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EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ON THE PERFORMANCE OF FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESSES IN IMENTI NORTH SUB COUNTY

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Abstract

Family-owned businesses are equal and crucial players in any country's economic growth, they are equal players in employment creation, generation of income and wealth accumulation. Nevertheless, this sector is faced with bundles of challenges not limited to leadership issues, poor employee performance, low-profit margins and market competition. This study sought to examine the effect of organizational culture on the performance of family-owned businesses in Imenti North Sub County. The research was informed by resource-based theory. With a target population of 1956 business owners, the study employed a descriptive research design and a stratified random sampling to a unit of analysis who were the owners of the business. The study adopted the Nassuma formula for the determination of a sample size of 320 respondents. A questionnaire was the main data collection tool which were administered by the researcher. Collected data was analyzed by use of SPSS and the results displayed in tables and figures, regression model was carried out to establish the relationship between the variables which helped in conclusions and recommendations. The organizational culture had a statistically significant positive correlation with business performance. The study recommended that organizational culture should be emphasized on in order to lead to improved business performance of the family businesses.

Keywords: *Organizational Culture, Resource-Based Theory, Employee Performance*

INTRODUCTION

Family-owned businesses may start as micro-enterprise and grow into small businesses, medium-sized and gradually to large businesses. Family-owned businesses play a crucial role in the economy through employment creation, income generation and also in accumulation of wealth. In the United States of America, family-owned businesses contribute to 90% of all the businesses in America. It is estimated that between 70% and 80% of the businesses in Kenya are owned by families. According to Institute for Family Businesses (IFFB), (2018), 60% of the employed Kenyans are employed in family-owned businesses. However, only 30% of Family-owned businesses survive to the second generation, 12% survive to the third generation and 3% to the fourth generation in the business's succession chain (Bizri, 2016).

Family-owned businesses face performance challenges in diverse ways. Most of the Family-owned businesses are unable to survive competition effectively and therefore lack competitive advantage among its competitors. Family-owned businesses also more time than not fail to satisfy customer demands on time. Other performance challenges of Family-owned businesses included poor employee performance leading to low profit margins or loss. Most of these businesses are unable to pay their employees on time leading to high employee turnover. Family-owned businesses have been also associated to poor performance in regard to inability to increase both physical businesses operation premises and also inability to increase its target market as well as its resources (Bannò & Sgobbi, 2016).

The performance problems of Family-owned businesses have high prevalence due to family related problems such as physical, financial and emotional problems in the day to day running of the businesses. The informal structure and culture in Family-owned businesses such as improper documentation and lack of laid-down policies is a reason for performance problems experienced in Family-owned businesses. Pressure from family members to hire family members into the businesses and who may be lacking the necessary qualification may be a reason for performance challenges of the Family-owned businesses (Agbim & Ph, 2018). In regard to sources of capital, family businesses are often faced with challenges of assessing capital for businesses growth due to different interest of family members and lack of clear policies and financial record keeping (Ofobruku & Nwakoby, 2016). Focusing on profit sharing, there lacks a proper way to evaluate the value of the Family-owned businesses. These further results into conflicts in sharing the proceeds from the businesses and therefore affecting the future performance of the businesses. Who should take charge of the businesses and the next generation to inherit the businesses has been a challenge in the performance of Family-owned businesses across the world (Ronoh, 2020).

Maloni et al., (2017) described performance of businesses as the ability of a businesses to meet its goals as well as ability to increase its wealth. Businesses performance is measured in terms of resource base, customer satisfaction, profits margins, stakeholders' value and employee turnover among other measures. These measures have been used to measure the performance of businesses owned by family members in diverse contexts. Family-owned businesses refers to involvement of family in running a businesses or family ownership of the businesses. Family-owned businesses may also refer to involving family in management roles of a businesses or through businesses succession (Liu et al., 2017). Family-owned businesses majorly fail or succeed based on the strategic leadership of the businesses. The overall say in all businesses matters by the business's owners, involvement of employees in decision making, ability of businesses owners to inspire trust as well as explaining to the employees their importance in achieving organizations' goals. Other strategic leadership aspects that have been associated with performance of family businesses include motivating employees towards a common goal, managers encouraging innovation and creativity in running different activities in the organization and businesses leaders challenging employees to perform better (Ezziane et al, 2013).

Good organizational culture will encourage employees to perform better and adhere to the set culture in an organization. Conducive working environment encourages full utilization of employees' capabilities and therefore better performance of an organization. Good relationships and a culture of good quality may in the long run improve the level of performance of an organization. In regard to corporate governance, adherence to the set of rules, practices, policies and guidelines that control the operations of an organization may result to higher performance levels of Family-owned businesses. This is because it discourages ultra-vires and unethical practices that may result to losses in an organization (Hiebl et al, 2013). In India, Homaidi et al, (2019) found out that family businesses faced leadership challenges that resulted to poor performance of the Family-owned businesses. The study indicated that the organizational culture of the family businesses was based on trust and therefore failure to carry out proper documentation which led to poor businesses performance.

In Indonesia, Sengke (2016) found out that the type of leadership affected the performance of family businesses. It was established that most of the Family-owned businesses were run on dictatorship and the successor of the businesses was determined through preferential treatment and not on merit of competence. The family biasness successor enjoyed full authority and freedom to run all the family businesses. It was concluded that good family relationships and participative leadership promoted the growth of the family businesses to a large extent.

In Zimbabwe, Denver (2018) indicated that family businesses were faced with leadership challenges such as lack of proper monitoring of employees who were family members, lack of proper measures to ensure the survival and succession of the businesses and poor decision making. These aspects resulted to reduced profitability of the Family-owned businesses and failure of most of the businesses to succeed to the next generation. In Nigeria, Palladan et al, (2016) established that Family-owned businesses faced diverse leadership and performance challenges. Lack of proper policies and programmes to control the family businesses resulted to low income for the businesses as well as low profitability of the businesses ventures owned by family members. Management experience of the Family-owned businesses was also attributable to the performance metrics of the businesses.

Ndemezo and Kayitana (2018) in Rwanda pointed out that family SMEs were competitive compared to non-family SMEs due to formulation of long-term policies and motivation of employees to bear the vision of the family businesses. The study further established that family businesses implemented cost saving strategies and this help such businesses to gain competitive advantage in the Rwanda market. M'Ithiria and Musyoki (2014) found out that governance structures in Family-owned micro and small businesses in Nairobi County affected the growth of the businesses. In this regard, the ability of the leadership structure to open room for faster decision and also provide important information affected the growth of businesses. Busolo et al, (2016) found out that balancing family responsibilities and businesses demands affected the level of performance of youth owed enterprises in Nairobi. The governance aspects such as monitoring of employees and financial management also affected the profitability of the businesses.

Waithira (2016) found out that type of leadership and strategic direction of Family-owned businesses affected the performance of survival of family businesses. In respect to this, strategic planning, directors' vision, potential of businesses successor, and the capability of the current leadership affected the performance of such leaders. This study was carried out in Imeni North Sub County and involved Family-owned business in Meru town in particular. Meru town is the headquarter of Meru County and many investors take advantage of the high population, good transport network, security, affordable housing and cheap labour to run a successful business in Imenti North Sub County. There are varying family-owned businesses in Imenti North Sub County and the study intends to assess the effect of leadership strategies that enables their survival.

Statement of the Problem

Family-owned businesses face performance challenges in diverse ways. Most of the Family-owned businesses are unable to survive competition effectively for they lack competitive advantage against non-family businesses. Most of family-owned businesses fail to satisfy customers' demands on time. Their employees lack required skills thus underperforming. This leads to low profit margins or losses. Such businesses are unable to pay their employees. This leads to high employee turnover. Family-owned businesses are unable to increase both physical businesses operation premises and also inability to increase its target market as well as its resources. On average, 30% of Family-owned businesses survive to the second generation, 12% survive to the third generation and 3% to the fourth generation in the business's succession chain (Bizri, 2016).

Between 70% to 80% of the businesses in Kenya are Family-owned businesses and 60% of the employed Kenyans work in family-owned businesses, failure to solve the performance problems facing Family-owned businesses in Kenya would result to economic challenges in the country and high poverty levels in families (Institute for Family Businesses, 2020). Strategic leadership aspects such as organizational culture, corporate governance, resources management and strategic direction may be key determinates of performance of Family-owned businesses. Poor strategic leadership such as failure to adhere to the set core values and beliefs in a business, poor governance strictures, poor resource management and unclear strategic direction of the businesses may lead to low profitability (Bannò & Sgobbi, 2016).

Some studies have been conducted in an attempt to find a solution for the different performance challenges of Family-owned businesses in diverse contexts. (Agbim & Ph, 2018) found out that family businesses faced leadership challenges that resulted to poor performance if the Family-owned businesses. Agbim and Ph (2018) established that Family-owned businesses in Nigeria faced diverse leadership and performance challenges. These studies were done in different contexts and therefore a contextual research gap to be filled by the current study. It is therefore on this background that the current study sought to assess the effect of organizational culture on performance of Family-owned businesses in Imenti North Sub County, Kenya.

Research Objective

The general objective of the study was to investigate the effect of organizational culture on the performance of family-owned businesses in Imenti North Sub County.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical literature review

Resource Based Theory

The Resource Based Theory also known as the Resource Based Advantage was conceptualized by Jay Barney in 1991 through publication of an article "Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage" (Emeagwal & Ogbonmwan, 2018). The theory places the availability of resources as a means of sustainable competitive advantage for the firms. The presence of resources enables the firm to create competitive advantage for the firm. The resources can either tangible or intangible resources for the firm. The tangible resources are those resources that can be touched including buildings and equipment while the intangible resources can't be touched including patents and rare skills (Hart & Dowell, 2010). The study utilized the resource-based theory for the purposes of the explaining the role of resources management on the performance of family-owned businesses. The presence of positive organizational culture and corporate governance can be considered as organizational resources for the firm which can be used to improve on the performance of Family-owned business in Imenti north Sub County, Kenya.

Empirical Literature

The business environment fashioned by the values, assumptions and ways of performing tasks in an organization has an influence on the performance. In the United Kingdom, Sadighi (2017) investigated the role of organizational culture on the performance of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the health sector. The study used structured questionnaires for data collection, the study findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between clan culture, adhocracy culture, hierarchy culture, market culture and performance of the SMEs selected for the study. Using regression analysis, the study also revealed that organizational culture significantly predicts the level of organizational performance. In Brazil, Larentis et al, (2018) identified market culture as a significant predictor of organizational performance. In Indonesian, a case study by Sengke (2016) on effect of organizational culture towards organizational performance, the study focused on entrepreneurial culture, consensual culture, bureaucratic culture and competitive culture. With adoption of causal research designed the study results indicated that the four organizational culture significantly affected the organizational performance.

Leithy (2017) carried out a study that sought to investigate the relationship between organizational culture and organizational performance of organizations in China. The study adopted descriptive research study and collected data by use of questionnaires. It was revealed that there was a positive relationship between the organizational culture and organizational performance of organizations sampled in the study. In a study that involved 80 banks in Pakistan, Latif (2016) sought to investigate the influence of organizational culture on performance of banks. A sample of 341 respondents was used in this study whose data collection was through the administration of questionnaires. The study found that there was a positive and significant relationship between collaborative culture and performance of commercial banks in Pakistan. However, these findings are not consistent with those by Shehu and Mahmood (2014) on determination of the effects of organizational culture on small and medium enterprises performance in Nigeria. The study findings established a negative relationship between organizational culture and performance of SMEs in Nigeria. Saad and Abbas (2018) concur with the finding by establishing that organizational culture aspect such as change management, and teamwork were positively related to performance of Arabian public sector firms.

In Kenya, a study by Kemunto (2017) on assessment of strategic leadership practices on organization performance of Tea factories in Kisii county, the study adopted a descriptive research design targeting a population of 795 permanent employees drawn from all the tea factories in Kisii county, the study results indicated that strategic leadership practices were statistically significant in explaining organization performance in tea factory in Kisii County.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The study targeted businesses owned by families within Imenti North Sub County. According to the Licensing Department at the County Government of Meru 2021, there are a mixed population of 1850 family businesses operating within Imenti North Sub County. This formed the unit of observation. From the 1956 family-owned businesses, the study targeted the business managers/owners. This implies that the target population of the study was the 1850 owners. The study utilized stratified random sampling to generate a study desired sample size. The sample size was 320 as suggested by Krejcie & Morgan (1970) in their sampling table. The study collected data through the use of closed-ended questionnaires.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSION

Response Rate

The study had a target population of 320 respondents drawn from the proprietors of the family-owned business in Imenti North Sub County in Meru County. The study thus issued 320 questionnaires to the respondents in which 252 questionnaires were returned. This made a response rate of 78.8% which is in line with Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) who notes that 50% of responses are acceptable for the study.

Reliability Test

To establish the reliability of the research instruments, the study used Cronbach's Alpha test of internal consistency. This test examined the degree in which the results obtained from a study using a particular data collection tool could be depended on to be accurate. The study used a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of at least 0.7 as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2013).

Organization Culture and Performance of Businesses

The extent in which the organizational culture affects the performance of business was examined using five indicators. The indicators of the organizational culture measured as latent variables were hierarchy culture, market culture, entrepreneurial culture, consensual culture and competitive culture. A five-point Likert scale with strongly agree (SA), Agree(A), Neutral (N) Disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) was used for the study. Both the frequency distributions, percentages and the chi-square result were presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Culture

	SD	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**	**Chi-Square**	
	Freq %	Freq %	Freq %	Freq %	Freq	$\chi 2$ %	P
Hierarchy Culture	9 3.6%	33 13.1%	51 20.2%	117 46.4%	52 16.7%	15.877	0.044
Market Culture	6 2.4%	24 9.5%	33 13.1%	153 60.7%	36 14.3%	5.125	0.057
Entrepreneurial Culture	15 6.0%	9 3.6%	30 11.9%	159 63.1%	39 15.5%	6.793	0.032
Consensual Culture	18 7.1%	12 4.8%	18 7.1%	144 57.1%	60 23.8%	7.324	0.027
Competitive Culture	12 4.8%	18 7.1%	36 14.3%	141 56.0%	45 17.9%	9.117	0.014

Finding in Table 1, 3.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the hierarchy culture affects business performance. A majority (46.4%) of the respondents agreed that hierarchical culture affect business performance, further, 16.7% of the respondents strongly agreed with the construct on hierarchical culture. The chi-square test of independence was used to examine on whether the hierarchical culture had a statistically significant association with the business performance. The study achieved chi-square results of 15.877 with a p value of 0.044. The chi square results thus indicated that the hierarchical culture had a statistically significant association with business performance at 5% level of significance since p value is less than 0.05.

The extent in which the market culture affects the business performance was examined. The study found that a cumulative percentage of 60.7% of the respondents agreed that the market culture had an effect on the business performance. This is compared to 2.4%, 9.5%, and 13.1% of the respondents who strongly disagreed, disagreed, and were neutral respectively, the results of this study in respect to the market culture are similar to those by Sadighi (2017) in the United Kingdom, investigated the role of organizational culture on the performance of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the health sector. The study had found that market culture had the highest influence on organizational performance. In line to this finding, Larentis, Simone, and Antonio (2017) indicated that market culture was a significant predictor of organizational performance in organizations in Brazil.

The extent in which the entrepreneurial culture influenced business performance was examined with 6.0%, 3.6%, 11.9%, 63.1%, and 15.5% of the respondents indicating that the respondents strongly disagreed, disagreed, Neutral, agreed and strongly agreed respectively with construct that Entrepreneurial Culture affect performance of business. In this context, the study achieved chi square value of 16.793 with a p value of 0.032. This indicated that the entrepreneurial culture had a statistically significant association with business performance at 5% level of significance. The results of the current study are similar to those in other empirical studies. Tubey, Rotich,and Kurgat (2015) found out that organizational culture among businesses owned by female in Nairobi County influenced the level of performance of an organization. In respect to this entrepreneurial culture, willingness to take businesses risks, emphasis on competitive actions, readiness to meet new challenges, procedural coordination of activities and having common interest towards the organizational goals influenced the level of performance of female owed enterprises.

The extent in which the consensual culture influenced business performance had a majority of the respondents 57.1% being in agreement that the measure influenced business performance. This is compared to 23.8% of the respondents who strongly agreed d that it affect the business performance. The study further used the chi square in examination of the whether the consensual culture had a statistically significant association with the business performance. The study achieved a chi square of 17.324 with a p value of 0.027. The results of the current study are similar to those of other studies. In Indonesian context, Sengke (2016) carried out a study that sought to investigate the influence of organizational culture on the performance of businesses. Sengke (2016) found that consensual culture had the greatest influence while entrepreneurial culture had the least influence and therefore the recommendation to encourage employees to be more innovative within their roles.

The effect of the competitive culture was examined. In this context, a majority (56.0%) of the respondents agreed that the competitive culture had an influence on the business performance. A further 17.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that the competitive culture had an effect on the business performance. The chi square test of independence was used to examine on whether competitive culture had statistically significant association with business performance. The study in this regard achieved chi square value of 19.117 with a p value of 0.014. This led to the conclusion that there was a statistically significant association between competitive culture and business performance aspects at 5% level of significance. The findings of the current study correlate with those other studies examining the same phenomenon. In Rwandan context, Ndemezo and Kayitana (2018), found out that family businesses were competitive compared to non-family SMEs due to formulation of long-term policies and motivation of employees to bear the vision of the family businesses. Ndemezo and Kayitana (2018) further established that family businesses implemented cost saving strategies and this help such businesses to gain competitive advantage in the Rwanda market.

Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis examines the relationship between variables while noting the direction and strength of the relationships. The results of the correlation analysis were presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

		Business performance
Organizational culture	Pearson Correlation	.639**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000
	N	252

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

The Pearson correlation coefficients were used in examining the correlation relationship between the individual independent variable and the dependent variable. The organizational culture had a positive correlation of 0.639 with business performance. The study further found that the observed relationship was statistically significant at 5% level of significance due to a p-value of less than 0.05.

Regression Analysis

The study used regression analysis to examine on whether the organizational culture affect the performance of family-owned businesses in Imenti North Sub County.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.915[a]	.837	.829	.14915

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Culture

The model summary results the correlation coefficient (R), and coefficient of determination (R Square) results which are explained in this research. The correlation coefficient examines the influence of the independent variable (organizational culture) cumulatively on business performance. The achieved correlational coefficient of 0.915 indicates that there is a positive correlation between the independent variable cumulatively and business performance. This was a high correlation between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The coefficient of determination examines on the variance in the dependent variable (business performance) that is attributed to the independent variable (organizational culture) together.

The study found an achieved an adjusted coefficient of determination of 0.829. This indicated that 82.9% of the variance in the business performance was attributed to the independent variable (organizational culture). This thus shows that there is a high influence of the independent variable of business performance of family businesses in Imenti North sub-county. The results thus further found that 17.1% of the variance in the business performance was as a result of other factors that are not in the regression model.

The study further sought to examine on whether the regression model is a good fit for the data. This was undertaken using the F-test of one-way ANOVA.

Table 4: ANOVA

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	13.254	1	13.254	59.703	.000[b]
	Residual	18.204	82	0.222		
	Total	31.458	83			

a. Dependent Variable: organizational performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Culture

The F test of one-way ANOVA was being used to check on whether the model was good fit for data at 5% level of significance with a decision rule that the model is considered good fit for data if the achieved p value is less than 0.05. The achieved results of ANOVA results were F (1, 82) = 59.703 and a p-value of 0.000. This led to the acceptance that the regression model was a good fit for data since p (F>59.703) =0.000 < 0.05. The conclusion that the regression model was good fit for data led to the examination of specific regression coefficients.

Table 5: Coefficients

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.386	.172		2.243	.028
	Organizational Culture	.260	.034	.384	7.724	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Business Performance

The regression coefficient was examined to understand the influence of a unit increase in the dependent variable as a result of the unit change in the independent variable. The achieved relationship was further examined on whether it would hold in the population (statistical significance) at 5% level of significance. With respect to the role of organizational culture on business performance, the achieved regression coefficient was 0.260 with t-test statistic value of 7.724 and a p value of 0.000. This indicated that a unit increase in organizational culture would lead to 0.260 increases in business performance with the other variables kept constant. These results were found statistically significant since p value was 0.000 and was less than the 0.05 level of significance.

Conclusion

The study found that organizational culture attributed to a huge variance of business performance. The organizational culture had a statistically significant positive correlation with business performance. In respect to the role of organizational culture on business performance, the achieved regression coefficient indicates that a unit increase in organizational culture would lead to 0.260 increase in business performance with the other variables kept constant. The results were statistically significant at 5% level of significance leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis that organizational culture had no significant influence on the performance of family-owned businesses in Imenti North Sub County, Kenya. The alternative hypothesis that there was a statistically significant influence of organizational culture on the performance of the family-owned businesses in Imenti North Sub County was accepted.

Recommendations

The study recommended that the organizational culture should be emphasized and practiced within family businesses. This was informed by the aspect being a significant predictor of the organizational performance of family-owned businesses. There is need to develop and promote a family business culture that values the unique strengths and advantages of family ownership and involvement. While the study examined the influence of the organizational culture on the organizational performance of family businesses in Imenti North Sub County, the study recommends the expansion of that study to other regions as the results in this study could not be generalized to other regions.

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