INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF KENYATTA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE

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DECLARATION

This research project has been done by me and has never been submitted for exam in any college, University or any other institute of higher learning.

Signature………………………………… Date………………………………

Kibiego Joel Terer

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

Signature………………………………… Date………………………………

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife Eunice and daughters Samantha and Sharleen.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I take this opportunity to thank Almighty God for good health and for bringing me this far, His grace was sufficient.

I would also like to express my deepest appreciation to all those who provided me the possibility to complete this report. A special gratitude I give to my project supervisor, Eliud O. Mududa whose contribution in stimulating suggestions and encouragement helped me to coordinate my project especially in writing this report.

Furthermore I would also like to acknowledge with much appreciation the crucial role of the Kenyatta International Convention Centre management and staff, who gave the permission to use all required resources and support to complete this project.
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GM</td>
<td>General Manager</td>
</tr>
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<td>KANU</td>
<td>Kenya National Union of Teachers</td>
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<td>KICC</td>
<td>Kenyatta International Convention Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBU</td>
<td>Strategic Business Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWOT</td>
<td>Strength Weakness Opportunities and Threats</td>
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<tr>
<td>MICE</td>
<td>Meetings Incentive Travel, Conferences and Exhibitions/Events</td>
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<tr>
<td>MNC</td>
<td>Multinational Corporations</td>
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<tr>
<td>RBV</td>
<td>Resource Based View</td>
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<tr>
<td>COTU</td>
<td>Central Organization of Trade Unions</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information Communication Technology</td>
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<td>SLA</td>
<td>Service Level Agreement</td>
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ABSTRACT

Strategic partnerships are purposive strategic relationships between independent firms that share compatible goals, strive for mutual benefits, and acknowledge a high level of mutual dependence. Strategic partnership formations have increased dramatically over the past decade and, in many industries, partnerships are now a central strategic component and a core offensive and/or defensive competitive weapon. Strategic partnership contractual, temporary relationship between companies remaining independent, aimed at reducing the uncertainty around the realization of the partners’ strategic objectives by means of coordinating or jointly executing one or several of the companies’ activities. To offer quality and achieve competitiveness, KICC has embraced strategic partnership. This study sought to establish the influence of strategic partnerships on the performance of KICC. In this light, the study sought to determine the strategic partnerships employed by KICC and also the influence of strategic partnerships on the performance of KICC. This research was conducted through a case study targeting selected managers at KICC. The study collected primary data through interview guide. Data collected was analyzed through content analysis and results presented in prose. The study established that partnerships enhances new conference customer acquisition and retention, improves sales turnover and reduces cost of procurement. Also, the study established that partnership enhanced Internet connectivity at KICC and reduced outages and downtimes. Deployment of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system led to automation of financial data processing and has enhanced efficiency and accountability. The study established that partners like hotels are reluctant to share with KICC important convention researches/thesis and studies since they perceive KICC as a potential competitor. The study recommends that KICC should develop its facility to International standards and establish subsidiaries in every county. Also KICC should seek to improve on its partners’ selection and management of the resulting relationship with its partners to enhance service delivery.
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

According to Mohr and Spekman (1994), strategic partnerships are purposive strategic relationships between independent firms that share compatible goals, strive for mutual benefits, and acknowledge a high level of mutual dependence. Dussauge and Garrette (1995) on the other hand illustrated a partnership as a cooperative agreement or association between two or more independent enterprises, which will manage one specific project, with a determined duration, for which they will be together in order to improve their competences. It is constituted to allow its partners to pool resources and coordinate efforts in order to achieve results that neither could obtain by acting alone. The key parameters surrounding partnerships are opportunism, necessity and speed.

Strategic partnership formations have increased dramatically over the past decade and, in many industries, partnerships are now a central strategic component and a core offensive and/or defensive competitive weapon. Strategic partnerships have shifted the fundamental competitive paradigm in many domestic and international markets from traditional firm-to-firm competition to more partner-based, network-vs.-network competition. Booz-Allen and Hamilton estimates that; more than one-third of the revenues of the top 2,000 U.S. and European companies come from partnerships. Lorenzoni and Baden-Fuller characterize firms positioned at the center of large multi-firm partner networks as ‘shining examples of how firms can change the rules of the game by creative and imaginative thinking.’ Moreover, as strategic innovations (such as online travel, auctions and banking; digital communications and entertainment,
including mobile phones, digital television, Apple’s iPod and iPhone and Blackberry) create powerful shifts in customer value propositions through new combinations of performance attributes, an individual firm’s competitive advantages can be taken back to zero. Barker (1992) found that paradigm shifts are often created by firms using non-traditional thinking, unrestrained by current industry practices, which raises the importance of having a strategic perspective about partner formation. Firms seeking to identify, develop and maintain sustainable competitive advantage increasingly use a collaborative paradigm that looks beyond their own boundaries to develop sophisticated, effective and flexible partner strategies.

Studies on partnerships confirm a significant increase in their use as a strategic device (Hergert and Morris 1987; Anderson 1990; Ahuja 1996). Firms use partnerships to gain competitive advantage in the marketplace, access or internalize new technologies and know-how beyond firm boundaries, exploit economies of scale and scope, or to share risk or uncertainty with their partners, reduce cycle time, achieving vertical integration, recreating and extending supply links in order to adjust to environmental changes, diversifying into new businesses, restructuring, improving performance, improve research and development efforts.

In line with Crawford, Costello, Pollack, Bentley (1998), Convention Centres worldwide are under pressure to increase efficiency while delivering improved and integrated services. The sector remains a central vehicle for development for both developed and developing countries. This is achieved through strategic partnerships using a framework to realize economic and allocative efficiency; equity, justice, fairness; security; competitiveness and contestability; guaranteed sustainability of
service where interests of conference participants prevails, even in competitive market; mitigate against potential failure of privatized services; reducing transaction costs among others. Most of the International Convention Centres reform programmes that have taken place were introduced as part of the global standardization of conferencing. However, most of the more recent strategic reforms, under the influence of the green conferencing have been driven by a combination of environmental, economic, social, political and technological factors, which have triggered the quest for efficiency as illustrated in the Kenya Vision 2030 and for ways to cut the cost of delivering public services through state corporations.

Despite the growing numbers and increasing significance of strategic partnerships, many fail, while an even greater proportion perform poorly. Although such failures may be for many interrelated reasons - and may be defined in various ways - two common causes are poor partner selection and poor partner management. Even superior partner management skills may not be able to overcome poor initial screening and targeting. This research will focus on influence of strategic partnerships on performance of Kenyatta International Convention Centre and present a strategic management-based process for evaluating target industries and firms that can help managers avoid the emotional drive to ‘do the deal’ - a key partner selection pitfall - as well as other factors that may inhibit appropriate partner selection. This process also provides a new dynamic partner selection tool for evaluating target industries and specific firms, and we illustrate its use by applying it to the partner-rich global business tourism industry, one of many industry contexts where the tool can be used.
1.1.1 Concept of Strategy

According to Nickols (2003), the concept of strategy had been adopted from the military and adapted in to modern business. A review by notable scholars on business strategies indicates that adoption is easy since adaptation is modest. In business as in military, strategies bridges the gap between policies and tactics. Hence strategy and tactics bridges the gap between ends and means. It is the unifying theme that gives coherence and direction to the decisions of an organization.

As stated in Oxford Dictionary (2006), strategy is considered as an art of war, especially the planning of movements of troops and ships, into favorable positions; plan of action or policy in business or politics. Chester (2005) on the other hand, views strategy as intended to focus on the interdependence of the adversaries’ decisions and on their expectations about each other’s behavior. Andrews (2006), noted that strategy is the pattern of objectives, purposes 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. It was not until very large companies with the ability to influence the competitive environment within their industries did strategic thinking in the business world begin to be articulated. Alfred Sloan, CEO of GM, 1923 – 1946 - One of the first to analyze competition, Ford, and devise a strategic plan based on its strengths and weaknesses.

In addition, Chester Barnard, Senior Executive of New Jersey Bell, 1930s - Argued managers should pay attention to “strategic factors” which depend on “personal or organizational action.”

In the 1950’s, strategy was truly introduced in business schools as a way of
analyzing the competitive environment and setting organizational goals and objectives to fit that environment. These concepts serve as the foundation of strategic management study like “Business Policy” perspectives looked at maintaining a “balance in accord with the underlying policies of the business as a whole.” – Harvard, Kenneth Andrews’ SWOT Analysis was developed – still in use today, Theodore Levitt’s “Marketing Myopia” argued that when companies fail it typically is because firms focus on the product rather than the changing patterns of consumer needs and tastes, Igor Ansoff argued, in response to Levitt, that a firm’s mission should exploit an existing need in the market, rather than using the consumer as the common thread in business. “In reality a given type of customer will frequently have a range of product missions or needs.” Corporate Strategy, 1965, BCG developed the “experience curve” and portfolio analysis concepts, McKinsey & Company’s development of SBU’s and the nine-block matrix, Mintzberg’s “Deliberate, Emergent & Realized Strategies” and Porter’s Generic Strategies

1.1.2 Strategic Partnership

Strategic partnership is a contractual, temporary relationship between companies remaining independent, aimed at reducing the uncertainty around the realization of the partners’ strategic objectives by means of coordinating or jointly executing one or several of the companies’ activities. According to Austin (2010), these partnerships are also emerging because businesses are increasingly reexamining their traditional philanthropic practices and seeking new strategies of engagement with their communities that will have greater corporate relevance and higher social impact. The strategic benefits from collaborating with other organization stem from the fact that wealth and growth in modern economies are driven primarily by intangible assets.
A partnership with another organization can create value that, due to its origin, will not be replicable by competitors, contrasting more traditional physical and financial assets since they are equally accessible to competitors.

Neergaard, Jensen, and Pedersen (2009) noted that the most underlying principles, concepts, practices, attitudes and behaviors that go into making strategic partnerships is vital. These characteristics apply right across the range, no matter what the specific detail of the particular relationship is. The principles, concepts and behaviors are universal. Strategic Partnership can be expected to have a relatively long life (5 years minimum), but it is also possible that a specific term is not specified, relying instead on an understanding that either party can terminate the arrangement depending on its circumstances. Good strategic partnering will have all the appropriate documentation (specifications, project plans, business plans and other information) needed for effective management and development of the relationship. Strategic partnerships raise questions concerning co-inventorship and other intellectual property ownership, technology transfer, exclusivity, competition, hiring away of employees, rights to business opportunities created in the course of the partnership, splitting of profits and expenses, duration and termination of the relationship, and many other business issues (Googins & Rochlin, 2000). The relationships are often complex as a result, and can be subject to extensive negotiation.

1.1.3 Factors Influencing Strategic Partnership

Business Environment Factors: Corporations and international strategic partner networks usually seek to overcome, circumvent, or subvert the regulatory mechanisms established by national governments. Berger, Cunningham, and Drumwright
(2004) noted that partnership are formed to achieve certain business environment. Partner formations are broadly shaped by general economic conditions and the institutional frameworks in countries of operation, including legal requirements, macro-economic policies, price controls, financial capital markets, distribution channels, and methods of contract enforcement. State regulatory activity affects firms’ freedom to form business coalitions and joint ventures. Thus, government intervention provides the major constraints and opportunities for strategic partner formation. Partnerships often require formal approval by national governments, particularly in adhering to antimonopoly or antitrust regulations.

Industrial Factors: Analysts generally recognize that, due to technical or economic rationales, firms are more vulnerable when closely tied up to a dominant partner shaping internal structures. According to Arya and Salk (2006) several inter-organizational formations emerge when organizations search for new efficiencies and competitive advantages while avoiding both market uncertainties and hierarchical rigidities. Among the competing technologies in a specific industry, some are core and leading while others are supporting. Rapid technological changes, or the abrupt emergence of a competence-destroying technology, can radically restructure an entire organizational field’s competitive and collaborative alignments. The private and governmental sources of technology research funding, and R&D expenditure levels in general, differ markedly across industries. Cross-border technology partnerships benefit directly from these differences. In most national economies, indirect subsidization takes place as governments fund R&D. The industrial context of partnerships also exerts strong direct impacts on inter firm relationships. The intensity of industry competition and the social organization of specific product markets
powerfully influences whether firm decide to internalize certain activities, to compete for greater market share, to cooperate with other firms for particular strategic advantages, or to internationalize by entering foreign markets. The importance of industrial contexts lies in how leading supply chains spread across different subsectors and which economic transactions occur among connected firms. Extreme contrasts are industries with long-established oligopolies or duopolies and industries with low barriers to entry and high rates of new firm creation. Industries may be classified along numerous dimensions, such as resource consumption levels, capital investment, labor scarcity, knowledge intensity, and technological innovation. This multidimensionality means that potentially many industry factors drive organizational strategies in seeking partnerships for comparative advantage.

Organizational Factors: The diversity of organizations in an organizational field stems from such company-specific properties as their sizes, visible and tacit assets, collaborative histories, ownership forms, corporate social capital networks, product ranges and diversification, market shares, and market penetration through distribution channels. Given such diversity, propensities to participate in strategic partnerships should vary across firms operating within the same organizational field. Knoke (2001) noted that strategic alliance forms also associated with different legal forms, which enable firms to control the resources allocation and the distribution of benefits among the partners. Corporate social capital influences partner creation, as new ties build on existing inter firm relations. Partner formation processes are also shaped by a dominant corporation (national or multinational). MNCs, with their complex headquarter-subsidiary relationships, have established new foundations for business
networks and multi firm partnerships.

In addition, MNCs help to develop domestic markets, generate demand and competition, thereby restructuring existing relations within the markets they penetrate. However, studies of equity joint ventures make clear that huge discrepancies occur between the objectives of foreign and domestic firms. Domestic firms typically seek opportunities to improve their export capabilities, while foreign firms desire greater access to the host country’s markets (Pan & Li 1998). This tension over incompatible objectives, capabilities, and constraints among international joint venture partners is a crucial reason why partnering firms often seek equity controls to safeguard their partner risks. A substantial difference between an MNC and a strategic partner lies in the concept of shared control. Metaphorically, CEOs describe the partner management problem by referring to the old logic of the octopus and the new logic of the network, where a different kind of interdependence emerges (Lorange & Roos 1993). The octopus symbolizes classical management control from the center, while the network metaphor requires decentralized organizational structures and management processes to facilitate shared control. Strategic interdependence is one salient feature of successful partnerships in dynamic markets (Sanchez, 1994).

Globalization Drivers and Commodity Chains: On the word of Gereffi (1990), traditional global commodity chains are producer-driven and comprised of four segments: raw material supply network, production network, export network, and marketing network. Each segment and the entire commodity chain consist of interlinked firms, representing an input-output structure with spatial dispersion and concentration of units, and a governance structure to coordinate the entire production
system (Gereffi, 1994). This governance form has more linear ties and is based on repetitive transactions and long-term contracts where the producers become push-factors moving their products towards the final retail market. In contrast, the buyer-driven chain has multiple backward and forward linkages and resembles a strategic partner structure with complex logistics pulled by the retail sector with buyer-driven orders. The selection of firms for such chains is very much determined by whether the coordinator role is dominated by producers or buyers, and varies across industry contexts. Thus, the globalization of commodity chains has stimulated complex economies of scale and scope that foster increasing rates of strategic partner formation. Market globalization transforms the nature of corporate operations. Globalization forces are among the key drivers forcing corporations to explore alternative ways of gaining and preserving competitive advantages. These factors include: heightened competitive pressures on a global scale; shorter product life-cycles and rapid technological change; emergence of new competitors; personnel recruitment and placement practices that extend corporate social capital across national boundaries; and increased demand by global firms for systemic solutions.

1.1.4 Concept of Convention Centre

A convention center is a large building that is designed to hold meetings, where individuals and groups gather to promote and share common interests. They typically offer sufficient floor area to accommodate several thousand attendees. They are large suitable venues for major trade shows, are sometimes known as exhibition centres. Convention centers typically have at least one auditorium and may also contain concert halls, lecture halls, meeting rooms, and conference rooms. Some large resort area hotels include a convention center. The most common conventions are based
upon industry, profession, and fandom. Conventions are often planned and coordinated, often in exacting detail, by professional meeting and convention planners, either by staff of the convention's hosting company or by outside specialists. Most large cities will have a convention center dedicated to hosting such events. The term MICE – Meetings, Incentives Conferences and Exhibitions - is widely used in Asia as a description of the industry; with Conference ("C") being the most dynamic element in the M.I.C.E. segment. The industry is generally regulated under the tourism sector. Nations have built multi-purpose convention centres to host attendees; both local and international visitors for meetings and various forums (Barnes, 2008).

Country like New Zealand have Christchurch Convention Centre that is first purpose-built convention centre. The design concept was to focus single-mindedly on one simple idea – a concrete box fronted with glass which established a dialogue with the much-loved Christchurch Town Hall opposite. The halls comprise over 1,850m² of pillarless, flat floor space, intended specifically for conventions, exhibitions, trade shows and various gala events. The design incorporates a glass-fronted foyer, main hall with an 8m high ceiling and capacity to seat 2,200 delegate’s theatre style, or 1,350 for a gala dinner. Seven break-out rooms on the first floor can be configured to accommodate between 30 and 130 delegates each. These diverse multi-use facilities could have easily become a complex jumble of spaces and connections, a hodgepodge of unrelated rooms and corridors that characterize many other buildings of this type. Behind this frontage a sequence of spaces interact with the street, and leads to its interior. Both buildings are connected by a glazed over-bridge straddling a busy inner-city thoroughfare – an aerial piazza. In its plan it seeks to challenge the lack of urban design and points towards what the city centre may one day become. The
Convention Centre establishes an intentional but respectful generational differentiation to its more established counterpart. While the Town Hall hides its purpose behind concrete walls, as was usual in 1966, the Convention Centre uses glass and steel to project an openness and honesty. The play between the two buildings is through materiality. The detailing language of glass, steel and concrete of the Convention Centre is a contemporary interpretation of the concrete and timber of the Town Hall. A flush glass wall on its public face, opposite the Town Hall, is supported by an elaborate, purpose-made structural system behind. Each sheet of glass is hung off stainless steel wires and braced against wind loading by steel pincers joined to the outriggers of the steel support trusses. Behind the glazing runs a curved concrete wall. Design emphasis was placed on the highly glazed south facing entrance foyer that articulates the concept of layering: a highly visible public space (foyer), a semi-public space (circulation hall) and the private spaces (convention rooms). The foyer which is clearly visible to passers-by between the concrete and glass, consciously engages with the street and generates an open connection to it. Carefully articulated it provides a light voluminous entrance contrasting with the internalized convention spaces. To the side of the foyer lies the naturally top-lit, pre-function and circulation zone running the full 90 metre length of the site. The three major convention spaces are entered directly off this. A stair ascends to the first floor circulation area beside a balcony projecting out through an opening in the concrete wall. The seven events rooms are accessed from here. Designed to be elegant, by both day and night, the entrance foyer acts as a brightly lit lantern and contemporary counterpoint to its more mature immediate neighbor (Barnes, 2008).

The new Convention Centre Dublin (CCD) – designed by Kevin Roche, John
Dinkeloo and Associates LLC, and built by Treasury Holdings Limited and John Sisk & Son Limited (who set up a joint venture for this project) – is a new and inspiring way of conceiving a space for conferences and cultural events. Figures have made a small but important contribution to this massive project by outfitting the main auditorium. The building, located on the Spencer Dock, features a cutting-edge design based on a stunning glass cylinder that skewers the building from top to bottom, emerging to form a spectacular glass atrium. The CCD, with a 2000-seat auditorium and 4500 square metres of exhibition space, is recognized as the world’s first carbon neutral convention centre and meets the highest standards of environmental sustainability. In the selection of construction processes and materials, the focus was on choosing the most ecological alternatives available. When configuring the auditorium, the challenge was to deliver the multi-functionality needed to accommodate the diverse range of events that will take place at the centre. The CCD’s programme makes it essential that the space can be quickly adapted to any type of event, from a corporate convention to a world-class concert. Chairs and tables can be quickly removed to create a raised stage for an orchestra, and just as easily put back where they belong when the performance is over. The generously dimensioned Mega-seat used for this installation features a fire barrier and an acoustic absorption system that optimizes acoustics for crystal-clear sound. Combined with the F-45 foldaway work table, it is the perfect solution for conferences and lengthy sessions (Conferences-UK.org.uk, 2008).

In South Africa, Cape Town International Convention Centre is a multi-purpose conference and exhibition centre in the hub of Cape Town. It combines the impassioned dedication of its capable personnel with an extensive range of
premium venues, services and facilities (CTICC, 2013). While in Kenya, hosting of conference is done in various hotels mainly in Coastal regions. Major international conferences are done in Nairobi mainly at Kenyatta International Convention Centre.

1.1.5 Kenyatta International Convention Centre

In the early 1960s, Kenya emerged as the commercial and communication hub of the East and Central Africa. The Government of Kenya then saw the need to roll out an ultra-modern conference facility in order to attract meetings regionally and internationally, hence the birth of Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) (KICC, 2007).

The KICC was designed by a Norwegian architect Karl Henrik Nostvik in 1967; where he combined an understanding of the traditions, aspirations and environment of the people of Kenya with the needs of modern conference organizers in terms of space, administration and ancillary requirements. Construction started in 1969 with the facility being opened on the 11th September, 1973 by the late President, H. E. Mzee Jomo Kenyatta. The same month saw KICC host its first international conference, the Annual Meetings of the Board of Governors of the World Bank Group and the IMF, one of the first largest international conferences to take place in Africa (KICC, 2007).

Towerling over buildings in East and Central Africa, KICC became an icon and landmark for Nairobi and a source of pride for Kenyans. Over the years, it was managed as a Government department under various Ministries until 1991 when the then ruling party KANU took possession of KICC from the Ministry of Tourism and
Wildlife and turned it into its headquarters. The facility was taken over by the Government of Kenya on 11th February, 2003 (KICC, 2007).

K.I.C.C. was transformed from a Government Department in the Ministry of Tourism to a State Corporation in July 2004; vide KICC Order 2004 of Legal Notice No. 77, following recommendations of the Task Force appointed by the Minister-in-charge of Tourism, to look into transformation of KICC into a parastatal. With the enactment of Tourism Act of 2011, the Corporation’s name changed to Kenyatta International Convention Centre, charged with the object of promoting the business of meetings, conventions and exhibitions through the development of the National Meetings, Incentive travel, Conferences and Exhibitions (M.I.C.E) strategy. Kenya has a large potential for M.I.C.E business, as a major product, owing to its location and ease of international connections. However, to fully realize the potential of M.I.C.E business, it has to benchmark against such leading M.I.C.E. destinations like South Africa, Malaysia, United Arab Emirates, Europe and America (KICC, 2007).

KICC will play a significant role in helping meet tourism sector targets through product diversification and development and implementation of MICE strategy that will seek to; increase number of delegates attending international Conferences from 35,663 in 2012 to 57,435 in 2017; increase the number of international conferences held in the country from 328 in 2012 to 528 in 2017 and to develop a new convention centre at the coastal city of Mombasa. In addition, organizational performance has been the most important issue for every organization be it profit or non-profit one. It has been very important for managers to know which factors influence an organization’s performance in order for them to take appropriate steps to initiate
them. However, defining, conceptualizing, and measuring performance have not been an easy task. Researchers among themselves have different opinions and definitions of performance, which remains to be a contentious issue among organizational researchers Barney (1997). The central issue concerns with the appropriateness of various approaches to the concept utilization and measurement of organizational performance (Venkatraman & Ramanuiam, 1986).

In the view of Hansen and Wernerfelt (1989) in the business policy literature, there were two major streams of research on the determinants of organizational performance. One was based on economic tradition, emphasizing the importance of external market factors in determining organizational performance. The other line of research was built on the behavioral and sociological paradigm and saw organizational factors and their ‘fit’ with the environment as the major determinant of success. The economic model of organizational performance provided a range of major determinants of organizational profit which included characteristics of the industry in which the organization competed, the organization’s position relative to its competitors, and the quality of the firm’s resources. Organizational model of firm performance focused on organizational factors such as human resources policies, organizational culture, and organizational climate and leadership styles. Another study by Chien (2004) found that there were five major factors determining organizational performance, namely: Leadership styles and environment, Organizational culture, Job design, Model of motive, and Human resource policies.

In a study by Ricardo (2001), there was a difference between performance and productivity. Productivity was a ratio depicting the volume of work completed in a
given amount of time. Performance was a broader indicator that could include productivity as well as quality, consistency and other factors. In result oriented evaluation, productivity measures were typically considered. Ricardo (2001) argued that performance measures could include result-oriented behavior (criterion-based) and relative (normative) measures, education and training, concepts and instruments, including management development and leadership training, which were the necessary building skills and attitudes of performance management. Hence, from the above literature review, the term “performance” should be broader based which include effectiveness, efficiency, economy, quality, consistency behavior and normative measures (Ricardo, 2001).

Previous research had used many variables to measure organizational performance (Thomas & Ramaswamy, 1996; Gimenez, 2000). These variables include profitability, gross profit, return on asset (ROA), return on investment (ROI), return on equity (ROE), return on sale (ROS), revenue growth, market share, stock price, sales growth, export growth, liquidity and operational efficiency. Javier (2002) found out that performance is equivalent to the famous 3Es (economy, efficiency, and effectiveness) of a certain program or activity. However, according to Daft (2000), organizational performance is the organization’s ability to attain its goals by using resources in an efficient and effective manner. Quite similar to Daft (2000), Richardo (2001) defined organizational performance as the ability of the organization to achieve its goals and objectives.

Kenyatta International Convention Centre had a strategic plan 2008-2012 with well-established guidelines to achieve its targets. Under the master plan, KICC was
charged with implementing the Business and Conference Tourism initiative, which was one of the 4 products under tourism sector of the economic pillar of Vision 2030. The organization partnered with various institutions like Department of Tourism, Ministry of East African Affairs, Commerce and Tourism, Kenya Utalii College, The Kenya Tourism Board and the national carrier Kenya Airways. The development of National MICE strategy was earmarked to be launched in 2009 but this was achieved in June 2010. This delay was a result of insufficient funds for the project; only 10% of MICE strategy was implemented with funds raised by KICC in 2011/2012 financial year.

In addition, the corporation during 2008-2012 plan periods completed the Electrical Rewiring and Fire Fighting System project - phase 1 as well as the supply and installation of 2 chiller plant units for a centralized air conditioning system (KICC, 2007). The Conference Management System Phase 1 was accomplished and phase 2 commenced immediately upon receiving addition funds from Treasury. In partnership with the Kenya Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC), the Mombasa International Convention Centre project was initiated. The feasibility study was undertaken on the land parcel at Bamburi quarry leased by Lafarge Bamburi Cement Company.

1.2 Research Problem

According to Dyer, Kale, and Singh (2001), 70% of partnerships fail to neither meet the goals of their parent companies nor deliver on the operational or strategic benefits they purport to provide (Bamford, Gomes-Casseres, & Robinson, 2004). Partner termination rates are reportedly over 50% (Lunnan & Haugland, 2008), and in
many cases forming such relationships has resulted in shareholder value destruction for the companies that engage in them Kale, Dyer, and Singh (2002). This creates a paradox for firms. While companies face significant obstacles in ensuring sufficient success with partnerships, they also need to form a greater number of partnerships than before, and must increasingly rely on them as a means of enhancing their competitiveness and growth.

Partnerships could be particularly important as mechanisms to help address market failures or failures in organizational performance and weak public administrative or infrastructure capacity—where neither the market nor the government is able on its own to deliver public goods or meet crucial social and environmental challenges. They are not always the most appropriate approach. Nor are they easy. They often have high transaction costs and are difficult to establish and sustain. Many of them fail, or at least fail to meet the high expectations that are created when they are first established ((Lunnan & Haugland, 2008)).

The Kenyatta International Convention Centre has moved to establish strategic partnerships with various organizations. These organizations includes; Kenya Tourism Board, Kenya Airways, Capital FM, Kenya Film Corporation, various hotels and Government Square Security Committee. Others include Directorate of Public Works, Stadia Management Board, Bomas of Kenya, COTU and Mombasa County Government. These partnerships are aimed at enhancing service delivery in the MICE business. However, in comparison with its Master Strategic Plan, that had neither been productive nor sustainable. It was against this background that the study sought to answer the following research questions; what strategic partnerships have Kenyatta
International Convention Centre employed? What Influence has the strategic partnerships had on the performance of Kenyatta International Convention Centre?

1.3 Research Objective

The study sought to achieve the following research objectives.

i) To determine the strategic partnerships employed by Kenyatta International Convention Centre.

ii) To determine the influence of strategic partnerships on the performance of Kenyatta International Convention Centre.

1.4 Value of the Study

The study aimed at determining the influence of strategic partnerships on the performance of Kenyatta International Convention Centre. Based on the understanding of the problem; the management would be advised on available scientific alternatives to radically restructure the organization’s strategic partnerships.

In creating an understanding of the specific problems, the management would be able to devise appropriate actions to address it and improve the institution’s operation. The recommendations could also be used to evaluate strategic partnerships at the institution. It further targeted the support of stakeholders, mainly the Ministry of East African Affairs, Commerce and Tourism would realign their partnership projects for successful accomplishment.

The study would help the government in transforming Kenya into newly industrializing middle-income country providing high quality life to all her
citizens by 2030 in a clean and secure environment. The research aimed at creating a fundamental framework through which other researchers could recommend effective strategic partnerships in both private and public sectors as well as advance studies on strategic partnership for enhanced performance at KICC.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents reviews of literature on the influence the strategic partnerships on performance of Kenyatta International Convention Centre. The literature will explore theoretical, empirical, critical reviews and derive a conceptual framework for the study.

2.1 Theoretical Foundations

There are various theories developed and show the essence of strategic partnerships amongst organizations. These theories include: Stakeholder Theory: According to Friedman (1970), while a traditional view of the organization sees their primary function as maximizing the financial returns of the owners, the stakeholder theory takes an extended perspective on its functions and dependencies. It is an organizational management theory developed, amongst others, by R. E. Freeman to build a case for why businesses should consider the interests of the organization’s stakeholders in tandem with creating value for their shareholders. He broadly defines a stakeholder as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives" Freeman and Reed (1983). Freeman (1984); argues that the success of the organization depends on the continued management of the organization's relationships with its stakeholders and that the organization’s continued legitimacy and survival depends on simultaneously managing these different and often conflicting interests.

As a result of increasing pressures, and the reputational risks the mismanagement of
stakeholders could pose, companies and other organizations have started to pay more attention to their stakeholders’ interests (Googins & Rochlin, 2000). Companies are reacting with efforts to appeal to and engage their stakeholders, leading them to explore stakeholder management (Huijstee & Glasbergen, 2008). Since stakeholders’ expectations are constantly changing over time, dialogue is essential to sense their changing demands. Dialogue is additionally useful for giving the organizations’ own perspectives to the stakeholders (Waddock 2002; Morsing & Schultz, 2006). Therefore, stakeholder theory holds great potential to explain the increased interest in collaboration through partnerships between businesses, but it falls short of explaining what can be expected by entering a partnership.

Resource Dependency Theory: Another way of looking at motivations for partnering across sectors is through the lens of the resource-based view and the resource dependency theory. It is an organizational theory that focuses on external dependencies to others, while resource dependency theory employs economic theory and examines the internal conditions of the organization. Pfeffer and Salancick (1978), argue that all organizational outcomes are based on interdependencies, because "in social systems and social interactions, interdependence exists whenever one actor does not entirely control all of the conditions necessary for the achievement of an action or for obtaining the outcome desired from the action”. This means that a partnership with an organization in a different sector could be “an excellent means of managing firm-specific uncertainty as well as policy uncertainty”, by gaining access to critical resources necessary for their own success and survival (Arya & Salk, 2006). While the resource dependency theory looks at the external interdependence with
other actors, a highly related theory is the resource-based view (RBV). RBV has a more internal view on resources, looking at how organizations can obtain and maintain competitive advantages (Neergaard et al., 2009). Eisenhardt and Schoonhoven (1996) argue that partnering occurs when organizations are facing strategic needs and social opportunities that they cannot deal with by themselves. When an organization does not have the necessary resources internally, it is dependent on external actors who have these needed resources. These resources can include financial resources, technical capabilities, knowledge, and organizational legitimacy. Organizations could address these issues strategically in a partnership by using other organizations to fill their core needs. The main rationale for creating strategic partnerships is the potential for value-creation through pooling organizations’ resources together (Penrose, 2009; Das & Tang, 2000). Partnering requires important considerations because the partnership performance will be affected by the possibility of aligning each partner’s interests. These interests consist of two dimensions: resource similarity and resource utilization, which directly affect the collective strengths and potential conflicts in the partnership (Das & Teng, 2000).

Social Network Theory: It gives a sociological perspective on how relationships are established and maintained. This theory is considered central to the study of partnerships, and focuses on “social interaction and network relations within and between organizations” (Neergaard et al., 2009). Understanding such relations is important because, as the social context from previous alliances and considerations of strategic interdependence can influence partnership decisions (Gulati, 2000; Doh 2008). Social network theory can provide important information about potential partners’ capability and reliability. There are two main forces in the social network
theory; the structural configuration of the network itself, and the centrality and
dynamics of individual actors (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003). The theory examines the
relations between organizations in society, represented by a system of actors (like
people, groups, and organizations). Social capital is an important element in social
network theory and is a precondition for the social process of transferring and
utilizing knowledge necessary for the partnership to succeed (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003).

2.2 Empirical Review

This section will provide an empirical review. Past literature in strategic partnership,
organizational performance and concept of convention center will be covered in this
section. Therefore, this section provided empirical review in the following order;
strategic partnership, organizational performance and convention center.

2.2.1 Strategic Partnership

According to Neergaard et al., (2009), partners work together strategically “on a
common problem which they would both like to see resolved.” The ventures create a
more dependent relationship between the partners, and “value will only be created
through a mutually dependent exchange of ideas, resources and efforts.” (Googins &
Rochlin, 2000). Partners see intractable problems that affect both of their missions,
and are not in a position to solve things by themselves. They are thus required to
collaborate in order to succeed. Strategic partnerships have, according to partnership
theory, the most potential for added value, since joining forces allow actors to reach
outcomes that neither partner could have achieved on their own (Googins & Rochlin,
2000; Neergaard et al., 2009).
According to Jamali and Keshishian (2009) and Neergaard et al. (2009), the formation of partnerships can be divided into 3 phase namely the initiation phase, the execution phase, and outcomes. The Partnership Initiation phase: This involves motivations, first contact, planning and other activities that start an engagement between partners. For a successful partnership between businesses to be established, it is essential to first identify and understand both own and the potential partner’s motivating forces for entering into collaborations across sectors. Austin and Reficco (2001) states that understanding this is “central to fostering the births of partnerships by finding common ground for coming together from disparate sectors”. The failure of many partnerships can often be traced to partner selection and the planning stage (Jamali & Keshishian, 2009).

Organizations must find a compatible company with issues that are congruent to their own (Berger et al., (2004); Jamali & Keshishian, 2009). Glasbergen and Huijstee (2008) pointed out that a ‘stakeholder map’ could be a useful tool in identifying relevant partners. By finding a partner with the right attitude, expertise, competence and issue relevance, it is more likely that the partnership can succeed. Berger et al. (2004) identifies a range of dimensions for how well the potential partners ‘fit’ each other, which could be used to spot similarities and differences that could help to evaluate the partnership compatibility. Partnership literature stresses the importance for partnerships of finding common goals that are aligned to each of the partners’ interests and serves as basis for success or failure in the future of partnerships (Cohen, 2003). The process of “issue crystallization” involves shaping and forming of common issues that the partners wish to address, as well as the building of common
understanding of how the partnership can build around such issues and take action towards them (Waddock, 1989).

The Partnership Execution phase: “Translating the goals of the initiation phase into action” (Cohen, 2003). In order to facilitate good performance from the partners, the partnership literature has stressed the importance of key factors that need attention in the execution phase (Googins & Rochlin, 2000; Rondinelli & London, 2001; Cohen, 2003; Jamali & Keshishian, 2009). This included relation to core activities, knowledge sharing, top management commitment and organizational anchoring, communication, trust and Organizational Culture.

Partnership Outcome phase involves evaluation of the partnership (Cohen, 2003). Partnership evaluation is an important, ongoing process to ensure progress and results (Googins & Rochlin, 2000). This is necessary to secure the partnership’s progress and ensure that both partners are achieving their goals. Evaluation is done both to benchmark performance with objectives and to analyze positive and negative experiences encountered along the way. Through evaluation, the organizations can learn from their experiences with each other. Learning ability is a prerequisite for being able to utilize partnership processes and diffuse the knowledge and capabilities of the partner in one’s own organization. Learning is a continual process throughout the partnership, starting from the initial contact where partners start to learn each other’s competencies, goals, and values throughout the relationship building process, to the ability to utilize complementary capabilities within the partnership (Cohen, 2003).
2.2.2 Organizational Performance

Researchers among themselves have different opinions of organizational performance. According to Javier (2002), performance is equivalent to the famous 3Es (economy, efficiency, and effectiveness) of a certain program or activity. However, according to Daft (2000), organizational performance is the organization’s ability to attain its goals by using resources in an efficient and effective manner. Quite similar to Daft (2000), Ricardo (2001) defined organizational performance as the ability of the organization to achieve its goals and objectives. One of the important questions in business has been why some organizations succeeded while others failed.

Organization performance has been the most important issue for every organization be it profit or non-profit one. It has been very important for managers to know which factors influence an organization’s performance in order for them to take appropriate steps to initiate them. However, defining, conceptualizing, and measuring performance have not been an easy task. Researchers among themselves have different opinions and definitions of performance, which remains to be a contentious issue among organizational researchers Barney (1997). The central issue concerns with the appropriateness of various approaches to the concept utilization and measurement of organizational performance. Organizational performance has suffered from not only a definition problem, but also from a conceptual problem (Hefferman & Flood, 2000). They stated that as a concept in modern management, organizational performance suffered from problems of conceptual clarity in a number of areas. The first was the area of definition while the second was that of measurement. The term performance was sometimes confused with productivity.
As stated by Ricardo (2001), there was a difference between performance and productivity. Productivity was a ratio depicting the volume of work completed in a given amount of time. Performance was a broader indicator that could include productivity as well as quality, consistency and other factors. In result oriented evaluation, productivity measures were typically considered. Ricardo (2001) argued that performance measures could include result-oriented behavior (criterion-based) and relative (normative) measures, education and training, concepts and instruments, including management development and leadership training, which were the necessary building skills and attitudes of performance management. Hence, from the above literature review, the term “performance” should be broader based which include effectiveness, efficiency, economy, quality, consistency behavior and normative measures (Ricardo, 2001).

In view of Hansen and Wernerfelt (1989) on the business policy literature, there were two major streams of research on the determinants of organizational performance. One was based on economic tradition, emphasizing the importance of external market factors in determining organizational performance. The other line of research was built on the behavioral and sociological paradigm and saw organizational factors and their ‘fit’ with the environment as the major determinant of success. The economic model of organizational performance provided a range of major determinants of organizational profit which included characteristics of the industry in which the organization competed, the organization’s position relative to its competitors, and the quality of the firm’s resources. Organizational model of firm performance focused on organizational factors such as human resources policies, organizational culture, and organizational climate and leadership styles. Another study by Chien (2004)
found that there were five major factors determining organizational performance, namely: Leadership styles and environment, Organizational culture, Job design, Model of motive, and Human resource policies.

Previous research had used many variables to measure organizational performance (Parnell & Wright, 1993; Thomas & Ramaswamy, 1996; Gimenez, 2000). These variables include profitability, gross profit, return on asset (ROA), return on investment (ROI), return on equity (ROE), return on sale (ROS), revenue growth, market share, stock price, sales growth, export growth, liquidity and operational efficiency. Although the importance of organizational performance is widely recognized, there has been considerable debate about both issues of terminology and conceptual bases for performance measurement. No single measure of performance may fully explicate all aspects of the term. There was also inconsistent measurement of organizational performance although most researchers (Peter & Crawford, 2004; Lee, 2005) measured organizational performance by using quantitative data like return on investments, return on sales and so forth. The definition of performance has included both efficiency-related measures, which relate to the input/output relationship, and effectiveness related measures, which deal with issues like business growth and employee satisfaction. Additionally, performance has also been conceptualized using financial and nonfinancial measures from both objective and perceptual sources. Objective measures include secondary source financial measures such as return on assets, return on investment, and profit growth. These measures are nonbiased and are particularly useful for single-industry studies because of the uniformity in measurement across all organizations in the sample.
Kenyatta International Convention Centre had a strategic plan 2008-2012 with well-established guidelines to achieve its targets. Under the master plan, KICC was charged with implementing the Business and Conference Tourism initiative, which was one of the 4 products under tourism sector of the economic pillar of Vision 2030. The organization partnered with various institutions like Department of Tourism, Ministry of East African Affairs, Commerce and Tourism, Kenya Utalii College, The Kenya Tourism Board and the national carrier Kenya Airways. The development of National MICE strategy was earmarked to be launched in 2009 but this was achieved in June 2010. This delay was a result of insufficient funds for the project; only 10% of MICE strategy was implemented with funds raised by KICC in 2011/2012 financial year. In addition, the corporation during 2008-2012 plan period completed the Electrical Rewiring and Fire Fighting System project - phase 1 as well as the supply and installation of 2 chiller plant units for a centralized air conditioning system. The Conference Management System Phase 1 was accomplished and phase 2 commenced immediately upon receiving addition funds from Treasury. In partnership with the Kenya Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC), the Mombasa International Convention Centre project was initiated. The feasibility study was undertaken on the land parcel at Bamburi quarry leased by Larfage Bamburi Cement Company.

However, the organization experienced various challenges that included inadequate funding that mainly affected implementation of MICE. Secondly, lack of a framework for public private partnership hampered implementation of a modernization and expansion of KICC program. Other challenges were over ambitious strategies and lack of the various people to deliver on good strategies that are in place, there
were many committees for the less work force hence extreme straining, focus was put on promotion of the centre rather than wider mandate of promoting the destination hence losing out opportunities. Lack of ownership for the strategic plan amongst many employees, poor budgeting process (departmental budgets slashed without consultation), focus on revenue generation instead of marketing destinations. The organization was reactive instead of proactive, insufficient funding for research and development programs, erroneous grading of the organization as a commercial entity. In addition many policies and structures were not implemented for example the new KICC staffing structure, succession planning and mentoring policies. Likewise, the procurement and payment systems are cumbersome due to many approvals required.

2.2.3 Concept of Convention Centre

A convention center is a large building that is designed to hold a convention, where individuals and groups gather to promote and share common interests. Convention centers typically offer sufficient floor area to accommodate several thousand attendees. Very large venues, suitable for major trade shows, are sometimes known as exhibition centres. Convention centers typically have at least one auditorium and may also contain concert halls, lecture halls, meeting rooms, and conference rooms. Some large resort area hotels include a convention center.

Conventions are often planned and coordinated, often in exacting detail, by professional meeting and convention planners, either by staff of the convention's hosting company or by outside specialists. Most large cities will have a convention center dedicated to hosting such events. The term MICE - meetings Incentives Conventions and Exhibitions - is widely used in Asia as a description of the
industry. The Convention ("C") is one of the most dynamic elements in the M.I.C.E. segment. The industry is generally regulated under the tourism sector.

2.3 Critical review

From the past studies by Jiang and Li (2009); Wang and Horsburgh, (2007); Zoogah et al., (2011), some results demonstrate that strategic partnerships improve financial performance. However, empirical research into the relationship between a firm’s strategic partnerships and performance is mixed. Some researchers fail to find a direct relationship between strategic partnerships and performance, arguing the relationship exists via mediating factors (Steensma & Corley, 2000). Other researchers report no association between a firm’s strategic partnerships and performance (Shrader, 2001). The arguments provided in this study are valid to some extent however, the purpose of strategic partnerships is to bring a mutual competitive gain into every part and process of organization therefore several researchers are of the opinion to educate the change and provide training before it takes place.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The investigation examined the influence of strategic partnerships on performance of Kenyatta International Convention Centre like on cycle time, supply links and market position. The key performance indicators for the organization were identified forming the independent variables for the study. Firstly marketing development as a variable was measured through new customer acquisition, customer attrition; conference sales turn over, profitability by segment of customers and market share penetration. Secondly, information technological development was measured in terms of availability/uptime, mean time between failure, mean time to repair and
unplanned availability. Thirdly, financial development was measured through automated entry of financial data, approval functions, profitability ratios, leverage position and debt collection rate. Finally research development was measured using availability of researched studies that aid the organization, quick problem solving and enhanced conference services.
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is a blueprint of the methodology that was used by the researcher to find answers to the research question. This chapter explains research design, sampling procedures, data and analysis and presentation.

3.2 Research design

Donald (2006) notes that a research design is the structure of the research; it is the "glue that holds all the elements in a research proposal together. Further, Orodho (2003) defines a research design as the scheme, outline or plan that is used to generate answers to research problems. This research was conducted through a case study since it was a research on one organization. A case study is an in-depth investigation of an individual, institution or phenomenon (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Since this study sought to investigate influence of strategic partnerships on the performance of Kenyatta International Convention Centre, a case study design was deemed the best design to fulfill the objectives of the study. A case study was chosen because it enables the researcher to have an in-depth understanding of the strategic partnerships on the performance in KICC. The importance of a case study is emphasized by Kothari (2000) who acknowledge that a case study is a powerful form of qualitative analysis that involves a careful and complete observation of a social unit, irrespective of what type of unit is under study.

3.3 Target population

The target population of the study was selected managers at Kenyatta
International Convention Centre. They were drawn from various departments and divisions namely Executive office, Finance and Administration, Sales and Marketing, Operations, Internal Audit, Corporate Planning, Legal and Regulatory Affairs, Supply Chain, Housekeeping, Security and Safety, Technical Services, Customer Service, Human Resources and Information Communication Technology.

3.5 Data Collection

The study collected primary data through interview guide. Questions on the interview guide were developed to give response on key performance indicators already identified. Interview method was used since it generally yields highest cooperation thus offers high response quality, takes advantage of interviewer presence and it's multi-method data collection (Owens, 2002). Interviews were conducted through oral administration involving face-to-face contact with the respondent. The use of interviews sought to attract in-depth data from the interviewees.

3.6 Data Analysis

Since the data collected was qualitative in nature, content analysis was used to analyze the data collected via the interview guides to measure the influence of strategic partnerships on performance of KICC. Before the analysis was done, all the filled up questions in interview guide were checked for reliability and consistency in a manner that facilitate analysis (Ngechu, 2006). The data collected was grouped in to the four thematic areas: marketing, finance, research development and ICT development. Data collected was then analyzed and interpreted in accordance to the research question. Results of the analysis were then presented in prose.
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis of the data collected on the influence of strategic partnerships on performance of Kenyatta International Convention Centre. The study sought responses from various departments and divisions including Executive office, Finance and Administration, Sales and Marketing, Operations, Internal Audit, Corporate Planning, Legal and Regulatory, Supply Chain, Housekeeping, Security and Safety, Technical Services, Customer Service, Human Resources and Information Communication Technology. The study used interview guide to collect data.

4.2 Data Analysis

This section presents analysis of data collected through the interview of managers at KICC. Therefore, the data analysis is presented in accordance to the thematic areas which includes performance of KICC, marketing developments, ICT development, financial development and research developments.

4.2.1 Performance of KICC

The study sought to establish from the respondents the conference market position of KICC. The respondents indicated that KICC is the leading conference venue in Kenya and in the region and second in Africa. Courtesy of the KICC, Kenya is ranked second in Conference Tourism in Africa after South Africa and 58th globally in the ‘Country & City rankings 2012’ report by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), a worldwide umbrella body for international Conferences and conventions. The respondents indicated that by virtue of its size especially on the
big meeting rooms, KICC claims the top position. Further, the respondents noted that KICC focuses on both local and international markets for conference tourism. The respondents also indicated that efforts were there to claim the top position by increasing capacity of KICC as well as provide variety to choose from. The respondents noted that there were expansion intention starting with Mombasa, Kisumu, and Isiolo. According to the respondents, already land has been secured in Bamburi Mombasa awaiting construction of a green convention centre. Nevertheless the respondents noted that hotels in Kenya are overtaking KICC in medium sized meetings and conferences.

The study further required that the respondents describe the cycle time in processing conference services at the organization. Majority of the respondents noted that cycle time in processing conference services at the organization is relatively slowed down by the many consultations that have to be made before a conclusion is reached. The respondents however differed in relation to lead-time in booking an event at the KICC. They indicated that the cycle time varies with the nature of conference support services for each event (i.e. the complexity of requisitions from the client). They noted that the cycle time ranges from hours to 45 days for local conferences while for international conferences cycle time may be as long as 2 to 4 years. They therefore highlighted that cycle time in processing conference services at the KICC was majorly dependent on resources availability and details of the conferences.

Further, the respondents were asked to describe supply-link-conference-services enhanced through partnerships. The respondents noted that there are a number of supply-link-conference-services enhanced through partnerships that include provision
of audio visual, catering service, provision of equipment, interpreters and provision of tents. The respondents noted that supply-link-conference-services is a working arrangement and has enhanced performance of KICC. They indicated that this arrangement takes advantage of benefits of supplier network with support partners to provide a one-stop shop to offer value proposition to clients. Further, partnerships enable KICC to fully exploit various strengths of various partners in the industry to offer clients value and meet their expectations. The process of establishing partnership in KICC was established as first identifying the need, seeking potential partners, doing pre-qualification and then entering into service level agreements.

4.2.2 Marketing Development

On how development of the partnerships enhances new conference customer’s acquisition, the respondents indicated that partnership enhances new conference customer acquisition through referrals and a wider marketing coverage. Also, the respondents noted that partnerships helps KICC provide a seamless service to the clients and allows KICC to focus on its core function while allowing its partners to provide the non-core functions and therefore improve efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Further, the respondents highlighted that with varied customer requests it may not be possible to surpass client expectations, consequently through partnership, KICC is able to develop and present a stronger value proposition and acquire more customers. Further, the respondents indicated that when partnerships are working, cycle time is reduced in the procurement process for services.

The study sought to find out the direct impact that strategic partnerships have on conference sales turn over at KICC. According to the respondents,
partnerships improves the sales turnover in the sense that KICC does not have to invest in the equipment needed but is able to make revenue as a percentage of what the partner makes. Further, the respondents pointed out that KICC benefited from the partners in sourcing for clients in the clients’ respective areas of specialization. The partners then refer the clients to KICC. Further, through partnership KICC has reduced the cost of sales as a result of reduced cost of procurement. However, some respondents indicated that other partnerships like caterers influenced revenue at KICC negatively since KICC could comfortably offer the services. The respondents therefore recommended that KICC should have a kitchen so as to tap that revenue.

The respondents were asked to discuss the impact of strategic partnerships on customer attrition (defection/churn) at KICC. Majority of the respondents indicated that strategic partnerships has reduced customer attrition through improved service delivery that leads to higher customer retention, repeated business and enhanced customer satisfaction. The respondents further noted that strategic partnerships enhance the efficiency of KICC therefore improving its competitiveness. Further, the respondents indicated that strategic partners contribute and share their prominent core competencies in order to provide co-developed goods and services to satisfy KICC customers and therefore enhance performance at KICC. However, the respondents noted that some strategic partners offer competition to KICC as they offer services, similar to those offered by KICC, at lower rate premises at the premises of the partners. The respondents noted that KICC has lost clients to such strategic partners especially hotels. Further, the respondents indicated that KICC risks losing its customers when the partners fail to offer value to clients’ expectation.
The respondents were further required to describe how profitability by segments of customers is enhanced by the strategic partnership employed. According to the respondents, some segments related to third party transactions like in catering and audio visual has enhanced profitability. The respondents indicated that segments of customers allows for price segmentation/differentiation in respect to segments and therefore enhance profitability. The respondents noted that KICC divides its target customers according to the common needs and priorities of the market, and then designs and implements strategies to target them. Further, they noted that customers always wanted to be associated with the best brands in each segment and partnership enhanced the customer confidence in KICC and therefore increased profits. However, a section of the respondents noted that segmentation of customer is not enhanced by strategic partnerships in KICC and that the two are not linked at the centre.

The study required the respondents to indicate how market share and penetration was influenced by the strategic partnerships used by the KICC. According to the respondents, partnerships help KICC offer competitive services which leads to customer acquisition, reverses attritions to ultimately allow growth in respective segments resulting in increased market share and market penetration. The respondents also indicated that strategic partnerships are drawn as responses to market share and penetrations strategies and therefore partnership has greatly influences market share and penetration. Further, the respondents noted that since KICC is currently the only custom made conference center in the country. The respondents noted that strategic partners only market KICC when a client has task which the partners themselves cannot handle. However, others felt that activities in KICC have always been minimal
and therefore strategic partnerships employed already have not affected market share and penetrations.

4.2.2 Information Communication Technology Development

On how strategic partnerships enhances availability and uptime of internet connectivity at the organization, the respondents unanimously agreed that partnership with internet providers in the market has enhanced internet connectivity at KICC and reduced outages and downtimes. They noted that whenever a challenge with Internet is experienced with one service provider KICC would seek redress or switch to another provider. According to the respondents, this has enhanced reliability of Internet services provision to customers and enhanced customer experience in connectivity which is a critical value addition point. The respondents mentioned a case in point where partnerships entered with Safaricom eliminated previous challenges of Internet outage and inadequate bandwidth.

The study also sought to find out from the respondents the impact of strategic partnerships on mean time between IT failures. The respondents were of the opinion that strategic partnership had reduced mean time between IT failures. In this regard, the respondents indicated that customers’ experience with Internet connectivity was a critical consideration point in overall customers’ experience during delegate days. The respondents indicated that KICC had partnered with reliable service providers, which had reduced the number and duration of outages while increasing time between failures.

The study required the respondents, to indicate the current status of IT resources
employed by the organization, and how they were influenced by the strategic partnership. In that regard, the respondents noted that the ICT field was dynamic and therefore demand for IT resources related to conferencing keep on changing at a rate that may not be sustainable for an organization like KICC. Therefore KICC sort partner companies that specialized in ICT to keep up with the pace and provide state of art equipment to KICC clients for enhanced service delivery. While noting the inadequacy of ICT resources employed by KICC, the respondents noted that the level of deployment does not commensurate with the return on investment; they indicated that right software and specifications for hardware needs to be addressed to increase capacity utilization. The respondents noted that KICC engages competent partners to address the gaps in customers’ expectations and service delivery, partners who keeps up with trends in the market. According to the respondents, the service providers had helped to increase the quality of ICT resources. In the light of these, respondents recommended that KICC through the strategic partners should improve on ICT resources and emphasize on quality of service delivery.

The study further sought to establish how strategic partnerships reduce mean time to correct ICT related issues. The respondents indicated KICC engages the technical capacity of each partner to reduce mean time to sort out ICT related issues. Others indicated that mean time to fix the ICT related problems entirely depends on how contracts are drawn and executed and SLAs agreed upon. To this end they noted that it affects the down time due to unnecessary bureaucracies. Further, the respondents indicated that mean time to repair the ICT faults is felt when using internal equipment, and noted that when the strategic partners provides the service then mean time is reduced significantly. However, the respondents noted that strategic
partners more often than not delay in correcting ICT related issues owing to delayed payments as a result of bureaucracies at KICC. Delays in payment were sited to influence quality of services offered.

On how unplanned availability has been enhanced by the partnerships employed by the KICC, the respondents indicated that through partnerships service delivery of a wide range of products and equipment is efficient. They also noted that in case of breakdown, replacement is done instantly in a partnership arrangement, as they tend to fill unanticipated gaps. Also, the respondents indicated that strategic partners engaged understands the nature of business in KICC and therefore are available for provision of a service when need arise. Nonetheless, a section of respondents indicated that “planned unavailability” affects timely provision of services to clients with unrealistic high price which eventually drives away clients.

4.2.4 Financial Development

On the impact of strategic partnerships in automation of financial data processing and approval functions, the respondents indicated that through the deployment of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system the impact of automation of financial data processing has been greatly felt as expert knowledge is tapped for enhanced efficiency in operations. The respondents further indicated that this leads to timeliness of reports, enhanced quality of reporting and better provision of audit trail of transactions. They also indicated that automation of financial data processing and approval functions enhanced efficiency in KICC as these systems delinks personalities from processes. However, the respondents noted that automation of
financial data processing is not under strategic partnerships.

The respondents were required by the study to indicate how partnership with conference players, improves profitability ratio in KICC. The respondents said that; partnership in general improves the turnover and hence improves profitability, and since partnership enhances diversification, profitability in KICC is sustainable. Further, the respondents noted that each partner concentrates on its core business, thus there is enhanced quality in service delivery to clients which improves the business and increases profits at KICC. Likewise, the respondents indicated that partnership with conference players improves profitability ratio in KICC in that it enables realization of revenue streams from other third party sources.

The study also sought to establish how partnerships with lending institutions enhanced leverage position of KICC. The respondents indicated that KICC has not entered in a partnership with any lending institution except on one arrangement with Cooperative Bank where affordable staff loans deal was entered. However, they noted that the leverage position could be in terms of preferential rates and convenience in sourcing financial services critical in attaining organizational goals and strategic plans in a planning period.

Also, the respondents were required by the study to indicate whether debt collection rate have been enhanced by strategic relations and partnerships with conference players. The respondents indicated that debt collection has not improved since the partnership already entered has no debt collection functions. They however noted that KICC suffers with debts and therefore the need to establish debt collection strategies
urgently.

The study also sought to establish other performance indicators at Kenyatta International Convention Centre that are influenced by strategic partnerships. The respondents listed these as training and personal interest in partnerships which also affects the quality of services delivery by partnerships.

4.2.5 Research Development

On whether conference players are reluctant to share important convention researches/thesis and studies with others through strategic partnerships, the respondents indicated that hotels which also have small conference facilities, are reluctant to share with KICC details of upcoming functions yet, they are very enthusiastic when KICC gives them business. They further indicated that strategic partners in the past were reluctant because they thought KICC was a competitor, but after understanding the nature of business at KICC some would open up. They noted that reluctance could be reversed by explaining to the partners the importance of sharing information and how sharing of information would benefit them also.

The study sought to establish whether KICC have sufficient conference learning resources that enhance performance through partnerships. Majority of the respondents indicated that KICC have sufficient conference learning resources that enhance performance through partnerships. However, others indicated that KICC does not have sufficient conference learning resources and that more needs to be done to ensure availability of resources for enhanced performance at KICC.

On whether the development of research through partnerships improved
conference services delivery by KICC, the respondents indicated that research is done internally and that not much has been achieved on that front. However, they pointed out that it’s not clear whether the improved conference service delivery is as a result of research through partnerships.

The study also sought to establish how partnership in research undertakings enhance quality problem solving through critical analysis. The respondents indicated that partnerships in research optimize resources use and quality of research while enriching appreciation of different perspectives to solving a problem hence aiding in quality of decision made. However, they noted that partnership in research is still in the formative stages and therefore not much has been achieved.
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the data findings on the influence of strategic partnerships on the performance of Kenyatta International Convention Centre. Based on the findings in chapter four, the study gives recommendations on what KICC management can do to improve its performance of the organization. The limitations of the study and suggestion for further research are also discussed. From the analysis and data collected, the following discussions, conclusions and recommendations were made.

5.2 Summary

KICC is the leading conference venue in Kenya and in the region and second in Africa. The study established that cycle time in processing conference services at KICC is slowed down by the many consultations that have to be made before a conclusion is reached. The study illustrates that cycle time varies with the nature of conference support services needed for each event (i.e. the complexity of requisitions from the client), and resources availability. Supply-link-conference-services enhanced through partnerships were established to be provision of audiovisual equipment, catering service, Internet Service, interpreters and provision of tents. Supply-link-conference-services were found to be a working arrangement and have enhanced performance of KICC. The study established that partnerships enable KICC to fully exploit various strengths of various partners in the industry to offer clients value and
Partnerships enhances new conference customer acquisition, helps KICC provide a seamless service to the clients and allows KICC to focus on its core function while allowing its partners to provide the non-core functions and therefore improve efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. It was established that strategic partnership in KICC improves the sales turnover in the sense that KICC does not have to invest in the equipment needed but is able to make revenue as a percentage of what the partners make. Further, it was established that strategic partnership aids in reduction on the cost of procurement. On customers’ attrition, it was established that strategic partnerships in KICC has reduced customer attrition through improved services delivery that leads to customer retention, repeat business and enhanced customer satisfaction. Segments related to third party transactions in catering and audiovisual in KICC were found to enhance profitability as it allows for price segmentation/ differentiation. Also, it was established that partnership help KICC offer competitive services which leads to customer acquisition, reverses attritions to ultimately allow growth in respective segments resulting in increased market share and market penetration.

Partnership with Internet providers in the market has enhanced Internet connectivity at KICC and reduced outages and downtimes. This has enhanced reliability of Internet service provision to customer and enhanced customer experience in connectivity; a critical value addition point. The study also illustrated that strategic partnership has reduced mean time between ICT failures. KICC engages the technical capacity of each partner to reduce mean time to repair ICT related issues. According to the
findings, ICT field is dynamic and therefore demand for ICT resources related to conferencing keep on changing at a rate that may not be sustainable for an organization like KICC. The study indicated that through partnerships, service delivery of a wide range of services and equipment is efficient including unanticipated gaps, this indicates that service providers in partnership with KICC are available for provision of a service when need arise.

According to the study, through the deployment of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, the impact of automation of financial data processing has greatly been felt as expert knowledge is tapped for enhanced efficiency in operations. This therefore leads to timeliness of reports, enhanced quality of reporting and better provision of audit trail of transactions. The study illustrated that partnership with conference players in KICC improves profitability ratio in KICC in that it enables realization of revenue streams from other third party sources. It was also established that KICC has not entered in a partnership with any lending institution or debt collectors.

The study established that partners like hotels are reluctant to share with KICC important convention researches/thesis and studies since they perceive KICC as a potential competitor. It was also established that KICC have sufficient conference learning resources that enhance performance through partnerships. According to the study findings, partnerships in research optimize resources use and enhance quality of research while embracing different perspectives to solving a problem hence aiding in quality of decision made.
5.3 Conclusions

The study concludes that partnership has helped KICC to improve on cycle time, supply links and market position; this has enhanced its performance. KICC fully exploits various strengths of the partners to offer clients value and meet their expectations and thus improves performance at KICC. Strategic partnership has contributed in making KICC the leading conference venue in Kenya and in the region and second in Africa. Supply-link-conference-services were found to be a working arrangement and have enhanced performance of KICC. However, it was indicated that at times, cycle time is increased by the many consultations that have to be made before a conclusion is reached.

On marketing development, the study concludes that partnership enhances marketing development and new conference customer acquisition at KICC. This is done through referrals and a wider marketing coverage. Through partnerships, KICC provides a seamless service to the clients as it assists KICC to focus on its core function and therefore improve efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Strategic partnership in KICC improves the sales turnover and aids in reduction procurement cost, as they need not buy most of equipment as partners provide them. Strategic partnerships aids in reduction of customer attrition through improved services delivery that leads to customer retention, repeat business and enhanced customer satisfaction. The study therefore concludes that through partnerships, KICC offer competitive services which lead to customer acquisition, reverses attritions to ultimately allow growth in respective segments resulting in increased market share and market penetration and hence enhanced performance.
The study also concluded that partnership has enhanced Internet connectivity and ICT related services. Reliability of Internet services provision to customer has enriched customer experience. Partnership has reduced mean time between ICT failures for service providers working with KICC are available to deliver the service when need arise. Therefore, the study concludes that through partnership there are IT developments in KICC that have greatly improved performance through enhanced customer experience.

Further, the study concludes that partnerships with conference players in KICC improves profitability ratio as it enables realization of revenue streams from other third party sources. Partnership in KICC has led to deployment of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to automate financial processes; the impact of this automation has greatly been felt as expert knowledge is tapped to enhance efficiency in operations. However, it was established that KICC has not entered in a partnership with any lending institution or debt collectors.

The study concludes that research development in KICC has been enhanced by partnerships. KICC have sufficient conference learning resources that enhance performance through partnerships. Partnerships in research optimize resources use and quality of research while embracing different perspectives to solving a problem; this enhances quality of decision made. Therefore, the study concludes that through research developments, performance of KICC is enhanced.
5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that KICC should develop its facility to International standards while opening subsidiaries in every county to offer more accommodation and increase bed capacity. Further, through partnership, KICC should ensure that its customers get ideal transport and communication services to raise the attractiveness and capacity of the destination. This will lead to more referrals from customers and reduced customer attrition.

Further KICC should seek to improve on its partners selection and management of the resulting relationship with its partners to enhance service delivery. Proper terms should be agreed upon to ensure sustainable quality service delivery. In areas that KICC feels are inadequately addressed; training of the partners should be conducted to ensure quality of services offered.

5.5 Recommendation for Further Study

To augment the results of this study, the study recommends that another study should be done to establish factors that KICC consider before entering a partnership with a service provider. This will help to point out the gaps existing in performance at KICC even after engaging strategic partners.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

The study was conducted through interview guide; this provided a challenge as some respondents were not willing to participate owing to the busy schedule of their work. However, the researcher left with them the interview questions so that they could fill in at their free time and the researcher collected them later. Further, since the
study aimed at collecting intricate organizational information, some respondents’ feared victimization and therefore were not willing to participate in the study. To counter that limitation, the researcher assured them that the data collected was for academic purposes only and that their responses will be treated with anonymity and confidentiality.
REFERENCES


Heffernan, M., M., & Flood, P.C. (2000). An Exploration of the Relationship between Managerial Competencies Organizational, Characteristic and


Appendix I: Letter of Introduction

September, 2013

Dear respondent,

RE: REQUEST FOR RESEARCH DATA.

I am a master’s student at The University of Nairobi, pursuing a course leading to degree on Master of Business Administration (Strategic Management). In partial fulfillment of the requirements of the stated degree course, I am conducting a research project entitled, Influence of Strategic partnerships on the Performance of Kenyatta International Convention Centre.

To achieve this, you are invited to participate in this academic research study being conducted. You are part of a carefully selected group that has been asked to participate in this academic research study and I greatly appreciate your assistance.

Please note that;

1. The responses are anonymous and confidential;

2. Approximately 15 minutes will be required to complete the questionnaire

3. Participation in the study is voluntary and important;

4. Your responses will be used for academic purposes only;

5. The findings can be availed on request only;

6. Should you have any difficulties in responding, please contact me at
the e-mail address; iterer@kicc.co.ke or call me at +254722943296.

Please sign the form to indicate that;

1. You read the information and

2. You have given your consent.

Thank you for your participation

Respondent’s signature:…………………… Date:…………………………
Appendix II: Questionnaire (for Kenyatta International Convention Centre)

Ref. No

Date: March 2014

My name is Joel Terer; a student pursuing a Master’s degree in Business Administration (Strategic Management) at The University of Nairobi. I am carrying out a research on Influence of Strategic Partnerships on Performance of Kenyatta International Convention Centre. You have been selected as one of the respondents for the study. I would like you to spend a few minutes to fill the questionnaire and note the information provided will be used for academic purpose only and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Instructions

Kindly respond to all questions by ticking and or giving comments where necessary. Please give additional information where you feel it is necessary.

INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS ON PERFORMANCE OF KENYATTA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE

1. What is the current conference market position of KICC?

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2. Please describe the cycle time in processing conference services at the organization

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3. Describe supply-link-conference-services enhanced through partnerships
4. How development of the partnerships does enhance new conference customer’s acquisition?

5. How do the strategic partnerships have direct impact on conference sales turnover?

6. Discuss the impact of strategic partnerships on customer attrition at the organization

7. Describe how profitability by segments of customers is enhanced by the strategic partnership employed.

8. Illustrate how market share and penetrations is greatly influenced by the strategic partnerships used by the organization.

9. Describe how the strategic partnerships enhances Availability
10. Discuss impact of strategic partnerships on mean time between IT failures

11. Describe current status of IT resources employed by the organization and how they are influenced by the strategic partnership

12. How does strategic partnerships reduce mean time to repair/correcting the IT related issues?

13. Illustrate how unplanned availability has been enhanced by the partnerships employed by the organization

14. In your experience, are conference players reluctant to share
important convention researches/thesis and studies with others through strategic partnerships?

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15. Does the organization have sufficient conference learning resources that enhance performance through partnerships?

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16. Have the development of research through partnerships improved conference services offered by the organization?

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17. How does partnership in research undertakings enhance quality problem solving through critical analysis

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18. Describe impact of strategic partnerships in automation of financial data processing and approval functions

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19. Describe how partnership with conference players improves profitability ratio the organization
20. Illustrate how partnerships with lending institutions enhanced leverage position of the organization

21. How has debt collection rate been enhanced by strategic relations and partnerships with conference players

22. Finally, what other performance indicators at Kenyatta International Convention Centre not mentioned in this survey are influenced by their strategic partnerships?

Thank you