

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN SAFARICOM COMPANY (K) LIMITED

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Abstract: In recent decades, corporate social responsibility (CSR) has drawn much research interests. While some researches have looked into how CSR initiatives affect business competitive advantage (CA), the results have been conflicting thus far. Moreover, the role of benchmarking, diversity support ratio, and satisfaction ratio on the relationship between CSR and CA has not been specifically and explicitly studied. Therefore, the aim of this study was to investigate how benchmarking, diversity support and satisfaction ratios affect the relationship between CSR and CA. The study adopted a descriptive design with a target population of 250 employees, comprising of managers, cluster managers and departmental heads from Safaricom Company Limited. The study employed the use of a questionnaire with a Likert type questions to gather primary data from the respondents. The questionnaires were administered through a drop and pick method. A pilot test was conducted prior to the main study, to test the reliability and validity of the research instrument and the results used to modify the questions to remove ambiguity, lack of clarity and test reliability. Data collected from the study was thereafter analyzed using statistical package for social sciences software and presented in tables, graphs and charts. Findings from the study showed that benchmarking had a statistical significant effect on competitive advantage of Safaricom Company, hence a unit increase in benchmarking would considerable lead to an increase in competitive advantage by 0.094 units. Consequently, the study also found that diversity supportive ratio had a statistical significant effect on competitive advantage of Safaricom. This therefore meant that a unit increase in diversity support ratio, would lead to an improvement of competitive advantage of Safaricom Company by 0.062 units. There was also a statistical significant effect of satisfaction ratio on competitive advantage of Safaricom Company, indicating that with a unit increase in satisfaction ratio, there would be a significant decrease in competitive advantage of Safaricom Company by 0.137 units. The study recommended that companies should embrace benchmarking because it provides platform through which companies can make improvements in their performance by learning from their competitors and other industry players. The study also found a need for companies to emphasize on employee diversity to improve on the overall company image on the market and to able to attract more customers to the firm's product and services. Finally, the study recommended that companies in general should strive to build their corporate reputation through corporate initiatives to attract best pool of talents that will steer the company towards achieving a competitive edge among other rivals in the industry. The study suggests that further researches may be performed on the sustainability of corporate responsibility due to its resource intensive nature, to enable companies cushion themselves from this without eroding on their gains

Keywords: benchmarking, diversity support ratio, satisfaction ratio, competitive advantage.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Globalization and major economic revolution across the world has tremendously led to increased competition among businesses around the world. Today is not business as usual. Organizations have to bring out the best to maintain their market and to remain viable in the market place, hence the need to develop strategies that can make them remain competitive

in the market (Cegliński, 2016). Because of the current volatile business environment, corporate activity is extremely dangerous. Any company that wishes to compete effectively on the market must apply a plan to acquire a competitive edge, whether consciously or unconsciously. Simply expressed, it refers to being at least one step ahead of the competition (Mwangangi, 2018). Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is seen as a component of establishing competitive advantage in the current setting of increased global competition (Maduro et al., 2016). The idea becomes a strength for the company since, according to Burianová and Paulk (2014), it's not just the pricing of goods or services that sets one company apart from its rivals, but also the conditions under which they are produced. According to Chih et al. (2008), the application of CSR principles primarily improves relationships with clients, local communities, business partners, and/or local authorities. This practice strengthens a company's variety and sets it apart from its rivals (Gupta et al., 2013). The idea of CSR is viewed as a strategy for establishing a competitive edge in the global economy, where customers, employees, and investors place a high value on many variables other than financial worth. Cultivating corporate social responsibility in its own policies and practices is one way for a company to increase public trust in its business actions.

It is important to note that social consciousness is evolving, which leads to changes in people's perceptions of business activities. Stakeholders, notably clients and government agencies, have a greater or lesser degree of official control over businesses. Companies do not operate in isolation from the communities in which they are located, as Waweru, P. K., & Omwenga, J. (2015), correctly observed. Porter and Kramer (2011) further state that the ability of businesses to compete is determined by the environment in their areas of operation. This has a greater influence on their success and continuity. Omwenga, J. Q., Mukulu, E., & Kanali, C. (2013). opines that business organizations always strive to achieve effectiveness and productivity to make them stand out among their rivals. For these businesses to achieve this, the operational environment which is customer oriented and market oriented, must be well understood in order to provide the best opportunities for the customers. To survive in such environment businesses must be flexible, adaptable and above all strive to offer superior services/products. An organization is required to enhance its operations in terms of environmental preservation and public outreach in addition to its legal obligations by the establishment of the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR). By working with employees and their families, the local community, and the general public to improve quality of life in ways that would be beneficial for business and overall development, discretionary business practices and the use of resources (Kotler & Lee, 2005) are necessary to improve social welfare (Irabora, 2019).

Companies are under pressure to give consumers services and products with enticing values, distinctiveness, and novelty as a result of increased business competitiveness. One such issue is environmental management where the company seeks to improve its overall reputation and performance (Kireru, Ombui, & Omwenga, 2016). As a concept, corporate social responsibility allows organizations to take care of their operational environment in order to build and improve not only their reputation and image but also to gain confidence of their customers. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a concept in which businesses commit to going above and beyond their legal requirements to improve their environmental and social performance. It is a commitment to improve a community's well-being through discretionary business practices and corporate contributions (Charkraborty, 2010). CSR is a company's commitment to contribute to long-term economic development by collaborating with employees, their families, the local community, and society at large to improve quality of life in ways that are both profitable and beneficial to the company (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). CSR though a long-term development strategy, benefits all stakeholders in terms of economic, social, and environmental benefits. Alternately, Dahlsrud (2014) defines social responsibility as obligations to pursue those policies, to make decisions or to follow those lines of actions which are desirable in terms of objectives and values of society.

Organizations are constantly looking for new methods to expand their business and address new difficulties as they occur. These businesses are seeking to manage numerous factors at the same time, including employee motivation, productivity, profit growth, corporate ethics, and leadership, to mention a few. Every action performed (or not taken), every policy and practice put in place, and every company goal should be evaluated in terms of how it affects diverse stakeholders. Executives, managers, shareholders, employees, and consumers' spring to mind as those who will be touched by organizational decisions and maneuvers, but the local community and society at large are frequently left out of the mix of stakeholders (Mwangangi, 2018).

1.2 Statement of the problem

The understanding the influence of consumer perceptions of firms' strategic CSR dimensions on firms' outcomes in diverse contexts is important (Farooq et al., 2019). This accounts for continued research interest in CSR actions among researchers and practitioners (Raza et al., 2020). CSR is an essential component of any corporate entity that aims at building and

maintaining a positive public image as a means of gaining a competitive advantage while also giving back to society (Hohnen, 2011). CSR has gained much attention by several organizations. Most of these organizations practice this as a form of conserving their operational environment while at same time providing favorable services to their customers, all in the name of creating an image on the customer's end about their products. Companies continue to engage themselves in CSR activities like financial scholarship programmes, improving employee welfare, supporting charities, community development and environment conservation through clean up exercises. Porter and Kramer (2015) add that as a marketing strategy, firms must recognize public expectations and constantly strive to improve their image as socially responsible institutions by finding and contributing answers to important socio-economic and environmental challenges and other connected issues.

Though many studies have been done on CSR for instance Abubakar, Belwal and Mohammed (2022), carried a study on impact of CSR on organizational performance through green behavior strategies and found a positive relationship with performance. Mwangangi (2018) on effect of CSR on performance of manufacturing firms in Kenya, focused on the effect of firm's sensitivity on multiple stakeholders. Opilo, Mulili and Kimani (2018) on the study of CSR and competitive advantage from employees of Safaricom, looked at corporate social responsibility initiatives (customer subscriptions, brand image and profit performance). Finally, Muhumed (2018) carried a study on CSR strategies and competitive advantage of commercial banks in Kenya. The study looked at influence of educational programs, staff welfare programs, environmental and enterprise development programs on the gains made by Equity Bank. According to Kudoyi (2013), corporate strategy was a tactic used by Kenyan commercial banks to recruit and keep workers. The research also showed that most employees felt at ease working for organizations that value social responsibility.

Though it is evident that so many studies have been done on CSR, it is also evident there is no evidence of a link between CSR and competitive advantage of safaricom, especially addressing the influence of benchmarking, diversity supportive ratio and satisfaction ratio on competitive advantage. Because recorded proof is of less relevance, the researcher's focus is on determining the influence of CSR on the competitive advantage of Safaricom, as well as determining whether this institution recognizes any benefit from the expenditure incurred while performing CSR activities.

1.3 Objectives of the study

This study was guided by the following objectives

1.3.1 General objective of the study

The general objective of the study was to examine the influence of corporate social responsibility on competitive advantage in Safaricom Company Limited.

1.3.2 Specific objectives of the study

- i. To determine the influence of benchmarking on competitive advantage in Safaricom Company Limited.
- ii. To establish the influence of diversity supportive ratio on competitive advantage in Safaricom Company Limited.
- iii. To assess the influence of satisfaction ratio on competitive advantage in Safaricom Company Limited.

1.4 Research Questions of the study

- i. What is the influence of benchmarking on competitive advantage in Safaricom Company Limited?
- ii. What is the influence of diversity supportive ratio on competitive advantage in Safaricom Company Limited?
- iii. What is the influence of satisfaction ratio on competitive advantage in Safaricom Company Limited?

1.5 Justification for the Study

The study is important in that it will help practitioners and students of strategic management understand the influence of corporate social responsibility on competitive advantage in Kenyan telecommunication industry. The study's main conclusions will be presented in forums like strategic Manager Seminars, organizations, and institutions to educate on corporate social responsibility on competitive advantage and add to the body of knowledge in strategic management.

The study will also serve as a manual for the practitioners (managers) on how to strategically integrate corporate social responsibility to further the long-term objectives of the company. The report will be useful to government agencies and

consultants in the field that are working to advance the telecommunication industry. Additionally, it will assist Kenyan telecommunication companies in advancing societal environment in which they operate in order to contribute to their wellbeing while at the same time seeking to increase their market share in the form of new customers.

1.6 Scope of the study

The purpose of this research was to examine the influence of corporate social responsibility (CSR) on the competitive advantage of Safaricom Company (K) Limited. The study was purposely examined CSR of Safaricom and how they influence competitive advantage of the company in the telecommunication industry. The study was specifically looked at benchmarking, diversity and satisfaction ratios in relation to competitive advantage of the company. Safaricom Company has been chosen for this study because of its vibrant and tremendous performance that it has maintained over the years in the telecommunication industry in Kenya compared to other players in the industry. This puts to an interest on how the company has positioned itself in the market for long and which draws the attention of the researcher to unearth. The study will target senior and management level employees drawn from the company headquarters in Westlands, Kenya. These employees will be form the target population of the study because they are considered to have an understanding of the operations of the company besides having knowledge on the company CSR programmes and other company strategies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Stakeholder Theory

On the other hand, the stakeholder approach contends that a firm has obligations to more parties than just its owners. Any individual or group that can influence or be affected by a company's decisions is referred to as a stakeholder. Employees, clients, suppliers, creditors, even the general public and rival businesses are all included (Freeman, 1984). Stakeholder theory's original proponent, Edward Freeman, acknowledged it as a crucial component of corporate social responsibility (CSR), a notion that acknowledges the obligations that organizations have in the modern world, whether they be financial, legal, moral, or even charitable. Some of the biggest firms in the world today assert that CSR is at the core of their company strategy. While there are many instances of businesses that truly have a "conscience," many others use CSR as a powerful PR tool to boost their brand and image but ultimately fall short of following through on their promises.

The literature on corporate social responsibility places a strong emphasis on the value of conceptual approaches to the alignment of competitive advantages. The CSR concept will relate to the features of the Corporate Social Responsibility supplied to the target market by borrowing from the private or corporate view of CSR (Freeman, 1984). There is consensus among academics that CSR must be included into an organization's business strategy and organizational culture in order to have a beneficial impact on organizational outcomes (Jonker & De Witte, 2006; Collier & Esteban, 2007; Carlisle & Faulkner, 2004). Participation in CSR can take many different forms, from launching initiatives to boost a company's reputation and short-term revenue to a more strategic and value-focused strategy that gradually permeates organizational culture. While taking into consideration embedded CSR culture, the relationship between CSR and favorable outcomes has not been scientifically established. In this study, the stakeholder theory is important because it directs the research in analyzing the kinds of CSR that telecommunication companies should engage in and the context of the activities for each group of stakeholders as provided by the stakeholder matrix (Wasilwa, & Omwenga, 2016). The theory is crucial in showing how the fulfillment of the CSR obligations to all stakeholders results in competitive advantage, specifically the environmental responsibility and social responsibility, given that the study focused on the influence of CSR on competitive advantage, employee productivity, and brand image.

2.1.2 Michael Porter Theory of Competitive Advantage

Lower cost or cost leadership, focus, and distinctiveness are the three categories of competitive advantage that Michael Porter identified that an organization might obtain in comparison to its competitors. This advantage results from factors like a stronger market position, higher talents, or more resources that enable a business to outperform its rivals. According to Porter, strategic management should focus on creating and maintaining a competitive edge (Warf & Stutz, 2007). Competitive advantage can come from a variety of sources, and it demonstrates how all advantages can be linked to particular activities and the relationships among those activities, as well as relationships with supplier activities and consumer activities (Porter, 1985). One of the sources a company can utilize to strategically position itself is internal organizational variables that are linked with corporate social responsibility.

Competitive advantage can come from a variety of sources, and it demonstrates how all advantages can be linked to particular activities and the relationships among those activities, as well as relationships with supplier activities and consumer activities (Porter, 1985). Corporate social responsibility-aligned internal organizational elements are some of the resources a company can employ to strategically position itself in the face of industry competition. This hypothesis serves as the foundation for the competitive advantage variable.

According to Porter, who was referenced in Chew and Gottschalk (2013), resources are only useful when employed strategically to enable businesses to carry out tasks that provide them an edge in specific markets. Similar to this, Bridoux (2004) contends that action on the product market causes a number of organizational skills to emerge, develop, or degrade. Thus, Porter offers a framework for analyzing an industry's attractiveness that takes into account the group of companies who are producing almost identical items. Porter names five fundamental competitive dynamics that are perceived as threats to the firm's profits: threat of new entrants, threat of substitutes, bargaining power of buyers and suppliers, and competition between current competitors. The combined effect of these five forces, along with an industry's fundamental structure, affects the level of industry rivalry and the profitability of individual enterprises. In order to successfully deal with the five competitive factors, Porter defines competitive strategy as using offensive and defensive measures. Porter's approach focuses on a company's position inside a specific industry structure, but in the business world of the 1990s, industry structures are anything from stable and are going through significant changes (Bridoux, 2004).

2.2 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework (CF) is a research tool that assists a researcher in creating awareness and an understanding of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables of the study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). It can also be described as an analytical tool with several variations and contexts used to make conceptual distinctions and organize ideas (Shields & rangarjan, 2013). A conceptual framework shows the way ideas are organized to achieve a research purpose. For this study, the CF will assist the researcher to draw the relationship between CSR and competitive advantage in Safaricom Plc. as presented in the diagram below

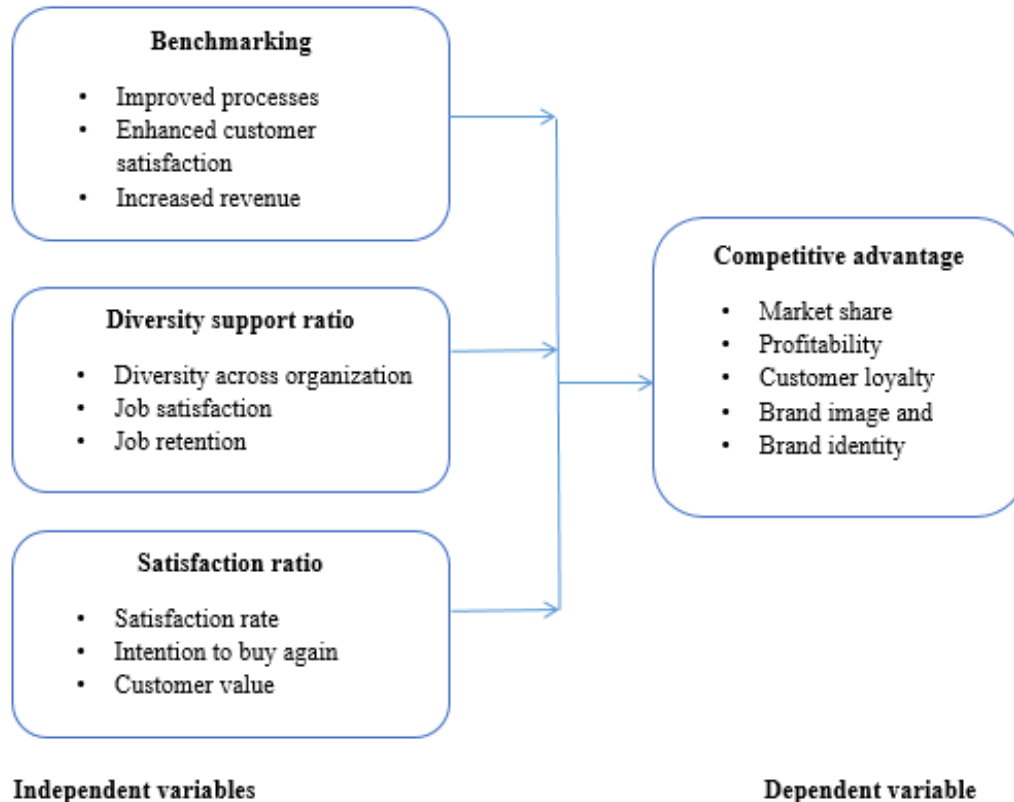


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

Source: Author 2022

2.3 Empirical review

Al-Shuaibi (2016) examined the relationship between CSR and performance through an empirical study, where it was proposed that CSR might help a company improve performance by boosting both productivity and innovation. CSR also lowers the business's exposure to risk. Murila's (2013) did a study on corporate social responsibility in East African Portland Cement Company Limited. The study discovered that by improving the firm's efficiency and raising the value of its market, corporate social responsibility may be used as a base for creating a competitive advantage. The study also discovered that strategically utilizing corporate social responsibility gave the business more options for formulating strategy and gaining a competitive advantage.

Onlaor and Rotchana Kitumnuai (2010) investigated how to increase client loyalty toward the CSR efforts of Thai mobile service providers. The study's survey of 400 mobile consumers yielded the findings, which revealed that there are four components of corporate social responsibility: economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic. Customer happiness and loyalty were most strongly impacted by the ethical factor. Moreover, a study done by Adebesei and Taiwo (2014) on developing a successful strategy for competitive performance through corporate social responsibility with a focus on MTN Nigeria, aimed at evaluating whether a corporation may use corporate social responsibility as a tactical instrument for competitive success, with special reference to MTN Limited, a dominant Nigerian telecom company. The results showed that effective societal-focused corporate social responsibility, ethical business practices, and economic empowerment of the host community all had a substantial impact on the mobile service provider's organizational performance.

Nyoro (2015) also sought to establish how CSR affects performance of mobile service providers in Kenya, focusing on Safaricom Plc. The study main objectives were to investigate the extent to which CSR was practiced as a competitive strategy by Safaricom Kenya and its effect on Safaricom's performance. The study used descriptive approach targeting 155 respondents that were drawn from the company management. The study revealed that CSR played a key role in the company's customer acquisition and retention, enhancement of brand reputation and increased usage of the company's products and services across the Kenyan market.

Kubai and Waiganjo (2010) focused on Equity Bank's wings to fly initiative when examining the connection between strategic corporate social responsibility and competitive advantage of commercial banks in Kenya. The study found that CSR has been a significant factor in shaping positive customer impressions, particularly among the beneficiaries, who showed a strong capacity to attach to the bank both now and in the future. The promotion of the Equity Bank brand owing to education and leadership development has attracted customers because they believe the bank is responsive to community concerns, giving it a competitive edge over its competitors.

Yang (2022) on corporate philanthropy and employee wellbeing, examined the impact of different types of corporate philanthropy and how they contribute to employee wellbeing. The study was based on a panel dataset of listed companies in Taiwan, with an empirical analysis obtained by using a panel data model to show that engagement and charitable donations are irrelevant to employee wage packages. The study results showed that dividing donation expenditures into donations to firm-related foundations have no influence on employee wage packages. By contrast, irregular and unscheduled donations, namely, donations to unrelated recipients, have a negative association with employee wage packages. The results remain the same using propensity score matching (PSM) and system generalized method of moments to conduct robustness checks. The first-stage PSM estimations on the determinants of corporate philanthropy indicate that firm characteristics such as firm size, firm age, earning performance, and stakeholders are factors influencing charitable donations.

Nyuur and Ofori (2019) on their study of corporate social responsibility and competitive advantage, examined the moderating role of export orientation, firm strategy, and structure on the association between CSR and CA. The study used a sample of 179 respondents that were picked organizations across five sectors in a developing country context of Ghana and realized a positive effect between CSR and CA. The study established a significant complimentary effect of export orientation and organizational structure as significant resources and capabilities on the relationship between CSR and CA, the study made a significant contribution to the resource-based view (RBV) scholarship. However, there was no proof that corporate strategy or size had any moderating influence on the CSR-CA link. These findings add to the body of knowledge on CSR and strategy while being informative and significant.

2.4 Critique of existing literature

Corporate social responsibility was conceptualized by Adeleke (2014) as a composite variable comprising the dependent sub-variables of ethics, human rights, and employee rights. According to the study, there is a strong correlation between CSR and customer satisfaction. The analysis employed Pearson's correlation, which only provided the direction of the

association between the variables without mentioning the magnitude of the influence between the studied variable. . Focus was placed on morality, human rights, and employee rights, all of which are constitutional and a prerogative of every organization. However, achieving competitive advantage requires orchestrating benchmarking, diversity support, and satisfaction ratios in addition to constitutional requirements. Further research has focused on the link between corporate social responsibility and customer satisfaction, while the current study is more concerned with how CSR affects an organization's competitive advantage.

Al-Bdour and Altarawneh (2012) examined the effect of internal Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities on Employee Engagement. In particular, the study looked at how five internal CSR practices—training and education, human rights, health and safety, work-life balance, and workplace diversity—affected employees' engagement in their jobs and in their organizations. Job Engagement (JE) and Organizational Engagement were the two dimensions of this engagement (OE). The use of strategically significant and practical resources, such as the human resource, is necessary to gain a competitive edge (Raduan, Jegak, Haslinda & Alimin, 2009). This explains why this study concentrated on the antecedents of employee engagement as a strategy of gaining a competitive advantage. However, it might be argued that an organization's strategic resources for gaining its competitive advantage are not solely human resources, but rather a combination of resources that enable it to perform better than its rivals.

In their study, Mei and Seng (2015) found that the adoption of internal CSR practices has a favorable link with autonomy, inventiveness, and proactiveness. By emphasizing the adoption of internal CSR practices in smaller organizations and the root of entrepreneurial attitude, this study added to the body of knowledge about CSR. It does, however, have certain drawbacks, the primary ones being the research design and the employee sample that was chosen at random. Only professionals, scientists, and technological activity professional service industry workers were chosen as survey respondents. Studies that go into further detail about the variables would therefore be beneficial, especially when internal CSR procedures differ by industry and nation.

Marakova, Wolak-Tuzimek and TOckova (2021) conducted a study on corporate social responsibility as a source of competitive advantage in large enterprises in Poland. The study aimed at identifying the key sources of competitive advantage of large enterprises and the hypothesis based on 253 large enterprises operating in Poland by means of exploratory factor analysis to discover the structure of their interrelationships. The procedure enabled the selection of the factors with the greatest statistical shares in explaining variability. The application of an exploratory factor analysis enabled the authors to construct an original factor model of sources of enterprise competitive advantage, with three factors identified: marketing, innovation activity and corporate social responsibility. The results indicated that marketing activities, innovation activities and the application of corporate social responsibility were the key sources of competitive advantage in large enterprises operating in the market. A look at the study points to a skewed population of interest that focused only on manufacturing enterprises, at the same time the study looked at only marketing activities, innovation activities and the application of CSR.

2.5 Research gap

The majority of CSR research has concentrated on how CSR implementation—or lack thereof—affects financial performance (Moskola, 2016; Galant & Cadez, 2017). Furthermore, Ndinda, Namusonge, and Kihoro (2015) argue that as much as studies have been carried out in the context of developed countries, these may not be generalized to developing countries because they have a completely different sociopolitical environment, with different political regimes, legal systems, and cultural influences (Tilt, 2016). The researches cited above show major gaps in the results of CSR practice and its impact on financial performance. This is a dispatch of the present study's competitive advantage focus. The study is primarily focused on how CSR may be strategically used to an organization's competitive advantage.

Existing research demonstrates that depending on the industry Yuen and Lim (2016); Batool, Butt, and Niazi, (2016) or societal culture and national cultures Gualtieri and Topi,(2016) in which they are embedded, people and companies are likely to have different expectations and attitudes about CSR. Moreover, the majority of the studies were carried out outside of Kenya and particularly outside of the African environment. In order to fill this contextual gap, this study will examine CSR and its influence on organizational competitive advantage in Safaricom. This is justified by the fact that organizational issues in other nations cannot be understood and explained using distinct cultural orientations. Husted and Allen (2006) assert that businesses don't always manage CSR strategically. Instead, the institutional isomorphism that frequently exerts considerable pressure on CSR management weakens the strategic reasoning (Mugesani, 2018). This necessitates that the firms differentiate themselves by creating distinctive internal CSR initiatives that would provide them an advantage over their rivals and which their rivals would not be able to emulate (Wanjohi, & Omwenga, 2017)..

An agenda for further theoretical and empirical research on CSR was suggested in a study by McWilliams, Siegel, and Wright (2005) that was cited by Velte and Stawinoga (2017). Only a small number of academic studies have examined the connection between CSR and competitive advantage but sometimes overlooked organizational processes, customer satisfaction, diversity support of employees and customer's satisfaction score despite the fact that research on CSR has spanned several decades and numerous sectors (Mei & Seng, 2015). Therefore, by examining the influence of corporate social responsibility on organizational competitive advantage in Safaricom PLC, this study covers the theoretical, empirical, and contextual gaps currently present

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a cross sectional research design. According to Mugenda (2003) descriptive design aims at collecting data without manipulating the research. The cross sectional research design method has a favorable impact on the study because it allows for the extraction of extensive data from the respondents. The design also permits the researcher gauge how people feel about certain events, procedures, and people in general (Welman & Kruger, 2001).

3.2 Target Population

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), population is a group of individuals, objects or items with similar desirable characteristic that suits the intention of the study. The target population for this study comprised all the 250 employees drawn from top management, middle management and departmental heads of Safaricom Plc. headquarters in Westlands, Nairobi. (Safaricom Plc. Human resource department, 2021).

Table 3.1 Population Distribution

Position	Number of employees	Percentage (%)
Top Management	72	28.8
Middle level management	168	67.2
Departmental heads	10	4.0
Total	250	100%

Source: Safaricom Plc. Human Resource Department (2021)

3.3 Sample Size

A sample is a set of entities drawn from a population with an aim of estimating characteristics of the population (Yates, Daniel, Moore and Starnes, 2008). The sample size for this study therefore were 72 respondents whom were drawn from the target population. Sample size was determined by Yamane's formula (1967). Thus for this population, the following formula was used to calculate the sample size:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n = Sample size

N = Targeted population

e = Level of precision or confidence interval i.e. 10%

$$n = \frac{250}{1 + 250(0.1)^2}$$

$$n = 72$$

= 72 respondents.

Table 3.2 Sample Distribution

Position	Population (respondents)	Percentage (%) of total	Sample size
Top Management	72	22.2%	16
Middle management	168	72.2%	52
Departmental heads	10	5.6%	4
Total	250	100%	72

Source: Author 2022

3.4 Sampling Technique

Sampling technique according to Mugenda (2008) is the process of selecting a number of individuals for study from a larger group in such a way that the individuals are representative of the larger group. Sampling procedure provides a valid alternative to a census where, it is impractical to survey the whole population, due to budget constraints, time constraints and when the results of the study are quickly needed (Kumar, 2010). This study adopted stratified sampling technique where the respondents were grouped into different strata according to the management levels and then simple random sampling used to select the respondents from each stratum to form the sample for the study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Stratified sampling is used where the population is heterogeneous in nature and therefore to obtain homogeneity, the researcher is bound to classify the population into subgroups with common characteristics (Mugenda, 2003)

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instrument that used in this study was a well set, semi structured questionnaire which permitted the researcher to obtain only relevant information destined for the study. The researcher used Likert type questions in the questionnaire that allowed the respondents to limit their responses on the range provided. The questionnaire was important for this case since it allowed the researcher to reach a huge number of people for a lower cost and in a shorter period of time. This is in agreement with Kothari (2005), who claims that a questionnaire may capture a big amount of data in a short period of time.

3.6 Pilot test

A pilot test was carried out by the researcher to check the accuracy and dependability of the research tool. A pilot study was conducted before the main data gathering activity on one telecommunication company chosen at random, where questionnaires were issued to cluster managers in the regions served by the company. A pilot study was conducted with 1% of the respondents, as per the general rule (Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). These respondents were barred from taking part in the main study. The pilot study involved 7 respondents which translated to 10% of the sample size of the study. Seven questionnaires were therefore distributed using the drop and pick method and respondents allowed time respond upon which they were picked for analysis. The pilot study results were used to improve the tool and corrections made on the final instrument in light of observations relating to individual item or variables. The pilot study was used to review the instruments for ambiguity, lack of clarity and to test the reliability status of the instrument (Muo, & Omwenga, 2018). The pilot results were presented in chapter four.

3.7 Data Analysis

The data analysis involved both quantitative and qualitative data that were collected from the respondents. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics that is frequency distributions, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The analysis attempted to explain the reasoning behind the independent variables affecting the dependent variables in the study. In a bid to elaborately and succinctly achieve the set objectives, the research considered the use of quantitative data to describe, explain and predict the relationship between variables by looking at the earlier CSR programmes implemented, and competitive advantages the company has achieved by applying statistical measures such as frequencies, means and standard deviations (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005).

Qualitative data was analyzed by applying comparisons, abstraction and categorization (Saunders et al, 2003). These two approaches provided an extensive analysis of the data obtained to draw clear inferences. Data analysis was aided by SPSS version 23 software which is the most current version in the market to generate quantitative reports. Qualitative data from

questionnaires were summarized by content analysis and sort into themes, categories and patterns. The results obtained were then presented using tables, pie-charts and graphs.

The multiple linear regressions models were also used to establish the degree and the extent of the relationship between the independent variables of the study and the dependent variable. The multiple regressions equation below was used in establishing the relationship;

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \epsilon$$

Where:

Y – Competitive Advantage

A – Constant

B_i–The Coefficient Of X_i (I=1, 2, 3)

X₁ – Coefficient Of Benchmarking.

X₂– Coefficient Of Diversity Supportive Ratio

X₃– Satisfaction Ratio

E – Error Term

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Response Rate

The researcher used a total of 72 questionnaires which were administered to the respondents. Out of this number, 54 questionnaires were collected fully filled that translated to 75% response rate as shown in Figure 4.1 below. However, 18 questionnaires representing 25% were not returned by the respondents. The researcher observed that the response rate was good and adequate for analysis as it fell between the recommended threshold. Kothari (2005) notes that the recommended response rates to verify consistency of measurements required for analysis should be above 60%, which the study met. On the other hand, Saunders, et al. (2003) suggest that a 30 to 50% response rate is adequate for making statistical generalizations. While Mugenda (2003) asserts that a response rate of 50% is enough, 60% and above is good, and over 70% is very good. As a result, the 75% response rate this study received was excellent to further data analysis.

4.2 Reliability Results

The dependent variable and the three independent variables' Cronbach's alpha reliability test findings were reported in this section. The competitive advantage had a Cronbach's Alpha value 0.654, Benchmarking had 0.786, while diversity supportive ratio had 0.720 and Satisfaction ratio had 0.702. All factor categories' Cronbach's alpha values were discovered to be more than 0.600 which is considered sufficient evidence of internal consistency. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), Cronbach's alpha values above 0.50 are considered acceptable, those above 0.70 are considered good, and those above 0.90 are considered exceptional.

Table 4.1: Reliability Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Status	Number of constructs
Competitive Advantage	0.654	Acceptable	7
Benchmarking	0.786	Good	7
Diversity ratio	0.720	Good	6
Satisfaction ratio	0.702	Good	4

Source; Research data (2022)

4.3 Descriptive analysis of study variables

4.3.1 Benchmarking

The aim of this variable was to investigate the influence of benchmarking on competitive advantage in Safaricom Plc. Specially, this variable investigated whether the company's CSR activities contributed to improved processes, enhanced

customer satisfaction and increase in revenue of the company supported achievement of competitive advantage of the company. 54 responses were received from the employees of the Safaricom Plc, who were directly involved in implementing and evaluating of CSR initiatives of the company. The respondents were required to rate their opinion through a scale of 1-5, where; (1) Strongly Disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Not sure; (4) Agree and (5) Strongly Agree. Their responses were represented in table 4.2

Table 4.2: Influence of Benchmarking on Competitive Advantage

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	STD DEV.
Corporate social responsibility has made our organization improve on its performance processes as a result of continuous customer needs preference in the market	8.2	70.4	4.1	16.3	1.0	2.32	.880
CSR has enabled our company to achieve tremendous customer satisfaction	32.7	61.2	1.0	5.10	0.0	1.79	.707
Benchmarking assists in assessing strengths and weaknesses in order to improve services provision among our customers	38.8	53.1	1.0	6.1	1.0	1.78	.831
Adoption of new approaches and strategies has greatly led to increased revenue performance.	23.5	74.5	2.0	0.0	0.0	1.81	.531
Our company embraces performance improvement to position itself within the market	23.8	74.2	2.0	0.0	0.0	1.96	.731
Benchmarking provides sound and effective approaches to product improvements that enhances customer satisfaction	18.3	65.8	3.4	6.7	3.8	1.85	.782
Our CSR initiatives are tailored to offer customer happiness and loyalty towards our products and services	24.3	72.6	0.0	3.1	0.0	1.92	.604

4.3.2 Diversity Supportive Ratio

The study sought to establish from the respondents whether diversity supportive ratio influence competitive advantage of Safaricom company. The respondents were required to rate their opinion on a likert scale of 1-5, where 1=strongly agreed, 2=agree, 3=neutral, 4=disagreed, and 5=strongly disagreed. The results were presented in Table 4.3 below:

Table 4.3 influence of diversity supportive ratio

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std Dev.
The company offers satisfactory human resource benefits that breaks the jinx of employee turnover.	14.8	68.5	7.4	9.3	0	3.70	0.643
Social responsibility creates a sense of employee identity with the company and enhances deeper connection on work performance	21.3	63.9	11.1	3.7	0	3.63	0.487
Feeling positively about their organization's CSR initiative increases employee's intentions to stay with their current employer and their overall commitment to the organization	18.5	81.5	0	0	0	4.19	0.392
Engaging in CSR helps our company to attract top talent over other organizations.	63	37	0	0	0	4.61	0.738
Giving back to the community is a virtuous circle in which engaged employees are enriched by volunteering opportunities to further engage and encourage them in their work.	42.6	57.4	0	0	0	4.43	0.499
Improved organizational branding serves as a source of employee retention strategy	23.5	69.1	4.6	2.8	0	3.54	0.438

4.3.3 Satisfaction Ratio

The third objective of the study was to examine the influence of satisfaction ratio on competitive advantage of Safaricom company. This variable sought to examine job retention, job satisfaction and diversity across organization on competitive advantage. The researcher sought to know from the respondents their opinion and level of agreement on the statements

provided on satisfaction ratio. The respondents were required to use a scale of a scale of 1-5, where; 1- Strongly Agree, 2-Agree, 3-Neutral, 4-Disagree, 5-Strongly Disagree.

Table 4.4: Influence of supportive ratio on competitive advantage

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	MEAN	STD DEV.
Organization reputation for corporate responsibilities plays a vital role in employee retention	14.8	57.4	9.3	18.5	0	3.69	0.948
Social responsibility brings positive impact on firm performance by increasing customer and employee satisfaction	18.5	57.4	14.8	9.3	0	3.85	0.833
CSR enhances employee diversity across the organization bringing a wealth of knowledge and expertise	13.0	46.3	29.6	11.1	0	3.61	0.856
Firms with better CSR face fewer employee problems as customers view their products favorably	20.4	64.8	3.7	11.1	0	3.94	0.834

4.3.4 Competitive Advantage

Consequently, the researcher sought to know the extent to which the respondents felt their company aimed at achieving each of the following statement on Competitive advantages. They were required to rate their opinion as follows; 1=strongly agree, 2= Agree, 3=Neutral, 4=Disagree 5=Strongly disagree.

Table 4.5: Influence of CSR on competitive advantage

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std Dev.
To have the largest market share among its telecommunication rivals	0	0	0	1.9	98.1	4.98	0.136
To be the customers' preferred service provider in the market	0	0	0	25.9	74.1	4.74	0.442
Well trained and motivated workforce leading to superior performance	0	0	0	72.2	27.8	4.72	0.452
Engaging in matters of corporate interests, societal needs and environmental concerns boosts corporate image among market players	0	0	0	66.7	33.3	4.33	0.476
Our company offers services that are customer friendly to enhance customer loyalty and satisfaction	0	0	1.9	3.7	94.4	4.93	0.328
CSR has enabled our company build a brand image in the market that draws customers' attention	0	0	33.3	31.5	35.2	4.02	0.835
CSR contributes to high performance achievement of our company, a reflection of its steady profitability in the industry	0	0	0	62.8	37.2	4.37	0.487

4.4 Results of Inferential Analysis

Inferential statistics provide the tools necessary to identify critical factors and to what degree specific test results can be generalized to the system as a whole. Inferential Statistics in this study involved regression analysis. Multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable using data gathered for the dependent variable and each of the independent variables.

4.4.1 Multiple Regressions Analysis

The competitive advantage of Safaricom Plc was examined empirically using the multiple regression analysis to show the impact of corporate social responsibility on the competitive advantage of the company and its general performance.

Table 4.6 presents a summary of the model.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.667 ^a	.535	.483	.130

a. Predictors: (Constant), Satisfaction, Diversity, Benchmarking

The adjusted R square was 0.483. The implication of this was that, 48.3 % could be explained by the constructs, i.e. benchmarking, diversity supportive ratio, and satisfaction ratio. The remaining 51.7% of the variations could be accounted for by other variables outside this study.

Table 4.7: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.132	3	.044	2.592	.003 ^b
	Residual	.849	50	.017		
	Total	.981	53			

a. Dependent Variable: Competitive Advantage
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Satisfaction, Diversity, Benchmarking

The analysis of variance above was carried out to test whether the overall regression model was a good fit for the data. The table 4.13 above shows that the independent variables statistically significantly predict the dependent variable, $F(3,50) = 2.592$, $P < .003$ and at least one of the slope coefficients is none zero (i.e. the model was a good fit for the data).

Table 4.8: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.229	.216		24.163	.000
	Benchmarking	.094	.032	.366	.438	.043
	Diversity Ratio	.062	.042	.217	1.465	.049
	Satisfaction Ratio	-.137	.051	-.395	-2.665	.010

a. Dependent Variable: CA

Table 4.8 shows the regression coefficients of each independent variable on competitive advantage of Safaricom company. The multiple regression model is presented below;

$$Y = 5.229 + 0.094X_1 + 0.062X_2 - 0.137X_3 + e_1$$

Where,

Y= competitive advantage of Safaricom company,

X₁= benchmarking

X₂= diversity supportive ratio

X₃= satisfaction ratio

e₁= Error term

From Table 4.13, the co-efficient for benchmarking had a p-value of 0.043 which is less than $p < 0.05$ implying a statistically significant effect on competitive advantage of Safaricom company. The regression coefficient was 0.094, indicating that it positively affected competitive advantage of Safaricom company. This therefore means that, an increase in benchmarking by 1 unit, increased competitive advantage of Safaricom company by 0.094 units.

The co-efficient for diversity supportive ratio had a p-value of 0.049. This was less than $p < 0.05$, leading to the conclusion that, diversity supportive ratio had a statistically significant effect on competitive advantage of Safaricom company. The regression co efficient was 0.062 depicting a positive relationship with competitive advantage of Safaricom company. The results imply that increase in diversity supportive ratio by 1 unit increased competitive advantage of Safaricom company by 0.062 units.

Lastly, results for satisfaction ratio had a p-value of 0.010 which is less than 0.05 leading to the conclusion that satisfaction ratio had a statistically significant effect on competitive advantage of Safaricom company. The regression coefficient was -0.137 depicting a negative relationship between satisfaction ratio and competitive advantage of Safaricom company. Therefore, for every 1 unit increase in satisfaction ratio, there was a decrease in competitive advantage of Safaricom by -0.137 units.

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study sought to examine the influence of corporate social responsibility on competitive advantage in Safaricom company in Kenya. Corporate social responsibility being a major component of organizational performance, has been adopted by many companies as a strategy to enhance their competitive advantage to acquire the market share. By giving back to society these companies see themselves to be building their corporate image and brands so as to draw customers and other interested parties to their products, services and even to the company itself.

Safaricom company has been involved in several social responsibility initiatives and programmes across various parts of the country that range from sports and athletics sponsorships, education scholarships and many others. These programmes have accelerated the company to achieve much in terms of its brand identity in the market as well attracted many loyal customers to its products and services. Though much has not been understood how social responsibility has made the company achieve its current competitive status. The current study tried to examine the underlying factors that influenced the company's competitive resilience nature over the years and among other rivals in the same industry. Therefore, this study examined the influence of benchmarking, diversity support ratio, and satisfaction ratio on the competitive advantage of Safaricom company.

5.1.1 Benchmarking and Competitive Advantage

The study found that benchmarking greatly influenced the competitive advantage of Safaricom company. The study observed that majority of the employees felt that corporate social responsibility had led to improvement of Safaricom company's performance through improved performance procedures that targeted customer needs and preferences in order to make it the company of choice with a small number disagreeing. The researcher further observed that majority of respondents agreed that CSR had enabled Safaricom to achieve tremendous customer satisfaction with their pool of services that were tailor made towards meeting customer needs. This justified the company's continued customer preference. The study also established that benchmarking was a critical tool for organizations not only for comparing themselves with other companies but also to identify their strengths and weaknesses that would help them strategically position themselves in the larger market. Benchmarking was the basis of adoption of new approaches and strategies which had great impact on revenue performance of the company as was opined by majority of the respondents though some few respondents disagreed. Moreover, the study established a strong link between benchmarking and Safaricom company positioning strategy to wade off competitive forces of other telecommunication rivals in the market and its emergence as service provider of choice.

The results of the study further demonstrated that benchmarking offered sensible and practical methods for product improvements that were focused on satisfying customer needs and customer satisfaction, as indicated by the responses from majority of the respondents. In conclusion, the researcher found that benchmarking was crucial for businesses because it serves as the foundation for performance development by assisting organizations in establishing realistic goals and maintaining their competitiveness in the market. The findings also demonstrated that the company's CSR initiatives were helpful in establishing competitiveness in the market.

5.1.2 Diversity Supportive Ratio and Competitive Advantage

Diversity support ratio greatly influences competitive advantage of Safaricom company. Diversity across organizational departments draw employees from diverse background in terms of ethnicity, race, religion, culture, age, gender and education, which bring wealth of knowledge and expertise to an organization. According to the findings, majority of respondents believed that CSR helps Safaricom attract top talent over other organizations. The overwhelming affirmation from every response demonstrates the company's commitment to its social responsibility plan and its goal of establishing a reputation for being a socially conscious business among its stakeholders as a whole.

The results further showed that majority of respondents, agreed that Safaricom Company provided satisfactory human resource benefits in the form of competitive pay packages and work-life balance to its employees, which helped them in breaking the curse of employee turnover, whereas a few respondents disagreed with this assertion. Moreover, the study also established that majority of respondents affirmed that corporate social responsibility established deeper employee connections on work performance and a feeling of employee identity with the company, though some respondents disputed the claim, while some were undecided. The study found that, generally, there was a strong sense of employee identity at Safaricom company, and this helped them attract top personnel and made it one of the most competitive telecommunications companies in the Kenyan market. Additionally, research revealed that employees believed Safaricom's CSR efforts had elevated their firm to the top of the field of competition and affected their decision to stay on as employees. This was demonstrated by a unanimous agreement by respondents. The study also discovered that volunteering in the community, affected how engaged employees performed their work, as evidenced by the majority of respondents who strongly agreed with the assertion. None of the study respondents' had any objections to this fact. Accordingly, the study discovered that nearly all the respondents, believed that better organizational branding was a source of Safaricom's personnel retention strategy. The respondents indicated that the majority of individuals would feel at ease working with reputable business organizations and companies that have established themselves as rival brands in the industry.

5.1.3 Satisfaction Ratio and Competitive Advantage

The third objective of the study was to examine the influence of satisfaction ratio on competitive advantage of Safaricom company. Findings revealed that majority of respondents said that an organization's reputation for upholding corporate obligations was crucial to employee retention as opposed to a minority of the study's respondents that were indifferent, while others took the opposite view, arguing that while corporate reputation was founded on corporate responsibilities, it had no bearing on staff retention in a business.

The findings also revealed that majority of the respondents believed that corporate social responsibility programs improved consumer and employee satisfaction, which in turn improved business performance. Though minority of people disagreed with the assertion, others were indifferent. The study further found that through CSR, Safaricom company was able to attract and employ people from different backgrounds throughout its departments, considerably enhancing the company's performance. Finally, the majority of respondents also agreed that businesses with superior CSR programs had fewer employee issues since their products were well-received by customers. Only a minority of the respondents were undecided, or believed that this was untrue. The researcher came to the conclusion that it is crucial for businesses to take on social obligations in order to boost their performance through excellent customer perceptions of their products services.

5.1.4 Competitive Advantage

The general objective of the study was to examine the influence of corporate social responsibility on competitive advantage of Safaricom company. Findings revealed that CSR was an important strategy and a strategic tool that Safaricom uses to penetrate the market and gain an advantage over its competitors and directly and greatly contributed to its overall profitability. According to the results obtained, majority of the respondents involved in the study, strongly agreed that Safaricom Company had amassed and achieved highest market share among its rivals in the telecommunications industry through its CSR programs and customer engagements. None of the respondents expressed a different viewpoint, suggesting that all the respondents agreed with the statement. According to Safaricom's yearly profitability reports, the results also demonstrates the crucial role CSR plays in helping the company acquire a competitive advantage over its rivals in the telecommunication industry. The study came to the conclusion that in order for any firm to acquire a competitive edge, it was necessary for them to get involved in programmes that advance their corporate goals, the value of their customers, and the overall environmental health of their operating environment.

Further the study results showed that Safaricom Company had a motivated and well-trained personnel, who greatly influence their performance levels over its rivals in the industry. When asked if addressing corporate interests, societal demands, and environmental concerns would aid in enhancing a company's reputation among competitors, majority agreed. This suggested that CSR initiatives improved a company's impression among its stakeholders, which in turn affected how the public perceived the company's standing in the marketplace. Safaricom also provided services that were friendly and competitive to customers, and this had a big impact on their customer loyalty on their goods and services. Moreover, majority of respondents, said that corporate social responsibility (CSR) was a crucial asset that enabled the company sustain competitive advantage through improved corporate reputation and brand image. Consequently, the study found that investments in a company's reputation function as self-reinforcing processes, enhancing the firm's reputation and revenue performance.

5.2 Conclusion

The influence of benchmarking, diversity support ratio, and satisfaction ratio on the competitive advantage of Safaricom company were examined empirically using the multiple regression models and found that the constructs influenced competitive advantage of the company. The study also found that there were other factors that considerably influenced the competitive position of the company that were not under consideration in this study.

The study found that benchmarking had a statistically significant effect on competitive advantage of Safaricom company, an indication that it positively affected competitive advantage of Safaricom company. This means that CSR led to increased customer satisfaction, improved service provision and improved revenue through reported profitability

Diversity supportive ratio was found to have a statistically significant effect on competitive advantage of Safaricom company, depicting a positive relationship with competitive advantage of Safaricom company. The results implied that CSR enhances diversity across the organization where organizations get pools of talent from different backgrounds with varied knowledge and skills, creates job satisfaction through motivations hence reducing employee turnover concerns of the organization.

Lastly, results showed that satisfaction ratio had a statistically significant effect on competitive advantage of Safaricom company. The regression coefficient was negative, implying a negative relationship between satisfaction ratio and competitive advantage of Safaricom company. Therefore, the study concludes that CSR would influence customer satisfaction levels depending on customer perception of the company corporate initiatives. Consequently, the customer's intention to purchase the company's products or services and their preference were dependent on their perceived benefits that they would derive from the company's social

5.3 Recommendations

Benchmarking is an important tool that enabled many organizations to position themselves in the market. From the study, it was noted that benchmarking played a critical role in making organizations realize their areas of weaknesses and strengths. This facilitated them to adopt different approaches and strategies to improve on the performance which translated to their competitiveness in the spanning market. Therefore, this study recommends that companies' management should embrace benchmarking in their management policies so as to take note of what their competitive rivals have done to position themselves to attain their current competitive advantage positions.

There is also a need for companies to be agile in ensuring that their employees are well taken care of in terms of meeting their job requirements, job satisfaction, diversity and motivation so as to paint a good company image in the market. As much as the company involves itself in social responsibility, the first step starts with employee outlook which then translates to their performance and the overall organizational performance in terms of meeting their purposed goals.

In addition to the right skill sets of employees, companies also need to adopt deliberate efforts of ensuring that social responsibilities initiatives create value to their customers, improve their loyalty towards their products and services, drives other potential customers towards their range of product offers and is viewed by many other stakeholders as coherent programmes that builds the company's brand image and identity in the market. No customer or employees will be drawn to companies with bad reputations but always gravitate towards best performing entities with good reputations in terms of performance and the general competitiveness in the industry, therefore companies should strive to build their corporate reputations through corporate initiatives to attract best pool of talents that will steer the company towards achieving a competitive edge among other rivals in the industry.

5.4 Suggestions for further studies

This study focused on how benchmarking, diversity supportive ratio and satisfaction ratio influence competitive advantage of Safaricom company. However, there are other key variables that contribute to competitive advantage that were not undertaken in this study due to time and scope of the study. The study focused on corporate social responsibility performed by Safaricom and the resultant competitive aspect achieved. Future studies can be done on the sustainability aspect of competitive advantage bearing in mind that social responsibility is resource intensive and how companies can cushion themselves from this. Finally, the study suggests that other scholars may conduct researches on regulatory policies that affect performance of corporate social responsibilities by companies and organizations in Kenya. This study only sampled staff from Safaricom company future studies can employ a different sampling procedure to target respondents from the other stakeholders that benefit from these social responsibility programmes and how it influences their perception about these companies.

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