

**STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY K.C.B. BANK KENYA DURING THE COVID-19  
PANDEMIC TIME**

**DAVID MBUI KAMAU**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF  
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND  
MANAGEMENT SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**2023**

## DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my original work and has not been put forward for academic purposes in any university.

**David Mbui Kamau**

D61/39395/2021

Signature:



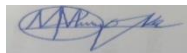
Date: 12/07/2023

## Supervisor's declaration

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor

**Dr. Raymond Musyoka**

Signature



Date: 12/07/2023

## **DEDICATION**

To God for giving me good health, perseverance, and intervening in my studies despite the many challenges.

To my caring parents, Robert Kamau Gichina and Beth Wanjiru Kamau for bringing me up well to be the person I am today and for instilling the importance of knowledge through education and good morals; may God bless you exuberantly and give you long life to enjoy the success of your labor.

My spouse Joyce Ndiko has also been a great pillar during my study and would wish to appreciate her in a great way.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I am gratefully indebted to God throughout the MBA studies, proposal, and project. I also want to appreciate my supervisor Dr. Raymond Musyoka for the research guidance. Thank Sir!

I want to sincerely thank all of my respondents for giving up significant time from their busy schedules to participate in and support my research project.

Finally, I would like to thank my loving family, friends, and coworkers for their support and encouragement as I worked on the MBA study and research work. Thank you all!

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**DECLARATION..... ii**

**DEDICATION..... iii**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT..... iv**

**ABSTRACT..... vii**

**CHAPTER ONE:**

**INTRODUCTION.....Error! Bookmark not defined.**

1.1 Background of the Study.....1

    1.1.1 Concept of Competitive Advantage.....3

    1.1.2 The Banking Industry in Kenya.....4

    1.1.3 Overview of K.C.B Bank.....5

1.2 Research Problem.....7

1.3 Research Objectives.....9

1.4 Value of the Study.....9

**CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....11**

2.1 Introduction.....11

2.2 Theoretical Foundation of the Study.....11

    2.2.1 Michael Porter's Theory of Competitive Advantage.....11

    2.2.2 The Resource-Based View Theory.....13

2.3 Strategy in Organizations.....14

2.4 Empirical Studies and Research Gaps.....16

**CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....19**

3.1 Introduction.....19

3.2 Research Design .....19

3.3 Data Collection.....19

3.4 Data Analysis.....20

**CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS, AND DISCUSSION.....21**

4.1 Introduction.....21

4.2 Respondents at KCB Bank, Kenya.....21

|                                                                 |                                                         |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 4.3                                                             | Strategies Adopted by KCB Bank.....                     | 21        |
| 4.3.1                                                           | Cost Leadership Strategies.....                         | 21        |
| 4.3.2                                                           | Technology and Innovation Strategies.....               | 22        |
| 4.3.3                                                           | Effective Communication Strategies.....                 | 23        |
| 4.3.4                                                           | Pro-environmental and Social Engagement Strategies..... | 24        |
| 4.3.5                                                           | Situational Analysis Strategies.....                    | 24        |
| 4.4                                                             | Discussion of Findings.....                             | 26        |
| <b>CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS..</b> |                                                         | <b>27</b> |
| 5.1                                                             | Introduction.....                                       | 27        |
| 5.2                                                             | Summary of Findings.....                                | 27        |
| 5.3                                                             | Conclusion.....                                         | 30        |
| 5.4                                                             | Recommendations.....                                    | 31        |
| 5.5                                                             | Limitations of the Study .....                          | 32        |
| 5.6                                                             | Suggestions for Further Research.....                   | 33        |
| <b>REFERNCE.....</b>                                            |                                                         | <b>34</b> |
| <b>Appendix 1: Letter of Introduction.....</b>                  |                                                         | <b>38</b> |
| <b>Appendix 2: Interview Guide.....</b>                         |                                                         | <b>39</b> |

## ABSTRACT

This study seeks to identify the strategies used by Kenya Commercial Bank Ltd. In 2020, the industry was affected immensely by changes in the external environment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The main objective of this study is to understand what strategies KCB adopted to gain a competitive advantage. In conducting the research, a case study research design approach was used. The research adopted a qualitative approach, collecting data through an interview guide targeting eight senior managers. The content analysis method was used to analyze primary data. The study found that KCB bank used the cost leadership strategy in reducing overhead and operational costs lower than the industry, continuously cutting costs across the value chain, outsourcing, increasing automation, operating facilities at full capacity, and exploiting economies of scale. KCB adopted this strategy by continuously improving customer experience by introducing new banking products and services, venturing into other related businesses such as bank assurance, and a strategic location for customers. Technologies and innovations strategies, effective communication strategies, and pro-environmental and social engagement strategies were also identified as strategies used by KCB bank to achieve competitive advantage. The research finding will provide insights into the effectiveness of the strategies adopted by KCB Bank during the COVID-19 pandemic time and offer recommendations that KCB should continuously invest heavily in Information Communication Technology by regularly reviewing and updating its infrastructure to avoid unforeseen circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The limitation of the study was on strategic information, where the respondents were a bit mindful of their choice of words due to the sensitivity of the information.

**Keywords:** *KCB, Strategy, COVID-19 pandemic time*

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

The way a company competes in a specific business environment is referred to as its competitive strategy. The way a business might eminently gain a competitive edge over rival businesses in this way (Aaker, 2011). A company in the market needs to have a sustainable competitive advantage in its industry and market. According to Kambona Othuon, Odhuno, and Wadongo (2010), competitive strategy refers to a company's efforts to expand its clientele, fend off competition, and build up its position in the market. To stay competitive, businesses use this strategy. The activities made by management to maintain their competitive position over the long term and outperform rivals form the cornerstone of any successful strategy (Peder & Richard, 2013).

The COVID-19 pandemic, which has seriously harmed humanity and disrupted life worldwide, caused the year 2020 and later to be understandably extraordinary. Everyone found it difficult, including their families, coworkers, businesses, and the economies in which they live and work. It put their resiliency and persistence to the entire test. When the crisis hit East Africa, KCB's business priorities changed to ensure the security and welfare of their employees, clients, shareholders, families, and other stakeholders. By implementing containment and control measures as instructed by health authorities and governments in all the countries where they operate, they could do this while still keeping a handle on their business objectives for the year. The KCB Bank, Kenya's largest lender by assets, reported a 40% drop in net operating profit after tax to 70.1 million USD which is about 7.6 billion shillings, and a 28% drop in pre-tax profit to 12.82 billion shillings”.



The pandemic hurt economic activity across markets, making the second quarter the hardest in recent memory.

The Bank anticipates difficulties for the remainder of the year as the coronavirus pandemic is expected to continue impacting the economy and business in the remaining months. To protect the firm from new challenges, KCB speeds up customer assistance, launches cost-management efforts, and looks for ways to increase efficiency through digitization. The Bank reports that the pandemic's effects have increased its provision for loan depreciation from 3 billion to 11 billion shillings in the first half. KCB, which has operations in South Sudan, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda, said that net interest revenue has increased (Obulutsa, 2020).

KCB could use generic strategies such as having the lowest operating expenses in the banking industry also referred to as a cost leadership strategy, which aims to provide a competitive advantage. It could also use a differentiation strategy which describes a marketing tactic used to set one product or service apart from comparable ones provided by rival banks. The Focus Strategy technique could also be used in areas where a bank concentrates its assets on growing in a certain market.

Porters (1980) outlined the competitive strategies of cost leadership, focus strategy, and differentiation that have tremendously assisted many organizations to become competitive. A firm that continuously undertakes one of these differentiation strategies, cost leadership, or focus can be competitive and perform better than those stuck in the middle (Dess and Davis 1984). Porter (1980) provides additional evidence in favor of this claim that it will eventually result in a powerful and stable organization. By implementing one of these strategies, an organization can effectively execute its goals, objective, operations, costs,

and projects efficiently, thus having superior market control. Firms will apply one of the strategies by reviewing and responding to external environmental changes, taking advantage of internal strengths while working on their weakness and neutralizing external competitors' threats.

### **1.1.1 Concept of Competitive Advantage**

Porter (1996) defines strategy as the company's position to help it gain a competitive advantage against other companies in the market environment. The strategy establishes the relationship between a company and its macro environment and must be compatible with its goals, values, and vision (Ansoff, 1990). A good strategy will help in getting organizational effectiveness by doing the right things at the opportune time, to attain the right fit with the external environment. Any organization that embraces competitive strategies attains a competitive advantage.

The strategy helps an organization meet its uncertain situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic with the proper examination, thus enabling it to remain sustainable. Strategy is the undertaking of a company's basic long-term targets, desires, and objectives and the taking on of the actions' causes and the allotment of resources needed for achieving these objectives.

A good competitive strategy enables a company put itself well in the industry in which it operates, creates a way to deal with external competitive forces, or otherwise sway them in its favor. Thus, a good strategy should be able to change the eternal environment, providing its customers with good products, and services (Marren, 2010).

Generic strategies include cost-leadership, focus, and differentiation strategies. The cost leadership strategy includes maintaining overheads lower than the industry, continuously cutting costs across the value chain, outsourcing, increasing automation, operating facilities at full capacity, exploiting economies of scale, working long hours, and use of knowledge from experience. Differentiation Strategy involves: continuously introducing new banking products and services, venturing into other related businesses such as bank assurance, a strategic location to customers, lower product pricing compared to competitors, providing unique customer service, offering a variety of services, employing high-quality staff, and providing innovative banking products (Musengi, 2021).

Focus strategy requires focusing on trading bank products and services to a specific market niche, allocating funds to maintain brand leadership in this niche, and innovating certain bank products and services for the niche. There are several indicators of improved competitive advantage at the bank as a result of the implementation of improved strategies at the bank. These indicators include an increase in operational efficiency, total deposits, market share, total loans, profitability, bank branches, customer growth, and asset growth (Musengi, 2021).

### **1.1.2 Banking Industry in Kenya**

Forty-two licensed financial institutions and one mortgage finance corporation make up Kenya's banking industry. Out of the 42 banks, only 12 are owned by foreigners; the remaining are locally held. Only three financial institutions, 27 commercial banks, and one mortgage institution—have significant local ownership (CBK, 2019). The Companies Act, Banking Act, Central Bank of Kenya Act, and the recommendations by the Central Bank of Kenya all regulate these institutions.

There has been continued growth in assets, deposits, profitability, and product offerings in the Kenyan banking industry. Key players have faced stiff competition in the last couple of years stemming from improved innovations, and new entries into the industry. Competition from local and international banks has also increased over the last ten years. This has improved the Kenyan economy since the customers and shareholders have benefited the most (CBK, 2019).

The constantly shifting business climate has had a significant impact on the Kenyan banking industry. Banks have recently been forced to alter their survival strategies as a result of technological advancements, privatization, globalization, increased competition, privatization rising customer demands, liberalization of markets, commercialization of public sectors, price decontrols, and the resurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic. The financial industry is planning for major growth, products, and business changes that could contribute to further restructuring of the banking sector (Riba Capital, 2011).

### **1.1.3 Overview of K.C.B Bank**

The leading provider of financial solutions in East Africa is the KCB Group, which has operations in Kenya, Tanzania, South Sudan, Uganda, Burundi, Ethiopia, and Rwanda. The Group was founded in 1896, and its headquarters are in Nairobi, Kenya. KCB Group has served as a driving force for development for more than a century, promoting regional trade, fostering growth and economic advancement, and introducing millions of people worldwide to opportunities in Africa and elsewhere, all while positively impacting society.

A licensed non-operating holding company known as KCB Group Plc is in charge of KCB Kenya and all of its regional affiliates. It also controls other affiliate businesses such as the

KCB Foundation, KCB Capital, KCB Insurance Agency, and the National Bank of Kenya, bought in 2019. The Group was acquiring more banking operations at the time.

With 359 branches, 23,460 merchants or points of sale, 1,104 ATMs, and agents offering banking services around-the-clock, the Group now has the biggest network of branches in the area. In addition, our 25.2 million clients have access to mobile banking, online banking, and a contact center that is operational 24 hours. Additionally, the Group maintains global partnerships with over 200 banks to ensure that their customers' needs for international trade are satisfied wherever they may be (2020 Integrated Report and Financial Statements, 2020).

The Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE), Rwanda Stock Exchange, Uganda Securities Exchange (USE), and Dar-es-Salam Stock Exchange (DSE) all provide trading of KCB Group shares (RSE). It continues to concentrate on sectors where it thinks it can significantly impact customers' aspirations, support business expansion, and promote financial inclusion. In the areas of retail banking, investment banking, corporate banking, and insurance, they provide a vast array of financial goods and services. Additionally, the bank offers goods that adhere to Shariah law and digital financial services. KCB has constantly made investments to advance its sustainability goal, which is based on creating a future-proof company with particular attention to the economic, financial, social, and environmental pillars (2020 Integrated Report and Financial Statements, 2020)

The majority of the nations where the KCB Foundation has programs faced difficulties when the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak began in East Africa in 2020 because it made the unemployment that they are trying to eradicate worse. The KCB Foundation was forced to

strike a balance because of the epidemic between concentrating on ongoing programs and helping. They considered it appropriate to provide support to their recipients through various programs. For the Save a Life Initiative, they set up 25 million Kenyan shillings. With initiatives like helping with safety and sanitation, this campaign was implemented to support several people.

To protect its consumers from the COVID-19 pandemic, KCB Group had to restructure loans, halt the listing of defaulters, and waive mobile banking costs. The COVID-19 pandemic emergency response funds received more than Ksh 200 million from KCB Group for activities around the region. In all its Kenyan locations, the KCB bank has money transfer cash pick-up services. Kenya's National Police Service received masks from KCB to help battle the COVID-19 pandemic. KCB Bank Rwanda provided working capital loans to SMEs affected by COVID-19 as part of Rwanda's Economy Recovery Fund effort. In cooperation with the Rwanda Social Security Board, KCB Bank Rwanda is providing long-term mortgages (2020 Integrated Report and Financial Statements, 2020).

## **1.2 Research Problem**

To keep businesses profitable in the face of forces that govern industry rivalry, the competitive strategy tries to create a sustainable environment in which organizations compete. (Porters, 1980). The external environment provides the grounds on which any organizations survive. Due to these ever-changing and dynamic factors influenced by changes in the external environment; banks should be able to rethink their strategy and re-strategize by undergoing internal restructuring, reorganization to change the strategy, and undergo internal change to enable it to stay relevant and avoid collapse.

KCB profits are to continue reducing due to the recent COVID-19 pandemic and as such the bank needs to employ competitive strategies to remain competitive. Wachira (2022) claims that the current coronavirus pandemic has made KCB, the leading lender in East Africa in terms of asset size, work remotely and has sped up the transition to digital banking platforms. According to the CEO of the KCB, a new way of thinking about the workplace has emerged as a result of the pandemic. Now that some employees are working from primary locations, secondary stations, and some from their homes, the bank can conduct its operations. These are options that have not yet been fully looked into but it now seems likely that this shift will become more noticeable in the future. Shifting transactions from physical branches to digital ones such as mobile banking. Even though banks offer comparable products or services, they must have a strategy that gives them an edge over their competitors if they want to survive in the market (Musengi, 2021).

Several studies carried out by researchers on competitive strategies in different banking industries. Abishua (2010) researched competitive strategies utilized by Equity to compete; established that the bank depended on information technology, expansion, and opening of more branches and product diversification. A study by Maxine (2012) showed how the banks used to generate profit in the past but failed to utilize effective strategies in their policies, gradually being surpassed by other banks in the region. The study by Maxine (2012) focused on the competitive strategies and environmental difficulties encountered by Barclays. The bank has in recent times faced challenges and saw the mother company Barclay PLC offload its shares to now Absa Bank. Mutua (2008) researched the competitive strategies carried out by the National Bank. The bank deduced that cooperative governance, information technology, company expansion, and product diversification all

used competitive techniques to adapt to environmental changes. Recently, NBK was acquired by KCB Bank due to inadequate policies and strategies put in place.

The studies described above demonstrate the various competitive strategies that firms develop and employ to obtain an edge, but they do not highlight any gaps that remain when confronted with unforeseen events like a pandemic. This study sought to bridge this important knowledge gap by addressing the following research question; what strategies have been adopted by KCB bank during the covid-19 pandemic time?

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

This study's objective was to determine the strategies adopted by Kenya Commercial Bank, Kenya during the COVID-19 pandemic time.

### **1.4 Value of the Study**

The following stakeholders will greatly benefit from the research since it intends to advance practical knowledge of the application of the strategies to the way an organization performs. It will also be possible to see where KCB's plan fell short during the COVID-19 pandemic time. This will give management the chance to rethink, restructure and revise their banking industry rivalry strategy. It will show areas of rivalry as well as the tactics used by banks to compete during COVID-19. This is because, they will be able to concentrate on the crucial areas that require policies to ensure equity for all banks, thus improving policy formation as a point of reference for policymakers. When that happens, the sector will be a fair place to work.

Management in other businesses aiming to gain a competitive edge post-COVID-19 pandemic will also use the study's findings. The study will benefit the theory by providing academics with a solid platform for future research on the subject of competitive strategy.



The topics that need further study will become apparent to other scholars. Additionally, it will serve as a useful reference for lecturers and academics alike.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Academics review pertinent research on competitive theories and strategies in this chapter. The theme and study objectives have been directly tied to the information gathered for this research from several sources. This chapter examined the study's theoretical underpinnings, based on Porter's Theory of Competitive Advantage and the Resource-Based View Theory.

### **2.2 Theoretical Foundation of the Study**

This section examines the body of concepts that had been done regarding the concepts of competitive strategy. It explained the current ideas that were used to analyze competitive strategies and competitive advantage. Porter's Theory of Competitive Advantage and the Resource-Based View Theory, two key theories, served as the foundation for the research.

#### **2.2.1 Michael Porter's Theory of Competitive Advantage**

Porter (1980) is a practical theory for assessing the industrial structure of a company in the context of strategic operations. The core element of the framework is that an evaluation of the challenges and opportunities a company faces should inform organizational strategy. For organizations to have a long-term competitive advantage, this model contains three major categories of strategies. The two criteria of strategic scope and strategic strength are used to identify these three strategies. A demand-side dimension called "strategic scope" aims to comprehend the size and makeup of the market a company wishes to serve. These strategies include cost leadership, differentiation, and focus.

Consequently, Porter's (1980) concept of competitive advantage, creating a position that is defensible in the industry to provide a higher return on investment involves both offensive and defensive action. According to this theory, a company can use cost leadership strategies to offer the same advantages as the competitors at a lower price, or it can use differentiation strategies or focus strategies that target a specific target market niche to offer benefits that are greater than those of competing products. Cost leadership tactics are accomplished, among other things, by mass distribution, enhanced efficiencies brought on by technical advances, and economies of scale. The creation of a distinctive offering aimed at high-end consumers that prioritize quality and originality over price is how differentiation tactics are achieved. The narrowly defined market achieves the focus strategies through the marketing mix, protecting itself from the dangers of the agreement on minimum maintenance and the consequences of potentially rising costs by positioning itself to increase the satisfaction of its customers and brand loyalty. According to Porter (1980), businesses can develop a competitive edge by focusing on cost leadership or using differentiation methods.

Porter's framework explores the probable factors that could affect the profitability of particular businesses in a given sector. Thus, enterprise management is provided with the knowledge to decide on entering a current market, developing new commodities, or expanding capacity in a specific industry. Therefore, the framework directs choices on the competitive strategies of the cost leadership approach, differentiation, or market focus to gain competitive advantage.

### **2.2.2 The Resource-Based View Theory**

Wernerfelt (1984) created the Resource Base View hypothesis as a framework for understanding competitive advantage in businesses. The theory would afterward be improved by Barney (2001), and organizations now frequently employ it to enhance competitiveness. The theory's basic tenet is that material and intangible resources are crucial to boosting a company's competitive position. The ability of a company to consistently employ the wealth of priceless tangible or intangible resources at its disposal will therefore determine its competitive edge. As a result, the RBV theory's proponents contend that resources are crucial in fostering the business's capacity for improved performance (Barney & Clark, 2007). The use of real and intangible assets is essential to the execution of competitive strategies, supporting the theory's importance to the current research. According to the theory, businesses should investigate their internal resources for competitive advantage rather than searching for them in the surrounding market. The theory essentially contends that the firm's competitive strategies, whether it is market emphasis, differentiation, or cost leadership will have a favorable impact on the organization (Arend, 2006).

The theory strongly emphasizes a company's internal assets and capacities as the source of competitive advantage. In summary, the theory's proponents contend that using available resources to take advantage of externally presented chances in a novel way is far more realistic than developing new skills to take advantage of every new opportunity. Resources provide the essential endowments that permit competitive advantage, affecting organizational performance (Arend, 2006). According to Galbreath (2005), long-term copies of material resources are possible, but intangible resources stay with the company

and are challenging to duplicate. Competitive advantage is based on the notion that businesses or organizations utilize unique resources in various ways to outsmart one another.

The competitive advantage theory is crucial to the investigation of factors that contribute to commercial banks' competitive advantage during the COVID-19 pandemic time by using competitive strategies. Commercial banks must alter their innovation and digitization initiatives to be more cost-effective, target-centric, and distinctive from their rivals to address the growing challenges posed by microfinance banks, Sacco institutions, and telecommunications companies. This idea is essential since it enables the researcher to understand and assess the rival's nature, enabling the identification of the dynamics driving technical espousal.

### **2.3 Strategy in Organizations**

Andrews (1987), Strategy is a pattern of objectives, purpose, or goals and the major policies and plans for achieving these goals, stated in such a way as to define what business the company is in or is to be in and the kind of company it is or is to be. Hammel and Prahalad (1989), Strategy is an organization's theory about how to compete successfully and competitively in the targeted market. Ansoff (1990), a common theme that connects the entire organization and links it to its external environment is strategy. Mintzberg (1987), Strategy is a particular pattern in a stream of decisions. Porter (1996), strategy is when an organization chooses to perform activities better place than those of the competitors. An organization strategy is its game plan for putting the business in the market it has selected, competing well there, winning over consumers, and generating strong financial results.

An organization's mission is outlined in the strategy. A mission is a broad statement of an organization's primary purpose that, in an ideal world, aligns with the values and expectations of its major stakeholders and addresses the scope and limits of the organization (Johnson and Scholes, 2002). Organizational strategy occurs at three distinct tiers: corporate, business, and functional. Depending on the scope of strategic activity taken into consideration choices regarding strategic management have different features. Members of the board of directors, the chief executive, and administrative officials are all involved in corporate-level strategy. They worry about the overall goals and scope of a company as well as the value that will be added to its many business divisions. Business and corporate managers are responsible for business-level strategy. This level's judgment serves as a link between those made at the corporate and functional levels. They are concerned with how to achieve superior financial performance by pursuing a competitive positioning that enables the organizations to have a durable competitive advantage over rivals.

Any organization that wants to be competitive must adapt its tactics to the external environment. An organization's daily operations, future directions, and competitive positioning are significantly influenced by the external environment. This is due to the open systems, dependence on the environment, and environment-serving nature of all organizations (Ansoff, 1990). Organizations need external environment resources for operation, which transform into products and services as part of the process. The end product is still returned to the environment for consumption, making it inherently environment-serving. However, if changes in the external environment occur, the company may need to reevaluate its strategy by going through internal reorganization to change the

plan to enable it to remain relevant and competitive. As a result, any organization's ability to operate efficiently anywhere in the world depends heavily on the external environment.

## **2.4 Empirical Studies and Research Gaps**

An overview of earlier empirical studies on competitive tactics is given in this section. The review tries to determine what has been accomplished and the research gap that still needs to be filled. The identification of research gaps adds value to the current study by allowing it to increase the body of knowledge already known about the subject.

Research conducted by Kaberia and Muathe in 2021 examined how the coronavirus pandemic affected Kenyan women-owned micro, small, and medium-sized businesses. Case studies, academic publications, web sources, and stakeholder reports were employed as secondary resources in this study. The research showed that the pandemic disproportionately negatively impacted women-owned companies. The study advised focused policy, resource, and research interventions to assist small businesses in preparing for the recurrence and resurgence of similar or different pandemics in the future.

When assessing the impact of the cost leadership method, Baraza (2017), considered the performance of East Africa Breweries Limited. A descriptive research methodology was employed in the investigation. Top management was consulted for information since they were thought to be knowledgeable about the specifics. The analysis made use of both inferential and descriptive statistics. Regression analysis was an important inferential analysis technique. According to the report, a cost leadership strategy improves business performance. There are areas where other firms should be compared to better understand the results. Kago et al. (2018) examined the Kenyan petroleum businesses and their cost

leadership strategy. The study's particular goals were to ascertain the impact of focus, distinctiveness, and cost leadership strategies. A descriptive survey methodology was used on a population of fifty-nine petroleum businesses in Kenya. Descriptive statistic was used for the analysis. Results showed that the cost leadership method helped to improve organizational performance. There are gaps in the assessment of the individual performance impacts of focus cost and focus differentiation strategies, which is required when splitting the market focus strategy.

Muriira (2014) investigated Kenyan insurance companies' use of the differentiation approach. The extremely low insurance penetration levels in the Kenyan market, which were significantly lower than continental averages, served as the basis for the study. The study specifically focused to point out the various strategies embraced by insurance companies to maintain profitability. Findings showed that the majority of businesses used market-focus strategies based on either cost or distinctiveness. The study identified gaps in the requirement to examine a broad spectrum of competitive strategies and establish a connection to performance.

Munyasia (2014) investigated the execution of the differentiation strategy of the Kenyan sugar industry. The study looked at three competing strategies: the cost leadership approach, the market focus strategy, and the differentiation strategy. Nine sugar firms in Kenya were the subject of the research, which used a descriptive survey research approach. A census method was employed since the population was low. Regression analysis and descriptive statistics that include the standard deviations and means were utilized to evaluate the hypothesis. The study results showed that the differentiation approach has a considerable and advantageous effect on organizational performance. There are gaps in the



necessity to take into account a broader understanding of differentiation's components as grounded in theory.

Nderitu (2015) evaluated Bamburi Cement (Kenya) Limited and its cost-cutting approach. Questionnaires issued to managers and department heads in the three branches were used to collect data—the corporate headquarters in Nairobi, Athi River, and Mombasa. The data were examined using descriptive statistics while employing a descriptive survey research design. Results showed that the cost focus strategy improved the performance of the company. Some gaps call for the investigation of more companies for better results comparability.

Kinyuira (2014) investigated the operations of Saccos and their competitive strategies in Muranga County in Kenya. The study used an explanatory research methodology and had 8 Saccos as its target population, all of which were registered with the county of Murang'a's cooperative development department. Data collection techniques included questionnaires and document reviews. Correlational and regression analyses were performed. Results showed that the focus differentiation method considerably influences the performance of Saccos positively. Gaps in the requirement to take into account a recent study for outcomes that apply to the present are revealed.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The methodology used to execute the actual field investigation is explained in this chapter. Methodology issues explored include the study design, data collection, and data analysis techniques.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The research design alludes to the method, framework, or approach that was utilized to generate responses to research questions. Due to the study's singular emphasis, a case study research design approach was chosen for its execution. Establishing the competitive methods used by KCB Bank to achieve an advantage during the COVID-19 pandemic was the case study's main goal. Kothari (2004) asserts that the research design is the main data gathering and analysis focus.

A case study; qualitative in nature, was adopted as the research method since it provided a solid foundation for learning about the competitive strategies implemented by the KCB Bank to successfully compete in the market during the COVID-19 pandemic time.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

In this study, primary data were utilized. An interview guide was employed since it allowed for a more in-depth description of the study participants. The interview approach was chosen because it has a high response rate, is adaptable, and may be used to deepen comprehension of the respondents' relevant information. The interview was conducted with five senior managers based at the KCB headquarters. The interview guide was

unstructured and open-ended questions that allowed for more conversations with the respondents and permit views to unfold. This method made it easy when analyzing the data collected. Direct and hands-on interviews were done by the researcher. The researcher personally provided the interview, which was then followed by the direct interview.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

The optimal approach of analysis was content analysis since the data gathered were qualitative. This method was the most effective way to analyze the information in a case study since it enabled the researcher to accomplish the study's goals. This method enhanced the research content because it didn't prevent respondents from offering a variety of opinions that provided the study with a new perspective.

Through content analysis, the data and the details gathered from the open-ended questions were examined. According to Mugenda (2003), content analysis is a methodical qualitative description of the make-up of the study's objects. To draw conclusions and provide recommendations, is a method that entails methodical observation and meticulously describing the objects of research.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS, AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter analyzed data gathered from the field. This is commensurate with the main objective of the study, of establishing the strategies adopted by the KCB during the COVID-19 pandemic time to gain a competitive advantage. The collected data was analyzed and interpreted accordingly. Five senior managers at KCB were the respondents.

### **4.2 Respondents at KCB Bank, Kenya**

The researcher reached out to eight senior managers at KCB but only five agreed to be interviewed and responded to the questions at their offices, which was their choice of meeting. The respondents interviewed were experienced staff at the bank, engaged in the creation, and rollout of the company business plan down the different departments.

### **4.3 Strategies Adopted by KCB Bank**

The banks' vision is "To be the preferred financial solutions provider in Africa with a global reach". This means that the bank had to be at the forefront to ensure that it develops solutions that would enhance its competitiveness and remain focused to meet its vision and mission. The strategies that were adopted by KCB could be summarized as cost leadership strategies, technology and innovation strategies, effective communication strategies, pro-environmental and social engagement strategies as well as situational analysis strategies.

#### **4.3.1 Cost Leadership Strategies**

The bank focused on reducing operational costs to improve efficiency and maintain competitive interest rates. This was undertaken by optimizing processes and streamlining

operations, where it aimed to offer cost-effective services to its customers. The management was given targets to ensure that it highlighted areas where the value proposition by the bank was not achieved. It, therefore, led to an onslaught of practices that used more resources but failed to deliver value in equal measure. Redundant practices were phased out to allow for more effective and prudent practices that brought value to the bank.

The bank reduced the cost of small business (SME) loans, making it more affordable for entrepreneurs and SMEs to access financing during the pandemic. This helped KCB Bank attract and retain small business customers. It also helped the bank to reduce the loan default rate as the products helped these businesses to access affordable credit that would support them during the crisis period.

#### **4.3.2 Technology and Innovation Strategies**

The technology and innovation strategies were also adopted by the bank as a way of enhancing its competitiveness. The bank invested in new technologies and digital platforms to support seamless banking experiences for its customers. The introduction of the VOOMA application, a mobile banking platform, allowed customers to access banking services remotely, making transactions and payments more convenient.

The bank was also able to introduce innovative loan products specifically designed for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). These products aimed to meet the unique financing requirements of SMEs, enabling them to sustain and grow their businesses during the pandemic. It also ensured that the clients were able to access the bank's services as and when they required by the use of online banking services, mobile banking as well as enhancing other digital platforms.

The bank was able to accelerate its innovations in new technology, as customers were encouraged to maintain social distance as well as integration of central banking services, to enhance cheque clearing system among facilitation of other inter-bank transactions. The bank was therefore tasked to ensure that it developed and improved its technological infrastructure to support these new services and ensure that it offers distinct products and services to clients.

### **4.3.3 Effective Communication Strategies**

The bank utilized an effective communication strategy to support stakeholder communication. KCB Bank effectively communicated its strategies and initiatives to all stakeholders, including employees, customers, and shareholders. Transparent communication helped build trust and confidence in the bank's ability to navigate the challenges of the pandemic.

The bank also ensured that it places in place programs and opportunities that enhanced employee morale and productivity. In this case, it focused on boosting employee morale and productivity through effective communication channels. Regular updates, town hall meetings, and clear communication of organizational goals and expectations helped align employees and foster a sense of belonging.

The bank also enhanced customer communication, where it communicated new products and services to customers through various channels, including digital platforms, emails, and SMS notifications. Prompt handling of customer complaints and issues also enhanced customer satisfaction and loyalty.

#### **4.3.4 Pro-environmental and Social Engagement Strategies**

The bank also hedged on the use of pro-environmental and social engagement strategies, to ensure that it maintained a positive and acceptable brand in the market. The initiatives were strategically undertaken to ensure that the bank became part and parcel of organizations that were providing solutions to the problem and challenges that were facing the entire target market. The strategies took the form of supporting adversely affected individuals, as well as undertaking climate change investment. The bank therefore engaged in initiatives to support individuals and communities adversely affected by the pandemic, drought, and locust infestation. This included providing financial assistance, relief programs, and partnering with relevant organizations to address societal challenges.

The bank was also able to demonstrate its commitment to environmental sustainability by investing in projects and initiatives related to climate change. This strategy aligned with the bank's corporate social responsibility and helped enhance its reputation. Improve its brand image thereby maintaining customers' loyalty and attracting new customers. By implementing these strategies, it aimed to position itself as a customer-centric and innovative bank while maintaining cost efficiency and addressing societal challenges.

#### **4.3.5 Situational Analysis Strategies**

The study respondents were asked briefly to state the banking environment that existed during Covid-19 time. The study intended to understand the situation that existed at the onset of Covid-19 from the point of view of the bank. Every economic sector was affected by Covid-19 disruptions that affected the way business is undertaken. The study

respondents were very particular about the different factors that had significant challenges and impacts on bank operations and competitiveness.

The Covid-19 time came with lockdown measures, travel restrictions, and reduced economic activities that resulted in a decline in business and consumer spending. This had a direct impact on the banking sector, affecting the total customer deposits, increasing the non-performing loans, as well as decreasing the total issued loans.

The respondents also indicated that to comply with social distancing measures, all organizations were required to ensure that they do not physically engage with other people nearby. It therefore encouraged the bank to use digital banking services, online banking platforms, mobile banking apps as well as the use of USSD codes that were enhanced to sustain banking transactions, even though the revenue generated from most of these services had been discounted through the government's direct intervention.

The Central Bank of Kenya introduced measures to provide relief to borrowers during the pandemic. KCB, therefore, offered loan restructuring and repayment moratoriums to help customers facing financial difficulties due to the pandemic. This aimed to alleviate the burden of loan repayments and support businesses and individuals affected by the economic downturn.

The bank also reduced branch operations as it reduced operating hours and limited the number of customers allowed inside the banking halls. Customers were mainly encouraged to use alternative banking channels that included the use of ATMs, and digital platforms among other innovative avenues – such as the use of agency services. The bank was also required to be part of the solution by getting involved in different relief programs that were



started by the government to address people who had been grossly affected by the pandemic as well as those hit by drought and locust invasion.

The respondents also indicated the challenges that hit the bank's daily operations, including the requirement to wear masks and ensure that customers as well as staff, undertake frequent hand sanitization, temperature checks, and physical distancing to protect both staff and customers. The pandemic accelerated the digital transformation efforts within the bank where the bank was required to invest in upgrading the digital infrastructure, expanding online banking services, and enhancing cybersecurity measures to ensure seamless and secure digital transactions.

#### **4.4 Discussion of Findings**

The findings of the study indicate that KCB Bank implemented different strategies during the Covid-19 period. The bank focused on cost leadership by reducing operational costs and lowering the cost of small business loans. This allowed the bank to offer competitive interest rates and attract cost-conscious customers. Additionally, this helped by enhancing; its service offerings, improving customer experience and introducing innovative loan products tailored to SMEs.

The bank also invested in technology and innovation, evident through the development of the VOOMA application and the adoption of digital platforms to provide convenient banking services. Effective communication strategies were employed to enhance stakeholder engagement, boost employee morale and productivity, and address customer needs. Furthermore, KCB Bank demonstrated its commitment to pro-environmental and

social engagement by supporting individuals and communities adversely affected by the pandemic, as well as investing in initiatives related to climate change.

When considering Porter's Theory of Competitive Advantage, the findings support the theory as KCB Bank successfully implemented the cost leadership strategy. The bank's emphasis on cutting expenses and offering competitive interest rates aligns with the cost leadership strategy, enabling it to attract price-sensitive customers. The emphasis on enhancing service offerings, improving customer experience, and introducing innovative loan products showcases the bank's pursuit of becoming competitive in the market environment, offering unique value propositions to customers. Therefore, the findings support the idea that KCB Bank utilized Porter's strategies to gain a competitive edge.

Regarding the Resource-Based View (RBV), the findings indicate that KCB Bank leveraged various resources to achieve a competitive advantage. The bank's investment in technology and digital platforms demonstrates the utilization of technological resources to provide convenient and efficient banking services, differentiating itself from competitors. Effective communication strategies served as a valuable intangible resource, boosting employee morale and productivity and enhancing customer satisfaction. The bank's pro-environmental and social engagement initiatives can be seen as unique resources that enhance its reputation, customer loyalty, and stakeholder relationships. Therefore, the findings align with the RBV perspective, highlighting the importance of valuable and unique resources for achieving sustained competitive advantage.

The findings, therefore, suggest that the bank successfully adopted different strategies during the Covid-19 time. It focused on cost leadership, technology and innovation, effective communication, and pro-environmental and social engagement. These strategies

enabled it to navigate the challenging environment, enhance its market position, and provide value to customers and stakeholders. The findings support both Porter's Theory of Competitive Advantage and the Resource-Based View, showcasing the bank's utilization of these theories to gain a competitive edge through cost leadership, resource leveraging, and value creation.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The following summary, conclusions, and recommendations were made from the scrutiny of the results or information obtained. Limitations of the study and suggestions for future research are captured.

### **5.2 Summary of Findings**

The objective of this study was to establish the strategies adopted by KCB Bank, Kenya to gain a competitive edge during the COVID-19 pandemic time.

The result indicates that the bank had adopted the Resource-based View Theory and Michael Porter's theory of competitive advantage; cost leadership strategies to achieve the objectives of the bank during the pandemic period. In the current economic and environmental challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, these strategies have proven to be important for the survival of any business. Therefore, making it easy for the bank to extend its products and services to customers with different wants and needs. KCB also recognizes its resources and restructures its strategies to gain a competitive advantage.

The research revealed that KCB extensively aligned with Michael Porter's theory of competitive advantage through a cost leadership strategy during the pandemic through the provision of loans provided at a lower interest rate compared to other banks and also rescheduling loans payment for customers affected during the pandemic. The strategies adopted by the bank assisted it offer financial services and medical support through the distribution of face masks, gloves, personal protective equipment, and sanitizers to the most affected regions and hospitals in the country.

Despite the environmental, economic, and social problems such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the respondents indicated that KCB continued to invest heavily in systems and technologies thus, maintaining good products and, services to its customers. During the devastating COVID-19 pandemic, the bank provided workers with the technological infrastructure needed to work from home. According to the study, KCB had other strategies such as technology and innovation, effective communication, pro-environmental and social engagement, and situational analysis strategies for a flexible and responsive response during the pandemic, giving it an edge over its competitors.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Kenya's banking industry, particularly KCB, experienced great economic turbulence due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This resulted in reduced assets, deposits, and profits. According to the study's respondents, KCB Bank can maintain its competitiveness thanks to the competitive measures it used during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The research concludes that the competitive strategy is important in ensuring an organization gains an edge over rivals in the market area when adapting to ever-changing environmental conditions such as the COVID-19 pandemic as affirmed by KCB Bank. The bank was able to remain competitive by employing the following strategies: cost leadership strategies, technologies and innovations strategies, effective communication strategies, pro-environmental and social engagement strategies, and situational analysis strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic time.

This research concludes that cost leadership strategies aid organizations cut down on operational and overhead costs thus maximizing and optimization of goods and services to

the customers. The organizations' technology and innovations strategies enable customers to access and acquire desired goods and services through the use of applications such as VOOMA, and mobile banking applications, thus preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Effective communication strategies enable organizations to be able to communicate their strategies to shareholders and employees thus having a proper chain of communication to its customers. The pro-environmental and social engagement strategies allow the company to maintain a positive and acceptable brand to its customer despite the turbulent environmental changes thus having an edge.

In conclusion, the banking industry in Kenya is still competitive and KCB is aware of this, in addition to the environmental problems compounded by the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, KCB still strives to remain competitive achieving its targets and maintaining higher performance.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Companies operate in an ever-dynamic and changing environment; KCB employed competitive strategies to gain a competitive edge during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following recommendations were made.

The research recommends that KCB should continuously invest heavily in Information Communication Technology by regularly reviewing and updating its infrastructure. Pre-pandemic period KCB had not invested heavily in ICT infrastructure, which posed a high challenge to the bank since most customers could not access bank service due to high periods of lockdown and cessation of movement by the government. KCB should link, integrate, and upgrade its core banking systems. This will enable the bank to provide its

customers with better products and, services thus having superiority in the industry. This will prevent future inconveniences caused, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the different strategies adopted by KCB to remain competitive during the COVID-19 pandemic, the banks' profits were reduced. The study concluded that the COVID-19 pandemic did hurt profitability. The study recommends that KCB comes up with more fights against the COVID-19 pandemic like vaccine sensitization. This will result in a considerable reduction in the COVID-19 pandemic cases, restoring the bank to profitability again.

## **5.5 Limitations of the Study**

This research concentrated on Kenya Commercial Bank. Therefore, this study's results are only limited to KCB. The results should be interpreted with a lot of care since it only represents KCB and not the banking industry in Kenya.

Obstacles were experienced in acquiring appointments with the interviewees. This was due to the tight, and busy schedules of the respondents. The interviews were carried out either early in the morning or later after working hours.

On strategic information, the respondents were a bit mindful of their choice of words due to the sensitivity of the information thus unable to intensively answer all questions. Therefore, limited information was provided due to business privacy which the researcher respected.

## **5.6 Suggestions for Further Research**

This study was limited to the research variable. Researchers should undertake studies on similar variables influencing the performance of Kenyan banks or the banking industry during the COVID-19 pandemic. Other variables should be researched to determine the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on the industry.

Further studies should be done concerning other banks to determine the strategies adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic since this study was limited to KCB. This research and other studies done in the future will help determine if similar or different strategies were adopted in the banking industry during the COVID-19 period.



## REFERENCE

- Aaker, A. (2011). The value of brand equity. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 13(4), 2-3
- Abishua, D. A. (2010). Strategic Responses Used by Equity Bank to Compete in the Kenyan Banking Industry, Unpublished MBA Project University Of Nairobi.
- Andrews, K.R. (1987). The concept of corporate strategy. Homewood, IL: Dow Jones-Irwin
- Ansoff, H.I. (1990). *Implanting Strategic management* (2<sup>nd</sup>.ed) Prentice-Hall
- Baraza, D. (2017). Effects of competitive strategies on performance of manufacturing firms in Kenya; a case study of East Africa Breweries Limited. (Ph Thesis).
- Barney, J. B. (2014). *Gaining and sustaining competitive advantage*. Pearson higher ed.
- CBK, (2019). The central bank of Kenya's annual supervision report 2019.
- Chesbrough, H. W., & Appleyard, M. M. (2007). Open innovation and strategy. *California Management Review*, 50(1), 57–76.
- Dess, G.C. & Davis, P.S. (1984). Porter's Generic Strategies as Determinants of Strategic Group Membership and Organizational Performance, *Academy of Management Journal* 27(1), 467-488.
- Grundy, T. (2006). Rethinking and reinventing Michael Porter's five forces model. *Strategic Change*, 15(5), 213–229.
- Hammel, G., & Prahalad, C. K. (1989). Strategic intent. *Harvard Business Review*, 67(3), 63-76.

- Kaberia, S.K., & Muathe, S. (2021). Effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the performance of women-owned micro, small and medium enterprises in Kenya. *Int'l J. Soc. Sci. Stud.*, 9(1), 7-21.
- Kago, Z. W., Gichunge, E. M., & Baimwera, B. (2018). Relationship between competitive strategies and organizational performance of petroleum companies in Kenya. *International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration*, 3(2), 407–429
- Kinyuira, D. (2014). Effects of Porter's Generic competitive strategies on Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) performance in Murang'a County, Kenya. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, 16(6).
- Maxine, C.W. (2012). Employee Perception of the Relationship Between Competitive Strategies and Performance in Barclays Bank of Kenya Limited, Unpublished MBA Research Project Report, University of Nairobi, Kenya.
- Mintzberg, H. (1987). Crafting strategy. *Harvard Business Review*, 65(4), 66-75
- Mugenda, O. M., & Mugenda, A. G. (2003). *Research methods*. Nairobi: ACTS.
- Munyasia, W., Robert. (2014). Effect of Competitive Strategies on Organizational Performance in the Sugar Industry in Kenya (Ph.D. Thesis). Moi University.
- Muriira, L. K. (2014). Competitive strategies adopted by insurance companies in Kenya. Unpublished MBA Project, School of Business, University of Nairobi.
- Musengi, Z. (2021). Effect Of Generic Strategies On Competitive Advantage In The Kenyan Banking Industry: A Case Of Ncba Bank Kenya Plc. Usiu.

<https://erepo.usiu.ac.ke/bitstream/handle/11732/7084/Musengi%20Zipporah%20MBA%202021.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Mutua, M. (2008). Response Strategies of Family Bank to Competition in the Kenyan Banking Industry, Unpublished Master of Business Administration Research Project of the University of Nairobi, Nairobi.

Nderitu, P., Muthoni. (2015). Relationship between competitive strategies and performance: a case study of Bamburi cement limited. (Ph.D. Thesis). University of Nairobi

Obulutsa, G. (2020, August 12). *Kenya's KCB Group H1 after-tax profit plummets 40% due to COVID-19*. The U.S. Retrieved July 19, 2022, from <https://www.reuters.com/article/ozabs-uk-kcb-group-results-idAFKCN25827Q-OZABS>.

Peder, F., & Richard, C. (2013). The service innovation triangle: a tool for exploring value creation through service innovation. *International Journal of Technology Marketing*, 8 (2), 123-131.

Porter, M. E. (1980). *Competitive strategy: techniques for analyzing industries and competitors*. New York: Free Press.

Porter, M. E. (1996). What is strategy? *Harvard Business Review*, 74(6), 61-78.

Riba Capital, (2011). Islamic banking and prohibition of Riba /interest. *African Journal of Business Management* 5(5);1763-1767.

Wachira, C. (2022, July 22). *Global Finance Magazine - Pandemic Strengthens African Bank Digitization*. Global Finance Magazine. Retrieved August 2, 2022, from <https://www.gfmag.com/topics/blogs/covid-19-stirs-rethinking-sub-saharan-africa-banking-sector>.

Wadongo B., Odhuno E., Kambona O. & Othuon L. (2010). Key Performance Indicators in Kenyan Hospitality Industry: A Managerial Perspective, Benchmarking: International Journal, 17(6), 858-875.

## Letter of Introduction

**David Kamau,  
The University of Nairobi,  
School of Business  
P.O BOX 30197-00100,  
NAIROBI.**

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **RE: DATA COLLECTION**

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Nairobi, School of Business, undertaking a management research project on **Competitive Strategies Adopted by Kenya Commercial Bank Kenya during the COVID-19 Pandemic Time** which is a requirement of partial fulfillment of the award of a master's degree in Business Administration (MBA).

I am kindly requesting a scheduled personal interview to enable me to gather the required information. The information you provide will be used exclusively for academic purposes and will be treated with utmost confidence.

Your assistance will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,



**David Mbui Kamau**  
**Researcher**

## **Interview Guide**

The interview guide will act as a plan to seek information on the competitive strategies adopted by the Kenya Commercial Bank during the COVID-19 pandemic period. All the information you give will be treated as confidential and for academic purposes only.

### **Section A: Concept of Strategy**

- 1) What is the banks' strategy?
- 2) Who is responsible for strategy formulation?
- 3) How is the strategy formulated?
- 4) Who is responsible for strategy implementation?

### **Section B: Competitive Strategies**

- 5) How does the bank use Michel Porter's competitive strategy of cost leadership strategies
- 6) KCB Bank's use of Technology and Innovation Strategies
- 7) Banks' Use of Effective Communication Strategies
- 8) Pro-environmental and Social Engagement Strategies adopted by the bank
- 9) Situational Analysis Adopted by the bank during the COVID-19 pandemic Time
- 10) Changes in the external environment that have affected the operation of KCB Bank
- 11) How the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has affected KCB Bank
- 12) Severity of COVID-19 pandemic to KCB Bank