



**STRATEGIC AGILITY AND PERFORMANCE OF PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA**

**Lilian Waithera Ndirangu & Dr. David Kiiru, PhD**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The intent of this research was to examine the impact of strategic agility on the performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Specifically the research sought to investigate the impact of human resource agility, information technology agility, research and development agility as well as marketing agility on the performance. The study theoretical foundation is dynamic capability theory, resource based view theory contingency theory and ambidexterity theory. The research employed a descriptive research design and data was gathered through the use of questionnaires that were distributed to a total of 104 respondents that was chosen from a target population of 26 private universities. Inferential and descriptive analysis was carried out. Data was analyzed using multiple regression analysis and findings were displayed through charts and tables. The study's results reveal that human resource agility, information and technology agility, research and development agility and marketing agility had a significant positive influence on the performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The research concludes that a flexible approach to managing human resources helps universities quickly adjust to changes in education. Information and technology agility enables these institutions to streamline their operations. Research and development flexibility is crucial for private universities in Nairobi, Kenya and helps them adapt to market demands and technological advancements. The research recommends that Universities should focus on investing in continuous training and development programs for staff members can help them stay updated with the latest trends and technologies in the education sector. Universities should seek for the implementation of advanced technology systems. Universities should focus on investing in state-of-the-art facilities and equipment that enable researchers to conduct cutting-edge studies and experiments. The private universities in Nairobi City County should invest in digital marketing techniques.*

**Key Words:** Human Resource Agility, Information Technology Agility, Research and Development Agility, Marketing Agility

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## INTRODUCTION

Organizations in many nations are constantly seeking to maintain performance since their survival is dependant on it. This is because an organization's performance decides whether or not it will survive in the fiercely competitive business climate (Arokodare & Asikhia, 2020). Maintaining positive performance consistently is a huge undertaking for most firms as well as educational institutions alike. This is far more difficult to accomplish during economic downturns, thus organizations that are adaptable, sensitive, and dynamic may be able to endure in these kinds of circumstances. These traits are associated with agile companies, which is a well-known concept recognized to as Strategic Agility (SA) (Gerald, Obianuju & Chukwunonso, 2020).

Globally, private Universities serve a vital part in the growth and development of nations especially in the aspect of research. Ensuring the effective performance of private universities is thus very paramount. In India, the number of private universities has significantly increased over the past two decades. According to the AISHE study conducted in 2016, out of the total 799 universities in India, 277 are private universities, accounting for approximately one in three institutions (Banshal, Singh & Mayr, 2019). Additionally, around 78 percent of colleges in India are privately operated. However, private universities still face challenges in matching the quality and productivity levels of well-established, government-funded higher education institutions in India, both in terms of academic outcomes and return on investment (Banshal, Singh & Mayr, 2019). Furthermore, According to the Higher Education Database (PT) in Indonesia, there was a considerable decrease of 19.04% in the number of enrolled students in Region II of Higher Education Institutions (LLDIKTI) for the 2019–2020 school year (Cahyani & Agusria, 2023).

In Africa private universities have sprang up in numbers in recent years and they contribute to the development of the sub region. However, the performance has not been as expected. According

to reports by Milledzi, Amponsah and Asamani (2017), both private and governmental universities in Ghana are having trouble keeping their workforce, especially the academic staff. Numerous things might be blamed for these problems, including inadequate teaching and research facilities, low pay, unfriendly laws like excessive taxes, and unstable employment with non-pensionable incomes. These problems have a negative effect on the workplace, which lowers employee engagement and productivity. These difficulties might also have an impact on the bureaucratic structures within these colleges, worsening the circumstance (Katere, Dorgbetor, Sutinga & Bediako, 2022). Also, the overflow of rejected applications from state colleges is being accommodated by an increasing number of private universities in Africa. These private organizations typically provide a more constrained array of market-driven programs. As a result, real performance is given less consideration (Jonyo, Ouma & Mosoti, 2018).

Kenya has seen a rise in the number of private institutions throughout time. Nevertheless, there have been concerns over their overall effectiveness. King'oo, Kimencu and Kinyua (2020) reported that private universities in Kenya have faced persistent challenges leading to subpar performance. These issues encompass intense competition, a decline in the quality of educational programs and research, concerns regarding the credibility of awarded degrees, inflexibility in university programs, limited innovation, and inefficient resource utilization. Additionally, the effectiveness of learning methods employed in these universities, which directly affects students' acquired skills and abilities, has been called into question. It has also been reported that Kenyan colleges, particularly private universities, have faced challenges in producing graduates who possess the necessary skills and qualifications required by the market. Despite a rise in enrollment in higher education programs offered by these universities, there has been no corresponding improvement in performance. As a

result, private universities have reported unsatisfactory levels of achievement (Njihia, Mwaniki, Ileri & Chege, 2020).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Several studies have been carried out on the concept strategic agility as well as on performance. AlTaweel & Al-Hawary (2021) researched the correlation between strategic agility and organizational success in industrial enterprises and reported that a substantial impact of strategic agility on organizational performance. The study did however focused on industrial corporations. Elali (2021) also stated that the possibility to take advantage of non-linear scientific and technical breakthroughs and enhance overall business performance is provided by strategic agility. The study did place emphasis on technological agility only. Sari and Ahmad (2022) studied the association between strategic agility and SMEs' competitiveness in Indonesia. According to the study, SMEs with strategic agility saw an increase in their overall competitiveness. The research however did placed focus on competitiveness and SMEs in Indonesia.

Despite the research that have been conducted previously, there still remain a number of gaps as the studies only touched on isolated areas. While some only focused on an aspect of strategic agility, some others approached the concept from a different context. As a result of the gaps that exist this study was relevant and timely in its endeavor to ascertain the effect of strategic agility on performance of private universities in Nairobi County, Kenya.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study was done to determine the effect of strategic agility on performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- To determine the effect of human resource agility on performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
- To assess the effect of information and technology agility on performance of

private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

- To evaluate the effect of research and development agility on performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
- To analyse the impact of marketing agility on performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Review**

#### **Dynamic Capability Theory**

Dynamic Capability theory is believed to pioneered by Teece, Pisano, and Shuen in the early 1990s and it is believed to be a Resource-based view theory's offspring. The DC theory, made up for RBV's limitations by explaining sustainable competitive advantage and superior performance in a dynamic context. In order to address rapidly changing conditions, Teece, Pisano, and Shuen (1997) defined DC as The firm's capacity to integrate, develop, and reposition internal and external skills. In order to develop new resource configurations when markets expand, split, fragment, and eventually perish, organizations adopt organizational and strategic methods (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000). Furthermore dynamic capability is the ability of an organization to modify and adapt its capabilities to suit the demands of a constantly changing environment. According to Po-Yen, Meng-Ling, Cheng-Chung, and Chun-Sheng Joseph (2016), the capacity of a firm to adjust to changing market circumstances is crucial in the current dynamic business environment. Building specialized abilities with the use of technological resources and complementary organizational resources improves performance.

#### **Resource Based View Theory**

The resource-based view (RBV) originated from Penrose's work in 1959, emphasizing the significance of an organization's resources over industry composition. However, the theory has evolved to incorporate principles such as path dependence and firm heterogeneity, as identified

by Lockett in 2005. The RBV theory focuses on how firms function and integrates traditional strategic perspectives on a firm's unique capabilities and diverse skills (Coase, 1937).

### **Contingency Theory**

The contingency model introduced by Fiedler (1967) popularized the concept that the ideal leadership approach is contingent upon the specific circumstances or environment in which it is applied. One theory posits that situational control and leadership style are crucial for effective management, known as the contingency hypothesis. It emphasizes the leader's ability to provide rewards and punishments, maintain a positive relationship with the team, and assign roles with clear objectives (Fiedler, 1958). Failure in administration may occur if these three prerequisites and factors are not met. Fiedler also developed the least preferred coworker (LPC) scale, which is used when a leader is asked to describe the qualities of their least preferred coworker.

### **Ambidexterity Theory**

Duncan was the first scholar to postulate the term of organizational ambidexterity in the mid 1970s. However, the idea of ambidexterity was further developed by March (1991) as well as Tushman and O'Reilly in (1996). The theory proposed that companies that concurrently pursue both explorative and exploitative operations might fare better than those that only concentrate on one at the detriment of the other. Companies that focus primarily on exploitation generate apparent but sometimes unsustainable results. They might improve their immediate results, but that could lead to a proficiency trap since they might not be able to react to contextual alterations effectively (Tushman & O'Reilly 1996). That the capability of enterprises for collaborating exploration and exploitation, on the other hand, may be founded in their capacity to contend efficiently over the course of time, with ambidexterity constituting an essential ingredient in their performance. In order for businesses to maintain their competitiveness over the immediate and distant futures, they must

pursue an ideal balance between exploration and exploitation (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004).

### **Empirical Review**

#### **Human Resource Agility and Organizational Performance**

Al-Nawasrah and Alafi (2021) studied how Jordanian airlines' human resource agility, which was used as a modified variable, affected how they adjusted person-job fit for performance. The study employed an analytical and descriptive approach, encompassing all senior and middle administrative personnel (a total of 185 individuals) from Jordanian airline companies as the research population. Given the relatively small population size, the researcher opted for a comprehensive survey approach, considering the entire population as the sample. The result of the analysis indicated that HR agility impacts how employees adjust and consequently performance. The study focused on Jordanian airlines which is different from what this study was centered on (private universities in Nairobi city county, Kenya).

#### **Information Technology Agility and Organizational Performance**

Perdue (2017) analyzed how information technology (IT) might improve organizational agility and organizational performance. The theoretical framework of the study was based on the hierarchy of dynamic capabilities, which was employed to establish the connection between performance and lower-order skills such as IT exploitation, as well as higher-order capabilities like organizational adaptability. To empirically investigate these proposed relationships, the researchers collected data from 289 factories located in the Pearl River Delta region of Guangdong, China. The partial least squares (PLS) structural equation modeling approach was employed for data analysis. The research findings demonstrated that the capability to exploit information technology (IT) has a positive impact on higher-order capabilities such as customer agility, operational agility, and partner agility. The study focused only on IT agility while

this research looked at human resource agility, IT agility and research and development agility.

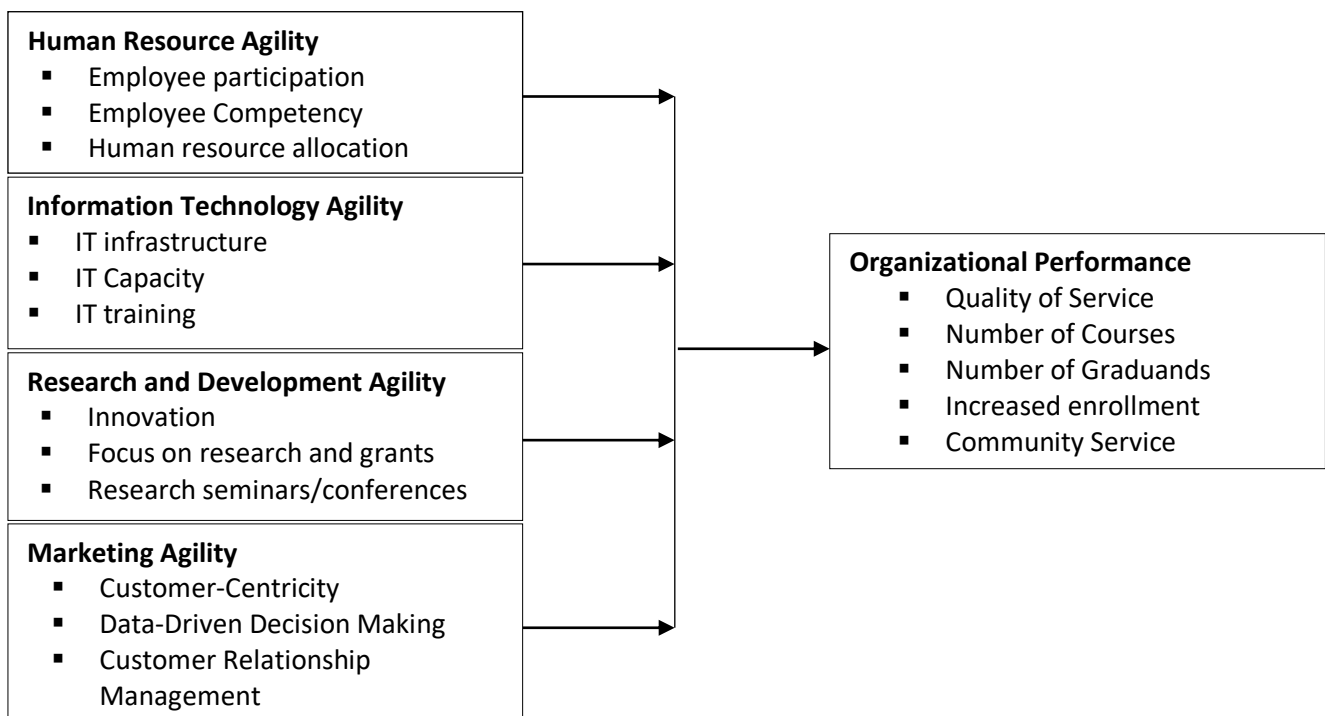
### Research and Development Agility and Organizational Performance

Olaleye, Herzallah and Anifowose (2021) studied the connection between strategic agility, innovation, and business performance in Nigerian tertiary institutions. This study used a descriptive research approach with a sample of 492 top management participants drawn from academic institutions. To test hypotheses and reach conclusions, the data were analyzed through SPSS and structural equation modeling (SEM). Based on the findings of the research strategic agility through research and development increases resilience and boost performance. The research focused on Nigeria which had a different outlook to Kenya the focus of this study.

### Marketing Agility and Organizational Performance

Nurcholis (2019) examined how organizational agility and marketing adaption strategy relate to enhance long-term competitive edge. SMEs make up the study's subject matter. Managers or employees with board of directors authorization make up the research unit. The research's target audience consists of 1201 MSMEs from 7 Indonesian cities and regencies. From June to October 2018, the questionnaire was distributed to MSME in seven Indonesian cities and regencies. In order to comply with the AMOS program, the sampling method employs purposive sampling with a goal of 150 respondents. Data were gathered from the surveys and subjected to SEM and statistical processing. Research reveals that new market discovery, merchandise variety, and marketing initiatives can all help enhance corporate agility. The research was focused on competitive advantage where as this study placed emphasis on organizational performance.

### Conceptual Framework



### Independent Variables

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Reseacher, (2024)

### Dependent Variable

**METHODOLOGY**

A descriptive research design was the most effective method for studying the research problem. The study population comprised of all the 26 private universities in Nairobi County Kenya accredited by CUE.

The participants for the survey was chosen through a stratified sampling technique from the target population. The respondents were made up of top management staffs that include the registrar, director ICT, director research and development as well as director marketing in the different private universities that was studied. The number of respondents was thus be 130.

The collection of primary data was conducted by using a self-administered questionnaire that includes a mixture of open-ended and closed-ended inquiries. A pilot test was done to ascertain the trustworthiness of the questionnaires. This study used 10 individuals from University of Nairobi. University of Nairobi was chosen because of its proximity to the study locale. In this study, the content validity of the research instrument was assessed by the supervisor, who evaluated the quality of the questionnaire by examining the content of its items.

The unprocessed data was manipulated and altered after its collection to guarantee precision and consistency through data validation and visualization techniques. Analyzing and

summarizing the data included the use of descriptive statistics, including measures such as the mean, standard deviation, and frequency percentages. The relationship between the impact of strategic agility and the performance of private universities in Nairobi County, as shown below, was examined using a linear regression model. The model was developed using SPSS software, and the coefficients were estimated using the method of least squares;

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

Whereby;

Y=Performance

$\beta_0$  is the Y Intercept.

$X_1$ =Human resource agility

$X_2$ = Information technology agility

$X_3$ = Research and development agility

$X_4$ = Marketing agility

$\epsilon$ =Error term

**RESULTS**

**Response Rate**

The questionnaires were administered to a sample size of 130 respondents. The aggregate response rate is exhibited in Table 1.

**Table 1: Response Rate**

| Category     | Frequency  | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Respose      | 123        | 94.6       |
| Non response | 7          | 5.4        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>130</b> | <b>100</b> |

**Source: Researcher Data (2024)**

Table 1 illustrates that the questionnaires returned by participants accounted for a 123(94.6%) response rate. Those that were not returned represented a response rate of 7(5.4%). Orodho (2005) states that a response rate of 80% or above is enough for doing data analysis. Therefore, a

response rate of 94.6% was considered suitable for the purpose of data analysis.

## Results of Descriptive Statistics

### Human Resource Agility

**Table 2: Human Resource Agility**

| Statements  | M           | SD           |
|---|-------------|--------------|
| Employees quickly respond and regarding business requirements                           | 4.42        | 0.764        |
| Employees effectively respond to changes regarding business requirements                | 4.56        | 1.002        |
| Employees effectively respond to challenges regarding business requirements             | 4.62        | 0.237        |
| Senior managers trust their employees   | 4.07        | 1.274        |
| Employees hired have the requisite knowledge, skills, abilities and personal attributes | 4.05        | 1.632        |
| There is employee participation in the institution                                      | 3.52        | 1.196        |
| The workers have self management skills   | 4.50        | 0.847        |
| There is effective human resource allocation  | 3.99        | 0.641        |
| <b>Aggregate score</b>  | <b>4.22</b> | <b>0.949</b> |

#### Source: Research Data (2024)

The results in Table 2 demonstrated that the respondents agreed that human resource agility affects the performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya as indicated by aggregate mean and std dev score of 4.22 and 0.949 respectively. The findings agree with Al-Nawasrah and Alafi (2021) who studied how Jordanian airlines' human resource agility, which was used as a modified variable, affected how they adjusted person-job fit for performance. The result of the analysis indicated that HR agility impacts how employees adjust and consequently performance.

The respondents strongly agreed on the following statements; employees effectively respond to challenges regarding business requirements (M=4.62, SD=0.237), employees effectively respond to changes regarding business requirements (M=4.56, SD=1.002) and The workers have self management skills (M=4.50, SD=0.847). The finding concur with Al-Qaralleh and Atan (2021) who explored how organizational agility, business analytics skills, and knowledge-based HRM strategies interact to affect creative performance.

The results of the linear modeling analysis demonstrated that organizational agility, business analytics, and knowledge-based HRM practices had a substantial impact on innovative performance.

The respondents agreed on the following statements; Employees quickly respond and regarding business requirements (M=4.42, SD=0.764), Senior managers trust their employees (M=4.07, SD=1.274), Employees hired have the requisite knowledge, skills, abilities and personal attributes (M=4.05, SD=1.632), There is effective human resource allocation (M=3.99, SD=0.641) and there is employee participation in the institution (M=3.52, SD=1.196). The finding is in line with findings of a study by Narenji, Mazari, Asadi and Mashayekhikhi (2022) which sought to ascertain the connection between human resource agility, specifically self-development, and the likelihood of organizational innovation and performance. The findings of the study demonstrated that both self-development and human resource agility (HRA) had a positive influence on the propensity for organizational innovation and performance.



## Information and Technology Agility

**Table 3: Information and Technology Agility**

| Statements  | M           | SD           |
|---|-------------|--------------|
| Employees are capable of promptly adapting to evolving technologies.                                | 4.55        | 0.449        |
| The institution is flexible with regards to information technology                                  | 4.59        | 0.409        |
| IT infrastructure is given priority   | 4.51        | 0.488        |
| The institution has IT capacity   | 3.53        | 1.096        |
| There is regular IT training for staffs   | 4.51        | 1.206        |
| Employees are able to change their plans and systems to match what the business needs at the moment | 4.41        | 1.301        |
| The organization is able to launch new products   | 3.84        | 1.159        |
| <b>Aggregate score</b>  | <b>4.28</b> | <b>0.873</b> |

**Source: Research Data (2024)**

The results presented in Table 3 suggests that the respondents agreed that information and technology agility affects the performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya as indicated by aggregate mean and std dev score of 4.28 and 0.873 respectively. The finding agree with Perdue (2017) who analyzed how IT might improve organizational agility and organizational performance. The research findings demonstrated that the capability to exploit information technology (IT) has a positive impact on higher-order capabilities such as customer agility, operational agility, and partner agility.

The respondents strongly agreed on the following statements; The institution is flexible with regards to information technology (M=4.59, SD=0.409), Employees are capable of promptly adapting to evolving technologies (M=4.55, SD=0.449), IT infrastructure is given priority and there is regular IT training for staffs (M=4.51, SD=0.488) respectively There is regular IT training for staffs. The finding concur with Burananuth and Tamprateep (2019)

who examined how absorptive capacity, supply chain agility, IT agility, and organizational performance were directly related in Indonesian manufacturing organizations. The study results revealed a strong and favorable correlation between IT agility and organizational success.

The respondents agreed on the following statements; Employees are able to change their plans and systems to match what the business needs at the moment (M=4.41, SD=1.301), The organization is able to launch new products (M=3.84, SD=1.159) and the institution has IT capacity (M=3.53, SD=1.096). The finding agree with Abdallah and Ayoub (2020) who attempted to identify IT factors that drive supply chain agility (SCA) and investigate their impact on the implementation levels of agile supply chains. The findings indicate that the various IT drivers, including enterprise resource planning (ERP), radio frequency identification (RFID), cloud computing (CC), and Web 2.0, have a positive and significant influence on supply chain agility (SCA).

## Research and Development Agility

**Table 4: Research and Development Agility**

| Statements  | M           | SD           |
|---|-------------|--------------|
| I have an understanding of research development agility   | 4.61        | 0.389        |
| The institution leverage on research development  | 3.58        | 1.419        |
| The institution encourages innovation   | 4.63        | 0.154        |
| Research and grants is given priority and actively pursued by the institution   | 3.67        | 1.247        |
| The institution organize regular research conferences and seminars.   | 3.51        | 0.581        |
| The institution effectively delivers new value offerings by integrating information technology with business processes. | 4.01        | 1.065        |
| <b>Aggregate score</b>  | <b>4.00</b> | <b>0.809</b> |

**Source: Research Data (2024)**

The results in Table 4 indicates that the respondents agreed that research and development agility affects the performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya as indicated by aggregate mean and std dev score of 4.00 and 0.809 respectively. The finding concur with Gerald, Obianuju and Chukwunonso (2020) study which focused how strategic foresight (SF) and agility affected SMEs in Anambra State's competitive advantage (CA). Based on the research the variable research agility improves competitive advantage of firms.

The respondents strongly agreed on the following statements; The institution encourages innovation (M=4.63, SD=0.154), they had an understanding of research development agility (M=4.61, SD=0.389). The finding concur with Olaleye, Herzallah and Anifowose (2021) study which focused on the connection between strategic agility, innovation,

and business performance in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Based on the findings of the research strategic agility through research and development increases resilience and boost performance.

The respondents agreed on the following statements; The institution effectively delivers new value offerings by integrating information technology with business processes (M=4.01, SD=1.065), research and grants is given priority and actively pursued by the institution (M=3.67, SD=1.247), the institution leverage on research development (M=3.58, SD=1.419), The institution organize regular research conferences and seminars (M=3.51, SD=0.581). The finding agree with Aremu, Lawala and Oladeji (2022) study which examined the impact of strategic agility characteristics on organizational performance within the industrial sector. The research findings indicated a substantial influence of R&D agility on organizational success.

## Marketing Agility

**Table 5: Marketing Agility**

| Statements   | M           | SD           |
|--|-------------|--------------|
| The university is able to make fast on the market changes. | 3.94        | 0.624        |
| The university is able to respond to customers needs.      | 4.53        | 0.912        |
| The institution is customer centric in structure           | 4.52        | 0.477        |
| Data is what drives the institution's decisions            | 4.24        | 0.771        |
| Market decision making is data driven                      | 4.05        | 0.619        |
| We offer customer relationship management                  | 4.53        | 0.467        |
| The university offers good customer experience             | 4.18        | 0.941        |
| <b>Aggregate score</b>                                     | <b>4.28</b> | <b>0.687</b> |

**Source: Research Data (2024)**

The results presented in Table 5 suggested that the participants agreed that marketing agility affects the performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya as indicated by aggregate mean and std dev score of 4.28 and 0.687 respectively. The finding agree with Nurcholis (2019) study which examined how organizational agility and marketing adaption strategy relate to enhance long-term competitive edge. SMEs make up the study's subject matter. Research reveals that new market discovery, merchandise variety, and marketing initiatives can all help enhance corporate agility.

The respondents strongly agreed on the following assertions; The university is able to respond to customers needs and they offered customer relationship management (M=4.53, SD=0.912) respectively, the institution is customer centric in structure (M=4.52, SD=0.477). The finding agree with The study by Sukardi, Zainurossalamia and Hudayah (2021) study which investigated the correlation between marketing agility and

performance in the dynamic coal market, focusing on the company's innovative capabilities. The study's findings showed that marketing agility has a large beneficial impact on innovation capability, and that marketing performance is significantly impacted by innovation capability.

The respondents agreed on the following statements; Data is what drives the institution's decisions (M=4.24, SD=0.771), the university offers good customer experience (M=4.18, SD=0.941), market decision making is data driven (M=4.05, SD=0.619), the university is able to make fast on the market changes (M=3.94, SD=0.624). The finding is consistent with Zhou, Mavondo and Saunders (2021) study which empirically investigated the level of impact marketing agility has on financial success of firms in a turbulent environment. According to the findings of the research, it was concluded that in a volatile business environment, marketing agility exerts both direct and indirect influences on financial performance.

### Organizational Performance

**Table 6: Organizational Performance**

| Statements  | M           | SD           |
|---|-------------|--------------|
| The university has a quality management system                          | 2.23        | 2.015        |
| The university offers a variety of Courses                              | 3.33        | 1.675        |
| The university has customer feedback mechanism                          | 2.91        | 1.054        |
| The university has increased number of students graduating              | 2.54        | 2.460        |
| Faculty members are engaged in research activities                      | 2.68        | 2.375        |
| The enrollment to the institution is regularly on an upward trajectory. | 3.06        | 1.941        |
| Faculty members are involved in community activities                    | 3.41        | 1.512        |
| <b>Aggregate score</b>  | <b>2.88</b> | <b>1.862</b> |

### Source: Research Data (2024)

The results presented in Table 6 indicates that the respondents were neutral on the assertions describing the performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya as evidenced by aggregate mean and standard deviation score of 2.88 and 1.862 respectively. The finding is contrary the Smriti and Das (2018) research, which aver that

performance signifies the organization's competence in addressing the four systemic processes (input, output, transformation, and feedback) to attain desired outcomes. Performance denotes the extent to which job implementation yields successful results.

## Results of Multiple Regression Analysis

**Table 7: Model Summary**

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | .756 <sup>a</sup> | .572     | .545              | 1.005                      |

Source: Research Data (2024)

The analysis conducted on Table 7 revealed an adjusted r squared value of 0.545 (54.5%). This figure illustrates the level of influence that changes in human resource agility, information and technology agility, research and development

agility, and marketing agility had on the performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. As a result, there is a remaining 45.5% of variables that were not accounted for in the study.

**Table 8: Analysis of Variance**

| Model |            | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F      | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|------|
| 1     | Regression | 225.005        | 4   | 56.251      | 66.295 | .002 |
|       | Residual   | 100.123        | 118 | 0.849       |        |      |
|       | Total      | 325.128        | 122 |             |        |      |

Source: Research Data (2024)

The data exhibited in Table 8 reveals that the F value of 66.295 exceeds the mean value of 56.251. With a significance value of 0.002, which is below the threshold of 0.05, it can be concluded that the

model is statistically significant in predicting the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable. This further validates the significance of the model.

**Table 9: Coefficients**

| Model |                                    | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients |        |       |
|-------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|-------|
|       |                                    | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      | t      | Sig.  |
| 1     | (Constant)                         | 0.523                       | 0.254      |                           | 2.059  | 0.002 |
|       | Human resource agility             | 0.771                       | 0.206      | 0.0054                    | 3.743  | 0.002 |
|       | Information and technology agility | 0.802                       | 0.304      | 0.1502                    | 2.638  | 0.001 |
|       | Research and development agility   | 0.785                       | 0.194      | 0.3123                    | 4.0464 | 0.004 |
|       | Marketing agility                  | 0.739                       | 0.23       | 0.2296                    | 3.213  | 0.003 |

Source: Research Data (2024)

The results displayed in Table 9 reveals that, with independent variables held constant, the dependent variable is estimated to be 0.523. Furthermore, enhancing human resource agility, information and technology agility, research and development agility and marketing agility would

result in a rise in the performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya by 0.771, 0.802, 0.785 and 0.739 respectively.

This leads to the formulation of the subsequent regression equation.

Performance = 0.523 + 0.771(human resource agility) + 0.802(information and technology agility) + 0.785(research and development agility) + 0.739(marketing agility)

The study's results reveal that human resource agility had a significant positive influence on the performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya ( $\beta=.0054$ ,  $p=.002$ ). This is congruent with the research by Aremu, Lawala, and Oladeji (2022), which examined how strategic agility characteristics impacted organizational performance in the industry sector. The research results indicate that HR agility has a direct impact on organizational performance.

The study's outcomes demonstrate that the agility of information and technology agility positive effect on the performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya ( $\beta=.1502$ ,  $p=.002$ ). This finding concurs with the findings of a study by Tlale, Van der Westhuizen and Chinomona (2022) which sought to determine how supply chain agility and capabilities—more specifically, supply chain network design, supply chain information capabilities, and supply chain integration—affected firm performance in the manufacturing sector of South Africa's Gauteng province. The results indicated that the efficacy of supply chain capabilities and agility determines the level of firm performance in the industrial sector.

The study's findings indicate that the agility of research and development positively affects the performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya ( $\beta=.3123$ ,  $p=.004$ ). The finding agrees with Perdue (2017) who analyzed how information technology (IT) might improve organizational agility and organizational performance. The research findings demonstrated that the capability to exploit information technology (IT) has a positive impact on higher-order capabilities such as customer agility, operational agility, and partner agility.

The study's findings suggest that the positive impact of marketing agility on the performance of private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya, is

statistically significant ( $\beta=.2296$   $p=.003$ ). The finding is consistent with Zhou, Mavondo and Saunders (2021) study which empirically investigated the level of impact marketing agility has on financial success of firms in a turbulent environment. According to the findings of the research, it was concluded that in a volatile business environment, marketing agility exerts both direct and indirect influences on financial performance.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research concluded that a flexible approach to managing human resources helps universities quickly adjust to changes in education, like changes in student populations, technology, and what the market wants. This flexibility helps private universities remain competitive and up-to-date in the constantly changing world of higher education. A team that can adapt easily helps universities deal with the challenges of the education field, like changing student needs, new technology, and market trends. This adaptability keeps universities competitive and relevant, which in turn improves academic success, student happiness, and the university's overall reputation.

The study concluded that information and technology agility enables these institutions to streamline their operations, enhance the quality of education, and improve overall efficiency, ultimately leading to improved performance and competitiveness in the education sector. By embracing information and technology agility, private universities can enhance their reputation, attract and retain students, and ultimately improve their overall performance and standing in the education sector. With the increasing reliance on digital platforms for education delivery, student engagement, and administrative processes, private universities that are able to adapt and respond quickly to technological advancements are better positioned to meet the evolving needs of their students and stakeholders.

The study concluded that research and development flexibility is crucial for private

universities in Nairobi, Kenya. It helps them adapt to market demands and technological advancements, stay competitive, and attract students. It also allows them to innovate and offer relevant programs, collaborate with industry partners, secure funding, and commercialize research findings. Prioritizing research and development flexibility can lead to academic excellence, student satisfaction, and financial sustainability for private universities in Nairobi.

The study concluded that Universities that are able to adapt their marketing strategies to meet the demands of the market are more likely to attract and retain students, leading to improved enrollment numbers and overall performance. Additionally, marketing flexibility allows universities to differentiate themselves from competitors and effectively communicate their unique value proposition to potential students, leading to increased brand awareness and reputation.

The study recommended that the Universities should focus on investing in continuous training and development programs for staff members can help them stay updated with the latest trends and technologies in the education sector. This will not only improve their skills and knowledge but also make them more adaptable to changes in the industry. Emphasizing the development of an innovative and creative culture inside the institution can motivate staff to think unconventionally and generate novel ideas for enhancing procedures and services. This can lead to increased efficiency and effectiveness in the university's operations. Additionally, fostering a collaborative and inclusive work environment where employees feel valued and supported can boost morale and motivation. This can result in higher levels of engagement and productivity among staff members.

The study recommended that the Universities should seek for the implementation of advanced technology systems, such as cloud-based platforms, data analytics tools, and virtual learning environments. Furthermore, by leveraging technology to its full potential, private universities

can better adapt to changing market demands, offer innovative programs and courses, and attract a wider pool of students. This can ultimately lead to increased enrollment rates, improved student satisfaction, and enhanced reputation within the education sector.

The study recommended that the Universities should focus on investing in state-of-the-art facilities and equipment that enable researchers to conduct cutting-edge studies and experiments. This can help private universities attract top researchers and students, as well as secure funding from government agencies, industry partners, and philanthropic organizations. Additionally, private universities can foster a culture of innovation and collaboration among faculty, students, and industry partners. By encouraging interdisciplinary research projects and partnerships with local businesses and organizations, these institutions can leverage their resources and expertise to address pressing societal challenges and drive economic growth in the region.

The study recommended that the private universities in Nairobi City County should invest in digital marketing techniques. This includes creating a strong online presence through social media platforms, search engine optimization, and targeted online advertising. By reaching potential students through digital channels, universities can expand their reach and connect with a wider audience. They should seek to enhance marketing flexibility is to diversify marketing efforts. This could involve exploring new advertising channels, such as partnerships with local businesses or community organizations, hosting events or workshops, or collaborating with other educational institutions. By thinking outside the box and trying new approaches, universities can differentiate themselves from competitors and attract more students.

### **Suggestions for Further Studies**

The study suggested conducting additional research to investigate alternative forms of strategic agility that were not examined in the current study. This

would help address the remaining 45.5% gap in understanding the variables that were not accounted for in the regression analysis findings.

The report also proposes that further investigations should be conducted with a specific emphasis on public universities.

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