An Analysis of the Competitive Strategies Employed by Private Universities in Kenya: A Case Study of Private Universities in Nairobi

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Abstract

The study discusses an analysis of the competitive strategies employed by private universities in Kenya. Private Universities have embraced different strategies to counter competition. The study discussed how private universities have employed technology and innovation as a competitive strategy and how they have employed differentiation to give them a competitive advantage.

Results arising from the research suggest that private universities have embraced technology, differentiated their products and services and also products are leading in the market which has given them a competitive advantage over the others.

Some recommendation that the study made includes supporting e-learning and virtual schools which will enable each lecturer to participate in e-learning and explore creative ways to fund e-learning opportunities, encourage broadband access by thoroughly evaluating existing technology infrastructure, improve lecturer training, consider innovative budgeting and lastly strengthen leadership.

Key words: Universities; Education; Differentiation; Strategy and competitiveness

ACRONYMS

DBS: Direct broadcasting satellite
WBT: Web based training
TEL: Technology-enhanced leaning
CSCL- Computer supported collaborative learning
CBT- Computer based training
TCP/IP: Transmission control Protocol/Internet protocol

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Competitive strategy refers to how a company competes in a particular business (note: overall strategy for diversified firms is referred to as corporate strategy). Competitive strategy is concerned with how a company can gain a competitive advantage through a distinctive way of competing. Having a competitive advantage is necessary for a firm to compete in the market but what is more important is whether the competitive advantage is sustainable. a firm must identify its position relative to the competition in the market by knowing if it is a leader, challenger, follower etc. it can adopt appropriate strategies to compete. A good strategist seeks not only to "win the hill, but hold on to it" (Subash, 2000). Sustaining competitive advantage requires erecting barriers against the competition by looking at the following: How you compete, basis of competition, where you compete, whom you are competing against and the ways to create barrier to competition (Aaker, 2011).

Some of the benefits of employing or having competitive strategies include; effectively supporting your company's top line growth objectives by helping you develop a differentiated and sustainable competitive position, development of a best practice process to; asses your company's strengths, assess the competitive situation and formulate the appropriate response. It enables your

organization to achieve competitive advantage or deliver benefits that exceed those of competing products (Porter, 1985).

The private universities in Kenya are not a new phenomenon; their rapid growth over the last five years is raising questions about the standards in higher education. Kenya today has 8 public and 30 private universities of which 11 are in Nairobi city (with either full or interim charter and 20% of a total of 150,000 students attend private institutions compared with some 91500 in 2005 according to government statistics. An analysis conducted enrolment in private universities in 2012/2002 using the accredited/non accredited dichotomy shows that out of 9,129 students enrolled in these institutions, accredited/non, accredited institution have the bulk of the enrolment at 7,639 or 83.7% unaccredited take the remaining. The competition has made public universities to join the fray by opening new colleges in different parts of the country and introducing 'parallel' degree programs in response to spiraling demand for higher education and for the purposes of dealing with competition brought about by the mergence of private universities. The growth of private universities has been fuelled by several factors including limited opportunities available in public universities has been closures of state funded universities and the desire to complement government managed higher institutions of learning. Also, interestingly, two thirds of the new universities are run by religious organizations, mainly protestant churches, that try to attract their followers using it as a competitive strategy to achieving a competitive advantage and also to ensure that as young minds mature academically they stay within the faith. Competition in private universities has intensified dramatically over the last decades, in virtually all parts of the world. it was not long ago that competition was all but absent in the private universities sectors and in many other industries too. Markets were protected and dominant market positions were the rule. Even where competitors were present, rivalry was anything but intense. Stifling government intervention blunted competition as did outright cartels. (Porter, 1998).

While the history of higher education in Kenya predates the country's independence and is characteristically religious, the 1st truly private University in Kenya was marked by the establishment of a campus of the United States International University, UDIS in 1969. This was followed by Daystar University in 1974 and the University of East Africa at Baraton in 1978. However the pace of change has been fast due to policy shifts that began in the 1980s and 1990s.

Statement of the Problem

The business environment within which the private universities in Kenya operate has been very volatile since both the market forces and technology are converging to deliver many new capabilities in the very near future.

Markets that were thought secure now look vulnerable to competition from the local private universities.

Several empirical studies have looked at the growth of the private higher education sector globally where two aspects stand out from the analyses that is the rise of the private sector, and the processes of differentiation, diversification, and stratification (Altbach, 1999). In some cases, these analyses found a deterioration of academic quality due to the private sector's focus on a set of programs and educational goals that is far more limited than those traditionally found in private non profit institutions. Nothing much has been researched on the competitive strategies employed by private universities. Thus this study therefore, aimed to fill in this knowledge gap by analyzing the competitive strategy employed by private universities in the growing educational sector.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze the competitive strategies employed by private universities in Kenya.

Objectives of the Study

To determine how private universities have employed technology and innovation as a competitive strategy.

To determine how private universities have employed differentiation as strategy to give them a competitive advantage.

Research Questions

In view of the above research objectives, this study sought to find answers to the following question.

How has technology and innovation been employed as a competitive strategy by private universities to improve on their performance and counter competition?

How has differentiation been employed as a competitive strategy by private Universities to improve on their performance and give them a competitive advantage?

Significance of the Study

The study will be important to:

1. **Private universities** - Since this will create awareness of the competitive strategies they are; likely to know how they can prevent and control competition.

2. **Academic researchers** - It will help them in developing their theories concerned with the study and to the public at large by educating them on competitive strategies used and how to research further on them.

3. **Students -** The study will provide the students with information of various private universities and how they can be beneficial to them since they will know what they are looking for.

4. **Scholars** - The study will provide information on effective competitive strategies among private universities in Kenya to potential and current scholars. This will expand their knowledge on strategic responses in education institution and identify areas

of further study.

5. **Other stake holders** - By identifying competitive challenges affecting private universities and determine way in which universities respond to increased competition.

Definitions of Terms

1. **Pedagogies**: Strategies of instructions or style of instruction. Correct use of instructive strategies
2. **Terrain**: A geographical area
3. **Francophone countries**: A list of countries where French is the official language.
4. **Binary Divide**: differentiation between polytechnic institutions and universities.
5. **SPEC**: nonprofit corporation formed to establish, maintain and endorse a standardized set of relevant Bench marks to the newest generation of high performance computers.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Introduction

For a business to be successful there should be some degree of advantage over the competitors. Competitive advantage can come in one or combination of the following factors: price, service, quality, location, or imbedded customer base. The better the business performs against one of these factors, the more likely it is to succeed (Bailey, 2006). Private universities have embraced different competitive strategies to counter competition. i.e. some have embraced technology and web marketing as a strategy where by many higher education for-profit, institutions, now offer on-line classes, use e-learning module, distance learning, selling courses electronically, this has mad learning easier and efficient thus increasing their enrollment (Kalypso, 2009).

Differentiation strategy has also been used to counter competition by employing unique and different products from competitor's i.e. different admission criteria, different requirements in credit transfers, academic staff mobility whether they circulate among different types of institutions and application of market driven strategies (McGee, 2003).

Last but not least, product leadership has also been used to counter competition by offering leading edge products and services, providing a stream of products and services and creatively adapting to new and changing conditions while constantly pursuing new solutions on behalf of the customers and engaging in corporate social responsibility on brand differentiation.

1.2 Technology Strategy

Technology is the making, usage and knowledge of tools, machines, techniques, crafts, systems or methods of organization in order to solve a problem a specific function. Innovation is increasingly regarded as an important basis for sustainable competitive advantage in organizations and innovation and the management of technology is assuming an increasing importance in strategic management courses. The types of available technologies used in distance education are divided into two groups, synchronous learning and asynchronous learning (Merisotis, 1999).

Synchronous learning technology is a mode of delivery where all participants are "present" at the same time. It resembles traditional classroom teaching methods despite the participants being located remotely. It requires a timetable to be organized. Web conferencing, video conferencing, educational television, instructional television are examples of synchronous technology, as are direct broadcast satellite (DBS), internet radio, live streaming telephone, and web-based (Honeyman, 1999). The asynchronous leaning mode of delivery is where participants access course materials on their own schedule and so is more flexible. Students are not required to be together at the same time. Mail correspondence which is the oldest form of distance education is an asynchronous delivery technology and others include message board forums, e-mail, video and audio recordings, print materials, voicemail and fax (Seaman 2006).

1.2.1 Computer-based Learning

Computer based learning practices are proven way to give students the opportunity of increased competence in the units covered, more autonomy in what they chose to study, and a greater sense of relatedness between their education and their personal lives. Relatedness, autonomy and competence are critical to instilling a lasting motivation to learn in students (Honeyman, 1990).

Cassandra B. Whyte researched about the ever increasing role that computers would play in higher education. This evolution, to include computer supported collaborative learning, in addition to data management, had been realized. This has also enhanced e-learning and use of module, computer labs, using projectors to learn in class and selling courses electronically hence creating awareness to the public. The type of computers have changed over the years from cumbersome, slow devices taking up much space in the classroom, home and office to laptops and handled devices that are more portable in form and size and this minimization of technology devices will continue (Tabor, 2007).

1.2.2 Computer-based Training

Computer based training is a flexible, affordable solution for trainees and corporate training department alike. Blending the best instructor-led training classes with the convenience of computers which allow trainees to learn the material from a certified instructor but at their own pace. Courses are offered on CD, DVD, or as an online e-learning course. CBTs typically present content in a linear fashion, much like reading an online book

or manual. For this reason they are often used to teach static processes, such as using software or completing mathematical equations. The term Computer-Based Training is often used interchangeably with Web-based training (WBT) with the primary difference being the delivery method. Where CBTS are typically delivered via CD-ROM, WBT are delivered via the internet using a web browser. Assessing learning in CBT usually comes in form of multiple choice questions, or other assessment that can be easily scored by a computer such as drag and drop, radio button, simulation or other interactive means. Assessments are easily scored and recorded via online software, providing immediate end-user feedback and completion status. Users are often able to print completion records in the form of certificates (Vaughan, 2010).

1.3 Cross-border Provision

A key feature of higher education differentiation within the countries covered in this study is cross-border provision. As a result of the financial constraints that limit the expansion of their physical and academic facilities, the higher education systems of the poorer or more populous countries of Africa are unable to accommodate the enrolment pressure exerted on them by the large numbers of school leavers from their pre-tertiary systems. Cross boarder educational activities, including the importation of courses and services and the physical movement of students across borders is, therefore, assuming important dimensions in Sub Saharan Africa. For example, many Nigerian students now attend Ghanaian universities on a full fee paying basis. Similarly, Nigerian universities have for a long time been training students from Cameroon and other neighboring countries. Senegalese higher education institution receives students regularly from other francophone countries in the sub-region who consider Senegalese qualifications of comparable standard to those obtained from France, but at a lower cost (Huisman, 1996).

The situation is repeated in East Africa where many Kenyan students study in Ugandan universities because higher education is cheaper there. South Africa has also become an attractive destination for student from nearly all English speaking African countries because of its diversified system, demonstrated quality and less expensive higher education compared to Europe and North America. While the importance of cross border provision cannot be denied as a way of improving access, it is legitimate to debate the extent to which it is increasing "knowledge diversity" in the country of student origin (Huisman, 1996).

1.3.1 Transferability of Credits

Transfer credit is evaluated only for the degree program to which students are admitted, and the amount of credit awarded is subject to change if students change degree programs. Courses applied toward the major may not be transferred to the University from another institution without special permission of the department. For credits transferred from a foreign institution, the University of Virginia grants credit for courses taken at recognized foreign tertiary-level education institutions. Foreign education institutions that are chartered and authorized by their respective national governments (generally through the ministries of education) are considered "recognized" (Altbach, 1999).

1.3.2 Admission Criteria

Universities across the nation have established criteria in the selection of students for admission. While the selection criteria vary among universities most universities use some combination of high school grade point average, high school and class rank. However, these admission criteria are valid in predicting academic performance and degree completion of students (Astin, 1996).

1.3.3 Academic Staff Mobility

The mobility of staff should contribute to strengthen international co-operation capacity of higher education institutions in third countries, with the production of new teaching material, as well as their management capacity. It should aim to consolidate and extend links between departments and faculties and to prepare for future co-operation projects between the universities. The staff mobility is also expected to lead to progresses in the application of ECTS or other systems for recognition of studies in the partner institution (Hopkins, 2011).

In order to be eligible, academic and administrative staff hereafter referred as "staff", must be a national of one of the eligible countries, work in or be associated to a HEI within the partnership, the mobility assignments must be based on partnership agreements between the members of the partnership, and the individual staff must agree on the program of lectures to be delivered by the visiting staff, on the research activities or on the type of training to be followed (Sharman, 2000).

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodologies, which were adopted when addressing the study objective. It also highlights the target population the researcher concentrated on during the study, the research design, sample and sampling procedures, instrumentation, and data collection procedures and data analysis methods.

2.2 Research Design

Research Design is a plan outlining how information is to be gathered for an assessment or evaluation that includes identifying the data gathering method, the instruments to be used, how the instruments will be administrating, and how the information will be organized and analyzed (Campbell, 1963).

The study adopted a descriptive research design since

it is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe what exists with respect to variables or conditions (Roson, 1993) in a situation by using questionnaires to fully describe the phenomenon and thus it well suits the objectives of the study.

2.3 Target Population

The study targeted 11existing private universities in Nairobi, Kenya which some are fully chartered and others operate under the letter of interim authority. It also targeted the total number of students in private universities which is currently 26,267.

Name of university	Student Population
Kcau	2,700
Usiu	7,158
Catholic	3,149
Strathmore	3,651
Kiriri Womens	281
Pan Africa Christian	280
Aga Khan	279
African International	450
Adventist	400
African Nazarene	2,004
Daystar	5,915
Total	26,267

Source: Registrar office of each university, 2011

2.4 Sample and Sampling Design

According to (Mellenbergh, 2008), sample technique is a statistical determination of the appropriate sample size, which enables the researcher to generalize results obtained. The study adopted simple random sampling technique since it gives each respondent an equal chance of being chosen. From the target population of eleven private universities in Nairobi, target samples of five private universities were considered for the study i.e. KCAU, USIU, Strathmore, Daystar and Kiriri Women's and a target sample of 10 students in each University.

2.5 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

2.5.1 Sources of Data

The researcher used primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data was obtained from the employees through the use of questionnaires and interviews while secondary data was obtained from published reports, journals, books and internet web sites.

2.5.2 Data Collection Instruments

2.5.2.1 Questionnaire

In order for the study to be successful, the researcher prepared self-administered questionnaires. This provided

a degree of anonymity for the respective respondents particularly if sensitive issues were to be involved. This helped to evaluate the quality of the research as is proceeds. (Kent, 1989)

2.5.2.2 Interview guide

The researcher interviewed a few employees because it was easy to obtain firsthand information and clarification where necessary and there was also personal contact between the interviewer and the interviewee and hence one was able to create a good rapport and also be able to read the body and facial language of the interviewee.

2.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation

It involved evaluating the findings obtained from the study and it is where the researchers gave meaning to the data collected in respect to ones desired objectives.

2.6.1 Data Analysis Techniques

Data was analyzed quantitatively by describing and summarizing it using descriptive statistics and this was to enable the researchers to meaningfully describe of scores. The data was analyzed in a systematic way so that it can come up with useful conclusions and recommendations. The researcher obtained detained information about the study and established patterns, trends and relationships from the information gathered. The researcher used frequencies which enabled arraying of the data. Percentages, measures were entered into the computer and analyzed by use of Microsoft Excel.

2.6.2 Data Presentation

The researchers interpreted the information collected from the respondents. Information was compiled once the questionnaires were completed and collected. The information was analyses and presented using statistical methods that is, pie charts and bar graphs.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

3.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzed the data collected using tools of analysis itemized in chapter three. Out of the 50 students in the 5 private universities in Nairobi sampled, only 40 students responded indicated by the table below.

Table 1
Findings on, Response Rate

| Response Rate	Frequency	Percentage
Responded	40	80%
Did not respond	10	20%
Total	50	100%
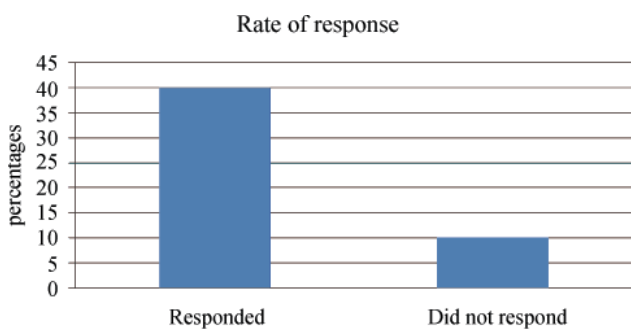
Figure 1
Rate of Response

Table 1 and Figure 1 above show an 80% response rate which was considered adequate for the study.

3.2 Findings on Technology and Innovation as a Competitive Strategy Employed by Private Universities

Table 2
Findings on, Whether Universities Have Embraced Technology

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Agree	20	50%
Agree	15	37.5%
Strongly disagree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
Total	40	100%
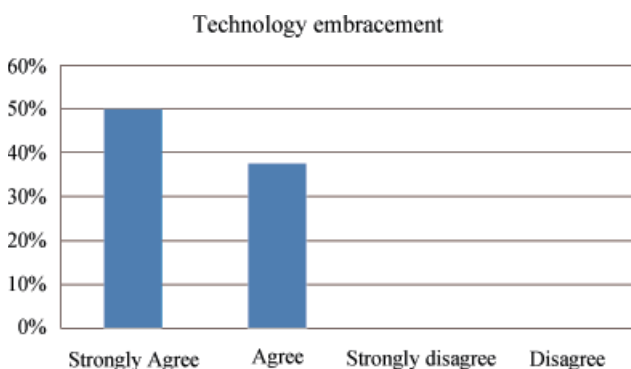
Figure 2
Technology Embracement

Table 2 and Figure 2 above indicate that fifty percent (50%) strongly agree that their University has embraced technology, thirty seven point five percent (37.5%) agree, twelve, point five percent (12.5%) disagree, while none strongly disagrees that their University has embraced technology.

The findings thus indicate that most of the universities have employed technology and innovation as a

competitive strategy thus giving them a competitive advantage over the others.

Findings on, how technology has given the universities a competitive advantage over the others.

Table 3
Findings on Whether Technology Has Improved Learning

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	25	62.5%
Agree	10	25%
Strongly disagree	3	7.5%
Disagree	2	5%
Total	40	100%
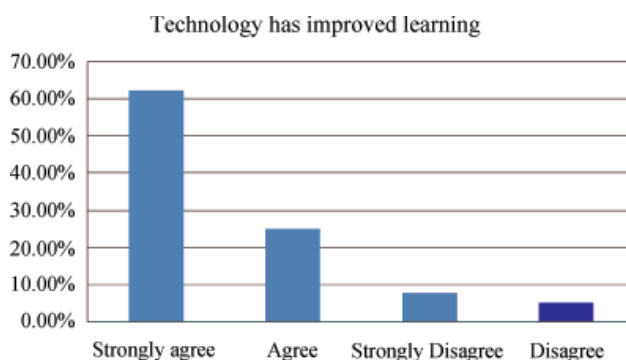
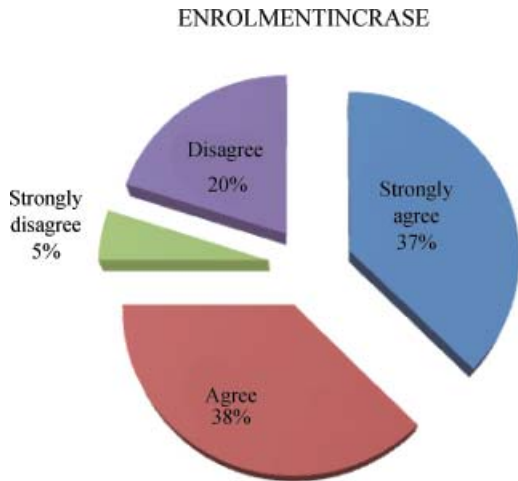Source: **Research findings from primary data**
Figure 3
Improved Learning

Table 3 and Figure 3 above indicate that sixty two point five percent (62.5%) strongly agree that technology has improved learning, twenty five percent (25%) agree, seven point five percent (7.5%) strongly disagree and five percent (5%) disagree.

The findings thus indicate technology has improved learning and hence this has given them a competitive advantage thus improving their performance.

Table 4
Findings on Whether Technology Has Increased Enrolment in Universities

|	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	15	37.50%
Agree	15	37.50%
Strongly disagree	2	5%
Disagree	8	20%
Total	40	100%

ENROLMENTINCRASE

Source: Research findings from the primary data
Figure 4
Enrolment Increase

Table 4 and Figure 4 indicate that thirty seven percent (37%) strongly agree that technology has increase the enrolment rate, thirty eight percent (38%) agree, five percent (5%) strongly disagree and twenty percent (20%) disagree.

The findings thus indicate that technology has increased the rate of enrolment in universities though not with a big percentage hence improving their performance.

Table 5
Findings on Whether Technology Has Eased the Admission Criteria

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	5	12.5%
Agree	5	12.5%
Strongly disagree	20	50%
Disagree	10	25%
Total	40	100%

ADMISSION CRITERIA
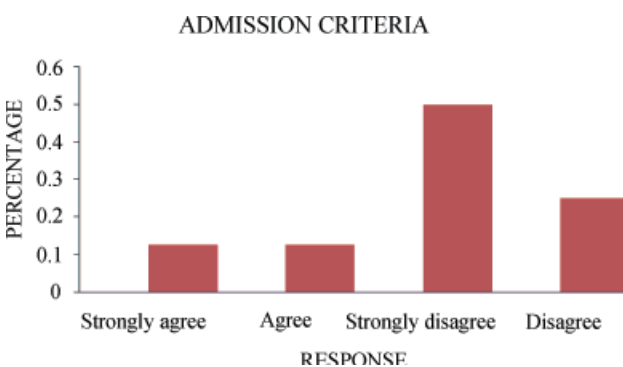
Figure 5
Admission Criteria

Table 5 and Figure 5 indicate that fifty percent (50%)

strongly disagree that technology has eased the admission criteria, twenty five percent (25%) disagree and twelve point five percent (12.5%) strongly disagree and agree.

The findings thus indicate that most of the students do not agree with the fact that technology has eased admission criteria.

Table 6
Findings on Enhance Learning

|	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	14	35%
Agree	20	50%
Strongly disagree	3	7.5%
Disagree	3	7.5%
Total	40	100%
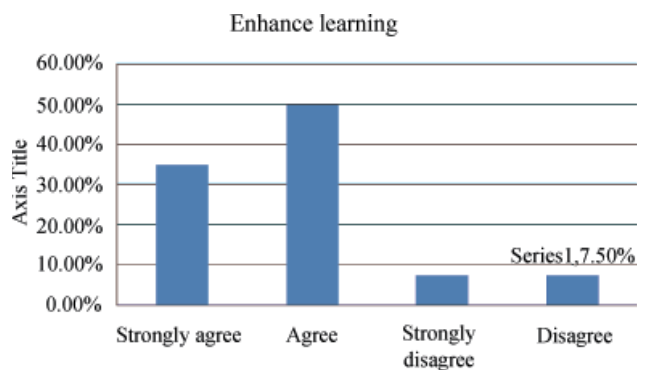
Enhance learning

Source: Research findings from primary data
Figure 6
Enhance Learning

Table 6 and Figure 6 indicate that fifty percent (50%) agree that the study criteria has enhanced learning, thirty five percent (35%) strongly agree, seven point five (7.5%) percent strongly disagree and disagree.

The findings thus indicate that the study criteria have greatly enhanced learning.

Table 7
Findings on Whether Students Are Aware of Computer Based Trainings

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	5	12%
Agree	17	42%
Strongly disagree	7	18%
Disagree	11	28%
Total	40	100.00%
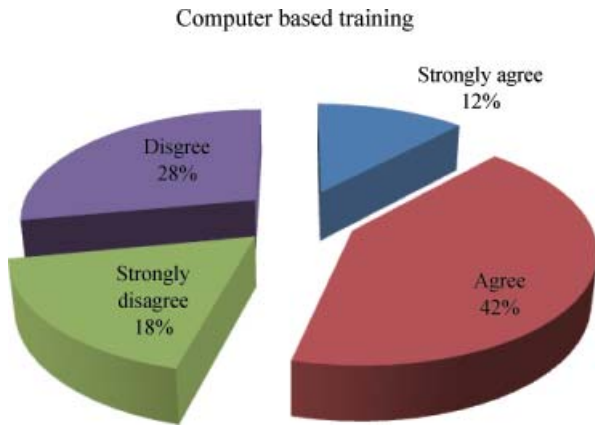
Figure 7
Computer Based Training

Table 7 and Figure 7 indicate that forty two percent (42%) agree that the students are aware of computer based training, twenty eight percent disagree (28%), eighteen percent (18%) strongly disagree and twelve percent (12%) strongly agree.

The findings indicate that students are quite not aware of the computer based trainings in their University and thus the University should create awareness.

Table 8
Findings on Whether Computer Based Training has Increased Computer Literacy

|	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	7	17.50%
Agree	27	67.50%
Strongly disagree	3	7.50%
Disagree	3	7.50%
Total	40	100.00%
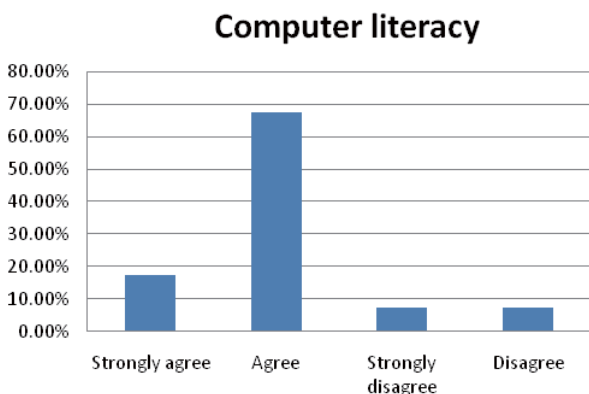
Figure 8
Computer Literacy

Table 8 and Figure 8 indicate that sixty seven point five percent (67.5%) agree that computer based training

has increase computer literacy, seventeen point percent (17.5%) strongly agree, seven point five percent (7.5%) strongly disagree and disagree. The findings thus indicate that computer based training has greatly increased the computer literacy.

Table 9
Findings on Whether Computer Based Training has Helped in Cost Management

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	7	17.50%
Agree	27	67.50%
Strongly disagree	3	7.50%
Disagree	3	7.50%
Total	40	100.00%
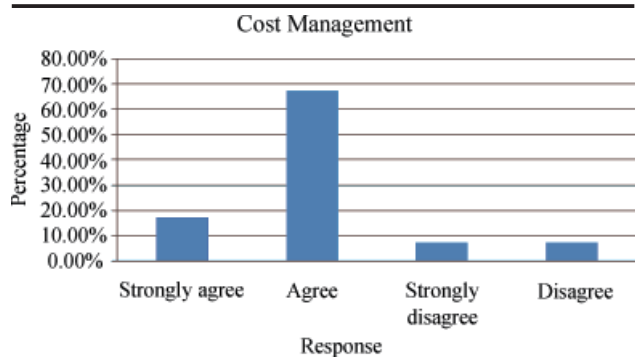
Figure 9
Cost Management

Table 9 and Figure 9 indicate that sixty seven point five percent (67.5%) strongly agree that computer based training has helped in cost management, seventeen point five percent (17.5%) agree and seven point five percent (7.5 %) strongly disagree and disagree.

The findings thus indicate that computer based training has helped in cost management in universities.

3.3 Findings on How Differentiation has Been Employed by Private Universities a Competitive Strategy

Findings on the criteria the universities have used to differentiate their products.

Table 10
Findings on Whether Universities have Used Price and Quality to Differentiate Their Products

|	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	7	17.50%
Agree	25	62.50%
Strongly disagree	2	5.00%
Disagree	6	15.00%
Totals	40	100.00%

Source; Research Findings from primary data .
Figure 10
Price and Quality

Table 10 and Figure 10 indicate that sixty two point five percent (62.5%) agree, seventeen point five percent (17.5%) strongly agree, fifteen percent (15%) disagree, and five percent (5%) strongly disagree.

The study thus indicates most of the universities have tried to differentiate their products by price and quality but some universities have not and need employ this strategy.

Table 11
Findings on, Whether Universities have Used Duration and Location as a Differentiation Strategy

	frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	2	5 %
agree	6	15%
Strongly agree	7	17%
Disagree	25	63%
Totals	40	100%
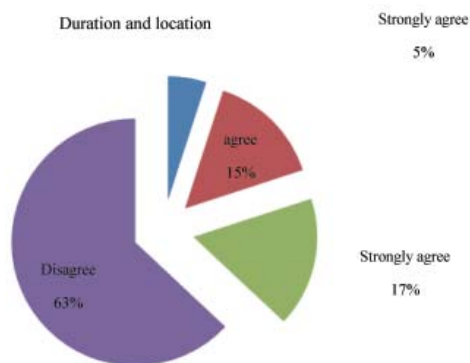
Source: Research findings from primary data
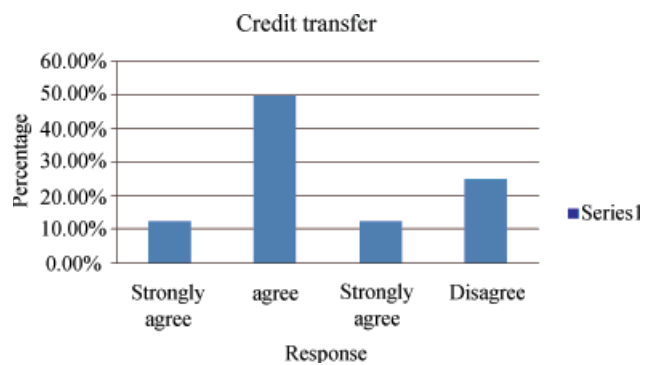**Figure 11**
Duration and Location

Table 11 and Figure 11 indicate that sixty three percent (63%) disagree that duration and location has been used to differentiate universities. Seventeen percent (17%)

strongly disagree, fifteen percent (15%) agree and five percent (5%) strongly agree.

The findings thus indicate that most of the universities have not used duration and location as a differentiation strategy thus need to employ this strategy to keep them in the market.

Table 12
Findings on Whether the Universities Allow Transferability of Credits and if There is a System to Facilitate it

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	5	12.5 %
agree	20	50%
Strongly agree	5	12.5%
Disagree	10	25%
Totals	40	100%

Source research findings from primary data
Figure 12
Credit Transfers

Table 12 and Figure 12 indicate that fifty percent (50 %) agree that their University allow credit transfers, twenty five percent (25%) disagree, twelve point five (12.5%) strongly disagree and strongly agree

The findings thus indicate that universities allow credit transfers and there is a system to facilitate it but they still need to be flexible on this in order to increase the enrolment rate.

Table 13
Findings on the Criteria Used to Admit Students in the Universities

	frequency	Percentages
KCSE Results	30	75%
Mock Results	4	10%
Credit Transfers	6	15%
Interview	0	0
Extracurricular Activities	0	0
Totals	40	100%
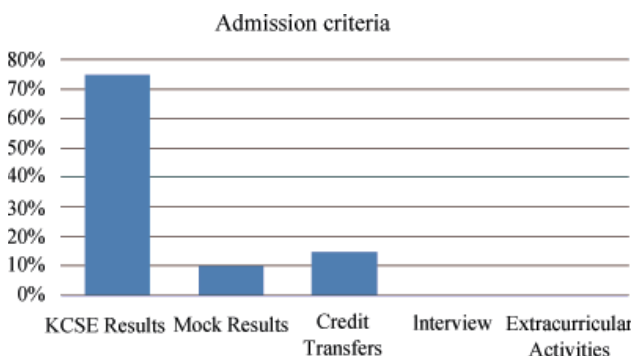
Source: Research findings from primary data
Figure 13
Admission Criteria

Table 13 and Figure 13 indicate that seventy five per cent (75%) where admitted through use of their KCSE results ,fifteen percent (15%) through credit transfer and ten percent (10%) through mock results.

The findings thus indicate that most of the students are admitted through their KCSE results thus the universities need to try other ways like interviews and extracurricular activities.

Findings on how academic staff mobility has given the University a competitive advantage.

Table 14
Findings on Whether Academic Staff Mobility has Strengthened International Cooperation and Extended Links Between Faculties

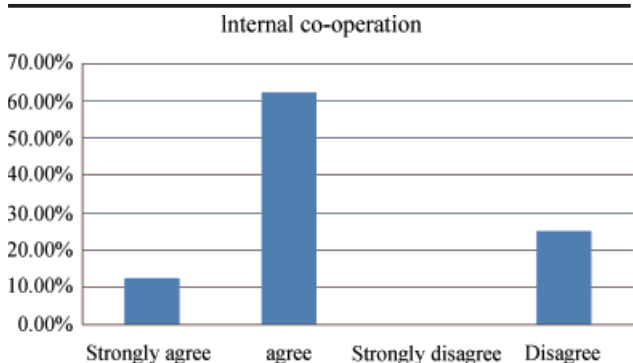|	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	5	12.5%
agree	25	62.50%
Strongly disagree	0	0.00%
Disagree	10	25.00%
Totals	40	100.00%

Source research findings from primary data.
Figure 14
Internal Co-operation

Table 14 and Figure 14 findings indicate that sixty two point five percent (62.5%) academic staff mobility has enhance international co-operation and extended faculty links, twenty five percent disagree (25%) and twelve point five (12.5%) strongly agree, none strongly disagrees. The findings thus indicate that academic staff mobility has

been of great help to universities.

Table 15
Findings on Whether Academic Staff Mobility has Improved Staff Knowledge and Experience

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	9	22.50%
Agree	31	77.50%
Strongly disagree	0	0.00%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Totals	40	100.00%
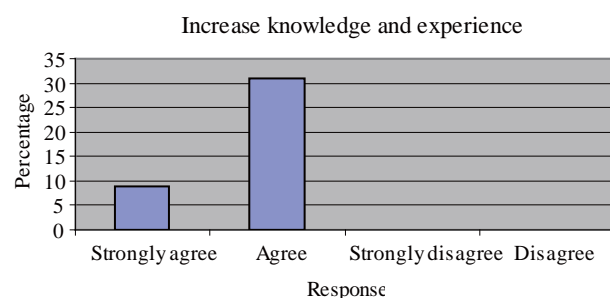
Source: research findings from data
Figure 15
Increased Knowledge and Experience

Table 15 and Figure 15 indicate that seventy seven point five percent (77.5%) support that academic staff mobility has improved staff knowledge and experience, twenty two point five percent (22.5%) strongly agree and none strongly disagree or disagree with the statement.

The findings thus indicate that academic staff mobility has greatly enhanced the staffs knowledge and experience.

4. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Summary

This study set out to seek and find answers to the following questions

How has technology and web marketing been employed as a competitive strategy by private universities to improve on their performance and counter completion?

How has differentiation been employed as a competitive strategy by private universities to improver on their performance and give them a competitive strategy?

How does product leadership and marketing strategies give private universities a competitive advantage?

Private universities have embraced technology as a strategy to give them a competitive advantage over their competitors. This has enhanced learning, increased enrolment, eased the admission criteria and at the same time improved the mode of study. For example, universities have used Computer based training as competitively strategy which has improved efficiency

in learning, increased computer literacy, helped in cost management and made distance not to be a barrier anymore.

Private universities have also o used differentiation as a strategy to give a competitive advantage that is they have used quality, price or cost, location, duration and embedded customer base to differentiate their products from others which has made their product from others which has made their products and services stand out. Lastly and not least, Private universities have also used product leadership as a strategy to gain a competitive advantage. That is, universities have tailored their products and services to meet the customer's preference and this has led to increase ion enrolment, enriched their reputation and also led to increase in the cost.

4.2 Conclusions

The results obtained above were derived from the data collected from the intended sample. For the purpose of simplicity and understanding, the information was presented in graphs, pie charts and tables with accompanying explanations of what the data means.

Communicating products vision, reaching customers preference, providing market driven programs, differentiating the University by location, campaigning for academic staff mobility, used of computer based trainings, computer based learning are some of the major factors which have given private universities a competitive advantage.

4.3 Recommendations

Private Universities should consider innovative budgeting since needed technology can only be funded successfully through innovative restructuring and relocation of existing budgets to realize efficiencies and cost savings. This will determine the total cost for technology as a percentage total spending and thus they should consider a systematic restructuring of budgets to realize efficiencies in cost savings and relocation.

Private universities should improve lecturer training that is, lecturer have more resources available through technology than ever before but some haven't received sufficient training in the effective use of technology to enhance learning thus hey should ensure that every lecturer has the opportunity to take online learning courses.

Private universities should support e-learning and virtual schools by providing every student access to e-learning, enable every lecturer to participate in e-learning training and also by exploring creative ways to fund e-learning opportunities.

Private Universities should encourage broadband access by thoroughly evaluating existing technology infrastructure and access to broadband to determine current capabilities and explore ways to ensure its reliability, encourage the availability of adequate technical support to manage and maintain computer networks.

Private universities should strengthen leadership. For higher education to benefit from the rapidly evolving development of information and communication technology, leaders at every level must not only supervise but provide informed, creative and ultimately transformative leadership for systematic change by developing partnership between universities and also the business community retool administrator education programs to provide training in technology decision making and organizational and invest in leadership development programs to develop a new generation of tech savvy leaders.

Private universities should employ multifaceted leaders who have a more holistic view of business, who can spot emerging opportunities and who can navigate through periods of decline as well as growth since they will be able to master new skills, explore diverse perspectives and develop new leadership styles transforming them into outstanding business leaders who have the judgment, confidence and skills to lead their organization in all economic environments.

4.4 Further Research

In view of the above shortcoming, the researcher recommends that future research should be carried out on the risks exposed to private universities which are affecting their performance.

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APPENDIX A

Research Questionnaires

This questionnaire is meant to gather information that will be used in writing up the project entitled "**AN ANALYSIS OF THE COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA**" (a case study of private universities in Nairobi).

Please answer the question to your knowledge and tick where appropriate

INTRODUCTION

1. Name of University

2. The course being undertaken
Certificate(   )   Diploma(   )   Degree(   )
Master   (   )   PHD   (   )

3. The mode of study
Full time   (   )
Part time   (   )
Weekend   (   )
Distance learning   (   )

Section A

TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

1.   Has your University embraced technology?
Strongly agree   (   )
Agree   (   )
Strongly disagree   (   )
Disagree   (   )
Neutral   (   )

2.   How has technology given your universities advantage over other universities?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree
Improved learning				
Enrolment increase				
Ease admission criteria				
Improved mode of study				

3.   How do you study in your University? By use of
Computer   (   )

Blackboards   (   )
Whiteboards   (   )
Projectors   (   )
Print out   (   )

Enhanced learning

Improved students and lecturers performance

4. How has the study criteria been useful?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree
Reduced paper work				

5. Computer Based Training is use of CD's , DVD's web, conferencing, video conferencing, educational TV, Internet radio to train students

Has your University used computer based training as a competitive strategy?

Strongly agree   (   )
Agree   (   )
Strongly disagree   (   )
Disagree   (   )

6. Are students aware of your Computer based trainings?

Strongly agree   (   )
Agree   (   )
Strongly disagree   (   )
Disagree   (   )

7. What value does Computer based training adds to your School?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree
Improve efficiency in learning				
Increased computer literacy				
Cost effectiveness management				
Distance is no longer an hindrance				

8. Which type of Computer based training do you use in your University?

CDS'   (   )
DVD'S   (   )
Web conferencing   (   )
Video conferencing   (   )
Educational T V   (   )
Internet Radio   (   )

9. How is technology affecting the learning process?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree
Multitasking does not render learning impossible				
Makes the learner rely on different memory systems				
Time spent switching from task to task is reduced				
Enhances efficiency				
Distance is no longer a barrier				

SECTION B

10. Has your school differentiated its products from other universities?

Strongly agree   (   )
Agree   (   )
Strongly disagree   (   )
Disagree   (   )

11. Which criterion has your University used to differentiate their product? Through;

	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree
Quality				
Price/cost				
Duration taken				
Location				
Courses offered				
Embedded customer base				

12. Does your University have other campuses in the country?

Yes ( ) No ( )

13. If yes, how that given them a competitive advantage over other Universities?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree
Services easily accessible				
Increase in enrolment				
Knowledge diversity				

13. Does your University offer transferability of credit?

Strongly agree ( )
Agree ( )
Strongly disagree ( )
Disagree ( )

14. Is there a system in place to facilitate transfer of credits?

Strongly agree ( )
Agree ( )
Strongly disagree ( )
Disagree ( )

15. Which credits are allowed at your University?

Credits from foreign Institution ( )
Credit by examination ( )
Credits from home country ( )

16. Which criteria were you admitted with to the University?

KCSE results ( )
Mock result ( )
Credit transfer ( )
Interview ( )
Work/ extracurricular activities ( )
Ability to pay ( )

17. How has Academic staff mobility given your University a competitive advantage?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree
Strengthen international co-operation				
Production of new teaching materials				
Consolidate and extend links between faculties				
Improve staff knowledge				

Improve staff experience	Disagree	( )
Prepare for future cooperative projects between Universities		

18. Do academic staffs circulate among differentiate types of institutions?

Strongly agree   ( )
Agree   ( )
Strongly disagree   ( )

SECTION C

PRODUCT LEADERSHIP STRATEGY

19. Do you think your products and services lead in the market?

Strongly agree   ( )
Agree   ( )
Strongly disagree   ( )
Disagree   ( )

20. Has the University communicated the product vision to the public?

Strongly agree   ( )
Agree   ( )
Strongly disagree   ( )
Disagree   ( )

21. Through which ways has the University communicated the products vision? Through ;

	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree
Twitter				
Facebook				
Radio				
Television				
Billboards				

22. Customer intimacy is tailoring and shaping products to fit the customers preference. Do you think your universities products are tailored to meet each customers specific needs?

Strongly agree   ( )
Agree   ( )
Strongly disagree   ( )
Disagree   ( )

23. How has customer intimacy given the University a competitive advantage over other universities?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree
Increased students enrolment				
Enriched their reputation				
Increased cost fee				
Reduced cost/fee				

24. Operational excellence aims to provide consumers with products at the lowest cost possible are your school

products affordable?

Strongly agree   (   )
Agree   (   )
Strongly disagree   (   )
Disagree   (   )

25. How satisfied are you with your universities products/services?

Very satisfied   (   )
Satisfied   (   )
 Neutral   (   )
Very dissatisfied   (   )
Dissatisfied   (   )

APPENDIX B

Chattered Private Universities in Kenya

1) African Nazarene University
2) Catholic University of East Africa
3) Daystar University
4) Kabarak University
5) Kenya Methodist University (KEMU)
6) Scott Theological College
7) Pan African Christian University
8) St. Paul's University
9) Strathmore University
10) University of East Africa Baraton
11) United Stated International University (USIU)
12) Kimathi University College of Technology
13) Narok University College
14) Mount Kenya University (MKU)
15) Kisii University College
16) Multimedia University College of Kenya
17) Pwani University College
18) South Eastern University College

Private Universities operating under the letter of Interim Authority

19) Aga Khan University
20) Great Lakes University
21) Kiriri Women University of Science and Technology
22) Presbyterian University of East Africa
23) Adventist University of Africa
24) KCA University (KCAU)
25) GRETSA University

Private Universities with Certificate of Registration

26) The Nairobi International School of Theology
27) Western Africa of Hospitality and Professional Studies
28) The East African School of Theology
29) The Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology
30) Kenya Highlands Bible College