

**EFFECT OF MARKETING STRATEGIES ON POST-PANDEMIC REOPENING
PERFORMANCE OF STAR-RATED HOTELS IN THE
SOUTH RIFT CIRCUIT, KENYA**

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**A Thesis submitted to the Department of hospitality and tourism in partial fulfillment of the
requirement of the award of Master of Hospitality and Tourism of Kenya Methodist
University**

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been submitted for a certificate or any other award in any other institution.

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MHT-3-0625-1/2018

Recommendation by Supervisors

This research project has been submitted for examination with our approval as University supervisors.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my loving family and all the researchers who came before me, paving the way for my wonderful exploration in this field.

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ABSTRACT

The hotel industry in Kenya, as well as across Africa, is fiercely competitive and plays a crucial role in bolstering the nation's economy. It serves as a vital source of foreign exchange, employment opportunities, and revenue. Nevertheless, the advent of the global Covid-19 pandemic has left an indelible mark on the hotel industry, not only in Kenya but worldwide. The imposition of travel restrictions, the need for social distancing, and a substantial decrease in visitor numbers have severely impacted their operations. With the widespread roll-out of mass vaccinations, hotels and the broader tourism sector are now able to reopen. However, their performance during this reopening phase is hampered by a slow recovery in the sector. This is due to persistent travel restrictions in some countries, a sluggish containment of the virus, reduced traveler confidence, and a challenging economic climate. For Kenya's classified hotels that rely heavily on international travelers, the current reopening conditions appear unpromising and could potentially undermine their competitiveness unless they undertake assertive marketing campaigns. This study sought to investigate the marketing strategies employed by star-rated hotels and their impact on their post-pandemic reopening performance in Kenya. The study had the following objectives: to assess the influence of technology-enabled service differentiation strategies on the reopening performance of the hotel industry in Kenya in the post-pandemic context, to examine the impact of product innovation strategies on the reopening performance of the hotel industry in Kenya in the post-pandemic context, to evaluate the influence of market diversification strategies on the reopening performance of the hotel industry in Kenya in the post-pandemic context and to analyze the effectiveness of market growth strategies on the reopening performance of the hotel industry in Kenya in the post-pandemic context. The research drew guidance from the Marketing Mix Theory, Ansoff Growth Matrix Model, and Service Marketing Theory. It employed a cross-sectional survey research design, targeting 47 hotels, lodges, camps, and guest houses in the South Rift Circuit, encompassing Nakuru and Narok counties, using a census approach. Data was gathered through questionnaires administered to the marketing managers of these hospitality establishments. Qualitative data was analyzed through thematic and content analysis using Nvivo, while quantitative data was coded and subjected to analysis through SPSS computer software version 24.0, employing both descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings revealed that Market Growth, Product Innovation, Technology Strategy, and Market Diversification all had a significant impact on the post-endemic opening public presentation of star hotels in the Circuit of Southern Rift, Kenya, supported by beta values of 0.807, 0.286, 0.365, and 0.318, respectively. In light of these findings, the study recommends that hotels should prioritize continuous staff training in technology applications, provide tailored services to both individual and group clients, diversify their markets to tap into more potential local and international markets, and emphasize market growth strategies. Additionally, introducing flexible pricing options for clients would facilitate convenient service bookings.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AHIF	-	Africa Hotel Investment Forum
COVID-19	-	Coronavirus Disease
FY	-	Financial Year
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GHATOF	-	Ghana Tourism Federation
HR	-	Human Resource
ICT	-	Information and Communications Technology
IJVs	-	International Joint Ventures
ILO	-	International Labour Organization
ISO	-	International Standards Organization
JKIA	-	Jomo Kenyatta International Airport
KAH	-	Kenya Association of Hoteliers
KTB	-	Kenya Tourism Board
KWS	-	Kenya Wildlife Service
MIA	-	Moi International Airport
MPT	-	Market Power Theory
NEMA	-	National Environmental Management Authority
OC	-	Organizational capital

OECD	-	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
RBV	-	Resource Based View
REITs	-	Real Estate Investment Trusts
SARS	-	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SDG	-	Sustainable Development Goals related to Tourism
TCE	-	Transaction Cost Economics

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In the world, tourism and hospitality are significant drivers of economic expansion and job creation. The hospitality sector will receive almost all of these tourist receipts. One of the most significant socioeconomic areas in Kenya is the tourism and hospitality sector, which also plays a significant role in global trade. About 11% of the nation's workforce was working in the sector. (Ministry of Tourism [MoT], 2020) and contributed 12.5%. Percent to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Further, accordant to the government department, for the country to move towards its development goals, focus on the standards and quality of hospitality and tourism facilities is paramount.

Beginning December 2019, however, the world has been exposed to a highly infectious and dangerous coronavirus known as SARS-CoV-2 virus or by its generic name Covid-19 that was first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China and whose symptoms presented as severe pneumonia. By 11th March 2020 the spread of infections had surpassed the epidemic status, COVID-19 was subsequently affirmed an epidemic by WHO. The Covid-19 pandemic has since risen to international crisis proportions affecting virtually every sphere of human life in every country at an unprecedented level. As a health safety measure, majority of countries worldwide imposed lockdowns, curfews and travel restrictions coupled with social distancing requirements. The restrictions were also effected on social gatherings and businesses which required close human interaction. These measures have significantly affected the global economy which lost an estimated USD \$ 3 trillion or 4.5% of the global economy in 2020 alone.

A number of hotels globally and locally have been forced to issue closure notices until further notice. The personalty of COVID-19 on the hospitality manufacture are mostly attributed to the restrictive

measures that have been placed to limit the outspread of the virus, such as: social distancing, which has greatly reduced hotel capacity; the suspension of international flights, which led to a immense drop in the number of foreign tourists (Nzisa, 2022). The new norm of most professionals working from home, which has reduced demand for conference facilities and other hotel services; daily curfews, which resulted in people working only a few hours each day; partial lockdowns in some countries that have severely affected the economy; and the increased cost of Covid-19 compliance certificates required to reopen businesses. These restrictions and measures put in place slowed down the operations of all hotels worldwide, resulting in them operating at reduced capacity or being closed (Mauguin et al., 2021).

According to industry analysts in Europe, the impact on the worldwide hotel business in 2020 will result in a profit decline of 11-29% (Deloitte, 2020). Also anticipated to be most affected would be Asia and the Pacific. For instance, occupancy dropped up to 68% in China in comparison to 2019 estimates. For the same reason that China was the first market to cope with the coronavirus, it is also the first market to demonstrate signs of stability (Lai & Wong, 2020). India's hospitality sector has been severely impacted. According to experts, domestic hotel businesses would see sluggish performance during this time (Puranik et al., 2020).

Foreign and local hotels on the African continent are currently closed due to a 1-3% decrease in tourism as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak. This outcome in a loss of \$30 to \$50 billion in revenue from foreign tourists. Hotels are running at single-digit rates of occupancy and, in some circumstances, have closed in numerous African nations. Due to rules governing social distancing, nations have shut down their airspace and the majority of their food and beverage enterprises (World Travel & Tourism Council [WTTC], 2020). This calls into question the hotel industry's level of readiness.

The Covid-19 pandemic may cause a 1%–3% decline in foreign visitor numbers to Africa globally in 2020, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). This might result in a \$30 billion to \$50 billion decline in foreign tourist expenditure. South Africa is among the nations in Africa most severely affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Due to its reliance on human movement, the hospitality industry was severely threatened by the Covid-19 outbreak (Dayour et al., 2020). The Covid-19 outbreak had a major impact on Ghana's travel and hospitality industry as well.

However, with easing of restrictions owing to mass vaccinations majority have reopened albeit low patron turnout. Before 2023 or later, according to health and economic experts, foreign tourist arrival numbers are not anticipated to return to pre-COVID-19 levels (Grandcourt, 2020). Travel limitation, the virus's suspended policy, travelers' low trust, and an adverse economic condition are the key obstruction. Evidently, the epidemic has severely and in some cases irrevocably damaged the infrastructure of the hospitality business, and as a result, many hotels are being compelled to rebrand. For the hospitality industry in the developing world such as Kenya, marketing the industry in a world already upended by asymmetric roll-out of vaccines is quite challenging especially for the classified hotels which depend much on international tourism owing to the slow recovery of tourism (Muragu et al., 2023).

Imperatively, in order to reposition itself in the market, the hospitality industry is turning to marketing techniques. Based on their research, Yücel and Önal (2015) deduce that strategy is only present at the trade, functional, and corporate levels of the organization. Corporate strategy, in particular the attitude toward managing certain business and commodity lines to achieve a balanced portfolio of commodities and services, also known as competitive edge, characterizes an organization's overall orientation. Business strategies are created at the divisional level with an emphasis on growing the company's modest position in a specific industry or market sector. Due to internal constraints,

functional departments such as marketing, finance, R&D, and finally production—develop ways to collaborate on various and related tasks in order to increase efficiency (Pruskus, 2015).

As stated by West et al. (2019), the marketing approach can be conceptualized as an approach that concentrates on attaining the strategic performance of an organization through the application of various sub-strategies, such as the expansion of new divisions and/or clientele, the development of new products, expert delivery arrangements, market projections, services after sales increases, and market-share analysis. As per Kim and Mauborgne (2014), a marketing strategy is a set of guidelines that a business use to allocate its resources and generate profit from clients that collectively form part of the market, with sufficiently defined parameters for size and methodology.

Mintzberg (1980) developed the five P's of strategy, which stand for position, plan, pattern, perspective, and ploy in terms of strategy. Thus, this might be viewed as a business matrix. As per Hanaysha (2020), it is apparent from a market mix theoretical standpoint that certain hotels are utilizing a combination of conventional and innovative marketing techniques (Sereikienė-Abromaitytė, 2013).

In contrast to manufacturing firms, the hotel industry primarily revolves around providing services. Customers in this sector assess their experiences and expectations across different establishments when deciding where to make their purchases. This dynamic competition among hotels, where customers can easily switch from one to another, often results in difficulties for many hotels to remain competitive. As a consequence, some hotels are forced to shut down (Jones et al., 2012). A significant concern for hotel patrons is receiving high-quality services and maintaining a clean environment (Maiyo & Obey, 2017).

Kenya's government has identified tourism as a key growth industry in its Vision 2030 economic plan. Collaborating with stakeholders, the government aims to elevate Kenya's position to become a top global tourist destination, offering diverse and exceptional experiences. Kenya is recognized as a prominent hospitality brand, and its hospitality sector, alongside agriculture, significantly contributes to the country's foreign exchange earnings (Mwaura, 2019). Gaining insights into marketing strategies employed by Kenyan hotels could greatly enhance their performance. The hotel sector in Kenya shares a symbiotic relationship with the tourism industry due to their intertwined interests, relying on each other for sustenance. The 2019 Kenya Economic Survey indicates that the industry constitute a major portion of the informal job sector, providing employment to approximately 6.7 million individuals. While the industry has achieved substantial success, it has also faced periods of challenges, which have been further exacerbated by the pandemic (Muragu et al., 2023).

Over 90% of Kenyan motels were forced to temporarily halt or stop operations, according to a 2020 World Bank survey, which led to an 80% decline in income in the first half of 2020. An estimated 2 million jobs were lost as a result (Ministry of Tourism, 2020). Due to the difficulty of having high operating costs and poor revenue, prestigious hotels including the Weston Hotel, Ole Sereni Hotels, Fairmont Norfolk Hotel, White Rhino Hotel, Sopa Lodges, Maiyan Hotel, Dusit D2 Nairobi, Ole Sereni Hotels, and Enashipai Resort and Spa had to close (Gikuhi, 2020). Reduced tourism and government regulations led to a USD 511 million drop in hotel revenue in 2020, according to the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA). Consequently, there were significant drops in sales, salary reductions,

Kenya's south Rift circuit includes national parks like Hell's Gate National Park, Lake Nakuru National Park, Masai Mara National Reserve, and Mara Triangle that offer high light safari experiences like hot air inflation, sundowners, bush dinners, bush breakfasts, guided nature walks,

birding safaris, and camping. According to Fredrick and Authority(2019), there are more non-star hotels on the circuit South Rift than rated hotels. Star-rated lodging is seriously threatened by the increasing number of unrated hotels.

In order to enhance their performance, these star-rated establishments must work towards establishing a competitive edge over their counterparts. Given the intensely competitive landscape of the global hotel industry, such hospitality enterprises need to enhance their long-term sustainability and adopt effective selling strategies to elevate their standing amidst their competitors. However, the impact of these marketing strategies on the re-opening performance of the hotels has not been established as yet. This survey, hence, seeks to analyze some of these marketing strategies in detail as applied by the hospitality industry in Kenya during Covid-19 and their impact on their reopening performance.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The emergence of the Covid-19 global epidemic has had a significant impact on the hotel manufacture in the country as elsewhere globally with travel restrictions, social distance requirements, and low visitor turnout affecting their operations. As a result, number of hotels have been forced to either shutdown or downsize their operations leading to job losses, losses in revenues and even impairing their market operations. Now that vaccination campaigns have been implemented widely, hotels and the travel and tourism sector as a whole are permitted to reopen. However, due to travel restrictions in some countries, slow virus containment, low traveler confidence, and a weak economic climate, their reopening performance is being hampered by a slow sector recovery rate.

For the classified hotels in Kenya which substantially depend on international travel, these reopening conditions do not look promising and could affect their competitiveness unless they resort to aggressive marketing campaigns. Currently, there is scarcity of literature on how the classified hotels in the country reorient themselves to the reopening conditions in the Covid-19 pandemic context in

the country. Majority of the studies on the effect of the epidemic on the hotel industry in Kenya have focused on its effect on performance with limited studies being done on the recovery efforts, especially marketing. The existing study, therefore, sought to analyze the marketing strategies in detail as practiced by the hotel commercial enterprise in Kenya and their impact on their reopening performance in the post-pandemic context.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to examine marketing strategies in use by the hotel industry and their impact on the reopening performance in a post-pandemic context in Kenya with a special focus on star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit.

1.3.1 Specific objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

1. To determine the influence of technology enabled service differentiation strategy on post-pandemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the circuit South Rift.
2. To examine the effect of product innovation policy on post-endemic opening performance of star-rated hotels in the circuit of South Rift.
3. To assess the influence of market diversification policy on post-endemic opening performance of star-rated hotels in the circuit South Rift.
4. To analyze the efficacy of market growth policy on post-endemic opening performance of star-rated hotels in the circuit of the South Rift.

1.4 Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: Technology enabled service differentiation strategy has no significant influence on post-endemic opening performance of star-rated hotels in the circuit of the South Rift.

H02: Product innovation strategy has no significant influence on post-endemic opening performance of star-rated hotels in the circuit of the South Circuit.

H03: Market diversification strategy has no significant influence on post-pandemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the circuit of South Rift.

H04: Market growth strategy has no significant influence on post-epidemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The outcome of this study is intended to be of benefit to various stakeholders in the hotel industry. Specifically, it intends to enlighten managers of hotel companies concerning strategy implementation in areas that are giving the company more competitive edge and investing accordingly. Managers of other hotel companies will find this document very helpful in identifying and employing growth strategies that they can adopt to ensure their organizations remain afloat and prosper in a competitive environment. The outcome of the study is also meant to be beneficial to policymakers in the government and especially, those concerned with tourism and commerce by providing relevant information on issues surrounding growth of the hotel industry. This information will enable the policymakers to review regulations and policies governing the industry with the aim of spurring growth in the sector and making it more competitive. The study results are also intended to add to the growing theoretical and empirical literature on strategic management and in particular competitive strategies and hotel management for future scholars. Since the research relates to local organizations, scholars will be in a position to closely examine the theoretical implications of realistic strategic choice and implementation on performance of organizations. Additionally, the study will provide empirical literature on which scholars may build their future research cases.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research adjusted on star-rated edifice in the South Rift Circuit and was limited to service differentiation strategies, product innovation strategies, Market diversification and market growth strategies as the marketing strategies adopted by the hotels and their effect on the reopening performance during the Covid-19 outbreak. Thus, the study concentrated on four independent variables: the strategy for service differentiation, the strategy for product development, the strategy for market development. The study adopted cross-sectional research designing with a population targeted of 47 star rated hotels within the south rift circuit. Adopting census for sampling the study used questionnaire and interview guide as the main primary data collection instrument.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

Similar to many studies of this kind, the results were understood within certain constraints. The researchers encountered difficulties in obtaining essential data from hotels due to a lack of cooperation. To address this issue, the study employed a strategy where they clearly explained the study's objectives, assured confidentiality, and emphasized that the information would be used strictly for scholarly purposes.

Considering the research scope and approach, it's important to use the research results while keeping in mind the restrictions. The data was gathered through a cross-sectional survey, which means it only reflects a brief and specific time-frame, and any variations due to different seasons were overlooked. However, to address this limitation, the data was collected during the same tourism season, ensuring that comparisons between different data collection samples are fair and unbiased.

Due to cultural variables, the results might not always be applicable to the tourism business in other nations. Accuracy, precision of data, and range interpretation may all be impacted by this. A good literature review and representative sampling, however, helped to mitigate this.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

1. The respondents gave an honest and fair assessment of the reopening situation in the Covid-19 context.
2. That the Covid-19 pandemic is not officially over despite the reopening of various sectors of the economy including travel and hospitality.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter assesses the works on marketing tactics used by the tourism and hospitality industries as well as on how well they performed after closing during the Covid-19 pandemic. The empirical review, research gap, theoretical framework, and conceptual framework are all presented later in the chapter.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This section presents the models to be used to illustrate the efficacy of marketing strategies as applied by the hospitality and tourism industry in the Covid-19 pandemic context. The theories and models to are, respectively; the Marketing Mix Theory, Ansoff Growth Matrix Model and Service Marketing Theory

2.1.1 Marketing Mix Theory

To elicit what is needed from a target market, a company uses a marketing mix, which is a collection of carefully regulated promotional tools. The four Ps of commerce (Product, Price, Promotion, and Place) are frequently used to refer to these tools. The product, distribution, promotion, and pricing techniques used in production, trade, and market penetration are referred to as the "marketing mix." "Marketing mix" is defined as "interconnected actions and remedies designed to satisfy customer requirements and to achieve the advertising goals of the company as a group" (Keelson & Nanekum, 20121). This theory was helpful in performing a study on the consequence of market expansion scheme and product innovation strategy on the hotel industry's performance following the epidemic in Kenya.

2.1.2 Ansoff Growth Matrix Model

The matrix was developed by business executive and applied mathematician Ansoff and then released by the Harvard Business Review in 1957. Ansoff's matrix has helped a lot of managers and businesspeople realize the dangers of growing their businesses. Businesses study and plan their expansion strategy using the Ansoff matrix, also referred to as the Product/Market Development Grid. The long-term expansion rate, or G, is obtained by dividing a company's profit-retained profits by its return on equity (Hussain et al., 2013).

Diversifying an organization's business operations can help it create markets and pursue growth. Diversification typically entails greater risk or calls for learning new business processes and working with unfamiliar clientele. Vertical or horizontal integration, as well as related or unrelated diversification, are two ways that Hussain et al. (2013) claim diversification can happen. This theory will be applied to provide light on how a market diversification plan will affect the performance of the post-pandemic Kenyan hotel sector.

2.1.3 Service Marketing Theory

The foundation of services marketing is the careful analysis of your clients' underlying needs, followed by the provision of services that boost their success. The core assumption in the literature on services marketing is that fundamental traits like intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, and transience are what cause the majority of issues that service marketer's face.

Service is an essential component of modern living. Services now have a more commercialized and polished nature as a result of liberalization, privatization, and globalization. Service was once thought of as a good deed done without expecting anything from return (social service), but it has since become commercialized. According to Altinay and Arici (2022) a service in the present refers to a task carried out for pay by a single individual to another.

Education, transportation, hotels, financing, property management, finance, insurance, banking, taxes, consulting, healthcare, etc. are just a few of the many industries that offer services. The tertiary sector or service sector is the general term used to describe these services. Change is inescapable and occurs in everything that grows (Lovelock & Patterson, 2015). From birth through old age, an individual goes through several stages in which his views, views, physical as well as mental traits, etc., change constantly. In order to provide a theoretical perspective on how technology-enabled assisted service differentiation strategy effects the reopening success of hotel chains in Kenya in the after the pandemic context, the service marketing theory will be applied.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Technology aided Service Differentiation Strategy

Companies create a distinct strategy to serve their clients in this kind of differentiation strategy. Different order processes, shorter wait times, higher service standards, and other factors can all help to make a service stand out.

Customer service differentiation strategy is a vital strategy and an element of strategic management that sets the organization's direction and its relationship with customers (Linton & Kask, 2017). Strategic management involves long-term plans for increasing the number of customers, market share, revenue growth, and sustainable organizational performance. Customer service engages the set of strategies that guide the company's interactions and customers (Kotler & Keller, 2012). It also encompasses the introduction of customers to the company products, handling of complaints, and feedback. The key issue in customer service is to make the clients feel the appreciation and value of the organization. Customer attraction matters less than keeping them loyal to the products for a long time. Acquisition of new customers usually costs more to the company than keeping the existing ones through effective customer service (Murage et al., 2011). Customer service should provide platforms

for customer feedback. Insurance companies are able to improve customer value after clearly understanding their needs. Therefore, customer differentiation strategies provide a framework for feeds upon which customers' wants and concerns are known and understood by the company.

Insurance companies have incorporated automated service delivery options to improve their time and cost convenience (Murage et al., 2011). The effectiveness of customer service depends on strategic resources such as the workforce. The use of qualified call center personnel is key in establishing and maintains customer relation in insurance companies. An increase in the use of engineering has influenced customer service delivery. Insurance companies are adapting to web-based service options. According to McDonald et al. (2018) customer service, differentiation strategy is employed in designing services that are unique and distinctive from the competitors. Therefore, companies have a strategy to appear different from other companies in the same industry.

An effective differentiation in customer services establishes company and product brand loyalty (Murage et al., 2011). Customer service differentiation leads to quality customer service and provides opportunities for product improvements, to sell more and increase revenue growth. Customer service determines the excitement about the product purchase by the customer. Lack of good customer service leads to bad customer experience and bad company reputation. Customer service differentiation is important in promoting good customer service and company reputation. In terms of company traits, customer service stands out as it guides contact and views on the services provided. This interaction carries a lot of weight that has important connote for market share (Miller, 2018).

Customer service is at the center of providing outstanding service to the customers and keeping them loyal (Huang et al., 2013). Insurance companies stand out from competitors through the exceptional quality of products. Customer service differentiation strategy advocates for creating great customer service frameworks that focus on policyholders, exceed their expectations and create relationships

that are good for the business. Customer service differentiation strategy is a leading indicator for weighing customer loyalty, identifying customer needs, and attracting new customers in business environments that are highly competitive (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Therefore, customer service is a dimension of organizational operations that should be given priority at all times. The product and brand loyalty cannot be achieved without appropriate customer services among insurance companies. Customer service satisfaction and revenue growth have a significant relationship (Huang et al., 2013). The provision of outstanding services to the customers makes insurance leaders in terms of revenue generation and performance.

2.2.2 Product Innovation Strategy

The procedures and methods used to introduce new items to the market or alter existing products to start a new company are known as product development strategies. From coming up with an idea to presenting the finished product to clients, there are several processes involved in the product development process. The approach to product development is important because it offers a roadmap for effective product sales that takes market research into account. The overarching business strategy for the company should specify the approaches and techniques that will be used at each stage of product development. This can help the business overcome obstacles and concentrate on its best strategies.

Product differentiation via user experience does not only influence organizational performance but further development of the company's overall strategy (Belleflamme et al., 2015). The need for leading in differentiation cannot be isolated from the user experience. This is due to the fact that customers are part of the long-term strategy of insurance companies. They ought to serve them better each time and act how user experience is created and maintained for a long time (Mithas et al., 2013). User Experience is highly important for successful insurance policy products. User experience

extends from being merely a differentiator to an organization that best specializes in meeting quality and uniqueness needs. Effective user experience contributes to customer retention, customer feedback through product recommendations, and company credibility. Efficiency goals are achieved through user experience differentiation strategy. Companies grab opportunities for reducing product development costs and associated business expenses.

2.2.3 Market Diversification Strategy

Diversification, one of the four main growth strategies put, enables companies to think about new markets to enter or products to provide in order to increase their customer base and revenues. Businesses use a diversification strategy when they want to grow. It is typical practice to add more products to a company's supply chain in order to increase profits. These products can signify corporate diversification—a new sector of the market the corporation already services.

The argument for diversity has two aspects, as defined by (Aichner & Coletti, 2013). First, diversification can be either defensive or aggressive depending on the scope of the strategic objective. When the product at hand or actual industry orientation looks to offer no more chances for growth, defensive reasons can be to spread the risk of an economic downturn or to force diversification. The use of retained funds in excess of overall growth requirements or the pursuit of prospects that promise higher returns than expansion opportunities may be offensive motives. The predicted outcomes of diversification are included in the second dimension. Management might anticipate significant economic value (growth, profitability), but more importantly, a significant relationship to its current activities (application of know-how, more effective use of publication and skills). Additionally, businesses can investigate diversification simply to gain a useful comparison between this tactic and expansion.

According to several studies, diversification strategy has a direct impact on corporate outcomes. According to Marlin and Geiger (2015), there should be a correlation between the level of diversification and the amount of firm impacts. In particular, the researchers Xiao (2007) discover that corporate impacts rise as organizations become less diversified. Additionally, according to Yücel and Onal (2015), a company's diversification is tightly tied to its core capabilities because the best results are typically attained by businesses that diversify largely into industries that draw on some shared core competencies. According to David (2011), expenditure on promotion and research and development, or R&D, varies dramatically between linked and unrelated businesses, and R&D can be a component of core competences.

Asman and Landman (2013) looked into how the performance of Kenyan commercial state enterprises was impacted by diversification strategy. The study found that Kenyan state commercial firms performed better when they adopted a diversification approach. By utilizing current technical capabilities, these businesses can provide new unconnected items while experiencing a large boost in sales. The performance of the listed corporations was also impacted by the geographic market expansion into new nations and areas. Arasa (2014) looked into how the Kenya Commercial Bank group's performance was impacted by its diversification strategy. According to the data, Kenya Commercial Bank Group has implemented three primary diversification methods.

Geographic diversification is the first type, entailing the establishment of entirely owned subsidiaries in the area. The second is the diversification of goods, in which the bank has been successful in exposing its consumers to a variety of products to meet their demands. The bank also uses an agency to provide insurance services, which is a completely separate diversification of its business. The KCB Group's success benefits from diversification. The overall profitability of the banks greatly grew along with the increase in income from diversification.

The study by Khamati (2014) examined how Radio Africa Limited in Kenya adopted diversification as a strategy and how that had an impact on organizational performance. According to the study, Radio Africa Limited's performance in Kenya and its diversification strategy are positively correlated. The poll also made clear that, despite performance gains brought about by the approach, total revenue growth was slowing down. Mwangi and Muturi (2016) looked into how diversification tactics affected Kenyan commercial banks' performance. The study demonstrated the widespread usage of mobile and online banking as a strategy for product diversification.

Additionally, financial institutions in Kenya can improve their performance by adding novel characteristics to the current offerings (pricing) and branding/rebranding the majority of the existing goods and re-launching them. These are important marketing techniques. An important internal growth diversification method is to use retained earnings to build banks, pay dividend to shareholders, and reduce bank debt. The highest correlation between the three factors was found between the performance of banks and internal growth diversity tactics.

In order to understand the diversification strategy used by Kenol Kobil Ltd. and how it affected Kenol Kobil's performance in Kenya, Karanja et al. (2013) conducted research. It was established that KK used cross-national, unrelated, and linked diversification techniques. The study also discovered that KK's sales, net profit, and capital increased as a result of its diversification. According to a study by Njoka (2016) on the impact of diversification tactics on the financial health of savings and credit co-operatives in Nairobi County, Kenya, Saccos there used a variety of diversification strategies by branching out into different business sectors outside of their core competency.

The many internal resources that businesses have have been proven to contribute to this. The study also discovered that different Saccos gain differently from their implemented diversification methods, which may be related to the size and customer base of the Saccos. This meant that the Sacco's growth

stage and the sector in which it operates would both influence the extent of gains from the diversification process. The pursuit of unrelated diversification by insurance businesses has been influenced by factors like industry profitability, the coinsurance effect, firm characteristics, and the overall economic environment. Therefore, the company's strategy and, as a result, the benefit outcome are determined by the level of the growth phase.

2.2.4 Market Growth Strategy

A market expansion strategy is an approach to corporate expansion that focuses on introducing current items to new markets. Market segmentation for current goods is known and developed as part of a growth plan. Customers who don't buy from the currently targeted groups are the focus of the development strategy. Additionally, it aims to reach fresh markets of clients. Businesses frequently employ market development strategies to find and nurture fresh prospects for their products' sales in uncharted territory. The market development strategy for the hotel industry is examined in this study along with recognition of brands, human resource capacity, organizational framework, and market segmentation.

Customer-based brand equity was studied by Kayaman and Arasli (2007) using data from the Cyprus hotel industry. The goal of the survey was to better conceptualize the customer-based hotel brand by examining the interactions between the four elements of marker assets in the hotel industry: Cognizance of the brand, seriousness to the brand, perceived value, and brand image. To investigate the relationships of the suggested path analysis model, this research used a sample of 345 real guests from 11 different nations who stayed in North Cyprus hotels. Brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality, and brand image all appeared on a scale designed to assess consumer-based brand equity. The results validated a three-dimensional customer brand value model for the hotel sector. In the studied hotel model, awareness of the brand dimension was not shown to be significant. By

analyzing the construct's dimensions, this study advances our understanding of brand equity measurement based on consumer behavior.

Through the brand extension effect of rise versus decline, Hultman et al. (2021) passage a study on the branding of the building business. In particular, the study looked at how consumer views of parent brands affect how valuable brand extensions are considered in the hotel industry and how these interactions are affected by the type of brand extension in issue. According to the study, which is based on the theory of brand equity, viewed optimistic characteristics of the brand, knowledge, views, and devotion towards the parent company have a beneficial connection to the high perceived worth of the brand delay, and these beneficial associations are more powerful for step-down extensions instead than a growing expansion. According to the findings of a poll of hotel guests in the UK, only the parent brand's perceived qualities and attitudes appear to have an advantage over the extension's perceived value and future (re)visit intentions. The results of the moderation process also show that positive connections are more substantial during step-up extensions and weaker during step-down extensions.

Aksu et al. (2022) looked at the elements of ecological service quality in hotels and divided up hotel guests based on how they felt about it. An exploratory study on Russian visitors living in hotels in Antalya, Turkey, was undertaken using a quantitative research methodology. The outcome of the component investigation revealed that the facility, practice, staff, and food dimensions are all part of the ecological service quality variable. These variables were utilized to classify hotel patrons into two categories: those who care about the environment and those who don't. Cross-tabulation and regression analysis were used to find cluster-based differences. Aksu et al. (2022) looked at the elements of ecological service quality in hotels and divided up hotel guests based on how they felt about it. An exploratory study on Russian visitors living in hotels in Antalya, Turkey, was undertaken

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2.3 Summary and Gaps

With regard to differentiation strategies, it emerged that patrons value the distinguished products and/or services more than they value low costs. In other words, costs are irrelevant in specialized markets. However, it was established location and product qualities are important attributes for supermarket shoppers in their patronage decisions. Nonetheless, the studies mainly focused on retail chains and not on hotel chains. Hence, it is important to examine whether, the differentiation strategies also hold for hotel chains and whether they significantly influence their growth. Literature on market niche strategy revealed that the real consequences and decision-making insinuations of place advertising remain uncertain. Thus, there is need for more research in this area and particularly in the hotel industry where niche markets exist. Finally, in terms of the diversification strategy, while there is empirical merit concerning this strategy on firm performance, there are nevertheless mixed views on the exact approach that firms use in diversification since firms rarely employ one strategy.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

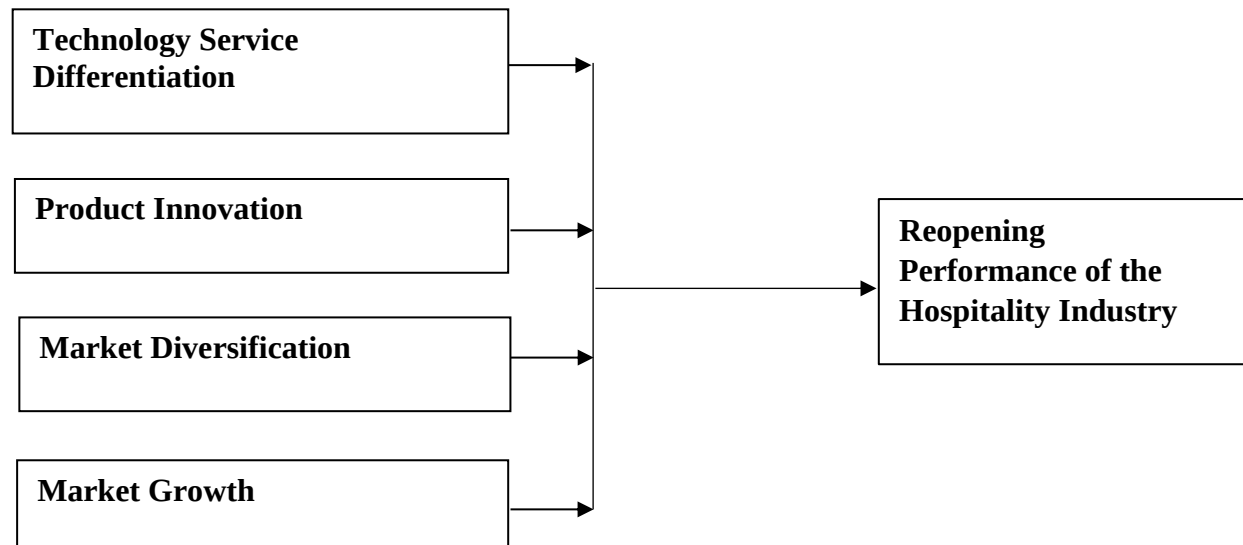
The conceptual framework for the current study is given in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1

Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables

Dependent Variable



The framework in Figure 2.1 conceptualizes that technology service differentiation plan, creation innovation policy, and market divergence approach and market growth strategy as independent variables influence Reopening Performance of the Hospitality Industry (dependent variable) in Kenya. It is expected that technology service differentiation strategy influences Reopening Performance of the Hospitality Industry through improving customer engagement. The framework also theorized that the product innovation strategy, that is, the uniqueness of the product offerings by the hotels in the market in Kenya likely influences their post-Covid-19 Reopening Performance. In the same vein, through diversification of products and services as a strategy, it was expected that the the Hospitality Industry in the country will improve their post-Covid-19 Reopening Performance. Finally, the market growth strategy where the hotels focus on growth strategies to leverage their performance is expected to result in improved post-Covid-19 Reopening Performance of the hotels.

2.5 Operationalization Framework

The operationalization of the autonomous and dependent variables is shown in Figure 2.2 through their respective indicators.

Figure 2.2

Operationalization Framework

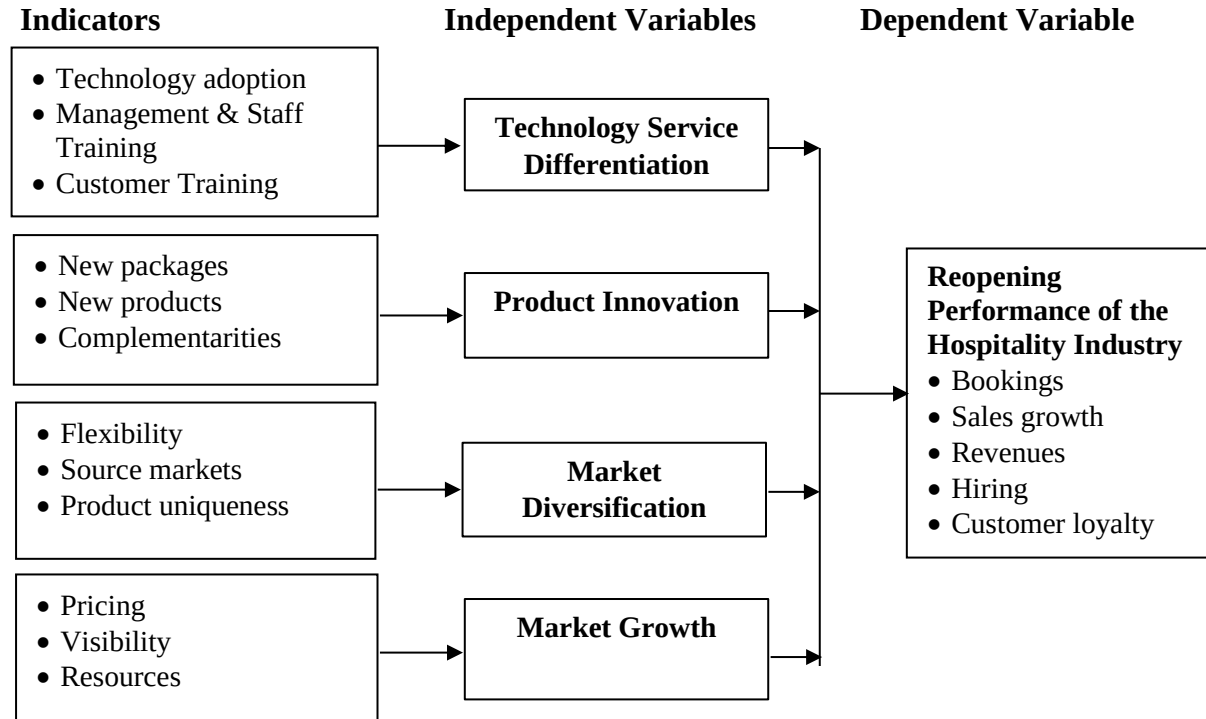


Figure 2.2 illustrates how the predictors of advertising strategies—market development, diversification, service differentiation, and product development—were predicted to have an overall impact on the hospitality industry's reopening performance in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Customer service differentiation strategy advocates for creating great customer service frameworks that focus on policyholders, exceed their expectations and create relationships that are good for the business. Customer service differentiation strategy is a leading indicator for weighing customer loyalty, identifying customer needs, and attracting new customers in business environments that are highly competitive (Kotler & Keller, 2012).

Because it uses data from the market to develop a strategy for successful product sales, an innovation strategy is crucial. The processes and strategies the organization will employ at each step of product

development should be part of its broader business plan. In doing so, the company may be able to overcome challenges and concentrate on its most effective methods (Belleflamme et al., 2015).

When businesses seek to expand, they utilize a market diversification approach. In order to boost earnings, it is a common practice to add additional products to a business' supply chain. A company's strategy to expand into an area of the market that it does not already serve while simultaneously developing a new product for that market is known as diversification. Because the company has no prior expertise in the new market and has no idea whether the product will be a success, this is the most dangerous region of the Ansoff Matrix.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The attack that was engaged to carry out the survey is presented in this chapter. It supply message on the study's objectives, target audience, and sample method. It also explains the process used to gather and analyze the data.

3.2 Research Design

Inquiry design refers to the structured plan or framework that outlines the procedures, methods, and strategies used to conduct a research study. It serves as a blueprint for how researchers will collect, analyze, and construe data in order to address a specific research question or hypothesis (Sileyew, 2019). The study utilized the Cross-Sectional Survey Research Design. This approach involves gathering data from a portion of a particular population at a specific instance.

The purpose of the Cross-Sectional Design commonly involves examining how prevalent specific traits are within a population. It enables the examination of connections between different factors and the differences among subsets within the population. This approach relies on several core suppositions about the causal connections between different factors, which can be assessed and adjusted as required. Additionally, a Cross-Sectional Design could be employed to reveal the factors that impact the connections between variables, providing insights into the mechanisms driving causality (Krosnick et al., 2014). The present study investigated the strategies that hotels employ to shape their post-pandemic reopening performance through marketing techniques. The survey conducted in this study utilized a questionnaire to directly gather data from participants. This method ensured that the researcher couldn't alter the collected data, thus enhancing the reliability of the Cross-Sectional Design.

This approach allows for the simultaneous collection of various attributes like gender, age, education, and income, serving as a basis for further research. The choice of the design is informed by the fact that the approach is inexpensive and rather quick to complete. Since this study intended to collect descriptive and self-reported data regarding the marketing techniques utilized by the hotel industry in Kenya and their impact on their opening performance in the context of the Covid-19 epidemic, the descriptive cross-sectional research approach was the most suited.

3.3 Target Population

According to Casteel and Bridier (2021) target people is a circumstantial grouping of individuals or entities that researcher is interested in studying. Ministry of tourism (MoT) (2017) categorized Southern Rift circuit to comprise of Nakuru and Narok Counties and consists of the champion notable attractiveness in Kenya are Masai Mara, Lake Nakuru and Lake Naivasha. The circuit has thus attracted several hospitality and tourism investments to cater for the visitors. The register of the Tourism Regulatory Authority (2021) on hospitality and tourism investments in the three South Rift Circuit counties respectively indicate that there are 47 star-rated hospitality establishments that include 8 hotels, 14 lodges, 21 camps and as well as 3 guest houses and 1 spa (Appendix IV). The study targeted the marketing managers of the establishment or the persons deemed to be in charge of the establishment thus the target population was 47 marketing managers, the choice of this carder of the employees was informed by the fact that they are the ones involved in strategies formulation and are deemed to have adequate knowledge on the study variables.

3.4 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

Sampling procedure, as defined by Singh and Masuku (2014), is the set of procedures and methods used to choose a subset of things, or data points, from more people in order to perform research on the complete population. The target population is small and accessible, that is, 47 marketing managers

in the star-rated hospitality establishments (Tourism Regulatory Authority, 2021) the study adopted the census approach eliminating possibility of sampling procedures. The approach allowed the researcher to have a highly representative and reduces the risk of sampling bias, allowing researchers to make more accurate generalizations about the entire population.

The star-rated hospitality establishments defined the unit of investigation. The unit of measurement were the marketing managers of the star-rated hospitality establishments. The marketing managers are selected in this study since they are among the key decision makers in the hotels and, therefore, continually analyze their performance and also they are best placed to discuss strategic matters related to the hotel. Hence, they are able to give more valid information relating to the inquiries of the study.

3.5 Research Instruments

In this investigation, primary data were utilized. Respondents' answers to questionnaires were used to gather data. Using this tool, a series of questions were created for the respondents to answer based on how well they understood the research issue. The surveys were both closed and open, giving the respondent the chance to answer any questions that were not asked directly. The decision to employ questionnaires was made because they were affordable, simple to administer, and provided data that was simple to arrange and evaluate.

Additionally, the researcher needed not be actually present when those responding are doing the questions. This allowed the respondents to complete the questionnaires in a free and pleasant environment and allows the questionnaire to get information from the respondents. A Likert scale was also included in the questionnaire to help gather information about the study's goals. All managers will receive questionnaires as they make up the unit of observation.

The questionnaire comprised of two parts with part A gathered information on respondent's background information while part B gathered data on marketing strategies guided by the study's independent variables.

3.6 Piloting

As stated by Leon et al. (2011), scholars commonly concur that incorporating pre-testing into the questionnaire development process holds significant importance. A preliminary investigation, known as a Pilot Study, serves the purpose of identifying potential challenges within the study methodologies. This proactive approach allows for adjustments to be implemented prior to embarking on extensive research endeavors. Additionally, it serves to tackle methodological concerns and provides valuable insights for shaping the research blueprint, ensuring the efficacy of procedures. The Pilot Study also assesses the viability of the proposed research, as indicated by Kim and Mauborgne (2011), Leon et al. (2011), and Owens et al. (2015). In this study, three lodging facilities a hotel, an apartment, and a lodge all located in the Southern Tour Circuit were used to pretest questionnaires and interview schedules for correctness and accuracy. The 3 top executives of the three establishments representing 10% of the sample size were involved in the pilot study. Following the completion of the reliability and validity pre-tests for the purpose of standardizing the research instruments, the study went on to employ the instruments.

3.6.1 Validity

Validity pertains to the degree to which a research tool effectively measures what it intends to measure (Mohajan, 2017). It reflects how accurate the results are in relation to the targeted concepts. The legitimacy of the tool hinges on its ability to precisely evaluate the subjects being studied (Pallant, 2011). In qualitative research, validity embodies qualities like trustworthiness, significance, and solidity (Zohrabi, 2013). To ensure the accuracy of the instrument's content, experts were consulted.

University supervisors with expertise in the field carefully evaluated each question and item in the survey, uncovering issues related to phrasing and arrangement of the investigation instrument.

3.6.2 Reliability

Using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 24, a Cronbach's reliability test for internal consistency was performed on the pilot study's results. A Cronbach's reliability value of = 0.70 or above, by Wallen and Fraenkel (2013), signifies that the instrument was very dependable and hence suitable for investigation. Items that were discovered to have a lower Cronbach's alpha than this number were therefore addressed.

Table 3.1

Data Collection Instrument Reliability

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Technological Differentiation Strategy	0.890	7
Product Innovation Strategy	0.748	6
Market Diversification Strategy	0.837	6
Market Growth Strategy	0.739	8
Reopening Performance	0.812	7
Overall Reliability Statistics	0.905	34

Table 3.2 shows that the overall instrument reliability together with the individual constructs reliability were higher than the suggested edge value of 0.7. This meant that the instrument was reliable and was thus adopted for administration to respondents after minor adjustments.

3.7 Data Collection

The investigator asked Kenya Methodist University School of postgraduate for a preliminary introduction letter, aiming to attain consent from the National Council for Science and Technology

(NACOSTI) for the purpose of conducting the research. Subsequently, the obtained permit was shown to both the Commissioner and the Director of Education in the two counties that form the South Rift circuit resulting in their endorsement. By utilizing this documentation, the researcher successfully obtained approval and appointment from the marketing managers of hospitality establishments which were sampled.

The researcher visited the respondents after securing the necessary licenses and authorizations, and explained the reason for visit to the respondents. Every respondent was specifically approached and invited to take part in the study. The respondents received assurances that the information they provided would be kept private. The form were self-administrate and collected one week after the answering had privately completed them. On the other hand, the researcher booked appointment with the managers for are an interview that took around 30 minutes for each respondents independently.

3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation

The instruments were first checkered for integrity and consistency before processing. For the interview schedules, both thematic and content analysis was carried out along thematic areas using NVivo software. For the questionnaire, the data was coded and was used for descriptive statistical analysis while Pearson's correlation and multiple linear regression was used for inferential statistical analysis. Multiple regression analysis was applied to set up the relationship between the autarkic variables and the dependent variable, through the equation;

$$y_{ij} = b_0 + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + b_4x_4 + e$$

Where,

Y_{ij} = Post-pandemic Reopening performance of hotels in Kenya

X_1 = Technology enabled Service Differentiation Strategy

X_2 = Product Innovation Strategy

X_3 = Market Diversification Strategy

X_4 = Market Growth Strategy

b_0 = Regression Error

b_1 to b_4 , are the constant of the variables ascertained by the model while e = error term, normally apportioned with mean zero and variance of 1. The null hypothesis was tested using the beta values in the regression models at the conventional threshold p-value ($p \leq 0.05$). the determination rule is to reject the null hypothesis when $p \leq 0.05$ and accept otherwise. The analyzed data was presented in tables and figures.

3.9 Measurement of the Variables

Table 1.2

Measurement of the variables

Objectives	Independent Variable	Dependent variable	Test
To determine the influence of engineering enabled service differentiation strategies on reopening performance of the hotel industry in Kenya in the post-pandemic context.	Technology enabled service differentiation	Reopening performance of hotel industry in Kenya in the post-pandemic context.	Correlation Beta values
To ascertain the effect of product innovation initiatives on the post-pandemic hotel business in Kenya's reopening performance.	Product innovation	Reopening performance of hotel industry in Kenya in the post-pandemic context.	Correlation Beta values

To ascertain the effect of product innovation inaugural on the post-pandemic hotel business in Kenya's reopening performance.	Market diversification	Reopening performance of hotel industry in Kenya in the post-pandemic context.	Correlation Beta values
To evaluate the impact of market expansion initiatives on the reopening performance of Kenya's hotel sector in the wake of the pandemic.	Market growth	Reopening performance of hotel manufacture in Kenya in the post-pandemic context.	Correlation Beta values

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Throughout the research process, the researcher upheld ethical standards. Privacy, confidentiality, cultural sensitivity, gender, and anonymity were ethical concerns taken into account when performing the research. All respondents received a complete and understandable explanation that made the research's purpose apparent. In order for the respondents to decide whether or not to engage in the research, the researcher fully reveals the study's objectives and offers all relevant information. All along the research procedure, study participants received guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

Results from the examination of data collected through questionnaires are conferred in this chapter. Each variable in the data set was subjected to descriptive and inferential statistical analysis, with the results provided in tables and their express self-addressed. The results are provided in terms of the study's goals.

4.2 Response Rate

The importance of the effect rate cannot be overstated, as it holds a significant role in ensuring the validity of research outcomes. It bears weight not only for maintaining academic integrity and professional benchmarks but also for determining the suitability of material for publication, as noted by (Zohrabi et al., 2013). In the context of response rate, a moderate and acceptable range lies at 60% with a margin of +/- 20%. This implies that results falling below 40% would be deemed insufficient and could potentially introduce issues with validity. Extreme cases of response rate, either surpassing 80% or falling below 60%, necessitate well-justified rationale and a clear sense of accountability (Zohrabi et al., 2013). For this specific study, a selection of 47 participants was drawn from a collection of 47 categorized hotels within Kenya's South Rift circuit.

Table 4.1*Response Rate*

No. of questionnaires		
Issued	No. of questionnaires Returned	Response Rate (%)
47	42	89.36

From Table 4.1 among the distributed questionnaires, 5 (10.64%) remained unreturned. Consequently, the pool of questionnaires viable for analysis consisted of 42 (89.36%). This indicates a response rate exceeding 60%, indicating its acceptability in terms of reasonability (Baruch, 1999). This outcome can be attributed to the methodology employed for questionnaire administration, wherein respondents were given ample time to complete the surveys, as the researcher handed out the questionnaires and collected them at a later point. This positive result was further facilitated by the constructive relationship fostered between the investigator and the staff at the star-rated hotels, who exhibited cooperative behavior in sharing insights regarding their marketing strategies.

4.3 Background Information

The study sought to set up the ground information of the responsive and the hotels respectively. The outcome are given in the subsections below.

4.3.1 Demographic Data

The research set out to identify the respondents' demographic traits because they are thought of as categoric variables that provide some central message about the respondents. The criteria taken into account in the study included the respondents' age scope, gender, greatest level of instruction

noninheritable, and the amount of months they had worked for their current company. Table 4.2 provides a summary of the findings in this regard.

Table 4.2

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Gender	Male	22	52
	Female	20	48
Age in Years	19 – 28	10	23
	29 – 38	13	30
	39 - 48	15	37
	Above 48	4	10
Level of Education	Certificate	2	5
	Diploma	12	28
	Bachelor's		
	Degree	20	48
	Master's Degree	8	19
Number of years worked in the present firm	0-3 yrs	7	16
	3-5 yrs	10	25
	5-8 yrs	19	45
	8-10 yrs	6	14

The results in Table 4.2 demonstrate that, despite the high amount of women, there was practically equal representation of women in the management ranks of the hotels. However, the majority (52%) of respondents were men. The findings also show that the majority (37%) of respondents had ages between 39 and 48. In terms of education level, the findings show that the plurality (48%) of

respondents had a bachelor's degree as their highest level of education, while there were also significant numbers with diploma and postgraduate degrees. The majority (45%) of the respondents had also spent between five and eight years working for the firms.

These results suggest that the absolute majority of respondents were young and had a sensible degree of education in their field of employment. Most of them also had a lot of experience working in the sector, thus it was expected of them to have insightful judgments about the firms' HR policies. According to Abere and Muturi (2015), to ensure that one tried from a reliable the population that is likely to provide accurate answers for the study, it was essential to establish the background characteristics of the respondents, including age, gender, educational background, and work experience.

4.3.2 Background of the Hotels

In order to provide some fundamental understanding of the hotels, the study also aimed to ascertain background information about each. The study took into account the age of the hotels, the number of branches, and the type of customers they served. The outcome on these are summarized in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

Background Information of the Hotels

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Age of hotel firm	0-5 yrs	4	10
	5-10 yrs	11	27
	10-15 yrs	17	40
	Above 15 yrs	10	23
Hotel firm's branches	None	22	49
	1	10	25
	2	7	18
	3	3	8
Type of clients hotel usually caters for	Local guests	8	20
	International guests	13	31

Both	21	49
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The findings in Table 4.2 show that most of the hotels surveyed (40%) were aged between 10 and 15 years meaning that they had been established recently. Most of the hotels (49%) had no branches and they usually catered for both international and local guests (49%). This meant that the hotels had diversified clients.

4.4 Descriptive Statistics of Technological Differentiation Strategies and Reopening

Performance

This study's primary goal was to determine how technology-enabled service differentiation techniques affected star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit's post-pandemic open performance. The following constructs were used to measure this goal: customer education, leadership & staff training, and adoption of technology. A five-point Likert scale was used to score the responses on this measure, with 1 representing strong disagreement and 5 representing strong agreement. The data was analyzed using the standard deviation and mean score. Each things mean score was closer to five the more agreement there was with the statement. A score of less than or equal to 2.5 would indicate dissent from the proposition, but a score of about 2.5 would indicate uncertainty.

The outcome are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Technology service differentiation strategies and reopening performance.

Statement	Powerfully				Powerfully		Std. Dev
	disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Agree %	Mean	
Our hotel has been able to incorporate diverse technology applications to improve service delivery	0	0	16.7	31	52.4	4.36	0.759
Our hotel has shifted several functions like booking and reservations to technology applications	0	2.4	0	95.2	2.4	3.98	0.348
Our hotel has been able to partner with third-party technology applications like trivago, bookings.com etc to improve our visibility in the market	0	0	0	71.4	28.6	4.29	0.457
Our management are well trained on how to integrate their functions with technology	0	0	0	73.8	26.2	4.26	0.445
Our staff are well trained on how to use technology to improve their tasks	0	52.4	7.1	28.6	11.9	3.00	1.148
Our clients know how to use most of our technologies	0	0	0	83.3	16.7	4.17	0.377
Where necessary, we train our clients on technology use	0	14.3	2.4	42.9	40.5	4.10	1.008
Aggregate						4.023	0.649

The outcome in Table 4.3, the overall mean was $M = 4.023$; $SD = 0.649$. The responses were in agreement with the items that described application-enabled service distinction methods on the post-epidemic opening performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit because the mean is high and the standard deviation is low below one. With a mean of 4.36 and a percentage of 52. %, the majority of respondents strongly agreed that the hotels had been able to use various technology programs to modify service delivery.

Many of respondents, who in agreement with a mean of 3.98 and a percentage of 95.2%, also claimed that most hotels had moved numerous functions, such as booking and reservations, to technological apps. The majority of respondents, who in agreement with a mean of 4.29 and a percentage of 71.4%, claimed that most hotels had been successful in forming partnerships with third-party technology apps like trivago, Booking.com, etc. to increase their visibility in the market. The results also show that most hotel management had received adequate training on how to integrate technology into their daily operations, as showed by the popularity of respondents, who agreed with a mean of 4.26 and a percentage of 73.8%. the concept was in line with the study by Gursoy and Chi (2021) that indicated that the implementation of contactless check-ins and check-outs significantly improved guest confidence and satisfaction and enhanced mobile apps and online booking platforms contributed to a smoother and more efficient guest experience in hotels during covid 19 reopening in China.

However, as revealed by the bulk of respondents who disagreed with a mean of 3.00 and a percentage of 52.4%, the staffs in most hotels were not well trained on how to use technology to better their work. Most respondents, who agreed with a mean of 4.17 and a percentage of 83.3%, claimed that the hotel clients are aware of how to use the majority of their technologies. The number of respondents, who agreed with a mean of 4.10 and a percentage of 42.9%, also indicated that the hotels made an effort to instruct their guests on technology use where it was essential. The results support Xu and

Tavitiyaman et al. (2018) that revealed that adoption of information technology as a differentiation strategy enhanced the promotion of brand image and was essential for the effective performance of hotel markets in the U.S. and China.

4.4.1 Inferential Statistics on Technology Service Differentiation Strategies

Regression analysis was carried out to establish the association between the Technology service differentiation strategies and the reopening performance of the star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit.

Table 4.4

Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.802 ^a	.643	.641	.16028

a. Predictors: (Constant), Technology service differentiation strategies

Source: Research (2024)

With an R-squared value of 0.643, it indicated that 64.3% of the reopening performance of the star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit is explained by technology service differentiation strategies

Table 4.5

Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7.911	1	7.911	307.951	.000 ^b
	Residual	4.393	40	.026		
	Total	12.304	41			

a. Dependent Variable: Reopening Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Technology service differentiation strategies

Source: Researcher (2024)

With a p-value of less than 0.05, the model was considered significant according to the F statistic shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

Correlation of Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.684	.149		11.299	.000
	Technology service differentiation strategies	.699	.040	.802	17.549	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Reopening Performance

Source: Researcher (2024)

The table shows a affirmative and significant relationship between technology service differentiation strategies and reopening performance. The regression model is expressed as $Y=1.684+0.699X$. According to this model, for every unit increase in technology service differentiation strategies, reopening performance improves by 0.699 units.

4.5 Descriptive Statistics of Product Innovation Strategies on Reopening Performance

A secondary objective of the research was to investigate how product originality techniques affected the success of hotels with star ratings in the South Rift Circuit's pandemic reopening. To gauge the achievement of this objective, new packages, goods, and relationships were created. A five-point Likert scale was used to score responses on this measure, with 1 representing substantial disagreement and 5 representing strong agreement. The data was analyzed using the standard deviation and mean score. Each item's mean score was closer to 5 (just below 2.5, indicating disagreement with the proposition) the more agreement there was with the statement; values around 2.5 would indicate skepticism. Table 4.4 presents the results.

Table 4.6*Product innovation strategies and post-pandemic reopening performance*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
Statement	%	%	%	%	%		
We have worked on developing customized products for our clients since the pandemic	11.9	28.6	14.3	31	14.3	3.07	1.295
We have been providing tailored services to individual and group clients as need arises	26.2	26.2	0	33.3	14.3	2.83	1.497
We have been able to partner with travel firms to provide unique products to our customers after the pandemic	14.3	14.3	16.7	40.5	14.3	3.26	1.289
We have acquired new products for our portfolio	0	14.3	14.3	59.5	11.9	3.69	0.869
We have been able to track our customer preferences and experiences and come up with new products for them	0	28.6	23.8	31	16.7	3.36	1.078
Our hotel has developed new packages for our clients to meet their shifting demands after the pandemic	0	42.9	26.2	19	11.9	3.00	1.059
Aggregate						3.202	1.181

According to Table 4.4's findings, the overall mean was $M = 3.202$; $SD = 1.181$. The items describing the impact of innovations in products embraced by the star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit on their after the pandemic reopening performance showed significant differences among the

respondents, as indicated by the low mean and high standard deviation above 1. With a mean of 3.07 and a percentage of 31%, the respondents acknowledged that their hotels have attempted to create tailored goods for their customers since the pandemic.

However, 26% of those polled who strongly disagreed with a mean of 2.83 claimed that most hotels had not been offering customized services to both private and public clients as needed. As stated by 40.5% of respondents who agreed with a mean of 3.26, the majority of hotels have also been able to collaborate with travel agencies to offer distinctive items to their consumers in the wake of the epidemic. The results also indicate that most hotels have added new goods to their line-up, as evidenced by the 59.5% of respondents who agreed, with a mean score of 3.69.

Also, participants concurred The star-rated hotels in the area have been able to track their guests' tastes and experiences and develop new items for them, according to 31% of the answering, with a mean score of 3.36. The results also show that most hotels have not created new clientele packages to satisfy their changing needs during the epidemic, as seen by the 42.9% of respondents who disagreed with a mean of 3.00. The hotels did not prioritize product innovation overall.

Belleflamme et al. (2015) claim that user experience-based product differentiation influences both organizational performance and the ongoing evolution of the business's overall strategy. The user experience cannot be separated from the necessity for leadership in distinction. This is because insurance firms' long-term strategies include their clients. They ought to treat them well each time and behave in a way that promotes long-term user experience creation and maintenance (Mithas et al., 2013).

4.5.2 Inferential Statistics

A simple regression analysis was done to establish the relationship between Product Innovation Strategies and the reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit.

Table 4.7

Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.492 ^a	.242	.237	.23360

a. Predictors: (Constant), Product Innovation Strategies

Source: Researcher (2024).

The value of the R-square variable in Table 4.7 was 0.242. This implies that product innovation strategies could explain 24.2% of the reopening performance of the star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit.

Table 4.8

Analysis of Variance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	2.973	1	2.973	54.487	.000 ^b
Residual	9.331	40	.055		
Total	12.304	41			

a. Dependent Variable: Reopening Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Product Innovation Strategies

Source: Researcher (2024)

The F-statistic presented in Table 4.8 indicates that the models were significant with the p-value being less than 0.05.

Table 4.9*Coefficient of Correlation*

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	3.217	.146		21.962	.000
Equity	.312	.042	.492	7.382	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Reopening Performance

b. Source: Researcher (2024)

The reopening performance and innovation in products Strategies appear to have had a positive and substantial relationship, according to the regression results shown in Table 4.9. Reopening performance is altered by 0.312 units for each unit change in Product Innovation Strategies, according to the regression model. The model is expressed as $Y=3.217+0.312X$.

4.6 Descriptive Statistics of Market diversification strategies on reopening performance

The third objective to be assessed was the influence of market diversification strategies on the post-epidemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit. This objective was measured through the constructs; Flexibility, Source markets, and Product uniqueness. Responses to this measure were rated on a five-point Likert scale The mean score and standard deviation were used to analyze the data. The greater the agreement concerning the statement, the closer each item's mean score was to 5 numbers slightly below 2.5 would reflect dissonance with the proposition, while Numbers around 2.5 would show doubt. Table 4.9 presents the conclusions.

Table 4.10*Market diversification strategies and post-pandemic reopening performance*

Statement	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %	Mean	Std. Dev
We value customer experiences and hence have come up with flexible products	14.3	14.3	26.2	45.2	0	3.02	1.093
We have also made our payments systems flexible in the aftermath of the pandemic so as to improve customer retention	16.7	11.9	0	33.3	38.1	3.64	1.511
We do reach out to new markets for a more diverse clientele than before the pandemic	0	16.7	0	52.4	31	3.98	1.000
We target customers from all destinations and develop appropriate products for them	0	31	0	52.4	16.7	3.55	1.109
We have complementary products for our customers	14.3	26.2	26.2	33.3	0	2.79	1.071
We inform our customers in advance about some of our complimentary products	2.4	14.3	11.9	57.1	14.3	3.67	0.979
Aggregate						3.442	1.127

According to the outcome in Table 4.10, there were significant differences in respondents' opinions about market diversification strategies used in the star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit following the pandemic and their impact on the hotels' reopening performance. With a mean of 3.02, the majority of respondents (45.2%) agreed that hotels appreciate guest experiences and have therefore developed flexible offerings. But 38.1% of respondents, or respondents with a mean score of 3.64 said that the

hotels had also made their payment methods flexible in the wake of the epidemic to increase client retention.

The 52.4% of respondents who agreed with a mean of 3.98 indicated that most hotels do go out to new markets for a more diversified customer than before the pandemic. The majority of respondents (52.4%) also concurred, with a mean score of 3.55 that their hotels attract travelers from various regions and create items that are suitable for them. They disputed, however, that their hotels offered complementary goods to guests, with a mean score of 2.79. Additionally, according to the results, the majority of the star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit now notify their clients in advance about some of their complementary services, as indicated by 57.1% of the respondents who agreed, with a mean score of 3.67. The overall results suggest that although the hotels had made an effort to diversify their market, their focus was not very strong. Since the highest performances are typically attained by organizations that diversify largely into areas that draw on certain shared core competencies, (Yücel & Onal, 2015) assert that a firm's diversity is closely tied to its fundamental strengths.

4.6.2 Inferential Statistics

To determine the correlation between market diversification tactics and the aftermath of the pan opening performance of hotels with stars in the South Rift Circuit, a straightforward linear regression analysis was carried out.

Table 4.11

Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.539 ^a	.290	.286	.22598

a. Predictors: (Constant), Market diversification strategies

Source: Researcher (2024).

From the finding, an R-square value of .290 was recorded, indicating that Market diversification strategies explain 29.0% of post-pandemic reopening performance.

Table 4.12

Analysis of variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.572	1	3.572	69.947	.000 ^b
	Residual	8.732	40	.052		
	Total	12.304	41			

a. Dependent Variable: Reopening Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Market diversification strategies

Source: Researcher (2024).

The F-statistics presented in Table 4.12 indicated that the overall model was significant. The independent variable, Market diversification strategies, was a good joint explanatory variable for post-pandemic reopening performance, with an F-value of 69.947.

Table 4.13

Correlation coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.678	.313		5.361	.000
Market diversification strategies	.751	.090	.539	8.363	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Reopening Performance

Source: Researcher (2024).

Reopening performance and market diversification techniques had a positive and significant link, according to Table 13's regression coefficient. $Y=1.678+0.751X_2$ is the model's equation. A one-unit increase in market diversification techniques is correlated with a 0.751-unit improvement in reopening performance, according to the regression coefficient of 1.678.

4.7 Descriptive Statistics of Market growth strategies on post-pandemic reopening performance

The fourth objective to be analyzed was the efficacy of market growth strategies on the post-epidemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the Circuit of South Rift . This objective was measured through the constructs Pricing, Visibility, and Resources. Responses to this measure were rated on a five-point Likert scale,. The mean score and standard deviation were used to analyze the data. The greater the agreement concerning the statement, the closer each item's mean score was to 5. Numbers slightly below 2.5 would reflect dissension with the proposition, while numbers around 2.5 would show doubt. The results are shown in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14

Market growth strategies and post-pandemic reopening performance

Statement	Strongly disagree					Mean	Std. Dev
	0	1	2	3	4		
Since the lifting of the travel ban we have embarked on developing flexible pricing	0	52.4	0	16.7	31	2.88	1.234
Using our resources and networks we have been able to provide substantial discounts to our clients	7.1	40.5	14.3	38.1	0	2.89	1.041

Our pricing strategies have increased our visibility in the market	16.7	2.4	0	54.8	26.2	3.71	1.349
We have leveraged on our networks to increase our visibility in the market	14.3	31	0	54.8	0	3.45	1.209
We have partnered with local affiliated firms like transport firms to increase our visibility in the market	16.7	11.9	16.7	40.5	14.3	3.24	1.322
We have been able to maximize our resource utilization to catalyze our growth after the pandemic	0	28.6	14.3	57.1	0	3.29	0.891
We have a resource sharing framework with other similar firms in the area that enable us to increase our market outreach	2.4	16.7	0	78.6	2.4	3.62	0.882
We have been able to increase our market share after the post-pandemic reopening	0	16.7	0	52.4	31	3.98	0.000
Aggregate						3.319	0.991

The findings in Table 4.6 shows that the collective mean was $M = 3.319$; $SD = 0.991$. The mean is low and the standard deviation low below 1, this means that there was close agreement among the respondents with the items describing market growth strategies in star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit and its effect on their post-pandemic reopening performance. Since the end of the travel ban, the majority of hotels have not started to use flexible pricing, as evidenced by the 52.4% of respondents who disagreed, with a mean of 2.88. With a mean of 2.89, the majority of respondents (40.5%) also disagreed that the hotels were utilizing their connections and resources to offer significant discounts to their customers. The fact that 54.8% of respondents agreed, with a mean of

3.71, suggests that the hotels' pricing policies have boosted their standing in the market. With a mean of 3.45, the majority of respondents (54.8%) also concurred that their hotels use their networks to improve their exposure in the market.

In addition, 40.5% of the answering, who agreed with a mean of 3.24, claimed that most hotels collaborated with locally linked businesses such transport providers to boost their visibility in the market. The results also demonstrate that most hotels were successful in maximizing resource use to spur expansion following the pandemic, as demonstrated by the 57.1% of respondents who agreed with a mean score of 3.29. The results also demonstrate that most hotels have a resource-sharing framework with nearby businesses that allows them to expand their market reach, as indicated by 78.6% of respondents who agreed with a mean score of 3.62.

With a mean of 3.98, the many of respondents (52.4%), also concurred that their hotels were able to grow their market share following the post-pandemic reopening. The results typically show that the South Rift Circuit's star-rated hotels focused less on the market expansion plan. The results support those of Kayaman and Arasli (2007) who looked at customer-based brand equity: findings from the hotel industry in Cyprus and determined the importance of a three-dimensional model of consumer brand value.

4.7.1 Inferential Statistics

To determine the correlation between market expansion tactics and the post-pandemic opening performance of star-rated hotels in the southern Rift Circuit, a straightforward linear regression analysis was performed.

Table 4.15*Model summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.539 ^a	.290	.286	.22598

a. Predictors: (Constant), Market growth strategies

Source: Researcher (2024).

The finding produced an R-square value of .290, indicating that market growth strategies explain 29.0% of the reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit.

Table 4.16*Analysis of variance*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	3.572	1	3.572	69.947	.000 ^b
Residual	8.732	40	.052		
Total	12.304	41			

a. Dependent Variable: Reopening Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Market growth strategies

Source: Researcher (2024)

The overall significance of the model was indicated by the F-statistics displayed in the Table. That is, with an F-value of 69.947, the independent variable, market growth strategies, was a solid joint explanatory variable for reopening performance.

Table 4.17*Correlation coefficient*

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.678	.313		5.361	.000
	.751	.090	.539	8.363	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Reopening Performance

Source: Researcher (2024)

Reopening performance and market expansion methods had a substantial and positive link, according to the regression coefficient table. The equation for the model is $Y=1.678+0.751X$. Reopening Performance increases by 0.751 units in response to a one unit increase in market expansion strategies, according to the regression coefficient of 1.678.

4.4.5 Post-pandemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit

The study aimed to determine the South Rift Circuit's star-rated hotels' post-pandemic reopening performance. The measures of bookings, revenue growth, sales, hiring, and customer retention were used to evaluate this target. A five-point Likert scale was used to score the responses on this measure, with 1 representing strong disagreement and 5 representing strong agreement. The data was analyzed using the standard deviation and mean score. Each item's mean score was closer to five the more agreement there was with the statement. A score of less than or equal to 2.5 would indicate dissent from the proposition, but a score of about 2.5 would indicate uncertainty.

The findings are presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.18

Post-epidemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the Southbound Rift

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
	%	%	%	%	%		
Bookings in our hotel have significantly increased since the lifting of the travel restrictions	0	2.4	42.9	54.8	0	3.52	0.552
Through technology, our booking efficiency has improved	14.3	0	0	66.7	19	3.76	1.206
Our revenue performance has been improving since the lifting of the travel restrictions	0	0	26.2	57.1	16.7	3.9	0.656
Our delivery times have significantly improved since the lifting of the travel restrictions	16.7	28.6	11.9	28.6	14.3	2.95	1.361
Most of our products are preferred by our clients after the lifting of the travel restrictions	16.7	26.2	11.9	40.5	4.8	3.29	1.246
We have been able to get new clientele since the lifting of the travel restrictions	14.3	26.2	26.2	33.3	0	2.79	1.071
We have been able to regain our old clients since the lifting of the travel restrictions	14.3	28.6	11.9	42.9	2.4	3.15	1.185
Aggregate						3.337	1.040

According to Table 4.18 data, the overall mean was $M = 3.337$; $SD = 1.040$. The fact that the mean is low and the standard deviation is large (above 1) indicates that respondents' opinions on the reopening

success of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit varied. 54.8% of respondents, who concurred with a mean of 3.52, claimed that bookings in the majority of hotels have greatly increased since the removal of the travel restrictions. The majority of respondents (66.7%) agreed, with a mean score of 3.76, that the use of technology has increased the efficiency of hotel bookings.

57.1% of respondents, with a mean score of 3.9, said that the revenue performance of the hotels has been increasing since the relaxation of the travel restrictions. However, as evidenced by a mean of 2.95, there was doubt over whether the hotel delivery times had really improved after the removal of the travel restrictions. However, the majority of respondents (40.5%) agreed, with a mean score of 3.29, that after the travel restrictions were lifted, most hotel guests preferred their offerings. However, as evidenced by a mean of 2.79, the majority of hotels have been unable to attract new customers after the removal of the travel restrictions.

However, as indicated by 42.9% of responsive who in agreement with a mean of 3.15, the majority of hotels had been successful in regaining their previous customers since the removal of the travel restrictions. The results generally show that there was a need to improve on the tactics in order to improve on the performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit after their reopening. These results support those of Hanaysha (2020) which discovered that the delayed rate of sector recovery, which is presently having an impact on hotels' ability to reopen, is due to travel restrictions in some countries, the virus' slow containment, low traveler trust, and an unfavorable economic climate.

4.5 Inferential Statistics

To determine the bivariate relationships between each independent variable and the dependent variable, as well as to assess the predictive power of a combined model incorporating all of the independent variables and models utilizing the variable that moderates as the dependent variable, the study employed both multivariate regression and correlation analysis.

4.5.1 Correlation Analysis

This subsection offers a synopsis of the Pearson's product-moment correlation study. The bivariate correlations are used to assess the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable in order to ascertain the relevance of the relationship as well as the degree and strength of their connection with the dependent variable. The results of this correlation analysis are summarized in Table 4.8.

Table 4.19

Summary of Correlation Analysis

		Technology Strategy	Product Innovation	Market Diversification	Market Growth	Reopening Performance
Technology Strategy	Pearson					
	Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	42				
Product Innovation	Pearson					
	Correlation	.836**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000				
	N	42	42			
Market Diversification	Pearson					
	Correlation	.639**	.718**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000			
	N	42	42	42		
Market Growth	Pearson					
	Correlation	.662**	.633**	.855**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		
	N	42	42	42	42	
Reopening Performance	Pearson					
	Correlation	.514**	.689**	.883**	.823**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	42	42	42	42	42

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The first correlation was carried out to determine whether technology enabled service differentiation strategy had a significant influence on post-pandemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit. The results show that the relationship between the two variables was significant ($r = 0.514$, $p = 0.000$). The Pearson's correlation coefficient, r , is also strong and positive implying that the between technology enabled service differentiation strategy had a significant influence on post-endemic opening performance of star-rated hotels in the Southbound Rift Circuit. This finding agrees with Huang et al. (2013) who found that technology adoption and utilization is a significant driver of insurance sector activities, thus making it a dependable contributor to the Countries' economic development all over the world.

The second correlation was carried out to determine whether product innovation strategy had a significant influence on post-pandemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit. The results show that the relationship between the two variables was significant ($r = 0.689$, $p = 0.000$). The Pearson's correlation coefficient also shows that product innovation strategy had a strong and positive influence on post-endemic open performance of star-rated hotels in the Southward Rift Circuit. The results agree with Mithas et al. (2013) who established that product differentiation strategy an essential component in the service companies. Felicio and Rodrigues (2015) asserted that the provision of unique products is the current key to success and survival in the market. Product uniqueness enables the company to exceed the customer expectations due to perceived additional quality.

The third correlation was carried out to determine whether market diversification strategy had a significant influence on post-pandemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift

Circuit. The results show that the relationship between the two variables was significant ($r = 0.883$, $p = 0.000$). The correlation is very strong and positive implying that there way things were currently, emphasis on market diversification strategy would lead to much improved post-endemic opening performance of star-rated edifice in the Southerly Rift Circuit. The findings agree with Marlin and Geiger (2015) who found a significant relationship between the size of firm effects and the degree of diversification. However, the findings disagree with Xiao (2007) who found that corporate effects increase as firms become less diversified.

The third correlation was conducted to see if the South Rift Circuit's star-rated hotels' post-pandemic reopening success was significantly impacted by their market growth plan. The findings demonstrate that there was a significant association ($r = 0.823$, $p = 0.000$) between the two variables. The Pearson's correlation coefficient also shows that the association was quite strong and positive, suggesting that the Southward Rift Circuit's star-rated edifice' post-endemic opening success was significantly influenced by their concentration on market growth plan.

The results corroborate those of Hultman et al. (2021) who studied the branding of the hotel industry through the brand expansion effect of increase versus reduce and found that UK hotel patrons only perceive the parent brand's attributes and attitudes positively, which positively affects the extension's perceived value and subsequent (re)visit intentions. The results of the moderation process also showed that positive connections are more substantial during step-up extensions and weaker during step-down extensions.

4.4.2 Regression Analysis

To verify the reliability of the multiple regression model proposed in chapter three, multivariate regression analysis was employed. Additionally, it was utilized to ascertain the general interactions between the dependent and independent variables and the dependent variable. Additionally, the

research tried to ascertain which components were more important and how much each independent variable added to the setup's overall effect on the dependent variable. The results are summarized in Table 4.9.

Table 4.19

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Model Summary

R	R²	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.755	0.570	0.559	1.77974

a Predictors: (Constant), Market Growth, Product Innovation, Technology Strategy, Market

Diversification

Table 4.19 findings reveal that the model correlation coefficient for the link between the dependent variable and all of the independent variables combined was 0.755. The model may account for up to 55.9% of the variability in the post-epidemic reopening public presentation of star-rated hotels in the Southbound Rift Circuit, according to the adjusted r-square ($R^2_{Adj} = 0.559$). It also implies that the model might be enhanced by include more predictive variables. According to Hair et al. (2009), the F test can be used to determine whether the multiple regression model as a whole is suitable. The independent and dependent variables were therefore subjected to an ANOVA in the study, and the outcomes are compiled in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	691.208	4	172.802	54.555	.000b
Residual	117.197	37	3.167		

Total	808.405	41
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a Dependent Variable: Reopening Performance

b Predictors: (Constant), Market Growth, Product Innovation, Technology service differentiation Strategy, Market Diversification

According to Table 4.20 findings, a highly significant quality between marketing tactics and the variable that predicted how well star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit would perform after the pandemic ($F_o' = 54.555 > F_c = 2.64; 0.05; df = 4, 37; p = 0.000$). This result demonstrates the significance of the model anticipated by Table 4.9 and supports its validity. The beta value was utilized to assess which of the human resourcefulness practices variables was more significant when it came to the South Rift Circuit's star-rated hotels' post-pandemic reopening performance. Table 4.20 summarizes the correlation coefficients from the multiple linear regression analysis and presents the results.

Table 4.21

Multiple linear regression results

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	9.193	4.509		2.039	0.049
Technology service differentiation Strategy	0.807	0.220	0.452	3.676	0.001

Product Innovation	0.286	0.083	0.448	3.443	0.001
Market Diversification	0.365	0.101	0.495	3.598	0.001
Market Growth	0.318	0.099	0.415	3.207	0.003

According to the answer in Table 4.11, Market Diversification ($\beta = 0.495$, $p < 0.05$) was the most effective marketing approach in the joint model. Following this were, in that order, Market Growth ($\beta = 0.415$, $p < 0.05$), Product Innovation ($\beta = 0.448$, $p < 0.05$), and Technology service differentiation Strategy ($\beta = 0.452$, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that when the associated independent factors changed by one standard deviation, the dependent variable, which is the post-endemic opening performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit, would vary by a related number of standard deviant.

Additionally, the model changeless is significant ($\beta = 9.193$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that there may have been additional factors that could have affected how well star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit performed after the epidemic ended. As a result, the study concludes that market expansion, product innovation, technology strategy, and market diversification all had an impact on the post-pandemic reopening success of starred hotels in Kenya's South Rift Circuit.

The outcome demonstrates that a technology-enabled service differentiation approach is statistically significant impact of 1% on the post-pandemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels. The outcome also shows that a unit increase in a technology-enabled service differentiation strategy results in a 0.807 unit increase in an organization's performance. Organizational effectiveness in service businesses is differentiated by the use of technology. This makes it absolutely essential for insurance companies to stay up with technology advancements in order to remain competitive in the market.

The results also demonstrate that product innovation strategy is statistically significant impact of 1% on the post-pandemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels. The outcome also shows that a unit increase in product invention strategy results in a 0.286 unit increase in organizational performance.

The functioning satisfaction requirement of the consumer is satisfied by high-quality products (Bayraktar et al., 2017). Due to its role in the strategic choice of the entire firm, the quality emphasis is not the organization's sole responsibility.

The regression results also demonstrate that market diversification strategy is statistically significant impact of 1% on the post-pandemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels. The outcome also shows a unit increase in market diversification strategy results in a 0.365 unit increase in organizational performance. The results are consistent with Asman and Landman (2013) research, which examined the impact of the diversification approach on the performance of Kenyan state-owned commercialized firms and found that it enhanced performance.

By utilizing current technical capabilities, these businesses can provide new unconnected items while experiencing a large boost in sales. The performance of the listed corporations was also impacted by the geographic market expansion into new nations and areas.

The outcome demonstrates that market expansion plan, which is statistically at 1%, has a substantial impact on the post-pandemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels. The outcome also shows that an increase in market expansion strategy results in an increase of 0.318 units in organizational performance. The findings support Hussain et al. (2013) who found that by diversifying their operations, businesses can create new markets and pursue growth. Diversification typically entails greater risk or calls for learning new business processes and working with unfamiliar clientele.

4.4.3 Testing the Hypothesis

H01: The South Rift Circuit's star-rated hotels' post-pandemic reopening performance is unaffected by a technology-enabled service differentiation plan.

The outcome demonstrates that the performance of star-rated hotels during a pandemic is significantly impacted by technology-enabled service differentiation approach ($\beta = 0.452$, $p < 0.05$). This resulted in the alternative perspective being accepted, which acknowledged that the technology-enabled service differentiation strategy did, in fact, contribute considerably to the post-epidemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit. This led to the non acceptance of the null hypothesis. The results support those of Bayraktar et al. (2017) who discovered that technology, used as a strategy for distinction, makes it easier to attract and acquire new clients while also lowering the cost of recruiting policyholders.

Technology is a crucial component of a corporate scheme with long-term effects on organisational success, claims (Yanney, 2014). As a result, the use of technology resources has a big impact on the market share and revenue growth of insurance businesses.

The following was done to test the study's second hypothesis:

H02: Star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit's post-pandemic reopening performance is not significantly impacted by product innovation strategy.

Product innovation strategy significantly affects the post-pandemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels, according to the result ($\beta = 0.448$, $p < 0.05$). The alternative view, which acknowledged that product innovation strategy, did in fact considerably contribute to the post-pandemic open performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit, led to the rejection of the null hypothesis as a result. According to Kaliappen and Hilman (2017), goods with superior quality that are congruent with consumer needs boost market share, product adoption, and performance for insurance businesses.

The outcome are in line with those of Rahman et al. (2014) who discovered that giving high-quality services continuously instead of only once or twice may give insurance businesses a competitive edge.

Brand loyalty, cost savings, and effective pricing among businesses are all influenced by the exceptional quality and distinctiveness of items (Kaliappen & Hilman, 2017). To gain a competitive edge and keep current customers, businesses must continuously improve the quality of their products.

The third hypothesis of the study was tested as under;

H₀₃: Market diversification strategy has no significant influence on endemic open performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit.

According to the outcome, market diversification strategy significantly affects the post-pandemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels ($\beta = 0.415$, $p < 0.05$). This resulted in the alternative perspective being accepted, which acknowledged that market diversification strategy did, in fact, contribute considerably to the post-epidemic reopening demonstration of star-rated building in the Southbound Rift Circuit. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The results corroborate those of Arasa (2014) who looked into how the Kenya Commercial Bank group's diversification strategy affected its performance. According to the data, Kenya Commercial Bank Group has implemented three primary diversification methods. The overall profitability of the banks greatly grew along with the increase in income from diversification. The results further concur those of Khamati (2014) which examined how Radio Africa Limited in Kenya used diversification as a strategy and how that affected organizational performance. According to the study, Radio Africa Limited's performance in Kenya and its diversification strategy are positively correlated. The study also showed that, despite the strategy's increased performance, total revenue growth was slowing.

The fourth hypothesis of the study was tested as under;

H₀₄: Market growth strategy has no significant influence on endemic open performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit.

The outcome demonstrates that Market growth strategy has a substantial impact on star-rated hotels' post-pandemic reopening performance ($\beta = 0.495$, $p < 0.05$). The alternative view, which acknowledged that market growth strategy did in fact considerably contribute to the post-epidemic open performance of star-rated hotels in the Southbound Rift Circuit, led to the rejection of the null hypothesis as a result. Concluding that Market growth strategy has significant influence on post-pandemic open demonstration of star-rated edifice in the Southbound Rift Circuit. According to Muriira and Bosire (2016), revenue growth in businesses is essential for long-term sustainability. To successfully meet organizational performance goals, businesses' income levels need to rise from year to year (Torkestani et al., 2014). Additionally, businesses are very interested in how many insurance products customers buy. The quantity and caliber of the products are important predictors of revenue levels. Hotels also want to continue expanding their market share and service big segments of the market. The hotel companies are not exempt from the company's aim of maximizing profits. Therefore, hoteliers adopt differentiation methods to boost organizational performance and increase profitability.

Founded on the results of multiple regression worthy, the final Nvivo analysis tool for post endemic opening of performance of the hotels in south rift circuit is thus presented as follows;

$$Y = 9.193 + 0.807 X_1 + 0.286 X_2 + 0.365 X_3 + 0.318 X_4$$

Where:

Y = Post-pandemic Reopening performance of hotels in Kenya

X_1 = Technology enabled Service Differentiation Strategy

X_2 = Product Innovation Strategy

X3 = Market Diversification Strategy

X4 = Market Growth Strategy

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter concisely presents the results and the conclusions reached, and it offers ideas for stakeholders that may be put into practice to assist in addressing the issues that the study discovered.

5.2 Summary

This study centered on star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit and was restricted to the marketing methods used by the Kenyan hotel industry in detail and their impact on their reopening performance in the post-Covid-19 epidemic setting. Thus, the study concentrated on four independent variables: the strategy for service differentiation, the strategy for product development, the strategy for market development. The South Rift Tour Circuit throughout the nation's hospitality businesses' management completed questionnaires to provide the study's primary data.

5.2.1 Technology enabled service differentiation strategies and reopening performance

Concerning this objective, the study found that Technology enabled service differentiation strategy has a significant influence on post-pandemic opening performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit. Most hotels had been able to incorporate diverse technology applications to improve service delivery. Further, most hotels had shifted several functions like booking and reservations to technology applications. There were indications that most of the hotels had been able to partner with third party technology applications like trivago, bookings.com etc to improve their visibility in the market. The findings further indicate that most hotels management were well trained on how to integrate their functions with technology. However, the staffs in most hotels were not well trained on how to use technology to improve their tasks. There were indications that the hotels clients know how

to use most of their technologies. Also, the hotels endeavored to train their clients on technology use where it was necessary.

5.2.2 Product innovation strategies and post-pandemic reopening performance

Regarding this objective, the outcome revealed that Product innovation strategy has a significant influence on post-epidemic opening presentment of star-rated hotels in the Southbound Rift Circuit. The findings also revealed that the hotels have worked on developing customized products for their clients since the pandemic. However, there were indications that most hotels had not been providing tailored services to individual and group clients as need arises. Most hotels had also been able to partner with travel firms to provide unique products to their customers after the pandemic. The findings further showed that most hotels have acquired new products for their portfolio. In addition, the star-rated hotels in the area have been able to track their customer preferences and experiences and come up with new products for them. The findings further indicate that most hotels had not developed new packages for their clients to meet their shifting demands after the pandemic. Overall, it is evident that the hotels had not emphasized on product innovation.

5.2.3 Market diversification strategies and post-pandemic reopening performance

The results on this objective revealed that Market diversification strategy has a significant influence on post-epidemic opening public presentation of star-charge hotels in the Southbound Rift Circuit. Most hotels value customer experiences and hence have come up with flexible products. There were, however, indications that the hotels have also made their payments systems flexible in the aftermath of the pandemic so as to improve customer retention. It was also evident that most hotels do reach out to new markets for a more diverse clientele than before the pandemic. Further, most their hotels target customers from all destinations and develop appropriate products for them. However, the hotels did not have complementary products for their customers. The findings also showed that most star-rated

hotels in the South Rift Circuit were now informing their customers in advance about some of their complimentary products. The findings overall imply that while the hotels had made attempts to diversify their market, the emphasis was not very strong.

5.2.4 Market growth strategies and post-pandemic reopening performance

The results showed that the after the pandemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the Southbound Rift Circuit is significantly influenced by market growth strategy. Most hotels had not embarked on developing flexible pricing since the lifting of the travel. Most hotels were not using their resources and networks to provide substantial discounts to their clients. However, there were indications that the hotels' pricing strategies have increased their visibility in the market. Most hotels leverage their networks to increase their visibility in the market. Further, there were indications that most hotels have partnered with local affiliated firms like transport firms to increase their visibility in the market. The findings also show that most of hotels have been able to maximize their resource utilization to catalyze their growth after the pandemic. The findings further show that most hotels have a resource sharing framework with other similar firms in the area that enable them to increase their market outreach. Most hotels have been able to increase their market share after the post-pandemic reopening. The findings generally imply that there was less emphasis on the market growth strategy in the star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit.

5.3 Conclusions

The study comes to the assumption that the after the pandemic reopening performance of hotels with star ratings in the South Rift Circuit is significantly influenced by technology-enabled service differentiation strategies. There were indications that the hotels clients know how to use most of their technologies. Also, the hotels endeavored to train their clients on technology use where it was necessary.

The study also hold that Product innovation strategy has a significant influence on position-epidemic open public presentation of star-rated hotels in the Southbound Rift Circuit. However, according to the findings most edifice had not developed new packages for their clients to meet their shifting

demands after the pandemic. Overall, it is evident that the hotels had out little emphasis on product innovation.

The report goes on to say that the after the pandemic reopening success of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit is significantly impacted by market diversification strategies. These days, the majority of the South Rift Circuit's star-rated hotels notify their patrons ahead of time about a few of their complementary offerings. Overall, the results suggest that even though the hotels tried to broaden their clientele.

The study ultimately comes to the determination that the after the epidemic reopening public presentation of star-rated hotels in the Southbound Rift Circuit is significantly influenced by market growth strategy. Following the post-pandemic reopening, the majority of hotels have been able to grow their market share. The results usually suggest that the star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit placed less focus on the market growth plan.

5.4 Recommendations

The research portray that the hotels should make provision for continuous training of staffs on technology applications as there are indications that the hotel industry will become more technology dependent in the future.

The hotels' management need to providing tailored services to individual and group clients as need arises. The management also needs to ensure that their hotels have developed new packages for their clients to meet their shifting demands after the pandemic.

The hotels need to diversify their markets to ensure that they are able to tap into more potential markets locally and internationally. In addition, there is need to value customer experiences and hence

have come up with flexible products and also the hotels need to have complimentary products for their customers.

Finally, the hotels need to emphasize market growth strategies. They should also introduce flexible pricing for their clients to enable them book the services conveniently. Further, the hotels should use their resources and networks to provide substantial discounts to their clients.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Research

Future studies in this area should investigate the mediating role of government support of the hotel sector on the post-pandemic reopening demonstration of star-rated hotels in Kenya. There is also need to examine the customer engagement strategies used by the star hotels. and their effect on the post-pandemic reopening presentment of star hotels.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire

You are invited to participate in this research that seeks to find out ***EFFECT OF MARKETING STRATEGIES ON POST-PANDEMIC REOPENING PERFORMANCE OF STAR-RATED HOTELS IN THE SOUTH RIFT CIRCUIT, KENYA*** The outcome of this research is purely for fulfilling academic requirement. All information submitted will be treated with utmost confidentiality. At no time will your name appear in any reported findings along with your responses. Feel free to express yourself as honestly as possible. Thank you for your cooperation.

Instructions

Please do not write your name on the questionnaire. Kindly answer all questions and indicate your view by ticking (√) as appropriate

PART A: Background Information of Respondent

1. Gender;

Male []

Female []

2. Age;

18 -20 [] 21-30 [] 31-40 [] Above 41 []

3. Level of Education

Certificate [] Diploma [] Bachelors [] Masters [] PhD []

4. Work experience in years

0-3 years [] 3-5 years [] 5-8 years [] 8-10 years [] 10+ years []

5. How old is your hotel firm?

.....

6. Does your hotel firm has other branches?

Yes ☐

No ☐

I don't know ☐

If yes, how many?

.....

7.What type of clients do you usually cater for?

.....

PART B: MARKETING STRATEGIES AND REOPENING PERFORMANCE OF HOTEL INDUSTRY POST-PANDEMIC

In this section, please tick (✓) where appropriate.

(1- Strongly disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly agree)

8. The following items seek your views on the influence of technology on the reopening performance of your hotel after the pandemic. Please tick (✓) where appropriate

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Our hotel has been able to incorporate diverse technology applications to improve service delivery					
Our hotel has shifted several functions like booking and reservations to technology applications					
Our hotel has been able to partner with third party technology applications like trivago, bookings.com etc to improve our visibility in the market					
Our management are well trained on how to integrate their functions with technology					
Our staffs are well trained on how to use technology to improve their tasks					
Our clients know how to use most of our technologies					
Where necessary, we train our clients on technology use					

9. The following items seek your views on the impact of product innovation strategies that your hotel may have applied upon reopening after the pandemic. Please tick (✓) where appropriate.

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
We have worked on developing customized products for our clients since the pandemic					
We have been providing tailored services to individual and group clients as need arises					
We have been able to partner with travel firms to provide unique products to our customers after the pandemic					
We have acquired new products for our portfolio					
We have been able to track our customer preferences and experiences and come up with new products for them					
Our hotel has developed new packages for our clients to meet their shifting demands after the pandemic					

10. The following items seek your opinion on the influence of market diversification on the reopening performance of your hotel post- pandemic. Please tick (✓) where appropriate.

Statements	1	2	3	4	5

We value customer experiences and hence have come up with flexible products					
We have also made our payments systems flexible in the aftermath of the pandemic so as to improve customer retention					
We do reach out to new markets for a more diverse clientele than before the pandemic					
We target customers from all destinations and develop appropriate products for them					
We have complimentary products for our customers					
We inform our customers in advance about some of our complimentary products					

11. The following items are intended to understand your opinion on the influence of market growth strategy on the performance of your hotel post- pandemic. Please tick (✓) where appropriate.

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Since the lifting of the travel ban we have embarked on developing flexible pricing					
Using our resources and networks we have been able to provide substantial discounts to our clients					

Our pricing strategies have increased our visibility in the market					
We have leveraged on our networks to increase our visibility in the market					
We have partnered with local affiliated firms like transport firms to increase our visibility in the market					
We have been able to maximize our resource utilization to catalyze our growth after the pandemic					
We have a resource sharing framework with other similar firms in the area that enable us to increase our market outreach					
We have been able to increase our market share after the post-pandemic reopening					

12. The following items are intended to understand your opinion on the reopening performance of your hotel post- pandemic. Please tick (√) where appropriate.

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Bookings in our hotel have significantly increased since the lifting of the travel restrictions					
Through technology, our booking efficiency has improved					
Our revenue performance has been improving since the lifting of the travel restrictions					

Our delivery times have significantly improved since the lifting of the travel restrictions					
Most of our products are preferred by our clients after the lifting of the travel restrictions					
We have been able to get new clientele since the lifting of the travel restrictions					
We have been able to regain our old clients since the lifting of the travel restrictions					
There has been cost reduction as a result of proper information sharing					
There has been cost reduction as a result of logistic design					
Maximum utilization of resources as a result of proper information sharing					
Maximum utilization of resources as a result of inventory management					
Maximum utilization of resources as a result of logistics management					

Thank you very much for your cooperation

Appendix II: Interview Schedule

You are invited to participate in this research that seeks to find out ***EFFECT OF MARKETING STRATEGIES ON POST-PANDEMIC REOPENING PERFORMANCE OF STAR-RATED HOTELS IN THE SOUTH RIFT CIRCUIT, KENYA*** The outcome of this research is purely for fulfilling academic requirement. All information submitted will be treated with utmost confidentiality. At no time will your name appear in any reported findings along with your responses. Feel free to express yourself as honestly as possible. Thank you for your cooperation.

Instructions

Please do not write your name on the interview schedule.

PART A: Background Information of Respondent

4. Work experience in years:

.....
.....

1. How old is your hotel firm?

.....

6. Does your hotel firm has other branches?

.....

7. What type of clients do you usually cater for?

.....

1. What are some of the technology factors that influence customers' choice of your hotel?

.....

.....

2. How do these technology characteristics influence customers' choice of your hotel?

.....

3. What are some of the service points that influences customers' choice of your hotel?

.....

4. How do these service innovations influence customers' choice of your hotel?.....

.....

5. Who are some of the product innovations that influence customers' choice of your hotel?.....

.....

6. To what extent do you source clients from within the country (domestic clients) and from outside the country?

.....

7. Do you have long term partnerships with other hotel firms and affiliated service providers?

.....

.....

8. What are some of the challenges you face in growing your clientele after the reopening?

.....

Appendix IV: List of Star Rated Hotels in South Rift Circuit, TRA 2021

No.	Establishment	Region	County	Rooms	Beds	Ratings
1	Enashipai Resort and Spa	South Rift	Nakuru	140	215	*****

2	Mara Serena Safari Lodge	South Rift	Narok	74	148	*****
3	Lake Elementaita Serena Camp	South Rift	Nakuru	25	50	*****
4	Cottars Nineteen Twenties Safari Camp	South Rift	Narok	16	40	*****
5	Olare Mara Kempinski	South Rift	Narok	12	17	*****
6	Masai Mara Sopa Lodge	South Rift	Narok	100	198	*****
7	Keekorok Lodge	South Rift	Narok	99	225	*****
8	Sentrim Elementaita Lodge	South Rift	Nakuru	83	166	*****
9	Lake Naivasha Sopa Resort	South Rift	Nakuru	82	164	*****
10	Sarova Mara Game Camp	South Rift	Narok	75	150	*****
11	Lake Naivasha Sawela Lodge	South Rift	Nakuru	74	150	*****
12	Sarova Lion Game Lodge	South Rift	Nakuru	67	134	*****
13	Lake Nakuru Sopa Lodge	South Rift	Nakuru	62	138	*****
14	Mara Intrepids Camp	South Rift	Narok	60	93	*****
15	Ashnil Mara Camp	South Rift	Narok	56	118	*****
16	Fairmont Mara Safari Club	South Rift	Narok	51	102	*****
17	Naivasha Kongoni Lodge	South Rift	Nakuru	29	29	*****
18	Neptune Mara Rianta Luxury Tented Camp	South Rift	Narok	20	40	*****
19	Mara Engai Wilderness Lodge	South Rift	Narok	20	40	*****
20	Little Governors' Camp	South Rift	Narok	17	34	*****
21	DBA Mara West Tented Camp	South Rift	Narok	16	30	*****
22	Sunbird Lodge	South Rift	Nakuru	16	32	*****
23	Governors' Ilmoran Camp	South Rift	Narok	10	10	*****
24	Mara Explorer Camp	South Rift	Narok	10	20	*****
25	Encounter Mara Camp	South Rift	Narok	10	24	*****
26	Naboisho Camp Tented Camp	South Rift	Narok	9	22	*****

27	Olarro Lodge	South Rift	Narok	9	18	****
28	Mara Simba Lodge	South Rift	Narok	84	168	***
29	Lake Naivasha Simba Lodge	South Rift	Nakuru	70	140	***
30	Hotel Cathay	South Rift	Nakuru	62	140	***
31	Lake Nakuru Flamingo Lodge	South Rift	Nakuru	60	91	***
32	Hillcourt Resort & Spa	South Rift	Nakuru	43	50	***
33	Tipilikwani Mara Camp	South Rift	Narok	20	34	***
34	Sekenani Camp	South Rift	Narok	15	30	***
35	Sanctuary Olonana Camp	South Rift	Narok	14	28	***
36	The Ole Ken Hotel	South Rift	Nakuru	40	54	***
37	Rekero Camp	South Rift	Narok	9	24	***
38	Hotel City Max	South Rift	Nakuru	40	56	**
39	Governors' Camp	South Rift	Narok	37	74	**
40	Chester Hotel	South Rift	Nakuru	31	36	**
41	Kabarak University Guest House	South Rift	Nakuru	24	32	**
42	Mpata Safari Club	South Rift	Narok	23	46	**
43	Agricultural Resource Centre (ARC) Hotel	South Rift	Nakuru	90	96	**
44	Mara Siria Luxury Tented Bush Camp	South Rift	Narok	14	35	**
45	Loldia House	South Rift	Nakuru	7	19	**
46	Porini Mara Camp	South Rift	Narok	6	12	**
47	Mara Bush Houses	South Rift	Narok	3	18	**

Appendix V: postgraduate approval letter



KENYA METHODIST UNIVERSITY

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DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

July 18, 2023

Commission Secretary
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovations
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: PAUL NGETICH (REG. NO. MHT-3-0625-1/2018)

This is to confirm that the above named is a bona fide student of Kenya Methodist University, in the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, undertaking a Master's Degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management. He is conducting research on: "Marketing Strategies and Reopening Performance of the Hospitality Industry in Post Pandemic Context. A Survey of Star Rated Hotels in South Rift Circuit, Kenya".

We confirm that his research proposal has been defended and approved by the University.

In this regard, we are requesting your office to issue a research license to enable him collect data.

Any assistance accorded to him will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. John M. Muchiri (PhD)
Dean, Postgraduate Studies

Cc: Dean SBUE
CoD, Hospitality & Tourism Management
Postgraduate Coordinator
Supervisors

Appendix VI: Research Permit


REPUBLIC OF KENYA
 National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

Ref No: 428272
RESEARCH LICENSE


This is to Certify that Mr. Paul Kipageno Ngetich of Kenya Methodist University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Bomet, Kericho, Nakuru, Narok on the topic: **MARKETING STRATEGIES AND REOPENING PERFORMANCE OF THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN POSTPANDEMIC CONTEXT: A SURVEY OF STAR-RATED HOTELS IN SOUTH RIFT CIRCUIT, KENYA. for the period ending: 31/July/2024.**

License No: NACOSTI/P/23/28059
Applicant Identification Number
428272

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
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