



DRIVERS INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE OF POSTAL SERVICES SECTOR IN KENYA: A CASE OF POSTAL CORPORATION OF KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Modern markets for postal services are highly dynamic because of the changing consumer behaviour. Today's consumers are different from the yester years. This is because of globalization and the new information and communication technologies. Postal Corporation of Kenya is facing competition from both international and domestic mail service providers, mobile telephony, electronic mail and commerce and this has led to declining mail revenues. Currently postal courier mail market share is shrinking in a market thus PCK seems to have lost competitiveness in the postal services sector. This study sought to establish the drivers influencing performance postal services sector in Kenya with a case of Postal Corporation of Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to examine how information communication and technology, human resource capacity, leadership and governance and implementation strategy influence performance of postal services in Kenya. A stratified sampling technique was carried out by involving all the targeted respondents and primary data was collected through the use of questionnaires. The secondary data was obtained from published documents such as journals, periodicals, magazines and reports to supplement the primary data. A pilot study was conducted for the data collection instrument. The data was analyzed with help of SPSS version 21 and Excel. The study adopted correlation and regression analysis at 5% level of significance to determine strength and direction of the relationship of the variables under study. The analysis showed that information communication and technology had the strongest positive influence on performance of postal services sector. In addition, leadership and governance, human resource capacity and implementation strategy are positively correlated to performance of postal services sector with Pearson correlation coefficient of .563, .503 and .632 with p-values of .001, .0003, .005 and .002 respectively. The study established that information communication and technology was the most significant factor. The study recommends for similar studies to be undertaken in other postal services firms in Kenya for generalization of the findings of this study.

Key words: *Organizational capacity, information communication technology, human resource capacity, implementation strategy.*

Introduction:

Modern markets for postal services are highly dynamic because of the changing consumer behaviour. Today's consumers are different from the yester years. This is because of globalization and the new information and communication technologies. According Finger *et al*,(2005), 80% to 85% of total mail volumes in industrialized countries are generated by global business customers. PCK is facing competition from both international and domestic mail service providers, mobile telephony, electronic mail and commerce and this has led to declining mail revenues at average rate of six percent per year (Postal statistics 2010- 2008). Currently postal courier mail market share is three percent in a market estimated to be worth Kenya shillings seven billion (GoK, 2013). Thus PCK seems to have lost competitiveness in the postal services sector.

A recent study by PCK (2006) identified the following competitors as posing the biggest threat: DHL, FedEx, UPS, and TNT in the international market and G4 Securicor Courier, Bus and freight companies, real and on time deliveries in the local market. The study also estimated PCK's market share declined to be 3% in courier and 60% in ordinary mail. According to CCK June 2009 statistics, the mobile subscriber numbers have risen to 16million to date and there is marked increase in electronic mail and commerce usage with an estimated penetration level of 33.3% leading to a stiff competition to PCK thus affecting its performance (CCK, 2009).

Previous studies into establishing strategic responses to competition and performance by organizations in Kenya, like Njogu (2007), Juma (2007), Naminda (2004), Muhindi (2007), Mwarey (2008), Munyoki (2007), Mwenda

(2007), and Ongaro (2004) have focused on the mail sub- sector. No studies were found to have been carried out on the performance of postal services sector in Kenya or elsewhere. This study sought to determine the drivers influencing performance of postal services in Kenya and strategies which PCK should adopt in order to gain competitive advantage in the sector. It will also contribute towards the paltry data on the performance of postal services in Kenya and aid in policy formulation at PCK and national level.

General objective

The overall purpose of the study was to establish the drivers influencing performance of postal services sectors in Kenya.

Specific objectives

- i. Establish the influence of information communication technology on performance of postal services sector in Kenya
- ii. Find out the influence of human resource capacity on performance of postal services sectors in Kenya.
- iii. Examine the influence of leadership and governance on performance of postal services sectors in Kenya.
- iv. Explore the influence of implementation strategy on performance of postal services sectors in Kenya.

Literature review

Karanja (2009) did a study to investigate the strategies adopted by postal corporation of Kenya to gain competitive advantage in the mail sub sector in Kenya. The study begins by acknowledging the record growth of the corporation during which there has been tremendous development of technology such as mobile phones which came as direct substitutes to the use of services mostly provided by PCK to its customers (CCK statistics June, 2009). Data

was collected through an interview guide administered to eleven senior members of staff heading departments and responsible for strategy formulation and implementation at Postal Corporation of Kenya, the study determined that though PCK has adopted various strategies to gain competitive advantage, they are slow in bearing fruit and hence indicating challenges in strategy planning and implementation. It thus recommends further studies on strategic planning and implementation at PCK.

A study conducted by Milewa (2010) found that the competitive strategies adopted by PCK in response to increased competition included; offering high quality services, introducing new products and services, use of latest information technology, regular market surveys for customer needs and keeping prices lower than competitors. Competition has compelled organization to become more effective and flexible in response to the rapidly changing environment. Organizations try to increase their capabilities by inventing more in new products and services.

Kambara (2013) also indicates the need for PCK to strategize in order for it to perform effectively and out beat competition. This has necessitated it to formulate and adopt strategies that should result in superior performance for the firm and ensure survival in an environment that is constantly changing due to different competitive factors. The study also indicates the liberalization of the Postal market to allow the entry of new competition into the market as the main reason as to why PCK ought to reinvent itself. In response to the changes in the market, PCK has had to focus on its capabilities and core competencies in order to achieve competitive advantage and its ultimate survival.

In another study, Wanjir (2013) seeks to establish the process of strategy development at PCK as it interacts with the environment in an attempt to align them with the ever changing business environment. The researcher assesses the firm's internal capability and how well it is equipped to adapt and survive in the industry within which it operates within the context of interaction between the corporation's strategies and the dynamic environments. Ideally, the researcher indicates that as much as a firm will devise a strategy to see it through a hectic market environment, strategy on its own is not static. As market environment and conditions change so does the strategy and especially its implementation change.

The findings of the study enlisted the whole process of strategy development at PCK and revealed a multistep approach to the eventual turnaround. From the study, PCK first did an analysis of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) to determine the actual need to turnaround. The corporation then devised the strategies and came up with an action plan. Finally, the corporation embarked on the implementation of these strategies, a process that took over one year in duration.

Research Methodology

The study was descriptive in nature as it is deemed appropriate because it involve use of written questionnaires administered to respondents. Baker (2009) recommends descriptive design as it allows the researcher to describe, record, analyze and report conditions that exit or existed. Since this study sought to establish the drivers influencing performance of postal service sector in Kenya, descriptive research design was the best design. This had the

advantage of providing an in-depth investigation of the problem under study.

The target population of this study was 400 senior managers' staff and middle-level managers staff of PCK Nairobi County the four branches; City Square Post Office, Tom Mboya Post Office, Ronald Ngala Post Office and General Post Office.

Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) indicates that a sample size of 10% of the target population is large enough so long as it allows for reliable data analysis and allows testing for significance of differences between estimates. Therefore, a proportionate sample size of approximate 40 respondents which is 10% precision of the population was selected using a stratified sampling technique from the identified sample.

The researcher used questionnaire as the research instrument. The study utilized questionnaire that was developed for generating information on key variables of interest from the targeted respondents in the study. The research also undertook desk review of existing information about the study areas and collect qualitative data through in-depth interview from respondents who are conversant with the subject through various interactions or experiences.

Data collected was analysed using both quantitative and qualitative methods with the help of (SPSS) version 21 and excel. Data processing was carried out through editing, coding and classification. Content analysis was employed to analyze the qualitative data whereas simple statistical methods, regression and correlation analysis was utilized to analyze the quantitative data by aide of SPSS Software version 21 and excel. The findings were

presented using tables, charts and graphs to facilitate comparison and for easy inference.

Discussions

Information Communication Technology

The study sought to establish the extent to which respondents agreed with the statements relating to ICT Infrastructure influence performance of postal services in the organization. A scale of 1-5 was used. The scores "Very small extent" and "Small extent" were represented by mean score, equivalent to 1 to 2.5 on the continuous Likert scale ($1 \leq \text{small extent} \leq 2.5$). The scores of 'Moderate extent' were represented by a score equivalent to 2.6 to 3.5 on the Likert scale ($2.6 \leq \text{Moderate} \leq 3.5$). The score of "great extent" and "Very great extent" were represented by a mean score equivalent to 3.6 to 5.0 on the Likert Scale ($3.6 \leq \text{great extent} \leq 5.0$). The mean was generated from SPSS version 21 and is as illustrated in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 reveals that majority of the respondents indicated that to a moderate extent that they had enough computers for the staff to use for postal services in the organization as shown by a mean of 3.01; to a moderate extent the respondents cited that the organization ensured that postal services soft wares are available for the use by the staff as shown by a mean of 2.82; to a small extent did the respondents state that they got reference manual for use on the management of postal services as shown by a mean of 2.41. The respondents to a great extent did find the system to be complex in processing of information thus affecting service delivery as shown by a mean of 3.76; to a moderate extent the respondents indicated that the systems complicate very simple manual processes thus affecting efficiency of postal services as shown by mean of 3.05 and there is

accessibility of postal services to all users at any time (24 hours), from anywhere as shown by mean of 3.02.Finally the respondents to a small extent did have relevant security to access the systems as shown by a mean of 2.41. This reveals that there is lack of enough computers, accessibility and software’s to enable the users perform their roles well thus affecting performance of postal services in the organization. According to Wafula

& Wanjohi(2009) the Kenyan government is undertaking ambitious reforms to further revitalize or transform their postal services. Thus lack of ICT support affects peromance of the services in the organization. To accomplish this revitalization, the governments are trying to ensure that there is well laid ICT to support postal services in Kenya.

Table 4.4: Elements relating to influence of ICT on performance of postal services

Statement	Very small extent	Small extent	Moderate	Great extent	Very great extent	Mean
Do you have enough computers for the staff to use for postal services in the organization?	35.5%	6%	61.5%	6.5%	7.5%	3.01
How has the organization ensured that postal services soft wares are available for the use by the staff?	6.5%	67.5%	7.5%	7%	11%	2.82
Do you get reference manual for use on the management of postal services?	6.5%	72..5%	6.5%	6.5%	8%	2.41
Do you find the system to be complex in processing of information thus affecting service delivery?	5.5%	11%	67.5%	6.5%	9.5%	3.76
Do the systems complicate very simple manual processes thus affecting efficiency of postal services?	22.5%	6%	65%	2.5%	7.5%	3.05
Is there accessibility of postal services to all users at any time (24 hours), from anywhere?	6.5%	18%	57.5%	7%	11%	3.02
Do you have relevant security to access the systems?	6.5%	62.5%	6.5%	6.5%	18%	2.41

Human Resource Capacity

The study sought to establish the extent to which respondents agreed with the statements relating to human resource capacity influence

performance of postal services sector in Kenya. A scale of 1-5 was used. The scores “Very small extent” and “Small extent” were represented by mean score, equivalent to 1 to 2.5 on the continuous Likert scale (1 ≤ Small extent ≤ 2.5).

The scores of 'Moderate extent' were represented by a score equivalent to 2.6 to 3.5 on the Likert scale ($2.6 \leq \text{Moderate} \leq 3.5$). The score of "Great extent" and "Very great extent" were represented by a mean score equivalent to 3.6 to 5.0 on the Likert Scale ($3.6 \leq \text{Moderate extent} \leq 5.0$). The mean was generated from SPSS version 21 and is as illustrated in Table 4.3. From the research findings, majority of the respondents indicated that to a small extent that they had adequate technical staff to ensure that there was efficiency of the postal services in the organization as shown by a mean of 1.96; to a moderate extent the respondents cited that the technical staff was engaged on planning and implementation of postal services to ensure quality of service as shown by a mean of 3.22; small extent did the qualified and trained

technical staff implement postal services in the organization as shown by a mean of 2.41.

The effective implementation, operation and maintenance of an IFMIS require staff with the necessary knowledge and skills. Sigei (2013) argues that low capacity for system implementation at the sub-national level, such as provincial and regional governments, is one of the major challenges in the implementation of a postal services in developing countries. Hove & Wynne(2010) contend that the human resource development issue within government needs prioritization, the education system needs to be aligned with the information and communication technologies postal services demands of the country and scarce postal services skills need to be attracted and retained particularly within government.

Table 4.5: Elements relating to influence of human resource capacity on performance of Postal services sector

Statement	Very small extent	Small extent	Moderate	Great extent	Very great extent	Mean	Std deviation
Do you have adequate technical staff to ensure that there is efficiency of the postal services in the organization?	71.5%	6%	9%	6.5%	7.5%	1.96	0.32
How is the technical staff engaged on planning and implementation of postal services to ensure quality of service?	6.5%	8%	67.5%	7%	11%	3.22	0.36
Do you have qualified and trained technical staff to implement postal services in the organization?	6.5%	72.5%	6.5%	6.5%	8%	2.41	0.44
Do you have proper leadership for the project team responsible for the initiation, execution, monitoring and controlling of postal services in the organization	5.5%	11%	6.5%	67.5%	9.5%	3.99	0.65
Do you have training program for the use of postal services in the organization	81.5%	6%	9%	2.5%	7.5%	1.55	0.92
Does the organization relies heavily on experts to run the postal services system?	6.5%	18%	57.5%	7%	11%	3.02	0.44
How are the users trained to handle postal services on the organization?	6.5%	62.5%	6.5%	6.5%	18%	2.41	0.44
Does ICT phobia among the staff members affect performance of postal services in the organization?	5.5%	6%	6.5%	77.5%	4.5%	3.88	0.95

Implementation Strategy

The study sought to establish the extent to which respondents agreed with the statements relating to implementation strategy influence performance of postal services sector in Kenya. A scale of 1-5 was used. The scores “Very small extent” and “Small extent” were represented by mean score, equivalent to 1 to 2.5 on the continuous Likert scale ($1 \leq \text{Small extent} \leq 2.5$). The scores of ‘Moderate extent’ were represented by a score equivalent to 2.6 to 3.5 on the Likert scale ($2.6 \leq \text{Moderate} \leq 3.5$). The score of “Great extent” and “Very great extent” were represented by a mean score equivalent to 3.6 to 5.0 on the Likert Scale ($3.6 \leq \text{Great extent} \leq 5.0$). The mean was generated from SPSS version 21 and is as illustrated in Table 4.5.

From the research findings, majority of the respondents indicated that to a moderate extent that they had strategic plan for implementation of the postal services as shown

by a mean of 3.96; the organization had proper systems approach of planning, scheduling of postal services as shown by a mean of 3.22; there was adequate project team involved in implementation of the postal services as shown by a mean of 3.91. The respondents to a great extent indicated that there was framework used to guide on how the plan can be realized as shown by a mean of 4.00 and they had training program for the use of postal services on the organization as shown by mean of 4.55. The study results reveals that lack of proper systems approach of planning, scheduling and training program in the strategic plan may have contributed non-performance of postal services in the organization. The findings of the study are in tandem with findings of Njonde & Kimanzi(2014) who indicated that strategic planning in implementation strategy is a process that results in decisions and actions to guide what your program is, what it does, and why it does it which enhance performance of postal services sector.

Table 4.6: Elements relating to influence of implementation strategy on performance of postal services

Statement	Very small extent	Small extent	Moderate	Great extent	Very great extent	Mean	Std deviation
Do you have strategic plan for implementation of the postal services?	3.5%	6%	78.5%	6.5%	7.5%	3.96	0.82
Does the organization have proper systems approach of planning, scheduling of postal services?	6.5%	8%	67.5%	7%	11%	3.22	0.39
Do you adequate project team involved in implementation of the postal services	6.5%	72.5%	6.5%	6.5%	8%	3.91	0.46
Do you a framework used to guide on how the plan can be realized?	5.5%	11%	6.5%	67.5%	9.5%	4.00	0.63
Does the strategic plan facilitate decisions and actions that guide implementation of the postal services?	7.5%	6%	9%	2.5%	81.5%	4.55	0.22

Table 4.6: Effects of leadership and governance on performance of postal services in the organization

Opinion	Frequency	Percent
Yes	22	70.96
No	9	29.04
Total	31	100

The study sought to determine the extent to which leadership and governance influence performance of postal services in the organization, from the research findings, most of the respondents as shown by 41.94% were of the opinion that leadership and governance influences performance of postal services in the organization to a great extent, 35.48% of the respondents indicated to a very great extent, 16.13% of the respondents indicated to a moderate extent whereas 6.45% of the respondents indicated to a little extent. This

implies that leadership and governance influenced performance of postal services in the organization to a great extent. The findings are in agreement with the findings of World Bank (2009) which states that decentralization, involving a variety of mechanisms to leadership and governance which provides ownership and/or political authority for effective strategic management to alternate institutions, should be promoted as a key means of improving performance of postal services in the organization

Table 4.7: Extent of influence of leadership and governance on performance of postal services in the organization

Extent	Frequency	Percent
Very great extent	11	35.48
Great extent	13	41.94
Moderate extent	5	16.13
Little extent	2	6.45
Total	31	100

The study sought to establish the extent to which respondents agreed with the statements relating to leadership and governance on effective performance of postal services in the organization. A scale of 1-5 was used. The scores “Strongly disagree” and “Disagree” were represented by mean score, equivalent to 1 to 2.5 on the continuous Likert scale ($1 \leq \text{Disagree} \leq 2.5$). The scores of ‘Neutral’ were represented by a score equivalent to 2.6 to 3.5 on the Likert scale ($2.6 \leq \text{Neutral} \leq 3.5$). The score of “Agree” and “Strongly agree” were represented by a mean

score equivalent to 3.6 to 5.0 on the Likert Scale ($3.6 \leq \text{Agree} \leq 5.0$). The results were presented in mean and standard deviation. The mean was generated from SPSS version 21 and is as illustrated in Table 4.5. The results were presented in mean and standard deviation.

Multiple Regression Analysis

According to Green & Salkind (2003) regression analysis is a statistics process of estimating the relationship between variables. Regression analysis helps in generating equation that

describes the statistics relationship between one or more predictor variables and the response variable. The results are shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.11: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.782 ^a	.611	.545		.256

a. Predictors: (Constant), ICT, Leadership & governance, human resource capacity and implementation strategy

According to the model summary Table 4.8, R is the correlation coefficient which shows the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable. It is notable that there exists strong positive relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable as shown by R value (0.782). The coefficient of determination (R^2) explains the extent to which changes in the dependent variable can be explained by the change in the independent variables or the percentage of variation in the dependent variable and the four independent

variables that were studied explain 61.10% of the performance of postal services sector as represented by the R^2 . This therefore means that other factors not studied in this research contribute 38.90% of the performance of postal services. This implies that these variables are very significant therefore need to be considered in any effort to boost performance of postal services by the organization. The study therefore identifies variables as critical drivers of performance of postal services by the organization.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Table 4.12: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	86.880	4	21.720	179.001	.014 ^b
	Residual	4.247	35	.12134		
	Total	91.127	39			

- a. Dependent Variable: Performance Postal services in PCK
- b. Predictors: (Constant), ICT, Leadership & governance, human resource capacity and implementation strategy
- c. Critical value = 13.390

Further, the study revealed that the significance value is 0.014 which is less than 0.05 thus the model is statistically significant in predicting how ICT, Leadership & governance, human resource

capacity and implementation strategy influence the performance of postal services sector. The F critical value at 5% level of significance was 179.001. Since F calculated (179.001) is greater

than the F critical (value = 13.390), this shows that the overall model was significant.

Summary of the Findings

From the study results, it was revealed that majority of the respondents to a moderate extent had enough computers for the staff to use for postal services sector in the organization and the organization ensured that postal services sector softwares are available for the use by the staff. The respondents stated that to a small extent they got reference manual for use on the management of postal services sector. The respondents to a great extent did find the system to be complex in processing of information thus affecting service delivery.

The study established that human resource capacity influenced performance of postal services sector in the organization. Also majority of the respondents stated to a small extent that they had adequate technical staff to ensure that there was efficiency of the postal services sector in the organization, to a moderate extent the respondents cited that the technical staff was engaged on planning and implementation of postal services sector to ensure quality of service and the qualified and trained technical staff implement postal services sector in the organization. The respondents to a great extent did have proper leadership for the project team responsible for the initiation, execution, monitoring and controlling of postal services sector by the organization and to a small extent they had training program for the use of postal services sector on the organization.

The study sought to establish whether leadership and governance can increase quality in performance of postal services in the organization; proper leadership and governance

to can help increase the effectiveness of performance of postal services in the organization through employee involvement in the decision making process, proper leadership and governance can help increase the effectiveness of performance of postal services in the organization in policy making, and for the voice of the employees to influence the decision of the policymakers effectively and the change process must involve a team of leaders and individual managers to help inspire change within each portfolio, department, and unit

Conclusions

The study established that human resource capacity influenced performance of postal services by the organization. There was no adequate technical staff to ensure that there was efficiency of the postal services by the organization, the technical staff was engaged on planning and implementation of postal services to ensure quality of service and the qualified and trained technical staffs implement postal services by the organization. There was lack of proper leadership for the project team responsible for the initiation, execution, monitoring and controlling of postal services by the organization and shortage of training program for the use of postal services by the organization.

From the study results, it was revealed that majority of the respondents to a moderate extent had enough computers for the staff to use for postal services in the organization and the organization to a small extent ensured that postal services software are available for the use by the staff. The is no enough reference manual for use on the management of postal services and the users find the system to be complex in processing of information thus affecting service delivery. The users at the same time find the

systems complicate very simple manual processes thus affecting efficiency of postal services and there was accessibility of postal services to all users at any time (24 hours), from anywhere. There are few users who have relevant security to access the systems.

Recommendations

The study recommends for adequate technical staff to ensure that there was efficiency of the

postal services in the organization, the technical staff should be engaged on planning and implementation of postal services to ensure quality of service and the qualified and trained technical staffs implement postal services in the organization. The government should ensure that there is proper leadership for the project team responsible for the initiation, execution, monitoring and controlling of postal services in the organization and avail training program.

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