and competitive advantage. This study assessed how project management practices can influence competitive advantage (Teece et al., 2016). A firm is considered to enjoy competitive advantage when it designs and executes a value adding strategy which is different from what other potential and current competitors have. Further, the competitive advantage becomes sustainable when rival firms are unable to replicate the benefits, strategies or activities of the firm. Great success can be attained by the firm if it focusses on aligning human, internal and marketing capabilities (Chimhanzi & Morgan, 2015). This alignment is achieved by collaboration, coordination and integration of the various departments in the organization including marketing, human resource and operations departments.



The current study was conducted in convenience stores in Mombasa County, Kenya, specifically on Naivas Supermarkets. Authors such as Mithamo et al. (2015), Naeem et al. (2018) and Tătar (2020) have indicated that application of project management practices is not a preserve of construction companies. The study selected Mombasa County for the study since it had experienced poor performance and closure of various convenience stores in the preceding five years (Musyoka, 2020). The study however, focussed on Naivas Supermarkets which had remained strong and vibrant over the years.

Statement of the Problem

The need for competitive advantage, financial performance and sustainability of convenience stores requires adoption of optimum practices. In a study in UK, Zulu (2017) noted that there was high application of project management practices not only in manufacturing and construction companies but also in the service sectors. This study however left some contextual gaps as it was conducted in a developed country. A study by Ogohi (2019) in Nigeria determined that adoption of project management practices such as project leadership, risk management and communication enhanced competitive advantage of construction firms. This study left some methodological gaps as it was conducted on construction companies. A study in Kenya by Musinya (2017) established that practices of project management adopted by construction companies in Nairobi County had enabled the firms to enhance their competitive advantage. This study left some contextual gaps as it only included construction companies and not firms in the retail sector. The study hence addressed this research gap by assessing the project management practices and their influence on the competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya.

Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives;

- To establish the influence of project leadership on the competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya.
- To determine the influence of project communication on the competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya
- To assess the influence of project risk management on the competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya.
- To evaluate the influence of teamwork amongst project staff on the competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Kahiga (2020) investigated the influence of strategic project leadership on the competitive advantage of a bank and its entities in Kenya. The research implements a case study design and data collection was primarily conducted using interviews and analyzed through content analysis. The objective of this study was to assess the relationship between strategic leadership and outcomes on National

Banks of Kenya streamlined operations. Kahiga's research concluded that strategic leadership are valuable tools used by banks as a means of reducing customer complaints, increasing productivity through ease in decision-making, it also concluded that businesses should invest in the latest technologies that allow their assets and resources to be assigned to the development of strategic leadership. The independent variable in the study was the influence of strategic project leadership while the independent variables were competitive advantages such as easy decision making, streamlined worker interaction, and increased productivity. Fuchs (2016) noted that there is a consensus between leadership and competitive advantage. The research supports the hypothesis that "leadership being crucial and a possible sustainable competitive advantage" small and medium-sized businesses.

According to Fuchs (2016), competitive advantage and strategic leadership are directly coordinated and the outcomes of the collaborating factors are higher organizational performance. The researcher implemented mixed research methods and different interview models were used at different levels of managerial professionals. Fuchs (2016) attempted to understand the relationship between different strategic leadership styles and competitive advantages associated with them. In the research, Fuchs concluded that there is a direct correlation between subordinate perception of the workplace culture depending on the type of strategic leadership available. Strategic leadership is in itself a co competitive advantage factor as Fuchs (2016) establishes that the two variables are simultaneously significant for the growth of a business enterprise. The independent variable in the research is leadership styles and competitive advantage is the dependent variable. Fuchs' mixed model research shows the positive interaction between strategic leadership styles and enterprise comparative advantage.

Hunitie (2018) investigated the relationship and influences of strategic leadership on competitive advantage. This research applied a different vector and developed the hypothesis based on the contexts of strategic planning and strategic thinking as concepts of strategic leadership. Hunitie examined the role of these two mediating factors in the impact of strategic leadership on competitive advantage. Using 1000 questionnaires for the healthcare sector, 521 were a response rate of 52.1%. The research implemented a literature review methodology in a meta-analytical design. The findings determined that premeditated leadership pointedly strategic thinking, strategic planning, and competitive advantage were all expected. The findings also revealed that strategic thinking and planning moderated the influence of strategic leadership on competitive advantage. As a result, the strategic leadership mediating variables have been established to determine the value of competitive advantage accumulated in an enterprise. Similarly, Noe et al. (2017) finds that project leadership is a factor of competitive advantage.



Hili et al. (2017) found another aspect of correlation between strategic leadership and competitive advantage. The authors found that project leadership has no significant impact on competitive advantage. This challenged the vast volume of literature on the influence of project leadership on competitive advantage. Owusu-Boadi (2019) investigated the significance of project leadership on profitability as resources are optimally used to meet the desired goals as leadership employs strategic approaches. This finding is supported by Abdow (2019) who established that strategic leadership has transformed the petroleum industry in Kenya and has induced competitive advantages for some firms. Those companies that use project leadership models to execute their planning and thinking have benefited from a vast array of advantages.

Project communication and competitive advantage

Research by Nwabueze and Mileski (2018) assessed the effectiveness of communication in competitive advantage established that without effective project communication, the variable of measurements indicate that productivity and outcomes are limited. The paper explores the importance of effective communication through a case study approach. The research uses the case of Macondo oils spill case study to test the effectiveness of project communication. The study implemented an analytical approach to the effects of project communication on competitive advantage. The authors find that where there is a lack of effective communication, an organization's global competitive ability is severely impaired. Additionally, there is a close relationship between competitiveness and effective communication as project management determines factors such as efficiency, responsive public relations and innovation. Fombrun (2015) established that effective communication leads to a good reputation that is significant in enhancing better customer relationship and competitive advantage. The independent variable in the research were efficiency, reputation, and public relations. On the other hand, the dependent variable was competitive advantage. This research shows that competitiveness is dependent on project communication.

Syaifuddin and Rizal (2018) investigated the effects of effective communication on customer public perception and connected to project management practices. The study employed a case study approach that assessed the Len-Indonesian State-Owned Company. The purpose of this study was to examine the customer value creations, corporate communication strategy, and the effect of corporate communication strategy and customer value creation toward the creation of corporate reputation and competitive advantage. Library data, questionnaire, and observations were the primary methods of data collection, while analysis was executed using path analysis. The study determined that project communication was significant in influencing competitive advantage.

Qosasi et al. (2019) investigated the effects of proper implementations of information and communication technology in small business enterprises and conclude that

competitive advantage is generated from effective project communication. Using a random sampling technique, Qosasi and colleagues found that entrepreneurial factors must be present for vast competitive advantages to be accumulated. The effectiveness of project communication reflects the value of customer perception and reputation of organizations. Hence good project communication influences comparative advantage.

Oh and Choi (2020) investigated the effects of project team members on process effectiveness by assessing the relationship between emotional, managerial, and intellectual competence of team members. Using a questionnaire and 164 project management professionals as the study population, the research established that the strategic direction of the members in an organization is dependent on competence, which defines innovation and the capacity of teams to prosper. Makabila (2018) studied the role of organizational learning in achieving competitive advantage by integrating factors such as organizational model to teamwork and effectiveness of teamwork compared to other styles of operation (Minbaeva, 2018). Using a cross-sectional and correlational research design and mixed methods for analytical purposes, Makabila established that in a population of 198 staff from 35 state-owned corporations, there was a high capability of learning effectiveness in a teamwork model than an individualized approached. The concurring research shows that teamwork is an effective factor in creating and developing a competitive advantage over other organization in the market.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the research technique used to carry out the study. The research design, target demographic, sample size, and sampling techniques used in the study are all presented here. The chapter also includes the data collecting instruments, as well as the process for pilot testing and verifying the reliability and validity of the instruments. Furthermore, the data collecting processes and strategies applied in data analysis are provided in the chapter. Lastly, the ethical considerations and the operationalization of the study variables are also included in the chapter.

Research Design

A research design is the overall strategy used in a study to combine the many components of the investigation in a logical and cohesive manner to guarantee that the research topic is properly addressed. A descriptive survey research approach was used in this study. This is a design that tries to methodically and properly explain a phenomena, situation, or population by addressing the questions "how," "when," "where," and "what." This strategy was used for this study because it allowed the investigation to answer the 'what' research questions in the study. The design also assisted the study to assess the influence of project leadership, project communication, project risk



management and teamwork amongst project staff on the competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya.

Target Population

Target population in a research is the entire set of individuals, organizations, elements or units for which the study findings are intended to generalize (Saunders et al., 2019). In this study, the target population was the 112 employees in four branches of Naivas Supermarkets in Mwembe Tayari, Bamburi, Nyali and Likoni. The target population is as presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Target Population

Category	Number	%
Senior Employees	4	3
Supervisors	23	21
Non-management staff	85	76
Total	112	100

Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

This section provides the procedures that were applied in determining the sample size and selecting the units from the target population that will participate in the study.

Sample Size

The number of units from the target population who engage in the study is referred to as the sample size (Chandra & Sharma, 2019). This study's sample size was determined using the calculation procedure by Yamane (1967) which is provided hereunder.

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

In the formula, 'n' is the sample size that participated in the study, 'N', is the size of the target population while 'e' is the selected significance level which in this study was 5%. Applying the formula, the computed sample size is as indicated below.

$$n = \frac{112}{1 + 112(0.05)^2} = 88 \text{ respondents}$$

The total population of 112 employees in four branches of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya was applied in the formula. Using the formula, 88 was the sample size.

Sampling Procedure

The strategy or process of selecting a sample from the target population to participate in the research is referred to as the sampling procedure (Zikmund et al., 2016). To guarantee that the sample chosen is representative of the target group, the sampling process should be appropriate for the characteristics of the target population. Because the study's target population was split between Mwembe Tayari, Bamburi, Nyali and Likoni, which are the four branches of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, stratified random sampling was used. Population was hence selected proportionately. The population is split into groups in this form of random sampling, and the randomly selected

sample is selected according to the distribution of the different groups in the target population.

Data Collection Instruments

A data collecting instrument is a tool used by a researcher to collect information for a study (Sharp et al., 2017). To obtain the quantitative data needed for the investigation, a standardized questionnaire was employed. According to Creswell & Creswell (2017), a questionnaire is a form with printed or written questions with multiple choice answers that is designed for research purposes. Questionnaire was applied because it is efficient, collects standardized responses, embraces clearness, and study participants can respond to it at their convenience (Saunders et al., 2015). The questionnaire was directed to the employees of the targeted branches of Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County, Kenya. It was created to fulfill the study objectives and in accordance with the conceptual framework and research questions.

The questionnaire was divided into six areas (A-F). Section A looked for general employee information in the convenience store. These questions were intended to mentally prepare the respondents before they proceeded with the primary questions being studied. Parts B to E requested information on predictor variables while Section F requested information about the convenience store's competitive advantages. Each segment had questions closed. The closed questions were formulated on a grading scale of five points (1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree and 5-Strongly agree).

Pilot testing of the instrument

Prior to the final data collection, the designed questionnaire was subjected to a pilot test that was conducted on 9 employees of Carrefour Supermarket in Mombasa County, who were not a part of the study population. Carrefour was selected since it is similar to Naivas Supermarkets. The pilot test sample was 10% of the sample size (Zikmund et al., 2016). The pilot test was conducted to ensure that the data collection instrument was suitable in collecting valid and reliable data. The responses from the questionnaires used in the pilot test were used to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

Validity of instruments

According to Collis and Hussey (2013), validity refers to whether the research instrument measures the variable that it is supposed to measure. The questionnaire used for data collection required two levels of validity. There are two types of validity: content validity and construct validity. The amount and extent to which the instrument connects to the variables under research is assessed by content validity. It is a test designed to determine if the equipment used in this investigation were measuring project management practices and competitive advantage. Some professional reviewers were sought for their opinion in order to assure this sort of validity. The experts helped in the evaluation of the questionnaire and offered recommendations that were utilized to make changes to the instrument.



Construct validity according to Fisher (2017), is a test to see if the data collecting instrument adequately covers the research variables. The pilot test was also utilized to determine if the responders comprehended the questions completely. Participants in the pilot test were asked to comment on the appropriateness, clarity, and design of the questions to ensure that they understood them. Besides, construct validity was assessed through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the questionnaires that were used in the pilot test. CFA uses factor loadings to establish how much each item contributes to the construct under investigation. According to Linton (2017), using eigenvalues and communalities, the minimum acceptable factor loading is 50% or 0.5. In the current study, this threshold was applied to establish which items to improve or delete. The method applied in extraction was principal component analysis. The factor loadings for all the five variables were above 0.5 and hence validity was inferred. The findings indicated that the items attained construct validity.

Data Collection Procedures

After developing the final data collecting instruments and receiving approval from the necessary University authorities, the data collection procedure began. The university's permission was utilized to apply for a research permit from the National Commission of Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). After receipt of the permit, permission was sought from Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County to conduct the study on their employees. This was followed by sampling of the 88 employees in the four branches of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa that participated in the study from the target population of 112. Thereafter, permission was sought from the branch managers in each of the branches to issue the questionnaire to their employees. This was then followed by locating the employees and administering them with the questionnaire. The electronic form of questionnaire administration (google forms) was used in the study. This involved physically visiting the supermarket and providing a link to the questionnaires to the employees who agreed to participate in the study.

Data Analysis Techniques

After the surveys were gathered from the field, data processing began. Data analysis is the process of examining, cleaning, coding, and converting data into information that can be used (Bell, 2018). The information gathered was quantitative. The data was cleansed and verified for consistency and completeness during the collecting period. This guaranteed that any surveys that were not completely completed were not utilized in data

analysis. The coded questionnaires were then put into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), which aided in analysis.

The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages. The distribution of the various replies was also described using mean and standard deviations. The quantitative data gathered via surveys was utilized to answer the study questions. Moreover, the study utilized simple linear regression to test the study hypotheses. Simple linear regression is a useful analysis technique to determine the influence of an independent variable on a dependent variable (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). This is an appropriate parametric test that seeks to establish the effect of independent variable(s) and the dependent variable. The findings from the regression and descriptive analysis were presented in tables and figures, interpreted and discussed.

Ethical Considerations

This study considered various ethical standards in all the procedures and activities. The ethical procedures considered include voluntary consent, confidentiality, privacy and anonymity. The study was only conducted on those employees that provided informed consent. To get consent, they were briefed and provided with complete information regarding the study purpose, how their responses would be used and how their rights would be respected. Those who did not provide consent were excluded from the study.

The study also ensured that confidentiality, privacy and anonymity of the participants was respected. In upholding confidentiality, the study did not collect any information that could identify the Naivas Supermarket branches or the employees who participated. Besides, privacy of the participants was upheld by not collecting any personally identifying information. Moreover, information about whether a participant has participated in the study was not disclosed to ensure that anonymity of the participants was respected.

Operationalization of the Variables

This section discusses variable measurement and operationalization. The process of converting variables into quantifiable indicators is known as operationalization. Furthermore, the framework in Table 3.1 demonstrates how all of the variables were assessed as well as the appropriate degrees of measurement.

Table 3.2: Operationalization of the Variables

Variable	Measurements	Level of measurement	Data collection instrument	Data analysis method
Project leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competence• Visionary• Decisiveness	Ordinal (likert scale questions)	Questionnaire with closed questions	Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages and means) Regression analysis



Teamwork amongst project staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team trust • Cohesiveness • Cooperation 	Ordinal (likert scale questions)	Questionnaire with closed questions	Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages and means) Regression analysis
Project communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager receptiveness • Information sharing • Feedback mechanisms 	Ordinal (likert scale questions)	Questionnaire with closed questions	Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages and means) Regression analysis
Project risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk evaluation • Risk identification • Risk treatment 	Ordinal (likert scale questions)	Questionnaire with closed questions	Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages and means) Regression analysis
Competitive advantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profitability • Employee growth • Sales growth 	Ordinal (likert scale questions)	Questionnaire with closed questions	Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages and means) Regression analysis

IV. DATA PRESENTATIONS, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The testing of the hypothesis of the study results in relation to the theoretical and empirical literature is also provided in this chapter.

Questionnaire Return Rate

The study targeted 88 employees from four branches of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya and received responses from 72 research participants. This related to an 81.8% success rate which was considered adequate. Saunders et al. (2019) posits that any response rate above 60% is considered adequate in descriptive surveys in the social sciences, management and business research. Following this authoritative assertion, the response rate in the study which was above the minimum stipulated was considered adequate.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The study explored various demographic characteristics of the respondents including gender, the highest level of education attained, the age and the number of years that the respondents had worked for Naivas Supermarket. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize these responses and the findings are presented hereunder.

Gender of Respondents

The study investigated the gender of the respondents to assess the gender balance in the supermarket as well as in the responses. The study results indicate that 54% of the study participants were male while 46% were female. These findings indicate a good gender balance which implies that Naivas Supermarket has attained an acceptable gender balance in its workforce. This shows that the supermarkets is gender sensitive.

Highest Level of Education of Study Participants

The study assessed the highest level of education attained by the study participants. This was aimed at assessing the education qualifications of employees employed in convenience stores and also assess the capacity of the participants to understand the questionnaire. The findings are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Highest Education Level of Study Participants

Education Level	Number	%
Secondary level	8	11.1
College certificate	17	23.6
College diploma	23	31.9
Bachelor's degree	18	25.0
Master's degree	6	8.4
Total	72	100

The findings summarized in Table 4.1 depict that 31.9% of the study participants had attained college diploma level of education while only 8.4% had master's degrees. Those with the lowest level of education were 11.1% who had a secondary level of education. Since the language of instruction in Kenyan secondary schools is English, and considering that the questionnaire was designed in easily understandable English, it was assumed that all the respondents were able to understand and respond to the questionnaire.

Age of the Study Respondents

The study investigated the ages of the study participants. This was aimed at assessing the age distribution of workers employed in convenience stores. The findings are summarized in Table 4.2.



Table 4.2 Age of the Study Participants

Age	Number	%
Below 30 years	18	25.0
31-40 years	32	44.4
41-50 years	19	26.4
51-59 years	3	4.2
Total	72	100

The findings summarized in Table 4.2 indicate that 44.49% of the study participants were between 31 and 40 years old while only 4.2% were between the age of 51 and 59 years. These findings suggest that most of the employees at Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County were young and middle aged.

Number of Years Respondents had worked at the Convenience Store

The study investigated the number of years that the study participants had worked at the convenience store. The findings are displayed in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Number of Years Respondents had worked at the Convenience Store

Number of years	Number	%
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Table 4.4 Competitive Advantage of Naivas Supermarket

Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Management in this store is competent and professional	72	1	5	4.36	0.756
This store provides the best prices compared to competitors in this town	72	1	5	4.03	0.888
The store experiences profitability that is above the average of the other stores in this city	72	1	5	3.96	0.941
This store has a good reputation as a store that provides value to customers	72	2	5	4.33	0.650
The store has experienced a high growth in sales compared to the past	72	1	5	4.07	1.012
The store has experienced high growth in employee numbers compared to the past	72	1	5	4.12	0.963
The store always provides quality products to customers	72	1	5	3.99	0.986

The findings summarized in Table 4.4 indicate that respondents agreed that the convenience store had a good reputation as a store that provides value to customers (mean = 4.33, std deviation = 0.650) and also agreed that the store has experienced high growth in employee numbers compared to the past (mean = 4.12, std deviation = 0.963). Further, respondents agreed that the convenience store had experienced a high growth in sales compared to the past (mean = 4.07, std deviation = 1.012). Moreover, the study participants agreed that the convenience store provides the best prices compared to competitors in the town (mean = 4.03, std deviation = 0.888) and also agreed that the convenience store always provided quality products to customers (mean = 3.99, std deviation = 0.986). The study findings also indicated that the study participants agreed to

2 years or less	13	18.1
3 – 4 years	16	22.2
5 - 6 years	28	38.9
7 – 8 years	10	13.9
Above 8 years	5	6.9
Total	72	100

The findings provided in Table 4.3 show that 38.9% of the study participants had worked at Naivas Supermarkets for between 5 and 6 years while only 6.9% had worked at the convenience store for more than 8 years.

Competitive Advantage of Naivas Supermarket

Competitive advantage was the dependent variable in the study. It was measured through profitability, employee growth and sales growth. To assess competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County. Respondents were provided with several statements and required to indicate their level of agreement on a 5 level Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree). The study applied descriptive analysis that included maxima, minima, mean and standard deviation. The results of the descriptive analysis are provided in Table 4.4.

the statement that the store experienced profitability that is above the average of the other stores in the city (mean = 3.96, std deviation = 0.941). these findings concur with the findings by Hosseini et al. (2018) that competitive advantage is attained by an organisation when it has profitability that is generally higher than the average of its industry for a long time. This is attainable when a firm has sustainable efficiency, quality, innovation and accountability. This shows that Naivas Supermarkets had attained competitive advantage.

Project Leadership and Competitive Advantage of Convenience Stores

The first objective of the study was to assess the effect of project leadership on competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya. The study



conducted descriptive analysis to assess the extent of project leadership in the supermarket and also conducted simple linear regression analysis to assess the influence of project leadership on competitive advantage. The findings of the descriptive and regression analysis are provided in this section.

Description of Project Leadership from Likert Scale Data

The study investigated the extent of project leadership at Naivas supermarket through providing statements that were on a 5-point Likert scale to the respondents (strongly disagree to strongly agree). The study applied descriptive analysis that included maxima, minima, mean and standard deviation. The results of the descriptive analysis are provided in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Project Leadership Likert Scale Data

Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Management in this store is competent and professional	72	1	5	4.36	0.756
Management in this store is always focused towards achieving the common goal of the store	72	1	5	4.13	0.871
Management in this store always guides and inspires confidence in employees	72	1	5	4.25	0.852
Management in this store always motivates employees to achieve their highest potential	72	1	5	3.94	1.124
Management in this store provides a clear vision of the direction the store should take into the future	72	2	5	3.89	0.797
Management in this store makes timely and sound decisions	72	1	5	3.96	0.740

The study findings summarized in Table 4.5 indicate that the respondents agreed to the statement that management in the convenience store is competent and professional (mean = 4.36, std deviation = 0.756) and also agreed that management in the convenience store always guides and inspires confidence in employees (mean = 4.25, std deviation = 0.852). Additional findings indicated that study participants agreed that management at the store is always focused towards achieving the common goal of the store (mean = 4.13, std deviation = 0.871) and likewise agreed that management in the convenience store makes timely and sound decisions (mean = 3.96, std deviation = 0.740). Furthermore, findings indicated that study participants were in agreement that management in the store always motivates employees to achieve their highest potential

(mean = 3.94, std deviation = 1.124) and also agreed that management in the store provides a clear vision of the direction the store should take into the future (mean = 3.89, std deviation = 0.797).

Regression Analysis of Project Leadership and Competitive Advantage of Convenience Stores

The study applied simple linear regression to test the first alternative hypothesis of the study which was;

H11: Project leadership has a significant influence on the competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya

The results of the simple linear regression are provided in this section. Table 4.6 displays the study results of the model summary which indicates the model's explanatory power.

Table 4.6 Model Summary for Project Leadership

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.695	0.483	0.476	0.47698

The study findings summarized in Table 4.6 indicate that the correlation coefficient was 0.695 indicating that there was a moderate correlation between project leadership and competitive advantage at Naivas Supermarkets. Besides, the coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.483$) shows that 48.3% of competitive advantage at Naivas was explained by project leadership in the convenience store. This suggest that 51.7% of competitive advantage of the convenience store was explained by other variables or factors that were not included in the model.

The study also assessed the significance of the simple linear regression model through ANOVA. The findings are provided in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 ANOVA for Project Leadership

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	14.887	1	14.887	65.436	0.000
Residual	15.925	70	0.228		
Total	30.813	71			

The findings displayed on Table 4.7 indicate that the model was statistically significant ($F = 65.436$, $p < 0.05$) at 5% level of significance since the p value was below the significance level of 5%. These findings imply that the regression model was a good fit for the data. Besides, the findings indicate that project leadership had a significant effect on competitive advantage.

To assess the significance of project leadership on competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, the coefficients were generated. The findings are summarized in Table 4.8.



Table 4.8 Coefficients for Project Leadership and Competitive Advantage

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.026	0.375		2.739	0.008
Project Leadership	0.747	0.092	0.695	8.089	0.000

The study findings displayed in Table 4.8 indicate that project leadership had a significant influence on competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County ($\beta = 0.747$, $t = 8.089$, $p < 0.05$). These findings led to acceptance of the alternate hypothesis of the study. The findings also indicated that a unit increase in project leadership in Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, would lead to 0.747 increase in competitive advantage and vice versa.

Project Communication and Competitive Advantage of Convenience Stores

The study's second objective was to establish the influence of project communication on competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya. The study conducted descriptive analysis to assess the extent of project communication in the supermarket and a simple linear regression analysis to examine the influence of project communication on competitive advantage of the convenience store. The findings of the descriptive and regression analysis are summarized hereunder.

Description of Project Communication from Likert Scale Data

The study assessed the extent of project communication at Naivas supermarket through providing statements that were on a 5-point Likert scale to the respondents (strongly disagree to strongly agree). The study applied descriptive analysis that included maxima, minima, mean and standard deviation to analyze the responses from the study participants. The results of the descriptive analysis are provided in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 Project Communication Likert Scale Data

Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The communication from management to employees in this store is always clear	72	1	5	4.08	1.242
Management in this store always use proper language when communicating to employees	72	1	5	4.14	1.011
Employees in this store freely communicate to their managers without fear	72	1	5	4.03	1.222

Managers in this store always encourage employees to communicate to them in case of any issue	72	1	5	3.33	1.233
Managers in this organization always pay attention when employees are communicating to them	72	1	5	3.42	1.004
The views and suggestions that employees provided in this store are always considered	72	1	5	4.22	0.938

The study results provided in Table 4.9 demonstrate that the study participants agreed to the statement that the views and suggestions that employees provided in the store are always considered (mean = 4.22, std deviation = 0.938) and also agreed that management in the store always use proper language when communicating to employees (mean = 4.14, std deviation = 1.011). Additional findings indicated that study participants agreed that the communication from management to employees in the store is always clear (mean = 4.08, std deviation = 1.242) and likewise agreed that employees in the store freely communicate to their managers without fear (mean = 4.03, std deviation = 1.222). However, study findings indicated that study participants were neutral to the statement that managers in the convenience store always pay attention when employees are communicating to them (mean = 3.42, std deviation = 1.004) and were also neutral to the statement that managers in the store always encourage employees to communicate to them in case of any issue (mean = 3.33, std deviation = 1.233).

Regression Analysis of Project Communication and Competitive Advantage of Convenience Stores

The study used simple linear regression to test the second alternative hypothesis of the study which was;

H12: Project communication has a significant influence on the competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya

The results of the simple linear regression are provided in this section. Table 4.10 summarizes the study results on the model summary which indicates the explanatory power of the model.

Table 4.10 Model Summary for Project Communication

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.779	0.607	0.601	0.41617

The study findings summarized in Table 4.10 indicate that the correlation coefficient was 0.779 indicating that there was a strong correlation between project communication and competitive advantage at Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County. Besides, the coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.607$) shows that 60.7% of competitive advantage at Naivas supermarket was explained by project



communication in the convenience store. This suggests that 39.3% of competitive advantage in the convenience store was explained by other factors that were not accounted for in the model.

The study also assessed the significance of the simple linear regression model through ANOVA. The findings are summarized in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 ANOVA for Project Communication

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.689	1	18.689	107.906	0.000
	Residual	12.124	70	0.173		
	Total	30.813	71			

The findings summarized in Table 4.11 show that the model was statistically significant ($F = 107.906$, $p < 0.05$) at 5% significance level. This is because the p value was below the significance level of 5%. These findings demonstrate that the regression model was a good fit for the data. Besides, the findings illustrate that project communication had a significant effect on competitive advantage.

To assess the significance of project communication towards influencing competitive advantage, the coefficients were generated. The findings are provided in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12 Coefficients for Project Communication and Competitive Advantage

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.280	0.363		0.771	0.443
	Project communication	0.944	0.091	0.779	10.388	0.000

The findings summarized in Table 4.12 show that project communication had a significant influence on competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County ($\beta = 0.944$, $t = 10.388$, $p < 0.05$). These findings were used to accept the alternate hypothesis of the study. The findings also indicated that a unit increase in project communication in Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, would lead to 0.944 increase in competitive advantage and vice versa.

Project Risk Management and Competitive Advantage of Convenience Stores

The third objective of the study was to assess the effect of project risk management on competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya. The study conducted descriptive analysis to assess the extent of project risk management in the supermarket and further conducted simple linear regression analysis to assess the

influence of project risk management on competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya. The findings of the descriptive and regression analysis are provided in this section.

Description of Project Risk Management from Likert Scale Data

The study examined the degree to which project risk management was observed at Naivas supermarket through providing statements that were on a 5-point Likert scale to the respondents (strongly disagree to strongly agree). The study applied descriptive analysis that included maxima, minima, mean and standard deviation. The results of the descriptive analysis are provided in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13 Project Risk Management Likert Scale Data

Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
In every project or operation in this convenience store, all possible risks are identified and listed	72	1	5	4.18	0.969
Risk analysis is effectively conducted for all identified risks in projects or operations of the convenience store	72	1	5	4.33	0.904
The likelihood and severity of project or operational risks is evaluated exhaustively	72	1	5	3.96	1.041
The organization ensures that there is an effective risk treatment plan for all risks identified	72	1	5	3.68	1.254
In projects and operations in this organization, there is continuous risk monitoring and review	72	1	5	3.79	1.034
All employees of this store are involved in risk management	72	1	5	3.89	0.797

The study findings displayed in Table 4.13 indicate that the respondents agreed to the statement that risk analysis is effectively conducted for all identified risks in projects or operations of the convenience store (mean = 4.33, std deviation = 0.904) and also agreed that in every project or operation in the convenience store, all possible risks are identified and listed (mean = 4.18, std deviation = 0.969). Furthermore, the study findings indicated that study participants agreed that the likelihood and severity of project or operational risks is evaluated exhaustively (mean = 3.96, std deviation = 1.041) and likewise agreed that all employees of the store are involved in risk management (mean = 3.89, std deviation = 0.797). Moreover, findings indicated that study participants were in agreement that in



projects and operations in the organization, there is continuous risk monitoring and review (mean = 3.79, std deviation = 1.034) and also agreed that the organization ensures that there is an effective risk treatment plan for all risks identified (mean = 3.68, std deviation = 1.254).

Regression Analysis of Project Risk Management and Competitive Advantage of Convenience Stores

The study applied simple linear regression to test the third alternative hypothesis of the study which was;

H13: Project risk management has a significant influence on the competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya

The results of the simple linear regression are provided in this section. Table 4.14 provide the study results of the model summary which indicates the explanatory power of the model.

Table 4.14 Model Summary for Project Risk Management

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.322	0.104	0.091	0.62814

The study findings summarized in Table 4.14 indicate that the correlation coefficient was 0.322 indicating that there was a weak correlation between project risk management and competitive advantage at Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County. Besides, the coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.104$) shows that 10.4% of competitive advantage at Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County was explained by project risk management in the convenience store. This implies that 89.6% of competitive advantage in the convenience store was explained by other variables or factors that were not included in the model.

The study also assessed the significance of project risk management in the simple linear regression model through ANOVA. The findings are presented in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15 ANOVA for Project Risk Management

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.193	1	3.193	8.092	0.006
	Residual	27.620	70	0.395		
	Total	30.813	71			

The findings summarized in Table 4.15 indicate that the model was statistically significant ($F = 8.092$, $p = 0.006$) at 5% significance level since the p value was below the significance level of 5%. These findings reveal that the regression model was a good fit for the data. Besides, the findings indicate that project risk management had a significant effect on competitive advantage.

To assess the significance of project risk management in influencing competitive advantage, the coefficients of the

independent variable were generated. The findings are provided in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16 Coefficients for Project Risk Management and Competitive Advantage

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.112	0.675		3.129	0.003
	Project Risk Management	0.455	0.160	0.322	2.845	0.006

The findings summarized in Table 4.16 show that project risk management had a significant influence on competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County ($\beta = 0.455$, $t = 2.845$, $p = 0.006$). These findings were used to accept the alternate hypothesis of the study. The findings also indicate that a unit increase in project risk management in Naivas Supermarkets Mombasa, would lead to 0.455 increase in competitive advantage and vice versa.

Teamwork amongst project staff and Competitive Advantage of Convenience Stores

The study's fourth objective was to determine the influence of teamwork amongst project staff on competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya. The study conducted descriptive analysis to examine the degree of teamwork amongst project staff in the supermarket and also conducted simple linear regression analysis to evaluate the influence of teamwork amongst project staff on competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya. The findings from the descriptive and regression analysis are provided in this section.

Description of Teamwork amongst project staff from Likert Scale Data

The study investigated the extent of teamwork amongst project staff at Naivas supermarket through providing statements that were on a 5-point Likert scale to the respondents (strongly disagree to strongly agree). The study applied descriptive analysis that included maxima, minima, mean and standard deviation. The results of the descriptive analysis are provided in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17 Teamwork amongst project staff Likert Scale Data

Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employees in this store have a good working relationship	72	1	5	3.81	1.030
There is effective communication between team members in this store	72	1	5	3.74	0.839



Whenever there is a conflict amongst employees in this store, it is amicably resolved	72	2	5	4.14	0.810
There is mutual respect amongst employees in this store	72	2	5	4.33	0.805
Employees in this store always seek to assist each other to attain the objectives of the store	72	4	5	4.44	0.500
Employees in this store always advice and support each other	72	2	5	4.22	0.859

The study findings summarized in Table 4.17 show that the study participants agreed to the statement that employees in the convenience store always seek to assist each other to attain the objectives of the store (mean = 4.44, std deviation = 0.500) and also agreed that there is mutual respect amongst employees in the store (mean = 4.33, std deviation = 0.805). Additional findings indicated that study participants agreed that employees in the store always advice and support each other (mean = 4.22, std deviation = 0.859) and also agreed that whenever there is a conflict amongst employees in the store, it is amicably resolved (mean = 4.14, std deviation = 0.810). Further findings indicated that study participants were in agreement that employees in this store have a good working relationship (mean = 3.81, std deviation = 1.030) and also agreed that there was effective communication between team members in the store (mean = 3.89, std deviation = 0.797).

Regression Analysis of Teamwork amongst project staff and Competitive Advantage of Convenience Stores

The study applied simple linear regression to test the fourth alternative hypothesis of the study which was;

H14: Teamwork amongst project staff has a significant influence on the competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarkets in Mombasa County, Kenya

The results of the simple linear regression are provided in this section. Table 4.18 provide the study results of the model summary which indicates the explanatory power of the model.

Table 4.18 Model Summary for Teamwork Amongst Project Staff

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.803	0.644	0.639	0.39571

The study findings provided in Table 4.18 indicate that the correlation coefficient was 0.803 indicating that there was a strong correlation between teamwork amongst project staff and competitive advantage at Naivas Supermarkets. Besides, the coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.644$) shows that 64.4% of competitive advantage at Naivas was explained by teamwork amongst project staff in the convenience store. This implies that 35.6% of

competitive advantage in the convenience store was explained by other variables or factors that were not included in the model.

The study also assessed the significance of the simple linear regression model through ANOVA. The findings are presented in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19 ANOVA for Teamwork Amongst Project Staff

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	19.851	1	19.851	126.773	0.000
Residual	10.961	70	0.157		
Total	30.813	71			

The findings summarized in Table 4.19 indicate that the model was statistically significant ($F = 126.773$, $p < 0.05$) at 5% significance level since the p value was below the significance level of 5%. These findings reveal that the regression model was a good fit for the data. Besides, the findings indicate that teamwork amongst project staff had a significant effect on competitive advantage.

To assess the significance of teamwork amongst project staff in influencing competitive advantage, the coefficients were generated. The findings are provided in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20 Coefficients for Teamwork amongst project staff and Competitive Advantage

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.145	0.260		4.407	0.000
	Teamwork amongst project staff	0.744	0.066	0.803	11.259	0.000

The findings summarized in Table 4.20 depict that teamwork amongst project staff had a significant influence on competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County ($\beta = 0.744$, $t = 11.259$, $p < 0.05$). These findings were used to accept the alternate hypothesis of the study. The findings also indicate that a unit increase in teamwork amongst project staff in Naivas Supermarkets Mombasa, would lead to 0.744 increase in competitive advantage and vice versa.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions

The study draws the following conclusions based on its findings. To begin, the research concludes that project leadership is essential for attaining and sustaining of competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County. Specifically, Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County was able to attain competitive advantage due to its visionary leadership, management that exhibited



professionalism and competence and leadership that provided inspirational motivation to workers of the convenience store.

The study also concludes that project communication is vital for competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County. Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County was able to attain competitive advantage through listening to the views and suggestions of their workers, treating the employees with respect, and communicating clearly and effectively to employees. Moreover, Naivas Supermarket's ability to have effective upward and downward communication and good relationships and communication between employees and management enabled it to achieve competitive advantage.

Regarding project risk management and competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County, the study concludes that project risk communication was essential in enabling the supermarket to attain and sustain competitive advantage. Major project risk management practices that played a critical role at Naivas Supermarket included effectively conducting risk analysis for all identified risks, identifying all possible risks, assessing the severity and likelihood of operational and project risks, and involving all employees in risk management.

Lastly, the study concludes that teamwork amongst project staff played a vital role towards attainment of competitive advantage of Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County. Important aspects of teamwork amongst project staff that were common in Naivas Supermarket in Mombasa County comprised of employees assisting each other to attain the objectives of the store, mutual respect amongst employees in the store, and the employees supporting each other.

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