STRATEGIC ALLIANCES AND PERFORMANCE OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES IN KENYA

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted for an award of a degree in any other university.

Signature…….. Date……

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D61/79846/2015

I confirm that the work reported in this research project was carried out by the candidate under my supervision as university supervisor. This research project has been submitted for examination with my permission as the supervisor.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CAK	Communication Authority of Kenya
CBK	Central Bank of Kenya
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOK	Government of Kenya
ICT	Information Communication Technology
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
SPSS	Statistical Package of Social Sciences
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to investigate the influence of strategic alliances on organizational performance of ICT companies in Kenya. Specfic objectives were to determine strategic alliances used by Information Communication Technology companies in Kenya and to find out the effect of strategic alliances on organizational performance of Information Communication Technology companies in Kenya. The descriptive cross-sectional survey research design was applied in this study. The population of this study was the ICT companies in Nairobi. The study adopted stratified random sampling technique to select the 150 ICT companies as the target population which was 25% of the target population. Primary data was collected through the use of self administerd questionnaires. Organizational Performance was measured using market share, efficiency of the ICT companies. Based on the findings, the study concluded that ICT companies in Kenya entered into strategic alliances with other firms for a number of reasons all meant to improve their survival, competitiveness and bottom-line performance. The main strategic alliances used by ICT companies were; joint ventures; franchises; joint research and development; joint marketing; supply partnerships and outsourcing. Majority of the ICT firms used the balanced scorecard to ascertain their performance both financially and non-financially. Strategic alliance has enabled the ICT companies to improve their market share and achieve improvement in their operational efficiency. From the regression analysis, strategic alliances contribute significantly to the organizational performance of ICT companies and that strategic alliances significantly influence the organizational performance of ICT companies. The study recommended that the management of the ICT companies should be keen to uncover manipulative behaviors and should institute 'air-tight' deals that protect their firms from such exploitative maneuvers in strategic alliances. The management should organize for seminars and workshops where its top management employees can be trained on new insights on alliance management tools and strategies with a focus on leveraging differences with partners to create value. Organizations should form strategic alliance driven by the need to differentiate their products and services within one or a number of target market segments. Finally, the study recommends that the company's management should initiate an appraisal of all the strategic alliances entered into with other firms.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In strategic alliances, the companies involved agree to pursue certain goals to improve their performance and competitiveness while they still remain independent (Foss, 1999). To achieve a competitive advantage, a company is required to embark on a value-adding plan which is not being used by its competitors both current and potential (Porter, 1985). Thompson and Strickland (1993) further indicates that a competitive strategy is the plan that a firm takes to be impressive to the buyers, and gain increased market share as well as deal with market forces threatening its survival.

The resource dependency theory indicates that companies gain competitive advantages from utilizing knowledge based resources. Approaching strategic alliances from a resource-based view, firms focus more on their abilities or lack of abilities to enter into a strategic alliance (Gulati, 1999). Therefore, resource dependency theory argues that firms enter into strategic alliances to access their partners' competencies to achieve competitiveness that on their own they could not access (Dyer and Singh, 2001).

The increased competition in the Kenyan ICT industry is a major reason that has borne the need for the players to seek for strategic alliances to survive, beat the competition and have improved performance. Majority of the ICT companies in Kenya are in strategic alliances with other firms to increase their profitability. This is upon realization by the managers that they can benefit a lot from the the competencies, talents, abilities, and resources outside their firms but are in possible

strategic alliance firms. It would thus be important to find out whether the strategic alliances by the ICT companies have enabled them remain profitable.

This study is motivated by the increased number of strategic alliances that are being entered into by various firms in Kenya. For instance, over 30% of the ICT companies have entered in to strategic alliances as they seek to enhance their service delivery, increase their competitiveness and profitability. The study therefore seeks to find out whether the strategic alliances being implemented had any influence on the performance of Information Communication Technology companies in Kenya.

1.1.1 Strategic Alliances

According to Channon (1999) strategic alliances are formed when two or more firms join together to achieve certain goals that they agree upon. Jarillo, (1988) further points out that firms entering into strategic alliances share resources to achieve superior organizational performance and increase their reputation and market share since they have access to a pool of resources and competencies that they didn't have as individuals.

Doz and Hamel, (1998) further indicates that firms in strategic alliances pool properties, resources, competencies and expertise to realize mutual objectives. This is informed by the fact that the information, properties, resources, competencies and expertise needed to enhance profitability of the individual firms exists outside the firms' themselves and the firms management lack direct control of these key resources. Through strategic alliances, firms are provided with opportunities to benefit from new information, expertise and develop new competences.

The alliances are wide-ranging associations including; franchises, joint research and development, long-term supply arrangements, outsourcing, joint ventures and joint marketing. Successful alliances become firms' engine for growth and profitability globally and/or in the local market. Strategic coalitions offer a chance for companies to parner in business operations which is very helpful in reducing individual firm weaknesses (Smith and Smith, 2003). According to Bernadette (2007) outsourcing as a form of alliance enables firms to lower operational costs, increase customer satisfaction, and enhance firm profitability and productivity.

1.1.2 Organizational Performance

According to Griffins (2006) organizational performance refers to organization's aptitude to obtain and exploit resources to meet its set firm objectives. Organization performance is a display which measures how well an initiative attains their goals (Venkatraman and Ramanujam, 2006).

According to Robbins and Coulter (2002) to measure firm performance, the firms' competencies and accomplishment of the set goals is assessed. On the other hand, Daft (2000) and Ricardo and Wade (2001) indicate that firm performance is the meeting of the set organizational goals and objectives for a given period of time which is equivalent to efficiency, effectiveness and economy, quality, consistent behavior and normative measures.

Measuring firm performance can also be achieved using the balanced scorecard which measures firm's learning and growth, internal business processes, financial performance and customer performance (Kaplan and Norton, 2001). The triple bottom

line performance measurement also focuses on the corporate economic, environmental and social performance (Norman and MacDonald, 2004). Performance is a function of several factors key among them competitive strategies, but this can also be influenced by information system and supply chain management practices.

1.1.3 Strategic Alliances and Organizational Performance

Berquist *et al*. (1995) indicates that strategic alliances help companies to meet the evolving customer needs, achieve high firm performance and remain competitive in the increasingly regulated markets. Forming strategic alliances has proved to be one of the most useful strategies that have enabled firms to retain and increase their market share in highly dynamic and competitive global markets as well as remain profitable over the years. These alliances however must be implemented in alignment with the overall corporate strategy of the respective partners.

Elmuti and Kathawala (2001) established that firms in alliances freely utilize competencies, expertise and strategic resources of their partners that they previously did not have. It is notable that large corporations are joining in alliances with medium sized firms in the same industry as well as NGOs to improve their reputation, competitiveness and performance as well as to reduce risks and costs.

1.1.4 Information Technology Industry in Kenya

There are many Kenyans utilizing ICTs in their different engagements giving rise to high and increasing penetration of ICTs as reflected by growing numbers of mobile phone users from 40,000 in year 2000 to approximately twenty million in 2016. There are also predictions that there will be close to 70 percent of Kenyans using mobile

phones by 2020 (CAK, 2015). The use of internet services has also experienced significant growth over the year which has led to emergence of software and application development and business process outsourcing. The growth of these ICT related sectors contributes to Kenya's economic growth as envisioned in the Vision 2030 (GoK, 2015).

The Kenyan ICT sector has faced massive corporate governance changes as well as regulatory and technological changes in the last decade. This has resulted to a significant disparity in the financial performance of respective firms based on the corporate governance structure in place and compliance to regulations (Communication Authority of Kenya, 2015). Currently, there are three mobile phone companies in Kenya which include; Safaricom, Airtel and Orange-Telkom with market share of 75%, 12% and 9% respectively. In the past decade, major changes have been seen in the technological development in the industry (CAK, 2015). By the end of 2016, the Kenyan ICT sector is targeted to grow by over 15 percent, and 20% by 2017 compared with 13.4 percent in 2015 which is attributed to continuous investment in infrastructure by the government and private sector players (CAK, 2015).

1.1.5 Information Technology Firms in Kenya

According to Communication Authority of Kenya (2015) there are seven main Internet providing firms including; Kenya Data Network (currently named Liquid Telkom), Jamii Telkom, UUNET, Access-Kenya, Wananchi online, Communication Solutions and Africa-Online.

Over the last five years, the Kenya ICT sector has seen many new entrants that have ventured into the ICT sector through outsourcing, franchises and joint ventures. The sector is currently very competitive and dynamic requiring each firm to be strategic in driving its organizational performance and growing its return on investment (Porter, 2003). At the same time a number of ICT firms have joined in strategic alliances with their fellow industry players as well as outside the ICT sector like commercial banks and hospitality firms to improve their bottom-line performance and grow in competitiveness (Nzengya, 2013).

1.2 Research Problem

World over, companies are going into merger and acquisitions or strategic alliances to improve their ever dwindling return on investments as a result of increase competition and deregulations in the global markets (Porter, 2003). The pangs of competition have necessitated many organizations to seek for strategic alliances. Porter (2003) further argues that using competitive corporate strategy firms can achieve improved competitiveness and profitability against the market forces of competition. According to Bleeke and Ernst (1993) organizations are becoming less self-sufficient and their survival largely depends on successful strategic alliances and co-operation with others. While the industry market leader has been renowned for actively been involved in strategic alliances to keep their tuff strong, no research has been conducted to analyze whether market followers in the industry stand to benefit or are at risk of practicing “me-too” endeavors.

To remain profitable and for optimal performance, ICT companies in Kenya have embraced formation of strategic alliances with companies in other sectors of

economy. The choice of strategic alliances by ICT firms in Kenya determines their survival, and performance (CA, 2013). According to the Government of Kenya economic survey (2014) implementation of structural adjustment programme and subsequent market liberalization opened the ICT sector, leaving businesses at the mercy of market forces. As a result, ICT firms face increased competition and declining profits and even losses. The ICT firms in Kenya have deployed a number of strategic alliances overtime including; Joint ventures, franchises, joint research and development and joint marketing ventures among others. It is expected that these strategic alliances lead to a firm's improved performance both financially or non-financially. However, it is questionable on how strategic alliances affect the performance of ICT firms in Kenya given the large variations in profitability and market share. It would therefore be very useful to establish the effect of strategic alliances on organizational performance of ICT firms.

Several local studies exist on strategic alliances in Kenya. Omwoyo (2013) focused on the role of strategic alliances on the competitiveness of Barclays Bank of Kenya limited. The study established that strategic alliances are very useful in enabling firms retain and enhance their competitiveness. The competitiveness of the firms resulting from the alliance will is generated through the synergistic effects of the collaboration, a wider customer base, spreading of risk and employment of better technology which consequently reduces the operational cost. However, the study was a case study and the current study is a survey. Mutuva (2014) investigated the effects of strategic alliance on competitive advantage in Airtel Kenya limited. The study was not generalizable to the ICT sector as it was a case study. The current study however, will

be a survey, hence the findings are generalizable. Agare (2012) focused on factors influencing the success of non-governmental organizations' strategic alliances in Marsabit County, Kenya. The findings indicated that financial capacity of partners, technical capacity of partners, planning and implementation of plans and senior management commitment greatly influence the success of strategic alliance of NGOs operating in Marsabit County. The study only employed descriptive statistics as the method of analysis. The current study however, employs both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics as the method of analysis. Makau (2011) focused on the strategic alliances and organizational competitiveness among commercial banks in Kenya. From the study, it was evident that strategic alliances enhance banks competitivenes and enable partners to tap into resources, information, capabilities and skills of their partners to gain competitiveness. However, the study was a case study of Equity Bank and therefore, the study was not a representative of the ICT sector in Kenya.

There is need to establish whether strategic alliances contribute to improved performance of ICT companies in Kenya. The study will investigate the research questions: Which strategic alliances are used by ICT companies in Kenya? What is the effect of strategic alliances on organizational performance of ICT companies in Kenya?

1.3 Research Objective

i. To determine strategic alliances used by Information Communication Technology companies in Kenya

ii. To find out the effect of strategic alliances on organizational performance of Information Communication Technology companies in Kenya

1.4 Value of the Study

The study results will be helpful to the regulators and policy makers in the ICT industry. It will inform their efforts in formulating industry policies guiding strategic alliances by IT firms in Kenya. The study findings will suggest strategic alliances that increase firm performance while still ensuring fair competition in the sector.

The study contributes to theory as its findings can be used in validating the propositions by theories underpinning the study. There has been scale up of firms using strategic alliance to enter new markets as well as enhance their competitiveness in their current markets, hence the need for reviewing of theories guiding strategic alliances. The scholars in the strategy will benefit from the study findings in future research.

The study findings may be used by companies' management seeking to get into strategic alliances. The results can be useful to the ICT firm's top managers as they seek to join into strategic alliances in order to attract new investors and also retain existing ones. Knowledge on the strategic alliances leading to better performance of ICT firms in Kenya will lead to deployment of the strategic alliances in intensified ways by the firm management.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The section presents the theoretical review, and review of literature review based on study objective.

2.2 Theoretical Literature Review

This sections presents theories that underpins this study which include: transaction cost theory, resource dependency theory, organizational learning theory and strategic behavior theory.

2.2.1 Transaction Cost Theory

Transaction cost theory is applied to explain the company decisions about markets and/or firm behavior. The theory argues that when the exchange' transactional cost is high, there will be internalization and the reverse is also true. The theory is very strategic in enabling investigations of relative costs in-terms of development, acclimating, monitoring task achievement under alternate governance structures (Porter, 2003).

However, this theory is only used in explaining motivation and resource allocation in worst case scenario and such a limitation is used to explain the formation of strategic alliances (Williamson, 1995). This theory further suggests that an organization will base its partner upon a trade-off between two criteria of the transaction cost incurred in joining hands with a specific partner and its ability to control the particular

partner's action. Thus, the optimal candidate for partnership should be the lowest transaction cost involving partner, which at the same time is most controllable.

2.2.2 Resource Dependency Theory

RDT provides alternative options to economic theories of mergers and board interlocks. It also provides better understanding on inter-organizational relations that brought about market failures (Pfeffer, 2003). The goal of management of the group is to guarantee organizational survival and to enhance firms' independence while ensuring permanence in firms' exchange dealings which were the factors driving the organization's movements in the global market.

According to Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) RDT speculates that authority is founded on the regulation of deliberate resouces in the firm. RDT originates from open scheme theory where organizations have fluctuating degrees of dependency with the outside environment. Confronted with such natures which are costly the management moves their firms to utilize their external dependence to their advantage.

The theory proposes that actors lacking the essential resources in their business environment will seek to establish relationships with others in order to obtain the needed resources. Organizations will also attempt to adjust their dependence relationships by minimizing their own dependence or by increasing other organizations' dependence on them. Within this perspective, organizations are perceived as coalitions alerting their structure and patterns of behavior to acquire and maintain the external resources needed (Ulrich and Barney, 1984). Hence strategic alliances may be viewed as the coalitions being built. This is the focus of this study.

2.2.3 Organizational Learning Theory

The theory recommends that for organizational change to perform in very dynamic industries, making it easier to achieve their goals. Organizational learning resembles psychology and cognitive studies as the learning occurs at distinct level. The learning however only become organizational learning when the material are shared and stored in organizational reminiscence to be conveyed, accessed and utilized for organizational goals (Cha *et al*., 2008).

This theory is in the middle of two philosophies where organizations looks at knowledge as a way of acquiring and retaining resources, therefore aclimatizing to the new environment.

2.2.4 Strategic Behavior Theory

Strategic conduct are activities used by firms to advance its competitiveness to real and probable competitors; to gain a perpetual commercial lead, thereby ensuring its long-run incomes. According to Carlton and Perloff (1994) strategic firm behavior are actions that affect market environment thereby increasing firm profits. The strategic firm behaviors therefore are firm actions that are not economically inevitable, but the outcome of a deliberate efforts by firms to reshape markets to firm's own contitnued competitive advantage against its rivals.

2.3 Strategic Alliances and Performance of ICT Firms

According to Varadarajan and Cunningham (1995) firms can outperform rivals by pursuing franchises and long-term supply arrangements. Each of such strategic initiatives led to incentives, needs and motivation for firms' partnership for common

goals. The symmetries in the firms' strategic conduct in during the past years may lead to characteristic and identifiable networking conduct in coming years, consequently leading to foreseeable network structures. The study by Varadarajan and Cunningham further indicate that companies with policies which are advantage-creating are entrenched in scant network structures with likelihood of forming non-equity coalitions in future. On the other hand, companies with great advantage-enhancing tendencies are embedded in dense network assemblies which in future may lead to equity-based alliances.

According to Oliva (2001) by use of joint marketing ventures companies are better placed to effectively deal with uncertainties in the market environment. This would help such firms to reposition in highly competitive global markets and significantly reduce the transaction costs. At the same time, alliances bring about better symmetry of information flows with the firm's suppliers and customers which greatly enables them to value add their product and services in the market.

Elmuti and Kathawala (2001) established that alliance can be in one market or in various different markets. The alliance can be within the same market or across different markets. Through joint research and development, there is relative configuration of organizational practices and skills and formation of competencies and social networks which the firms in partnership can use to determine the level of learning.

Gari (1999) proposed that vertical tactical alliance that are complementary have the utmost chances of generating a justifiable competitive advantage. As a way of

creating competitiveness many companies world over are entering into mergers. Such mergers reduce market uncertainties, and help to create firm competitiveness. However, such competitive advantages are temporary compared to advantages achieved through both vertical and horizontal, corresponding and premeditated alliances.

According to Simonin (1997) balanced alliances lead to formation of value from the diminishing competition, alliances which are uncertainty reducing that are set up to respond to competitors' actions instead of new entrants. To effectively commercialize discoveries, companies collaborate with other partners, exchange useful information and resources.

2.4 Empirical Studies and Research Gaps

Makau (2012) researched on strategic alliances and organizational competitiveness among commercial banks in Kenya: a case study of Kenya Commercial Bank. The study used descriptive case study design where a convenient sample was used to create a sample frame where 33 respondents were considered. The study used structured and semi-structured questionnaires to collect data which was analysed using MS Excel Spreadsheet and relationship among variables established using correlation analysis. The study found that strategic alliances seek to create competitive advantage through collaboration rather than competition. Strategic alliances are also based on mutual trust of partners. The study also established that strategic alliances provide partners with an opportunity to tap into resources, knowledge, capabilities and skills of their partners to gain competitiveness. Finally, the study found that strategic alliances especially non-equity strategic alliances are

positive and significantly correlated with organizational competitiveness. The study therefore concluded that strategic alliances create interdependence between the partner firms which bring benefits in the form of intangible assets and capabilities.

Bernadette (2007) did a study on the use of strategic alliances as an instrument for rapid growth, by New Zealand based questor companies. The qualitative technique of semi-structured in-depth interviews was used to gather primary data in response to the research questions. This research indicates that the key contributor to the success or failure of alliances is whether all the parties will benefit equitably from the venture and the relative strategic importance of the alliance to the stakeholders.

Kibira (2015) investigated on effect of strategic alliances on competitive advantage of commercial banks in Kenya. The study revealed that banks' decision to form strategic alliances with other firms was so as to generate more profits and market share. Other factors highlighted as reasons behind the formation of strategic alliances included to reduce operational costs, to overcome market entry restrictions and slow market penetration, for risk sharing purposes, to achieve economies of scale, to learn new skills and knowledge, for socio-political factors/considerations, to increase efficiency and quality of services and for blocking a competitive threat. The study also found out that the existing strategic alliances had a significant influence on the banks' competitive advantage.

Kinyua (2010) researched on strategic alliances between Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) and Middle Level Colleges in Kenya. The findings showed that the alliance were formed with a motive/s of enabling students

who would otherwise be locked out of universities owing to stiff competition to progress with their studies hence exploiting this niche market. It also intended to reduce brain drain and capital leaving Kenya economy. The collaborations intended also to tap the resources from vocational economies of scale and enjoy faster payback on investment.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The section presents the methodology that the researcher used to undertake the research. The areas covered include; research design, population of the study, data collection and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The descriptive cross-sectional survey research design was applied in this study. The design was suitable as it allowed for generalization of the findings to the entire ICT industry in Kenya (Kothari, 2004). The research design allowed for the use of quantitative method that collects quantitative data which is ready to be analysed and enables the researcher establish relationships between variables.

3.3 Population of the Study

Nairobi is the IT hub for East and Central Africa as it hosts a numerous ICT companies and therefore, its appropriateness as the basis for the study. According to Communication Authority of Kenya (2015) there are various categories of ICT firms in kenya including; telecommunications companies, Internet service providers and backbone gateway operators, data network operators, VSAT operators, loop operators and mobile operators. It is from these categories of ICT firms, that the study population will be drawn from. The population of this study was the ICT companies in Nairobi. According to Communication Authority of Kenya (2015), currently there

are 600 registered ICT companies in Nairobi County as at 31st December, 2015 which were the target population of the study. (Communication Authority of Kenya, 2015).

3.4 Sampling and Sampling Technique

The study adopted stratified random sampling technique to select the 150 ICT companies as the target population which was 25% of the target population. Kothari (2004) postulates that a representative sample should be ten to thirty percent of the target population. This was also in conformity with Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) postulation that at least 10-30% of the target population is appropriate for statistical reporting. The study respondents were the operations manager in each of the ICT companies as they were in charge of strategic direction of their firms giving the study a sample size of 150 respondents.

3.5 Data Collection

The researcher utilized self administerd questionnaires for primary data collection. Organizational Performance was measured using market share, efficiency and customer base of the ICT companies.

The questionnaire comprised closed ended questions. The questionnaire had three main parts. The section A gathered general business information of the ICT firm as well as the demographic information of the respondents. The section B contained questions to identify strategic alliances in use. The section C contained questions on the effect of strategic alliances on organizational performance of ICT companies in Kenya.

One respondent from the top management level in operations department was selected as the study respondent. This was because they were the persons implementing various strategic alliances and therefore rich in information on the strategic alliances and their effect on organizational performance. Thus 150 copies of questionnaires were distributed. The questionnaires were administered through the drop and pick method. This method is applicable when the study sample is big as it allows the respondents to fill in the questionnaires at their own time, hence giving in depth information as they are not restricted by time and they have time to clarify some facts. At the same time the method helps to increase the study response rate as the respondents are given time to answer the questionnaire despite their busy work schedule.

3.6 Data Analysis

Once the questionnaires were received back, they were checked for completeness and consistency. The incompletely filled in questionnaires were disregarded for the study. Data cleaning, editing and coding followed after which data entry was undertaken for all the questionnaires in a database. SPSS (version 21) was the software that the researcher employed to manipulate the data to achieve the study objectives. The study used descriptive and inferential statistical analysis in terms of regression analysis to analyse the primary data consisting of quantitative data collected through the questionnaires. The descriptive statistics was in terms of frequency, percentages, and measure of central tendency. Tables were used as appropriate to present the findings while explanations were presented in prose.

The study employed simple regression model to establish the significance of strategic alliances on organizational performance. The simple regression analysis model specification was shown below;

$$Y=\alpha+\beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon \text{ where}$$

Y represents organizational performance;

X_1 represents strategic alliances;

ε= error term; β=coefficient of independent variables; α= constant

The study tested for the multicollinearity of independent variables using formal detection-tolerance and the variance inflation factor (VIF) with the help of SPSS.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis and findings of the study as set out in the research methodology. The results were presented on the influence of strategic alliances on organizational performance of information communication technology companies in Kenya. The study targeted the operations manager in each of the ICT companies as they are in charge of strategic direction of their firms.

4.2 Response rate

The study had a sample size of 150 respondents. Out of the 150 respondents, 120 of them responded to the questionnaires contributing to a response rate of 80%. This response rate was sufficient and representative and conforms to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) stipulation that a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good while a response rate of 70% and over is excellent.

The chapter covers the respondent's background information, and the findings based on the study objectives.

4.3 Company Profile

Background information about the ICT companies was inquired by the researcher. The information was sought with regard to the number of years that the company has been in existence and the number of employees. This was important because it

enhanced reliability of the information given and gave the basic understanding of the ICT companies studied.

4.3.1. Age of the ICT companies

The study sought to establish the number of years that the ICT companies have been in existence. The findings are as shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Age of the ICT companies

	Freq	**Percent**
1-5 years	35	29.2
6-10 years	65	54.5
Over 10 years	20	16.7
Total	**120**	**100**

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

The study established that 54.2% of the ICT companies were aged 5-10 years, 29.2% were aged 1-5years while 16.7% were aged over 10 years. This depicts that majority of the ICT companies were aged 5-10 years and therefore were old enough to get involved in strategic alliances as a way of enhancing their performance.

4.3.2. Number of employees

The respondents were requested to indicate the size of their ICT firms based on the number of employees. The findings are presented in the Table 4.2 below

Table 4.2 Number of employees

Number of employees	Freq	Percent
1-10	35	29.2
11-25	43	35.8
26-50	30	25.0
51-100	12	10.0
Total	**120**	**100**

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

From the findings, most (35.8%) of the ICT companies had 10-25 employees, 29.2% had 1-10 employees, 25% had 25-50 employees while 10% had 51-100 employees. This depicts that most of the ICT companies had a small size of employees of 1 to 50 employees.

4.4. Strategic Alliances Used by ICT Companies in Kenya

The first objective of the study sought to establish the strategic alliances in use by the ICT Companies in Kenya. The findings are as discussed in the subsequent subsections.

4.4.1. Reasons for Entering Strategic Alliance

The study sought to find out the extent to which various reasons motivated the ICT Company's decision to enter into strategic alliances with other firms. The findings are as illustrated below

Table 4.3. Reasons for Entering Strategic Alliance

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Ddiffusion of new technologies	3.9500	1.12160
Creation of new markets	3.9083	1.21611
Socio-political factors	3.6750	1.03844
The need to reduce cost of production	3.6667	1.07947
Generation of more profits	3.6333	1.26977
The need to increase market share	3.5917	1.12643
Achievement of a sustainable competitive advantage	3.5333	.96956
Improvement of customer service	3.4833	1.20909
Enhancement of financial stability of the firm	3.3333	1.07166
Enhancement of the market entry restrictions	3.2667	1.25513
To slow market penetration	2.9402	.98515

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

From the study findings, the majority of the respondents to a great extent that; diffusion of new technologies (mean=3.9500), creation of new markets (mean=3.9083), socio-political factors (mean=3.6750), the need to reduce cost of production (mean=3.6667), generation of more profits (mean=3.6333), the need to increase market share (mean=3.5917), achievement of a sustainable competitive advantage (mean=3.5333), improvement of customer service (mean=3.4833), enhancement of financial stability of the firm (mean=3.3333), enhancement of the market entry restrictions (mean=3.2667), to slow market penetration (mean=2.9402) respectively. This implied that to ICT companies in Kenya entered into strategic alliances with other firms for a number of reasons all meant to improve their survival, competitiveness and bottom-line performance both financially and non-financially.

The key reasons for majority of the ICT firms entering into strategic alliance being; diffusion of new technologies, creation of new markets, to reduce production cost, increase profits, increase market share, achieve sustainable competitive advantage and improve customer service.

4.4.2. Strategic Alliances in Use by ICT Companies

The study sought to establish the extent to which various strategic alliances are being used by ICT Companies. To this end, the respondents were required to indicate the extent to which various measures of strategic alliance were applied in their firms. The responses were rated on a five point Likert scale where: 5-To a very great extent, 4-To a great extent, 3-To a moderate extent, 2-To a little extent, and 1-To no extent. The mean and standard deviations were generated from SPSS and are as illustrated in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4. Strategic Alliances in Use by ICT Companies

Joint ventures	**Mean**	**Std dev**
Operational efficiency	3.4083	1.21265
Competitiveness and external customer relations	2.6500	1.01791
Equity and working relationship	2.6667	1.53575
Franchises	**Mean**	**Std dev**
System efficiency	2.6000	1.38054
Compliance with the set standards	2.8167	1.51177
Joint Research & Development	**Mean**	**Std dev**
Investment in capital, equipment and scientific and technological resources	2.6500	1.14238
Technology transfer	2.8250	1.02623

Innovations realized	3.3167	1.18096
Joint marketing	**Mean**	**Std dev**
Shared cost of marketing	2.6750	1.18224
Marketing performance scores	2.9750	.89313
Exploiting full market potential	3.3583	1.12866
Win-win marketing solution	3.0167	1.22977
Supply partnerships	**Mean**	**Std dev**
Meeting end-customer needs through product availability and responsiveness and on-time delivery.	3.2500	1.28501
The ability to fill customer orders faster and more efficiently than the competition	3.4583	1.12941
Delivery times, product availability and product returns.	3.9583	1.04033
Customer and supplier satisfaction	2.9250	.91819
Outsourcing	**Mean**	**Std dev**
Benchmarking	3.2667	1.26181
Customer satisfaction	3.6167	2.65426
Business management capability	3.6250	1.10052
Transformation capability	3.3917	1.08694
Delivery management capability	3.5333	.89755
Grand mean and standard deviation	**3.142**	**1.229**

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

From the findings, the majority of the respondents agreed to a great extent (Mean 3.5 to 4.5) that their ICT firms applied various strategic alliances to enhance their operational performance and competitiveness. In terms of joint ventures, they indicated that; operational efficiency (mean=3.4083), competitiveness and external customer relations (2.6500) and equity and working relationship 2.6667) respectively were the criteria of measuring the strategic alliance. In terms of franchises, they agreed that the criteria used included; system efficiency (mean=2.6000) and

Compliance with the set standards (mean=2.8167) respectively. With regard to joint research and development, the respondents agreed that they considered; investment in capital, equipment and scientific and technological resources (mean=2.6500), Technology transfer (mean=2.8250) and Innovations realized (mean=3.3167). On the joint marketing, the respondents indicated the measures used to include; Shared cost of marketing (mean=2.6750), Marketing performance scores (mean=2.9750), Exploiting full market potential (mean=3.3583) and Win-win marketing solution (mean=3.0167) respectively.

In terms of supply partnerships, the criteria used included; meeting end-customer needs through product availability and responsiveness and on-time delivery (mean=3.2500), the ability to fill customer orders faster and more efficiently than the competition (mean=3.4583), delivery times, product availability and product returns (mean=3.9583) and customer and supplier satisfaction (mean=2.9250) respectively. With regard to outsourcing as a strategic alliance being used by the ICT companies, the respondents indicated that the criteria used to adopt outsourcing include; benchmarking (mean=3.2667), customer satisfaction (mean=3.6167), business management capability (mean=3.6250), transformation capability (mean=3.3917) and delivery management capability (mean=3.5333) respectively.

This implies that ICT companies were involved in strategic alliances to a great extent. These companies were in diverse strategic alliances with different companies to benefit from the benefits of each of the strategic alliances they were involved in. The findings confirm that the main strategic alliances used by ICT companies were; joint

ventures; franchises; joint research and development; joint marketing; supply partnerships and outsourcing all of which had a mean of above 3.5.

4.4.3. Communication of the Motives of Forming Strategic Alliances

The respondents were requested to indicate whether the organization communicate the motives of forming strategic alliances with the concerned stakeholders of the organization. The findings were shown in the Table 4.5 below

Table 4.5 Communication of the Motives of Forming Strategic Alliances

	Freq	**Percent**
Yes	72	60
No	48	40
Total	**120**	**100**

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

From the findings majority (60%) of the respondents indicated that the organization communicate the motives of forming strategic alliances with the concerned stakeholders of the organization while 40% were of the contrary opinion. This depicts that majority of the ICT firms communicated the motive behind strategic alliances to their stakeholders to enhance their ownership and commitment to the initiative hence its success.

4.4.4. Extent to which your Organization's expectations vary with the Overall Strategic Alliances Results

The study sought to establish the extent to which the organization's expectations vary with the overall strategic alliances results. The findings were shown in the Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6 Organization's expectations and overall strategic alliances results

	Freq	**Percent**
Very great extent	7	5
great extent	18	15
Moderate extent	38	32
Little extent	57	48
Total	**120**	**100**

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

From the findings most (48%) respondents indicated to a little extent that the organization's expectations vary with the overall strategic alliances results, 32% indicated moderate extent, 15% indicated to a great extent, while 5% indicated to a very great extent. This implies that to a little extent that the organization's expectations vary with the overall strategic alliances results.

4.5. Strategic Alliances and Organizational Performance

The second objective of the study sought to establish the effect of strategic alliances on organizational performance of Information Communication Technology companies in Kenya. The findings are as discussed in the subsequent subsections.

4.5.1. Use of Balanced Scorecard

The respondents were requested to indicate whether their organizations use the balanced scorecard as a performance evaluation tool. The findings were shown in the Table 4.7 below

Table 4.7 Use of Balanced Scorecard

	Freq	**Percent**
Yes	108	90
No	12	10
Total	**120**	**100**

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

From the findings majority (90%) of the responents indicated that their organizations use the balanced scorecard as a performance evaluation tool while 10% were of contrary opinion. This depicts that the balanced scorecard was significantly used by majority of the ICT firms to ascertain their performance both financially and non-financially which gave a broad outlook of the company performance.

4.5.2. Performance

The study sought to establish the extent to which the ICT company apply the following measures of Balanced Scorecard in measuring its organizational performance. The findings are shown in the table 4.8 below

Table 4.8. Financial Performance Measures

	Mean	Std. Deviation
return on Investment is the main indicator used for assessing financial performance	3.6833	1.04506
the business unit has experienced an increased annual growth in sales as a result performance evaluation undertaken	3.6500	1.10499
the operating cost of the firm has decreased when employees cost to revenue generated is evaluated	3.4250	.95849
the revenue growth of the firm has increased as a result of adopting the BSC	3.4167	.91287
appropriate levels of cash necessary for operations both in the long term and short term are available	3.2583	1.36890
top management is satisfied with the profitability levels	3.1917	1.31120

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

From the findings the majority of the respondents agreed to a great that; return on Investment is the main indicator used for assessing financial performance (mean=3.6833), the business unit has experienced an increased annual growth in sales as a result performance evaluation undertaken (mean=3.6500), the operating cost of the firm has decreased when employees cost to revenue generated is evaluated (mean=3.4250), the revenue growth of the firm has increased as a result of adopting the BSC (mean=3.4167), appropriate levels of cash necessary for operations both in the long term and short term are available (mean=3.2583), top management is satisfied with the profitability levels (mean=3.1917) respectively. This depicts that majority of the ICT firms were keen to apply the financial measure of their company performance based on the BSC approach. Through this approach the firms major financial indicators were on a positive outlook such as improved return on

Investment, growth in sales, decreased operational cost, revenue growth and profitability levels.

Table 4.9. Customer Perspective

	Mean	Std. Deviation
customer orientation objectives have been formulated and implemented	3.7667	1.00196
customer Relationship Management systems have been implemented	3.5250	1.17368
customer satisfaction is a criteria used to evaluate firm performance	3.4250	1.15709
the speed of services delivery is satisfactory	3.3333	1.23896
our market share in different geographic locations has increased	3.0917	1.18105
customer expectations are taken into account in the decision making process	3.0167	1.25680

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

From the findings the majority of respondents indicated to a great extent that; customer orientation objectives have been formulated and implemented (mean=3.7667), customer Relationship Management systems have been implemented (mean=3.5250), customer satisfaction is a criteria used to evaluate firm performance (mean=3.4250), the speed of services delivery is satisfactory (mean=3.3333), our market share in different geographic locations has increased (mean=3.0917), customer expectations are taken into account in the decision making process (mean=3.0167) respectively. This majority of the ICT companies heavily applied the customer perspective in measuring the financial health of their firms by assessing things like; speed of services, Customer Relationship Management issues and assessing response to customer expectations.

Table 4.10. Internal Business Processes

	Mean	Std. Deviation
top management is satisfied with the product and service technologies	3.9583	1.05636
customer satisfaction indicator is used as the basis for improvement of internal processes	3.5500	1.13648
the quality of products has improved	3.3167	1.29630
manufacturing defects has reduced since the introduction of the BSC	3.2833	1.22429
the product manufacturing time has reduced since the organization adopted the BSC	3.0250	1.04087
the order processing time of the firm has become manageable	2.9580	1.22402
the organization has the right business policies that helped in the increase of the productivity in the organization	2.8083	1.18319

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

From the findings the majority of the respondents indicated to a great extent that; top management is satisfied with the product and service technologies (mean=3.9583), customer satisfaction indicator is used as the basis for improvement of internal processes (mean=3.5500), the quality of products has improved (mean=3.3167), manufacturing defects has reduced since the introduction of the BSC (mean=3.2833), the product manufacturing time has reduced since the organization adopted the BSC (mean=3.0250), the order processing time of the firm has become manageable (mean=2.9580), the organization has the right business policies that helped in the increase of the productivity in the organization (mean=2.8083) respectively. This depicts that to a great extent Internal Business Processes component of BSC was used to determine the organizational performance of majority of ICT companies in Kenya. Through this Internal Business Processes approach, the companies attested to

measuring the product and service technologies, quality of products, changes in product manufacturing time and order processing time among other internal issues.

4.6. Strategic Alliances and Organizational Performance

This section presents findings on effect of strategic alliances on organizational performance of ICT companies. The findings are presented in subsequent sections

4.6.1. Improvement of the Market Share

The respondents were requested to indicate whether being in strategic alliance has enabled the company to improve its market share in the ICT industry. The findings are shown in the Table 4.11 below.

Table 4.11 Improvement of the Market Share

	Freq	**Percent**
Yes	78	65
No	42	35
Total	**120**	**100**

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

From the findings majority (65%) of the respondents indicated that being in strategic alliance has enabled the company to improve its market share in the ICT industry while 35% were of the contrary opinion. This depicts that being in strategic alliance has enabled the ICT companies to improve their market share in the ICT industry which is highly dynamic and competitive especially due to new entrants and

dominance of older firms coupled with evolving regulations, infrastructural changes and globalization of technology.

4.6.2. Improvement of the Customer Base

The respondents were requested to indicate whether being in strategic alliance has enabled the company to improve its customer base in the ICT industry. The findings are shown in the Table 4.12 below

Table 4.12 Improvement of the Customer Base

	Freq	**Percent**
Yes	96	80
No	24	20
Total	**120**	**100**

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

From the findings majority (80%) of the respondents indicated that being in strategic alliance has enabled the company to improve its customer base in the ICT industry while 35% were of the contrary opinion. This depicts that being in strategic alliance has enabled the ICT companies to improve their customer base in the ICT industry.

4.6.3. Improvement of the Operational Efficiency

The respondents were requested to indicate whether being in strategic alliance has enabled the company to improve its operational efficiency. The findings are shown in the Table 4.13 below

Table 4.13 Improvement of the Operational Efficiency

	Freq	Percent
Yes	108	90
No	12	10
Total	**120**	**100**

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

From the findings majority (90%) of the respondents indicated that being in strategic alliance has enabled the company to improve its operational efficiency while 10% were of the contrary opinion. This depicts that being in strategic alliance has enabled the ICT companies to improve their operational efficiency from accessing great resources that were previously out of their reach such as technical know-how, financial resources and new technologies.

4.6.4. Performance of the Company

The respondents were requested to indicate the extent of performance of the company using various indicators. The findings were shown in the table 4.14 below

Table 4.14. Performance of the Company

Indicator	Mean	Std. Dev
Market share	3.0167	.99565
Efficiency	3.4667	1.15906
Grand mean and standard deviation	3.241	1.077

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

Form the findings the respondents indicated to a great extent that the performance has improved in terms of market share (mean=3.0167), followed by operational efficiency

(mean=3.4667). This depicts that the performance of majority of the ICT firms in Kenya has improved due to increase in the market share and operational efficiency.

4.6.5. Strategic Alliances and Firm Performance

The respondents were requested to indicate the extent to which the existing strategic alliances contributed to improved organizational performance. The findings are shown in Table 4.15 below.

Table 4.15 Strategic Alliances and Firm Performance

	Freq	**Percent**
Very great extent	42	35
great extent	60	50
Moderate extent	12	10
Little extent	6	5
Total	**120**	**100**

Source: (Field Data, 2016)

From the findings majority (50%) of the respondents indicated to a great extent that the existing strategic alliances have contributed to improved organizational performance, 35% indicated very great extent, 10% indicated moderate extent, while 5% indicated to little extent. This depicts that to a great extent that the existing strategic alliances have contributed to improved organizational performance.

4.7 Assumptions of Regression

The researcher undertook a number of tests on regression assumptions including; tests for multicollinearity, normality and autocorrelation.

4.7.1 Testing for multicollinearity

The study tested for the multicollinearity of independent variables using formal detection-tolerance and the variance inflation factor (VIF) with the help of SPSS. The findings are as shown in Table 4.16 below.

Table 4.16 Testing for multicollinearity

Independent variables	Variance inflation factor (VIF)	I/VIF
Joint ventures	2.53	0.131
Franchises	2.50	0.243
Joint Research & Development	2.48	0.295
Joint marketing	2.45	0.158
Supply partnerships	2.43	0.075
Outsourcing	2.36	0.158
Mean VIF	2.45	

From the findings, there is no multicollinearity of independent variables as their variance inflation factors are less than four which was the standard.

4.7.2 Test for Normality

Normality test was undertaken using Shapiro-Wilk test and the results are as indicated in Table 4.17 below.

Table 4.17 Test for normality

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
strategic alliances	.233	119	2.000	.863	119	.800

According to the findings in Table 4.17 above, strategic alliances were normally distributed as their significance value of the Shapiro-Wilk Test were greater than 0.05, hence the data was normally distributed.

4.7.3 Test for Autocorrelation

The study used Breusch-Godfrey test to establish the presence or absence of autocorrelation between strategic alliances and organizational performance of ICT companies as indicated in Table 4.18 below. Breusch-Godfrey test makes use of the residuals from the model being considered in a regression analysis, and a test statistic is derived from these. From the findings, the study confirms that there is no autocorrelation between strategic alliances and organizational performance of ICT companies based on the Breusch-Godfrey test for autocorrelation (prob>chi2 value is 0.000).

Table 4.18 Autocorrelation

Breusch-Godfrey LM test for autocorrelation			
Lags (p)	Chi2	df	Prob>Chi2
1	30.251	1	0.243

4.7.4 Reliability Results

From the pilot study results, study established that the Cronbach alpha values were higher above 0.7 for the study variables strategic alliances (0.712) on organizational performance of ICT companies. This was an indication that there was internal consistency on strategic alliance in measuring the concept of interest (organizational performance of ICT companies).

4.8 Regressions Analysis

Multiple regressions were used to determine the predictive power of strategic alliances in influencing the organizational performance of ICT companies and the findings are as shown in Table 4.19 below.

Table 4.19 Coefficient of Determination

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	.113	.776		.146	.000
	Strategic alliances	.927	.180	.841	5.155	.000

As per the SPSS generated Table 4.19 above, the equation:

$$Y=\alpha+\beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon \text{ becomes: } Y= 0.113+ 0.927X_1+\varepsilon$$

According to the regression equation results in Table 4.19 above, taking strategic alliances to be constant at zero, organizational performance of ICT companies will be 0.113. The data findings analyzed also shows that a unit increase in strategic alliances will lead to a 0.927 increase in organizational performance of ICT companies. This implies that strategic alliances contribute significantly to the organizational performance of ICT companies.

At 5% level of significance and 95% level of confidence, strategic alliances had a 0.001 level of significance, meaning that the strategic alliances significantly influence the organizational performance of ICT companies.

4.8.1 Model Summary

Coefficient of determination explains the extent to which changes in the dependent variable can be explained by the change in the independent variables or the percentage of variation in the dependent variable (organizational performance of ICT companies) that is explained by the independent variable (strategic alliances). The regression model summary findings are as shown in Table 4.20 below.

Table 4.20 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.841a	.707	.681	.28949

As shown in Table 4.20 above, the strategic alliances that were studied, explain only 70.7% of the organizational performance of ICT companies as represented by the R^2. This therefore means that other strategic alliances not studied in this research contribute 29.3% of the organizational performance of ICT companies. Therefore, further research should be conducted to investigate the other strategic alliances (29.7%) that influence organizational performance of ICT companies.

4.8.2 ANOVA Results

The study ANOVA results are as shown in Table 4.21 below.

Table 4.21 ANOVA

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.227	1	2.227	26.578	.000[b]
	Residual	.922	118	.084		
	Total	3.149	119			
a. Dependent Variable: organizational performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), strategic alliances						

Table 4.21 above indicates that, the significance value is 0.001 which is less than 0.05 thus the model is statistically significant in predicting how strategic alliances influence organizational performance of ICT companies. The F critical at 5% level of significance was 3.23. Since F calculated is greater than the F critical (value = 26.578), this shows that the overall model was significant.

4.9. Discussion of Findings

The study established that the need to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage played a critical role in influencing the ICT Company to enter into strategic alliance with other firms. The study also found that strategic alliances used are reflected in the ICT company in that our strategic alliances are managed largely based on the mutual trust, constant communication and ability to learn and transfer knowledge and other resources among partners. Doz and Hamel, (1998) further indicate that firms in strategic alliances pool properties, resources, competencies and expertise to realize mutual objectives. This is informed by the fact that the information, properties,

resources, competencies and expertise needed to enhance profitability of the individual firms exists outside the firms' themselves and the firms' management lack direct control of these key resources. The study also established that the organization communicate the motive of forming the strategic alliances with the concerned stakeholders. Further the study established that to a little extent that the organization's expectations vary with the overall strategic alliances results.

The study found that there is significant use of the balanced scorecard as a performance evaluation tool. The study also established that to a great extent that the business unit has experienced an increased annual growth in sales as a result of performance evaluation undertaken. The study further found that to a great extent that customer expectations are taken into account in the decision making process. Berquist et al. (1995) indicates that strategic alliances help companies to meet the evolving customer needs, achieve high firm performance and remain competitive in the increasingly regulated markets. Forming strategic alliances has proved to be one of the most useful strategies that have enabled firms to retain and increase their market share in highly dynamic and competitive global markets as well as remain profitable over the years.

The study found that to a great extent that the product manufacturing time has reduced since the organization adopted the BSC. The study also established that to a great extent that hours per employee training has increased since the organization adopted the BSC performance measures. The study further established that the performance of the organization has improved due to increase in Market share growth. According to Oliva (2001) by use of joint marketing ventures companies are better placed to

effectively deal with uncertainties in the market environment. This would help such firms to reposition in highly competitive global markets and significantly reduce the transaction costs.

The study established that being in strategic alliance has enabled the company to improve its market share in the ICT industry. The study also established that being in strategic alliance has enabled the company to improve its customer base in the ICT industry. Additionally the study found that being in strategic alliance has enabled the company to improve its operational efficiency. Elmuti and Kathawala (2001) established that firms in alliances freely utilize competencies, expertise and strategic resources of their partners that they previously did not have. It is notable that large corporations are joining in alliances with medium sized firms in the same industry as well as NGOs to improve their reputation, competitiveness and performance as well as to reduce risks and costs.

The study found that the performance has improved due to increase in market share. Further the study established that to a great extent that the existing strategic alliances have contributed to improved organizational performance. The study also found that to a great extent that by use of joint marketing ventures the company is better placed to effectively deal with uncertainties in the market environment. According to Oliva (2001) by use of joint marketing ventures companies are better placed to effectively deal with uncertainties in the market environment. This would help such firms to reposition in highly competitive global markets and significantly reduce the transaction costs.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study in line with the objective of the study. The research sought to establish the influence of strategic alliances on organizational performance of ICT companies in Kenya.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study established that the majority of the reasons that made ICT firm to enter into strategic alliances included; diffusion of new technologies (mean=3.9500), creation of new markets (mean=3.9083), socio-political factors (mean=3.6750), the need to reduce cost of production (mean=3.6667), generation of more profits (mean=3.6333), the need to increase market share (mean=3.5917), achievement of a sustainable competitive advantage (mean=3.5333), improvement of customer service (mean=3.4833), enhancement of financial stability of the firm (mean=3.3333) and enhance market entry restrictions (mean=3.2667). Therefore, ICT companies in Kenya entered into strategic alliances with other firms for a number of reasons all meant to improve their survival, competitiveness and bottom-line performance both financially and non-financially. The key reasons for majority of the ICT firms entering into strategic alliance being; diffusion of new technologies, creation of new markets, to reduce production cost, increase profits, increase market share, achieve sustainable competitive advantage and improve customer service.

Based on the study findings, it is evident that; ICT firms applied various strategic alliances to enhance their operational performance and competitiveness, some of them including; joint ventures, franchises, joint research & development, joint marketing, supply partnerships and outsourcing**.** Thus, ICT companies were involved in strategic alliances to a great extent. These companies were in diverse strategic alliances with different companies to benefit from the benefits of each of the strategic alliances they were involved in. The findings confirm that the main strategic alliances used by ICT companies were; joint ventures; franchises; joint research and development; joint marketing; supply partnerships and outsourcing all of which had a mean of above 3.5.

The majority (60%) of the ICT firms communicated the motive behind strategic alliances to their stakeholders to enhance their ownership and commitment to the initiative hence its success.

To measure organizational performance, the study revealed that majority (90%) of the ICT firms used the balanced scorecard to ascertain their performance both financially and non-financially which gave a broad outlook of the company performance. The majority of the ICT firms were keen to apply the financial measure of their company performance based on the BSC approach. Through this approach the firms major financial indicators were on a positive outlook such as improved return on Investment, growth in sales, decreased operational cost, revenue growth and profitability levels. On the other hand, majority of the ICT companies heavily applied the customer perspective in measuring the financial health of their firms by assessing things like; speed of services, Customer Relationship Management issues and assessing response to customer expectations. Similarly, to a great extent the Internal

Business Processes component of BSC was used to determine the organizational performance of majority of ICT companies in Kenya. Through this Internal Business Processes approach, the companies attested to measuring the product and service technologies, quality of products, changes in product manufacturing time and order processing time among other internal issues.

The study further ascertained that being in strategic alliance (65%) has enabled the ICT companies to improve their market share in the ICT industry which is highly dynamic and competitive especially due to new entrants and dominance of older firms coupled with evolving regulations, infrastructural changes and globalization of technology. Again, being in strategic alliance as attested by 80% of the ICT firms has enabled the ICT companies to improve their customer base in the ICT industry. Similarly, 90% of the ICT firms indicated that being in strategic alliance has enabled the ICT companies to improve their operational efficiency from accessing great resources that were previously out of their reach such as technical know-how, financial resources and new technologies.

From the regression analysis, the study established that a unit increase in strategic alliances will lead to a 0.927 increase in organizational performance of ICT companies. Therefore, strategic alliances contribute significantly to the organizational performance of ICT companies. At 5% level of significance and 95% level of confidence, strategic alliances had a 0.001 level of significance. Thus, strategic alliances significantly influence the organizational performance of ICT companies.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concluded that ICT companies in Kenya entered into strategic alliances with other firms for a number of reasons all meant to improve their survival, competitiveness and bottom-line performance both financially and non-financially. The key reasons for majority of the ICT firms entering into strategic alliance being; diffusion of new technologies, creation of new markets, to reduce production cost, increase profits, increase market share, achieve sustainable competitive advantage and improve customer service.

From the findings, it was further concluded that ICT companies were involved in strategic alliances to a great extent. These companies were in diverse strategic alliances with different companies to benefit from the benefits of each of the strategic alliances they were involved in. The findings confirm that the main strategic alliances used by ICT companies were; joint ventures; franchises; joint research and development; joint marketing; supply partnerships and outsourcing.

In addition, ICT firms communicated the motive behind strategic alliances to their stakeholders to enhance their ownership and commitment to the initiative hence its success

The study concluded that to measure organizational performance, majority of the ICT firms used the balanced scorecard to ascertain their performance both financially and non-financially which gave a broad outlook of the company performance. The majority of the ICT firms were keen to apply the financial measure of their company performance based on the BSC approach. Through this approach the firms major financial indicators were on a positive outlook such as improved return on

Investment, growth in sales, decreased operational cost, revenue growth and profitability levels. On the other hand, majority of the ICT companies heavily applied the customer perspective in measuring the financial health of their firms by assessing things like; speed of services, Customer Relationship Management issues and assessing response to customer expectations. Similarly, to a great extent the Internal Business Processes component of BSC was used to determine the organizational performance of majority of ICT companies in Kenya. Through this Internal Business Processes approach, the companies attested to measuring the product and service technologies, quality of products, changes in product manufacturing time and order processing time among other internal issues.

The study further concludes that strategic alliance has enabled the ICT companies to improve their market share in the ICT industry which is highly dynamic and competitive especially due to new entrants and dominance of older firms coupled with evolving regulations, infrastructural changes and globalization of technology. Again, being in strategic alliance has enabled the ICT companies to improve their customer base in the ICT industry. Similarly, being in strategic alliance has enabled the ICT companies to improve their operational efficiency from accessing great resources that were previously out of their reach such as technical know-how, financial resources and new technologies

Finally, the study concluded that strategic alliances contribute significantly to the organizational performance of ICT companies and that strategic alliances significantly influence the organizational performance of ICT companies.

5.4 Recommendations

Given that not all alliances are intentionally designed to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes for all parties as some organizations may enter into strategic alliances as low-risk pathways for exploring opportunities for subsequent takeovers or divestitures, the study recommends that:

1. The management of the ICT companies should be keen to uncover such manipulative behaviors and should institute ‘air-tight’ deals that protect their firms from such exploitative maneuvers.

2. The organization management should organize for seminars and workshops where its top management employees can be trained on new insights on alliance management tools and strategies with a focus on leveraging differences with partners to create value, dealing with the internal challenges of making your partnerships succeed and managing the day-to-day challenges of working in alliances with competitors.

3. The organizations should form strategic alliance driven by the need to differentiate their products and services within one or a number of target market segments. It was not clear whether the banks formed strategic alliances in order to serve any differentiated market segment. Use of strategic partnerships geared towards differentiated strategy would help the banks to gain more competitive advantage compared to their competitors in terms of market capture.

4. Given the significant influence of the strategic alliances on the organization performance of the ICT companies in Kenya, the study recommends that the company's management should initiate an appraisal of all the strategic alliances entered into with other firms with a view of identifying the most important limiting factors impeding their successful implementation in order to ensure that the constraints are systematically addressed so that the companies can leap optimal benefits of the strategic alliances.

5.5 Areas of further studies

Since this study explored the influence of strategic alliances on organizational performance of information communication technology companies in Kenya, the study recommends that similar studies should be done on the other organizations in Kenya for comparison purposes and to allow for generalization of findings on the influence of strategic alliances on organization performance of companies in Kenya.

The study further recommends that a study should be done to investigate the organizational attributes that are key in choosing partners for a strategic alliance. For instance, is it products, market positions, technologies, human resources, managerial styles or reputation of an organization.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A: Background Information

1. Kindly indicate the age of your company?

2. Kindly indicate the number of employees in your company?

Section B: strategic alliances used by ICT companies in Kenya

6. What are the major strategic alliances the organization has entered into in the last five years?

…….

7. To whet extent did the following reasons motivate your ICT company's decision to enter into strategic alliances with other firms? Use a scale of 1-5 where 5 = To a very great extent, 4 = To a great extent, 3 = To a moderate extent, 2 = To a little extent, 1 = To no extent

Reasons behind strategic alliances	1	2	3	4	5
To create new markets					
To allow diffusion of new technologies					
To improve customer service					
To achieve a sustainable competitive advantage					
To enhance financial stability of the firm					
To enhance the market entry restrictions					
To slow market penetration					
To generate more profits					
Socio-political factors					
The need to reduce cost of production					
The need to increase market share					

8. The following statements relate to strategic alliances used by ICT companies in Kenya. To what extent are they reflected in your ICT company? Use a scale of 1-5 where 5 = To a very great extent, 4 = To a great extent, 3 = To a moderate extent, 2 = To a little extent, 1 = To no extent.

Joint ventures	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Operational efficiency					
Competitiveness and external customer relations,					
Equity and working relationship					
Franchises					
The system is efficient					
Compliance with the set standards					
Joint Research & Development					
Invest capital, equipment and scientific and technological resources					
Technology transfer					
Innovations realized					
Joint marketing					
Shared cost of marketing					
Marketing performance scores					
Exploiting full market potential					
Win-win marketing solution					
Supply partnerships					
Meeting end-customer needs through product availability and responsive, on-time delivery.					
The ability to fill customer orders faster and more efficiently than the competition					
Delivery times, product availability and product returns.					
Customer and supplier satisfaction					

Outsourcing					
Benchmarking					
Customer satisfaction					
Business management capability					
Transformation capability					
Delivery management capability					

9. Does your organization communicate the motives of forming strategic alliances with the concerned stakeholders of the organization?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

10. Kindly indicate the extent to which your organization's expectations vary with the overall strategic alliances results?

Very great extent [ ] Great extent [ ] Moderate extent [ ] Little extent [ ]

Section C: Organizational Performance

11. Does your organization use the balance scorecard as a performance evaluation tool?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

12. To what extent does your ICT company apply the following measures of Balanced Scorecard in measuring its organizational performance? Use a scale of 1-5 where 5 = To a very great extent, 4 = To a great extent, 3 = To a moderate extent, 2 = To a little extent, 1 = To no extent

Financial Performance Measures	1	2	3	4	5
The revenue growth of the firm has increased as a result of adopting the BSC					
The operating cost of the firm has decreased when employees cost to revenue generated is evaluated	n				
The business unit has experienced an					

increased annual growth in sales as a result performance evaluation undertaken					
Appropriate levels of cash necessary for operations both in the long term and short term are available					
Return on Investment is the main indicator used for assessing financial performance					
Top management is satisfied with the profitability levels					
Customer perspective					
Customer Relationship Management systems have been implemented					
Customer orientation objectives have been formulated and implemented					
Customer satisfaction is a criteria used to evaluate firm performance					
Customer expectations are taken into account in the decision making process					
Our market share in different geographic locations has increased					
The speed of services delivery is satisfactory					
Internal business processes					
The organization has the right business policies that helped in the increase of the productivity in the organization					
The product manufacturing time has reduced since the organization adopted the BSC					
Manufacturing defects has reduced since the introduction of the BSC					
The order processing time of the firm has become manageable					
The quality of products has improved					
Customer satisfaction indicator is used as the basis for improvement of internal processes					
Top management is satisfied with the product and service technologies					

Section D: Strategic alliances and organizational performance

13. For how long has your company been in a strategic alliance?

14. Has being in strategic alliance enabled your company to improve its market share in the ICT industry? Yes [ ] No [ ]

15. Has being in strategic alliance enabled your company to improve its customer base in the ICT industry? Yes [ ] No [ ]

16. Has being in strategic alliance enabled your company to improve its operational efficiency? Yes [ ] No [ ]

17. Kindly indicate the performance of your company in terms of the indicators given? Use a scale of 1-5, where 1-no extent, 2- little extent, 3-moderate extent, 4-great extent, 5-very great extent.

	1	2	3	4	5
Market share					
Efficiency					

18. To what extent has the existing strategic alliances contributed to your firm's improved organizational performance?

Very great extent [ ] Great extent [ ]

Moderate extent [ ] Little extent [ ]

Thank you for your time and participation

APPENDIX 2: INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES IN KENYA

1. Bejeris Jamoh the Xpert
2. Belcom C T Ltd
3. Bell Atlantic Communication Limited
4. Bell Atlantic Communication Ltd
5. Bell Computers
6. Benjos Investment
7. Bensa Technology
8. Bermin Cyber Cafe
9. Best Telecom Limited
10. BestComm
11. Bestell Computers Ltd
12. BestWebs Systems
13. BestWebs Systems
14. Better Globe ICT
15. Bewa Computer Systems
16. Big Foot Systems Ltd
17. Birowaks
18. Bit Cyber
19. Bitcomm Technologies
20. Bizzlab Kenya Holdings Ltd
21. Bloomerg Limited
22. Blue Chip Systems Ltd
23. Blue Violet Interactive
24. Blueline Synergy Limited

25. Blueprint Technologies
26. Blueweb Technologies
27. Bostelecomputing
28. Breezenet Technologies
29. Bridge Ict
30. Bright Webs Media
31. Brighter Day Web
32. Broker
33. Bromley Computer Systems
34. Bunduz Creative
35. Businet Systems
36. Butterfly Solutions Inc.
37. Byte Systems
38. ByTech
39. Bytech Engineering Ltd
40. C Hear (K) Ltd
41. C Hear (K) Ltd
42. Calais Communications
43. Callkey Networks
44. Capital Links Technologies
45. Capstone Computers
46. Cellulant
47. A.I Records (Kenya) Ltd
48. A.I Records (Kenya) Ltd
49. A.K. Computerlink Ltd
50. Abacus Computer System

51. Abacus Computer Systems Ltd.
52. Aboro Office Solutions
53. Abovenet Technologies
54. Access Kenya Group
55. Accolade Computer Technologies
56. Accoladebiz Co. Limited
57. Advance one Ltd
58. Adwest Communications
59. Adwest Communications
60. Afribit Online
61. Africa Journal Online
62. Africa Online Kenya Limited
63. Africa360 Ltd
64. African Desktop Ltd
65. AfricanColours Limited
66. Afrinet Cyber Cafe
67. Agritrance Kenya Ltd
68. Air Com Systems
69. AITEC East Africa
70. Aksent Ltd
71. Algomine-Tech Ltd
72. Algomine-Tech Ltd
73. Alldean Satellite Networks Ltd
74. Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa – AGRA
75. Allicos
76. Almond Communications

77. Alpha Ecological Pest Control
78. Alphabit Technologies
79. Alphajiri Kenya
80. Altech Technologies
81. Alternative Technology Supplies
82. Alwan Communications Ltd
83. Amiran Communications Ltd
84. Andest Bites
85. Appspool Business Solutions Ltd
86. Arid Land Information Network
87. Armaco Kenya Ltd
88. Ascend Network Ltd
89. Asper Worldwide Enterprises
90. Aster Global services Kenya Ltd (AGSKL)
91. Aster Ltd
92. Astron Computer Ltd
93. Atapiy Big Technology Ltd
94. Attika Crafts Agency
95. Avant Garde Design
96. Avtech Systems Limited
97. Axak Enterprises Ltd
98. Baobab Solutions Co. Ltd
99. Begood Computers Ltd.
100. Centriftonline
101. Centurion Systems
102. Cerberus Solutions Ltd

103. Cerberus Solutions Ltd

104. Charles Makori Networks

105. Chavs Technology Solutions

106. Chipukizi Systems

107. Chirema Telecomunications

108. Christopher Kyalo Consulting

109. Chura Ltd

110. ChwaniTech

111. CIO East Africa

112. CIO East Africa

113. CISI Kenya

114. Citech-Centre For Innovative Technology Ltd

115. Citech-Centre For Innovative Technology Ltd

116. Cloudnine Interaction

117. Cluster Communications Ltd

118. CoffeeWorks Solutions

119. Com Twenty One Ltd

120. ComChoice Africa Ltd

121. Comfortrain Computers

122. Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK)

123. COMP-USA (K) Ltd

124. Compulynx

125. Compusys

126. Computer Aid International

127. Computer Lynx Ltd

128. Computer Planet Kenya

129. Computer Point

130. Computer Revolution

131. Computer Revolution Ltd

132. Computer Source Point

133. Computer Technics Ltd

134. Computer Technologies

135. Computer Zone Consultants & Supplies Ltd

136. Comspec I T Solutions Ltd

137. Comtec Group

138. Comtec Networks Ltd

139. Comtec Networks Ltd

140. Comtel Intergrators Africa Ltd

141. Comtel Intergrators Africa Ltd

142. Copy Cat Ltd

143. Copycat Limited

144. Crescent Tech

145. Crossexcel Technologies Ltd

146. Cyber Africa

147. Cyber Cafe Pro

148. Daniche Solutions

149. Dankam Agency

150. Dase Creation