

**EFFECT OF NICHE MARKETING ON PERFORMANCE OF INTERNATIONAL
COURIER COMPANIES IN KENYA**

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**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of the Award of
Masters of Business Administration (Marketing Option) Of Masinde Muliro
University of Science and Technology**

NOVEMBER, 2023

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work prepared with no other than the indicated sources and support has not been presented elsewhere for a degree or any other award.

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CERTIFICATION

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DEDICATION

I would want to thank my family and friends for all of their love, support (both emotionally and financially).

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I would want to express my gratitude to the Almighty God for showering me with an abundant amount of grace, mercy, and blessings that have allowed me to succeed in my endeavor. My supervisors, Dr. Dishon M. Wanjere and Dr. Silver E. Kwendo, have provided me with priceless and ceaseless guidance, as well as dedication, encouragement, and outstanding support. I genuinely thank them for all of these things. They helped me navigate the complexities of learning by providing me with academic direction, informative comments, and constructive criticism.

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ABSTRACT

CCK (2022) found that 11.8% of the consumers were based in Nairobi, while 8.2% and 5.5%, respectively, were from Mombasa and Laikipia. The findings revealed that the average level of satisfaction with private courier service providers was 67%, as determined by the assessment of four specific qualities (service quality: 74%; complaint resolution: 61%; customer service quality: 65%; response time: 68%). There exist deficiencies in the provision of postal and courier services, as well as limited accessibility to these services. In order to thrive in today's fast-paced and fiercely competitive global market, the courier services business must, first and foremost, innovate on a consistent basis. The general objective of this study was to establish the effect of niche marketing on performance of international courier companies in Kenya. The study was guided by the following objectives: to assess the effect of concentrated marketing on performance of international courier companies in Kenya, to examine the effect of customization on performance of international courier companies, to evaluate the effect of positioning on performance of international courier companies and to investigate the moderating effect of organizational factors on niche marketing and performance of international courier companies. The hypothesis of the study was there is no significant relationship between concentrated marketing and performance of international courier companies; There is no significant relationship between positioning and performance of international courier companies; There is no significant relationship between customization and performance of international courier companies and Organizational factors have no significant moderating effect on the relationship between niche marketing and performance of international courier companies. The study adopted an explanatory research design using survey method. The study targeted an estimated population of 55 international courier companies in Kenya by targeting the marketing managers. The researcher used purposive sampling technique through census. Data was collected from primary sources using questionnaires. The questionnaires were pre-tested with five national courier firms within Kisumu town. This study used both descriptive statistics (percentages, frequencies, means and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (regression and Pearson's correlations) to analyze quantitative data. While conducting the study, the researcher observed ethical issues. The results from multiple linear regression indicated that concentrated marketing ($B_1=0.384$, $P=0.003$), Customization ($B_2=0.197$, $P=0.024$); Positioning ($B_3=0.345$, $P=0.000$) have positive and significant effect on performance of international courier companies in Kenya. Niche marketing significant accounted for 66.4% ($R^2=0.664$) variance in organizational performance. Organizational factors had significant moderating effect on the relationship between niche marketing and organizational performance. The hierarchal regression moved r square from 66.4% ($R^2=0.664$) to 78.8% ($R^2=0.788$) significantly explaining addition 12.4% change in r square. Therefore, the study concluded that organizational factors moderate the relationship between niche marketing and performance of international courier companies. The study further recommended that management of courier companies should choose specific market segments for some of its service offerings. The study further recommends that the management should enhance seeking of feedback from their clients on their satisfaction level of their services. Courier companies should be marketing- oriented as this will enable the companies to get insights on the actual needs and wants that customers have. Courier companies should also embrace transformational leadership since it enables them to determine the choice of market concentration, positioning, customization, and allocation of resources. The study's findings will provide the management of international courier companies with valuable information for developing and executing corporate niche strategies. The results of the research would be helpful to the government in creating policies to safeguard the public as well as the participants in the business. The findings of this study may serve as a jumping-off point for future research, and the findings may even stimulate the development of other studies in this field.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CCK	Communications commission of Kenya
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOK	Government of Kenya
OCS	Overseas Courier Services Kenya
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
CA	Communications Authority
B2B	Business- to- Business
MMUST	Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
VC	Venture capital
CRM	Customer Relationship Management

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Courier companies - include businesses whose primary function is the transportation and delivery of documents, packages, and larger shipments of products. In contrast to regular mail, their services cater to customers that want speed, accountability, and monitoring

Niche- A niche market is a more specialized group of people looking for a particular set of advantages.

Niche marketing - refers to marketing strategies that target a certain subset or market of consumers.

Performance -a group of financial and nonfinancial indicators that together give information on the extent to which objectives and accomplishments have been met

Organizational performance - a description of the amount of success that has been achieved in the execution of an organization's duties in an attempt to meet the organization's objectives, purpose, and vision

Strategy - is the broad statement of the goals of an effort and the specification of various courses of action to be chosen in order to achieve the set goal of the undertaking.

Competitive advantage - a company's competitive advantage may be discovered in the distinctive qualities that set it apart from rivals and enable it to provide its customers better products and services.

Target marketing - entails determining the market segments that will provide the most profits for the company, after which the company may choose to concentrate on just one, a few, or all of these markets.

Micro marketing - refers to the execution of activities that try to meet an organization's objectives by anticipating customer or client demands and steering a flow of need-satisfying items and services from producer to customer or client.

Brand name awareness - whether and when consumer knows the brand and brand image i.e. how the consumer associates the brand with him

Value proposition - it's a guarantee that the corporation will provide some set of value-adding services to its clients

Brand differentiation - Creating a brand that is seen to be unique and distinct in contrast to others is an essential step in the branding process known as brand differentiation

Customer relationship management - is the set of procedures, approaches, and technological tools used by businesses to handle and evaluate consumer data and interactions during the course of the customer lifetime.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Over the last several years, niche marketing has been an increasingly prevalent topic of discussion in academic circles as well as in the marketing world at large. Furthermore, niche marketing is generally acknowledged to be an essential tool for modern marketers. Over the course of the last couple of decades, niche marketing has been used in a wide range of businesses, as well as for the promotion of a wide variety of goods and services, including: food items (Tregear, 2003; Suryanata, 2000; Tamagnini and Tregear, 1998); wine and beer (Jarvis and Goodman, 2005; Anand, 1995; Saperstein, 1994); retailing (Ashworth, Schmidt, Pioch, and Hallsworth, 2006; Heim and Sinha, 2005; Azuma and Fernie, 2001); tourism (Trunfio, Petruzzellis, and Nigro, 2006; Raynor and Weinberg, 2004; MacKay, Andereck, and Vogt, 2002); airline travel (McKechnie, Grant, and Fahmi, 2007; Raynor and Weinberg, 2004; Olson and Slater, 1996).

The rise in prominence of courier services can be attributed to the expansion of online commerce. Online shopping is becoming increasingly prevalent in Poland. At present, thirty percent of Internet consumers conduct their purchases online, according to the study. The native e-commerce industry evolves similarly to its Western counterparts. Courier companies are obligated to offer additional services to their clients at no cost. The proposed strategies encompass not only conventional delivery services but also multi-channel distribution, return logistics, and the integration of cost-effective cashless payment methods

for products ordered directly with the courier (Riwa, 2014). Canada Post, the largest parcel delivery corporation and national postal service provider in Canada, delivers nearly two-thirds of parcels purchased online (Canada Post, 2016). Thus, in the event that postal service (specifically the courier service rendered by Canada Post) is not incorporated into the definition of courier service, this research will be unable to provide an authentic evaluation of how Canadian online consumers perceive the courier services they engage with. Furthermore, according to the Canadian government, the courier industry is defined as "enterprises that are principally involved in the provision of air, surface, or combined courier delivery services." "Included are courier establishments operated by the Post Office" (NAICS 49211). Consequently, both express and postal service will be encompassed within the scope of the courier service examined in this research.

In comparison to parcel and courier companies in Western nations, Malaysian firms were unable to contend with the efficient services offered by multinational courier companies. In contrast to Malaysia, the performance of courier services in European nations is satisfactory and meets the needs of customers (Ejdys & Gulc 2020). For instance, the courier services in Italy and other European nations have experienced notable advancements due to an increase in public confidence in the functions performed by this industry (MontwiR et al. 2021 and German et al. 2022). At present, these corporations are confronted with a multitude of obstacles as a result of competition. Due to the proliferation of the internet, postal and courier services are compelled to prioritize electronic and digital advancements in order to

ensure their continued existence (Wang et al. 2015). Their survival is uncertain in this ecosystem characterized by innovation and rapid change.

As per the draft report of the Communications Authority of Kenya (2022), postal and courier services constitute an integral component of worldwide communications infrastructure, carrying significant economic and social significance. Despite this, worldwide mail volumes are decreasing, according to 2015 statistics from the Universal Postal Union (UPU), which indicate an increase in global weights. The revenue trend continues to be downward. The Kenya Economic Survey 2021 documents the overall trajectory of postal service indicators in Kenya from 2016 to 2020. The data reveals that the quantity of post offices in the country declined by an additional 1.7 percent, from 585 in 2019 to 575 in 2020. In 2020, the total number of registered and insured items lost in transit fell by 76.4 percent. The principal factor contributing to the 23.2 percent decline in the volume of parcels managed in 2020 was the 60.6 percent decline in international parcels. The volume of domestic packages delivered, nevertheless, increased by 30.4 percent. This decline is primarily attributable to digitization and the replacement of physical correspondence with electronic counterparts. A positive development was the 14.8% increase in licensed operators from 229 in 2019 to 263 in 2020, and the 18.3% increase in private courier outlets from 666 in 2019 to 788 in 2020.

According to the Communications Authority of Kenya (2022), the inception of the Kenya postal service can be traced back to the early 17th century, specifically to 1592, when the Portuguese colonial administration in Mombasa commenced official correspondence with the rest of the world. However, the earliest documented instance of transmission dates back to 1610, when letters were transported to Arabia and India via ship before being relayed to Europe via land. 1890 marked the introduction of the first postage stamp in Kenya, which was issued by the British East Africa Company until 1895. The British East Africa (1895-1903), East Africa and Uganda Protectorates (1903-1922), Kenya, Uganda (1922-1935), and Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika/Tanzania (1935-76) stamps that followed were issued between 1935 and 1976. The inaugural Kenyan stamps were published on December 12th, 1963. Uganda and Tanzania recognized these stamps until the dissolution of the East African Posts and Telecommunications Corporation in 1976. Technological advancements have not only introduced postal operators to new forms of competition from alternative communication services (e.g., e-mails), but have also provided them with fresh prospects, as exemplified by express delivery companies' utilization of technology in the just-in-time transportation of products. As a result, postal and courier service providers must assert their relevance in the context of digitalized global economies.

Furthermore, the Communications Authority of Kenya (2022) asserts in their report that the subsequent suggestions are proposed to enhance the accessibility and scope of postal and courier services: On supply side interventions, tailored digital postal and courier services for the general public and individuals with disabilities were implemented. Promote the implementation of tailored products and services for individuals with disabilities (PWDs)

and nomadic communities. This may involve utilizing Braille, stationing sign interpreters in banking halls, conducting door-to-door deliveries, and offering targeted incentives like discounts and complimentary literature for the blind to encourage service usage. Additionally, ensure that existing customers have access to dependable and easily accessible products and services. Regarding capacity building: Advocate for the enhancement of capabilities within the postal and courier industry, placing emphasis on operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, interdependencies, emerging technologies such as e-commerce, improved logistics, and novel delivery methods; Regarding service quality, consider implementing additional technological advancements in the postal and courier industry, such as web-based re-sellers to facilitate price and service comparisons and increase consumer choice; consolidate volumes to secure parcel carrier discounts; and offer reduced prices through the consolidation of orders.

The structures of postal markets have undergone significant changes in the last ten years, evidenced by the introduction of numerous new products, technologies, and competitors. Recent statistical data indicates a significant decline in letter-post volumes and revenue, which can be attributed to the proliferation of electronic postal systems and digital technology. Domestic letter-post volumes decreased by 36% between 2018 and 2020, as shown in the table below, whereas international letter-post volumes decreased by 37% during the same period, with the exception of 2019, when a growth apex was observed. E-commerce has presented postal services with novel prospects, compelling them to modify their operational frameworks and service provisions to capitalize on these developments; as a consequence, domestic parcel volumes have increased. On the contrary, recent years have

witnessed a decline in the international parcel service. The upward trajectory of domestic parcel volumes is anticipated to persist, whereas the international parcel market's future remains uncertain in light of the significant supply constraints and bottlenecks. disruptions to supply chains brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and the escalating cost of fuels. Before experiencing a nearly 20% decline in 2020, postal revenue in Africa increased nominally in the years preceding 2018. As a consequence of the intricate variables that affect the expansion of postal revenue, coupled with the adverse repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic on the worldwide economy, designated operators have realigned their primary endeavors by diminishing their dependence on letter post as the principal revenue stream and instead prioritizing the diversification of their offerings (including social and digital services). Strong competition exists in the parcel-post and express mail sectors from other providers, including Jumia, DHL, and FedEx. (2022, Universal Postal Union)

1.1.1 Concept of Niche Marketing

According to Lynn (2011), marketing generally has two meanings. First, it is a business concept that emphasizes that the primary objective of the company must be to satisfy customers. The second idea in marketing refers to a separate set of actions that are centered on determining how to segment a market and where to place a products or services inside that market. As a result, without it, the company will not be able to thrive in cutthroat markets. According to Kotler (2001), a marketer can very seldom please each and every customer in a market. This is because individuals have varying preferences for items like soda, cars, universities and films. Therefore, the first step that marketers do is to segment

the market, which involves identifying and profiling diverse groups of customers who may have different preferences or requirements for goods and marketing mixes

Kotler (2003) defines a niche as a specific group of people looking for a set of benefits. He claims that the most common method for the construction of niche markets is to subdivide an existing market segment, and that the primary challenge posed by niche marketing is the need to specialize in the product or service being offered. Strong niche markets have five characteristics, according to him customers with specific wants and needs, a willingness to pay a premium to the business that best serves those wants and needs, a lack of competitors, economies of scale for the niche marketer, and growth potential. Niche marketing, as described by Isoraite (2009), is developing a focused marketing plan on a certain market group that has a high potential to match with the supplied value in terms of brand or product. It is a subset of strategic marketing focused on determining what customers want and then meeting those needs via production, communication, and distribution. In order to sell to a specialized subset of consumers, or "niche," of the market, companies use niche marketing strategies. Targeting a certain segment of the market requires identifying the needs of that segment and designing a product to meet those needs.

According to a plethora of sources, niche marketing is best described as: Niche positioning in underserved but potentially lucrative and unified market subsets (Dalgic & Leeuw, 1994). A method of marketing in which a specific target audience is identified and then appealed to via the use of product distinctiveness (Philips and Peterson, 2001). Targeting a specific subset of customers who are willing to pay a premium to the company that can best meet those needs, where there is little chance of new entrants to the niche, where

economies of scale can be achieved through specialization, and where the niche company is large enough, profitable enough, and growing quickly enough to be a good investment (Kotler, 2003). Toften and Hammervoll (2013) proposed a revised definition as the action of identifying and catering to a certain segment of a market whose members have distinct wants and requirements. Based on the work of Parrish, Cassill, and Oxenham (2006), we see niche marketing as a multifaceted notion that comprises product, market, and tactic. The phrases "small" and "narrow" tend to be used interchangeably when referring to specialty sizes. Niche markets, as defined by Lindsay (2007), need not be little in size; they need only be specific. Some companies, including Johnson & Johnson (Dalgic & Leeuw, 1994) and Heinz (O'Reilly, 1995), operate in markets that are not often classified as tiny (Toften & Hammervoll, 2013), but have still been linked with niche strategies. As a result, "narrow" seems more accurate to use. Furthermore, it may be argued that the niche market's size in terms of total income is not the most important component when categorizing the market as tiny or narrow. There aren't a lot of buyers or sellers in this market. The specialty market is relatively limited because there is a bigger, referral market.

Niche marketing has become a widely accepted marketing approach for modern business practice since it assists companies in identifying and targeting their ideal clientele (or "niche") within a larger market (Jarvis & Goodman, 2003). In order to maximize market opportunities, businesses can use specific product, market, or company-based characteristics to differentiate their offerings and attract a specific target audience, resulting in higher profits, happier customers, and a stronger position in the market. This is what we call "niche marketing." Alternatively, the method might be used by businesses to

increase their consumer base by targeting a previously unrecognized demographic and catering to their needs with a specially designed set of advertising and promotional initiatives (Howard, 2008).

Niche markets, as defined by Thilmany (2012), are subsets of a broader market composed of consumers that exhibit comparable demographic, buying behavior, and/or lifestyle traits. Differentiation is possible because even among consumers with the same purchase behavior, there may be wide variation in their reasons (what are the fundamentals of advertising and public relations). According to Amubode (2009), niche marketing is targeting consumers in segments that are neglected or disregarded by well-established brands. Parrish (2010) defines "niche marketing" as a method for reaching a certain kind of market or clientele. Even if the concept of a niche is complex, it may be simplified by focusing on the market, the product, and the strategy, as stated by Parrish (2006).

Selecting the pockets, sectors, or markets to focus on is the first and most crucial step in the niche marketing approach, as stated by Hooley, Saunders, and Piercy (2004). The second and equally crucial step is devoting all available resources to satisfying the chosen targets. For any attempt to define niche marketing, Toften and Hammervoll (2013) propose looking at three significant differences between niches and segments. It's common to hear "small" and "narrow" used interchangeably, but "narrow" seems more appropriate; a niche market is defined by its restricted focus. To be successful in niche marketing, you need specialized knowledge, abilities, or assets that allow product distinction (perceived uniqueness), as well as greater value for consumers; If you find the right kind of niche market, you may be able to defend yourself by erecting strong entry barriers. Such

obstacles to competition could include superior quality or characteristics of the product, interactions with clients on a personal and ongoing basis, patents, a system of certificates and protected geographical characteristics for items that are organic or environmentally friendly, collective identity, strong reputation or worth among consumers as a recognized expert in their field, target industries that have a greater dependence on both capital investment and technological advancement, and directing one's attention to markets that are subject to seasonality.

It has been shown that niche marketing may be an efficient method of marketing (Dalgic & Leeuw, 1994; Stanton, 1991; Philips & Peterson, 2001), given that businesses are ready, willing, and able to deliver specialized items to specific target customers. According to Toften and Hammervoll (2013), a successful application of niche marketing provides a multitude of advantages, including higher earnings and competitiveness, as well as high growth and market shares. Segmentation-based marketing strategies are essential to Nagashima's (2007) plan for securing a niche in the market. If a company can "sell products to anybody," then that "anybody" may put the product to any use they like. In order to effectively reach them, businesses need to have a complete picture of their target market, including demographic information such as age, income level, education level, and interests. Once a certain audience has been identified, it is possible to tailor offerings to meet their needs exactly. Along with this, it may be necessary to set up effective channels of distribution and shipment.

1.1.2 Organization Performance

According to Iuliana and Maria (2016), the word "performance" was first employed to define the outcomes of sports competitions in the middle of the nineteenth century. The idea progressed during the course of the twentieth century, resulting in the formulation of a number of definitions that were intended to include the broadest possible range of experiences that may be had as a result of performance. There is not yet any performance that is independent of the specified goals. Obtaining the performance goals is synonymous with reaching the goals themselves. Because the goals of an organization cannot be specified with exactitude and there are an increasing number of them, it is becoming more difficult to determine their performance because performance is a relative metric. The field of organizational theory has given rise to a profusion of models that investigate organizational performance. In fact, a number of academics have said that there are just as many models as there are studies of organizational performance. In contemporary discourse, the notion of organizational performance has been subject to a multitude of interpretations owing to its inherently subjective nature. The lack of universal agreement among scholars regarding the criteria that ought to be employed when assessing the performance of an organization is due to the subjective nature of the organizational performance definition (Bolman & Deal, 2003; DeClerk, 2008; Scott & Davis, 2015).

Socioeconomic development is inextricably attached to the postal and courier sector, per the Postal Development Report (UPU, 2019). Postal services that are economical, efficient, and ubiquitous essentially eliminate the financial barriers that separate economic agents, thereby providing them with entry to an extensive network of communications and

infrastructure. The postal sector actively participates in the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established by the United Nations.⁷ As the UN agency with expertise in postal services, the UPU has formulated a fresh strategic plan for the period spanning 2021 to 2024. The strategy, designated the "Abidjan Postal Strategy," was endorsed during the UPU Congress held in Abidjan in August 2021. The SDGs have been integral to the implementation of this strategy. In pursuit of the overarching objective of advancing socio-economic progress and aiding in the realization of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the postal sector's vision for 2030 is predicated upon four fundamental domains: gap reduction, regulatory harmonization, operational performance enhancement, and stakeholder integration. The Postal Vision enables the expression of the SDGs in their entirety, from the overarching vision to the specific indicators at the national level. This permits the assessment of the direct and indirect effects of the postal sector on the achievement of the SDGs.

One way to measure the success of a country's postal and courier network is by looking at how well it does across a variety of indicators that contribute to economic and social progress (Communications Authority of Kenya, 2022). E-commerce advancement and operational efficiency enhancement are, in particular, global priorities in every region. "In light of the proliferation of digital technologies and e-commerce, innovations are imperative for postal and courier operators to meet customer expectations regarding service modernization and quality enhancement."⁸ Postal networks can be deemed to be performing at a high level when they provide a dependable service, exhibit strong

connectivity, experience substantial demand from citizens, and maintain operational resilience against external disruptions.

The overarching goal of a functional postnatal and courier subsector is to ensure that postal and courier services are accessible to all individuals, accompanied by satisfactory quality and costs. However, their capacity to innovate more rapidly has been hindered by a number of factors, such as technological progress, declining traditional mail volumes, the operation of some loss-making post offices and private courier outlets, and insufficient funding to supplement their universal service obligation. Insufficient responsiveness to consumer demands;) Legislative framework: The reserved services that the Public Postal Licensee (PCK) is obligated to provide are explicitly delineated in the law. Inadequate addressing system; One of the challenges posed by the rise in online shopping-related fraud is the inadequate regulatory framework governing e-commerce platforms. Additionally, the underserved areas have inadequate infrastructure. Manual procedures, such as sorting and unautomated private letter receptacles, have an impact on both domestic and international delivery standards, thereby indicative of substandard service quality. Insufficient security measures, particularly for courier riders who deliver in suburban and impoverished areas; absence of designated loading zones or areas for critical courier services, which results in harassment by city or town council officials in major cities whenever courier providers park to deliver packages; Due to a dearth of ICT expertise in the industry, technology adoption is sluggish. The Communications Authority of Kenya (2022) identifies multiple parking charges across counties as a compliance burden for courier operators.

1.1.3 Courier Industry in Kenya

A courier service is a company that transports and delivers things such as letters, packages, and larger shipments of goods however, its original niche was the rapid delivery of time-sensitive documents such as contracts. They provide services to corporations and people that want speedy service, accountability, and tracking that cannot be accommodated by normal mail. These requirements cannot be met by conventional mail. Commercial delivery services, the United States Postal Service, and bicycle messenger services were three of the largest courier services around the turn of the century (Cohen, 2005). Small businesses in a few cities throughout the United States established the first courier services in the late 19th and early 20th century. When there were relatively few telephones in households, personal communications had to be delivered in person. There were several early firms that offered delivery services for parcels and baggage.

In the early 20th century, the proliferation of major retail and department shops led to an increase in the need for package delivery services, which saw their popularity soar. Over the course of the subsequent several decades, the scope of such services expanded. Even though a lack of gasoline and rubber caused a fall in the courier sector during World War II, the industry rebounded after the war thanks to increased usage of air freight by courier services, which opened up new markets (Campbell, 2007). The proliferation and variety of transportation options have led to problems with regulatory compliance. Companies that did their delivering by airplanes or automobiles were often subject to various regulations over pricing and other aspects of their business operations. These regulations governed a variety of variables. The development of fax machines and electronic mail ushered in a

new era of competition for the record transport business in the late eighties. However, some transportation firms have branched out to offer new services to their clients as a result of the continuing development of the global marketplace and the continued necessity for physical conveyance of specific commodities. These "logistics," or "support," solutions were developed to aid clients in becoming more productive via computerized monitoring of manufacturing materials and guidance with handling sales orders and shipments. (Kumar, 2006).

The increasingly scattered structure of business operations within the worldwide economy, the expansion of mail-order commerce, and the rising cost of postal services after 1970 caused a change in the character of courier services, making them more varied and competitive. As other modes of transportation, like as trucks, began to merge with courier services, the distinctions between the two became less clear. The commercial delivery businesses that were formerly a complement to the United States Postal Service eventually became competitors to the government-operated mail system. In response, the Postal Service increased its focus on its overnight Express Mail delivery as well as its Priority Mail service, which delivers packages in two days (Cohen, 2005). Regulatory problems were caused by the expansion and increased specialization of the delivery business. Companies who carried their goods by airplane or truck were often subject to different regulations on pricing and other elements of their business operations. In the late 1980s, the introduction of fax machines and electronic mail brought about new levels of competition to the market for document delivery services. However, given the continued growth of the global marketplace and the continued necessity for the physical delivery of

some commodities, several delivery businesses started to broaden their operations and offer new services to the clients they serviced. Logistics refers to the services that help businesses run more smoothly by keeping track of the supplies they use in production and the orders and shipments that come in (Kumar, 2006).

Due to the growth of other sectors, more companies in Kenya are now in a position to provide courier services. Another study by Mbogo and Lati, (2009) claims that despite the economic recession and the dangers presented by technological innovation, mail and courier services are still expected to have a successful year. This is because more businesses are outsourcing their mail delivery so that they can focus on their core businesses. According to a recent analysis published by PWC, the global logistics business expanded, particularly among the major players, as a greater number of customers looked for one-stop shopping. This evaluation made by CCK is consistent with the findings of the PWC report. Changes in consumer tastes are helping to drive mergers and acquisitions, which are also being bolstered by the fact that only large firms in the West and China have been able to weather the shocks of the global economic slump. "When it comes to the postal and logistics industries, it's typically the case that more is better. According to the PWC research, "critical mass has the potential to provide meaningful economies of scale." At the time when the courier sector was liberalized in the late 1990s, there were a total of 21 firms providing courier services that had been licensed up until the beginning of the year 2000. According to the numbers provided by CCK, there are now over 200. Courier services were worried about the rise of the internet, which allowed for the instantaneous

transmission of electronic documents and conversations. The business has survived, however, because of the need for physical proof of information on papers.

According to Elimu center (2020) there are more than 50 International courier companies in Kenya. These postal and courier services in Kenya are provided by regional, national, and international firms that also provide postal and courier services. You may also locate shipping and freight firms in Kenya, which move a significant number of packages each and every day. The Kenyan firms that specialize in international courier service transfer packages and papers all over the globe. The local courier services in Kenya always work hand in hand with the international courier companies in Kenya to ensure that your parcel is delivered on time and to the right destination. Among major industry players in the Kenyan Courier Industry include large corporations with international networks, with their headquarters in the West. These companies have the biggest machineries, many huge tracks, a lot of staff and employ the best technology, which has helped keep them at the top of the industry, controlling the global express mail and delivery business. Some of the international delivery have the largest delivery networks in the country and even offer home delivery services to their clients in the upcountry. Most of the deliveries these companies make are imports from other countries sent to Kenyans. Some of the companies operate in the country through partnerships and collaborations with local courier companies, which enables them to expand their networks across the country. Others are fully owned companies stationed in the country with offices in various parts of the country.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

The Communications Authority of Kenya (2022) reports that data was gathered from sub-locations throughout each county to conduct a nationwide survey. Although 11.8% of the consumers were based in Nairobi, Mombasa and Laikipia contributed 8.2% and 5.5%, respectively. The findings revealed that consumers held a moderate level of satisfaction with the postal and courier services offered by the Postal Corporation of Kenya. An overall satisfaction rating of 49.75% was derived from four assessed attributes: time taken to be attended to: 45%; quality of service: 55%; complaint resolution: 45%; and quality of customer service: 54%. On the basis of four measured attributes—time taken to be attended to: 68%; quality of service: 74%; complaint resolution: 61%; and quality of customer service: 65%—the average level of satisfaction with private courier service providers was 67%. The findings indicate that customers express 17.2% greater contentment with private courier service providers in comparison to public courier service providers.

A summary of the deficiencies identified through a stakeholder survey in the postal and courier subsector is provided below: (i) Access facilities and devices are required to utilize automated postal and courier services, which include the ability to track and trace shipments. The operators are obligated to furnish the requisite devices to ensure universal accessibility to their services. Additionally, they must guarantee the quality of services, encompassing the punctuality of shipment deliveries and the standard of service across multiple locations. In conjunction with the mandate for operators to disclose their standards, CA ought to conduct routine inspections to verify adherence to them. (iii) Postal

and courier locations ought to supply restricted physical access, which may involve the installation of ramps. While some effort has been made at PCK, all service providers should prioritize facilitating service access for their consumers, particularly those with disabilities. (iv) The cost-effectiveness of courier and postal services. Although fundamental postal services are subject to a regulated tariff regime, all operators must strive to effectively control their operating expenses in order to prevent excessively high prices from being imposed on consumers. Enhancement of consumer protection is imperative. Observance of the law protecting consumers is required. Access to and availability of postal and courier services are both inadequate. A lack of coverage of postal and courier outlets contributes to the supply gap, whereas access gaps are characterized by lengthy distances to and from such outlets and exorbitant service fees. Another deficiency on the demand side is service quality. (Kenya Communications Authority, 2022)

In light of recent transformations in the business landscape, organizations are compelled to seek novel avenues of competition. Instead of attempting to accommodate the needs of every customer, businesses should prioritize the selection of suitable clients and the fulfillment of their desires. Innovation enables organizations to produce value, and marketing aids those organizations in capturing that value (firm success). Organizations that tailor their products to a specific segment or subgroup will be more appealing and proficient, as they will have a greater understanding of the needs and desires of their target customers (Akbar, Omar, Wadood & Rosmaini, 2015). Existing research indicates that conventional companies face a threat from emerging, more inventive rivals, and that the continuous advancement of information and manufacturing technology undermines the

efficacy of their marketing approaches (Dalgic, 2018). Robbins and Coulter (2009) assert that innovation is an absolute necessity in the courier services industry, which functions within a perpetually volatile and competitive environment. To prosper in the current dynamic and highly competitive international marketplace, the courier services industry must prioritize consistent innovation. Every multinational corporation faces challenges both internally and externally that may hinder its ability to accomplish its goals.

In order to maintain competitiveness while conducting business in a foreign country, these international courier companies must implement marketing strategies that provide them with a lasting competitive advantage and enable them to outwit domestic competitors in the same industry. To achieve this, they must embrace niche marketing. Given these factors, the aforementioned study will be undertaken. By conducting an analysis of niche marketing components including concentrated marketing, positioning, and customization, this study sought to ascertain the impact of niche marketing on the operational outcomes of international courier companies operating in Kenya. In an effort to address the existing lacuna in knowledge, this article investigates the financial impact of niche marketing strategies implemented by international couriers.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The study aimed to establish the effect of niche marketing on performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

1.3.1 Specific objectives

The following were the overarching goals of the study:

- i. To assess the effect of concentrated marketing on performance of international courier companies in Kenya.
- ii. To examine the effect of customization on performance of international courier companies in Kenya.
- iii. To evaluate the effect of positioning on performance of international courier companies in Kenya.
- iv. To investigate the moderating effect of organizational factors on niche marketing and performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

1.4 Research Hypothesis

The study tested the following hypothesis:

H₀₁: There is no significant effect of concentrated marketing on performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

H₀₂: There is no significant effect of positioning on performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

H₀₃: There is no significant effect of customization on performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

H₀₄: Organizational factors have no significant moderating effect on the relationship between niche marketing and performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

1.5 Significance of the study

The study's findings will provide the management of international courier companies in Kenya with valuable information for developing and executing corporate niche strategies.

Because of this, a deeper knowledge of niche marketing, its success, and the problems encountered by the company in applying it would be gained from the research.

The government views the manufacturing of couriers as an industry that is essential to the continued economic development of the nation. In addition to this, it provides residents with work opportunities and serves as a source of money for the government in the form of taxes. The results of the research would be helpful to the government in creating policies to safeguard the public as well as the participants in the business.

The findings of this study may serve as a jumping-off point for future research, and the findings may even stimulate the development of other studies in this field. Understanding the symbiotic link between chosen tactics and organizational performance would be the primary objective of this study, which would enable it to make a substantial addition to the expanding body of research on niche marketing.

1.6 Scope of the study

To learn how niche marketing affects the performance of Kenya's international courier companies, researchers reviewed data from 55 different companies in the industry. The independent variables are concentrated marketing, positioning and customization while the moderating variables are management style and marketing orientation whereas performance of international courier companies is the dependent variable. The study targeted an estimated population of 55 international courier companies in Kenya by targeting the marketing managers. The study was conducted between May 2021 to June 2022.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The study found it difficult to solicit response from the respondents due to sensitive nature of their company strategies in terms of information. To counter this, the researcher assured the respondents of anonymity and confidentiality and re-assured them that the feedback will only be for the purpose of the study. There was also a challenge of time resources management particularly where the respondents delayed giving their response to the questionnaires submitted to them. To mitigate this, the researcher made follow ups quite often to these institutions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This part consisted of the theoretical review, the empirical literature which reviews past studies which are related to the research topic and the conceptual framework.

2.2 Theoretical Foundations

This study was built around Segmentation theory and theory of Porter's Generic Competitive Strategies which elaborate how institutions need to relate and interact with the environment to create a formidable competitive advantage in the Courier industry. These theories are discussed in-depth below:

2.2.1 Market Segmentation Theory

Market segmentation based on customers' descriptive characteristics is an example of traditional criteria. The term "market segmentation" refers to the practice of dividing potential buyers into subgroups based on demographic, economic, sociological, or psychological characteristics (Marii, 2010). The core concept stems from the observation that consumers might have varying distinguishing traits while yet having commonality in their expectations and preferences (Marii & orevi, 2012). The first thing to do when segmenting markets is to choose a market or product category for investigation (Lamb & McDaniel ,2003). Choose a foundation or grounds for market segmentation is the second stage. Picking segmentation descriptors is the Third Step. Identifying and analyzing

segments is the fourth strategy. Selecting intended consumers is the fifth stage. Lastly, it's important to "create, execute, and maintain proper marketing mixtures." Product, distribution, promotion, and pricing tactics make up what is known as "the marketing mix," a set of tools used to establish and maintain profitable connections with certain consumer groups.

Within the realm of strategic targeting is the process by which businesses pick which parts of the market they will service (Choy, Shin & Lee, 2013). A fundamental component of a need strengthening strategy is to approach the market with the goal of meeting the requirements of consumers and developing long-term relationships with those clients. According to Chernev (2012), companies use market segmentation to "optimize the effectiveness of their business actions by focusing on business activities," "optimize the cost efficiency of their business activities by rationalizing business activities," and "direct resources toward the needs and preferences of a specific market segment".

Market segmentation relies heavily on a measurement of consumer tastes in terms of product features and buying patterns. Long-term segmentation success requires constant monitoring and adjustments to tactics. Since the aforementioned variables are in flux throughout time as a result of many influences, it was determined that a continuous procedure was required. Newly accessible market data, according to certain studies, may have a major effect on the evolution of the aforementioned factors (Ma, Zhang, Wang & Lee, 2014).

Consumers' preferences and priorities in terms of monetary and non-monetary benefits are very responsive to a wide range of circumstances, including the availability of new

information. The complexity of client needs further complicates the task of market segmentation. When making a purchase, buyers place a high premium on a product or service's value. According to academics (Marii & orevi, 2012), value is the "difference between the advantages gained by consumers and the sacrifice placed in it." According to Amplify XL (2022), the most crucial question you will need to ask yourself if you want to create a courier service is, "What businesses or people will find value in my courier service?" It's easy to be tempted to respond with "everyone,". However, if you want to please everyone, you will end up pleasing no one. You will not only be able to decide on the appropriate marketing strategy and craft the appropriate marketing messages once you have a clear understanding of who you are targeting and, more importantly, who you are not targeting; you will also be able to tailor your core products or services to the specific requirements of your target audience when you have this knowledge.

This theory was relevant to this study because market segmentation, at its heart, is the act of separating a market into smaller, more manageable groups of consumers with common requirements and desires. Therefore, by dividing, it's easier to apply niche marketing by focusing on these segments. More importantly, by understanding segmentation, the researcher will know instances of the market that courier services are aiming for which is key information in niche marketing. Recent marketing researchers have concluded that segmentation is a crucial part of any successful marketing plan. The writers here argue that this strategy's proper use has become the bedrock of gaining a market advantage (Kotler & Keler, 2011).

2.2.2 Theory of Porter's Generic Competitive Strategies

One definition of a competitive advantage is an asset that gives a firm an edge over other businesses in its industry. Because of this, a firm is able to reach higher profit margins than its rivals, which ultimately results in value creation for both the company and its shareholders (Lorenzo, Rubio & Garcés, 2018). Three typical methods for outperforming the competition in each given market have been developed as a result of the interplay between the two primary categories of competitive advantage and the wide variety of activities through which companies seek to accomplish them. Strategies like cost leadership, differentiation and focus strategies are examples of this (Porter,1985). Focus strategies strive to gain a cost advantage (in the case of cost focus) or differentiation (in the case of differentiation focus) inside a certain industry segment, while cost leadership and differentiation strategies seek a competitive advantage across a wide range of business segments. Both the precise activities that are necessary to execute each generic strategy and the generic strategies that are viable in a given sector are likely to differ significantly from industry to industry.

In order to achieve *cost leadership*, a company must first strive to become the lowest-cost participant in a given activity. Low input costs, economies of scale, expertise, product/process design and economical pricing are all possible strategies to achieve cost leadership. (Johnson, Whittington & Scholes, 2011). Because of the *differentiation* approach, the firm is now able to either produce or market products and services that are wholly original to the market (Ismael, Ismael, Othman, Gardi, Hamza, Sorguli, Aziz, Ahmed, Sabir, Ali & Anwar, 2021). Businesses may differentiate themselves from one another in a

variety of different ways and aspects, and these routes and aspects are many. *Focusing* as a business strategy allows a corporation to effectively serve a certain customer or market niche in a way that maximizes profits (Jamal, Akoi, Fadel, Sardar & Zhilwan, 2021). It is important to distinguish between a stuck-in-the-middle strategy, in which a company does not actively pursue cost leadership or uniqueness, and a combination competitive strategy, in which both are given high priority (Acquaah & Yasai-Ardekani, 2006). The fundamental idea behind generic strategies is that organizations must decide in order to achieve a competitive advantage.

Michael Porter had earned the moniker "management guru" by the time he published *Competitive Advantage and Competitive Strategy* in the 1980s. Subsequent to that, his theories have been the subject of considerable commentary, refinement, reappearance, and criticism on the grounds that they are hardly comprehensively applicable. The comments on the generic strategies that were elaborated in the preceding section constituted a significant aspect of contemplation and will be the focus of the following section. Porter argues in his book that for a company to achieve success, it must compete using a single strategy, which can be cost leadership, differentiation, or focus (Mekic, Ensar & Mekic, Emina., 2014). The criticism revolved around the necessity of attaining a substantial market share as a prerequisite for implementing a cost leadership strategy. How does one, however, attain a substantial market share to begin with? Academics contend that market share leaders have achieved this status not by focusing on cost leadership but rather by employing differentiation strategies, such as offering more appealing packaging or superior quality (Datta, 2009).

The existence of a correlation between organizational performance and Porter's generic strategies stands as a paramount concern. In 2006, Helms and Allen devised a questionnaire with the intention of examining this type of correlation. Product differentiation, focus-cost leadership, cost leadership, and focus-product differentiation were the four factor scales utilized. Through correlation analysis of the four strategy measures, they have determined that each is unmistakably correlated with organizational performance, according to the results of their survey. Furthermore, they delineated which strategic practices ought to be associated with every generic strategy to foster favorable organizational performance. This study falls short of the support line for Porter's theory of generic strategy; however, it has produced empirical evidence that underscores the practicality of the theory. As a result, it is possible to deduce that generic approaches proved advantageous for global managers tasked with the arduous endeavor of strategic planning.

This theory was pertinent to this investigation as competition is the paramount determinant in determining the success or failure of businesses. Competition determines the efficacy of a firm's operations such as innovation, organizational cohesion and outstanding execution. A company has to figure out what sort of competitive advantage it wants and how widely it wants to accomplish it. These international courier companies have come to do business in a local country and therefore needs to embrace competitive strategies to ensure they stay afloat. Also, the porter's strategies were very relevant to the study

2.3 Conceptual Review

2.3.1 Concentrated marketing

According to a study by Toften and Hammervoll (2009) niche marketing is defined as advertising directed at a small but specific group of consumers and businesses. Relationship marketing is a kind of niche marketing in which the principles of specialization, distinctiveness, emphasis on the client, and relationship building are heavily used. Specialized operation, as defined by Yang and Gang (2004), denotes that a company chooses to grow inside a certain industry rather than randomly venturing into other ones. Rather, the company exclusively concentrates on the development space of its' choosing and does not attempt to enter other industries.

According to Hong (2006), specialization may be defined as the sort of operation in which a person or organization lowers the many roles associated with its production operations. To put it another way, industrial activities should be centered on processes that include fewer distinct functions. Scott (2011) explains further that niche marketing calls for an in-depth familiarity with a certain industry or product. As a result, it is crucial that manufacturers choose a market segment that fits with their own aspirations and passions. Customers in the present day want goods and services that meet their individual needs, and niche marketing might be the solution. According to Huijie and Jing (2005), an enterprise is considered to be performing a specialized operation if it is limited to the manufacture and distribution of a single product or service, or to a subset thereof, or just to do these tasks of isolated procedures in the allotted time.

According to Scott (2011), the future may now belong to businesses and sales experts that specialize in certain markets and goods. He makes this assertion in his article. It's possible that businesses may perform better if they take a targeted, focused strategy than to one that takes in the whole picture. Being a specialist in sales rather than a generalist explains the solutions that a sales professional delivers, which might assist in attracting new customers. Since the turn of the 2000, a lot of things have changed, and it's possible that the old assumption of "larger is better" no longer applies. Today's shoppers want goods and services that are tailored to their unique needs, and niche marketing might provide just that. There are benefits to specializing, such as the development of an expertise, which may lead to client relationships that are more meaningful, profitable, and rewarding.

In a nutshell, a firm cannot optimize the resonance it has with its target market unless it first determines the area of specialized concentration for its services and solutions and then maintains that focus. Think about the following aspects of your business that will be affected in some way by the choice to concentrate on one thing: Some of the things that need to be discussed include: social media strategy, search engine optimization, product or service distinctions, value proposition, content marketing initiatives, allocation of resources, owned, paid, and earned media advertising and public relations campaigns, recruitment targets, and sales incentives. Whether or not a business chooses to target a certain subset of customers may have far-reaching consequences for the whole of its operations. Almost every decision that must be made in business circles back around to the primary dichotomy of deciding whether to concentrate or spread out one's attention (Myler, 2017).

2.3.2 Customization

The idea of customization, which refers to the extent to which a company's products may be adapted to satisfy the diverse requirements of its clientele (Anderson, Fornell, & Rust, 1997), has been gaining ground as a viable business strategy among various companies. In contrast to the standard practice of trying to serve as many consumers as possible by satisfying just a subset of their individual needs, the ultimate objective of customization is to meet as many of those needs as possible for each individual client. The goal of customization is to meet the needs of each unique consumer in as many ways as possible (Simonson, 2005; Fiore, Lee, & Kunz, 2004).

Because of the positive effects it is thought to have on CRM, customization is now widely used (Freeland, 2003; Lemon, White, & Winer, 2002). Products tailored to individual buyers' needs are gaining popularity and may help a business grow rapidly. It is difficult for businesses that specialize in bespoke goods to produce and transport high-quality things that match the demands of each individual client, but doing so has become a new competitive advantage (Huang, George, Simpson, Timothy, Pine & Josep, 2005). This tendency has also been pushed by new technology-driven potential to deploy cost-efficient techniques to mass customization of products (Durray, Ward, Milligan & Berry, 2000). In B2B markets, catering to the specific requirements of each individual customer has been and will continue to be an important focus (Kleinaltenkamp & Jacob, 2002). According to Cermak, File and Prince, and Dabholkar, "customer involvement" is defined as "the extent to which a customer actively participates in shaping and influencing the design,

development, and delivery of a product or service" (Dong, Sivakumar, Evans & Zou, 2015).

Uma and Chandramowleeswaran (2015) state that providing greater value to clients in a cost-effective and customer-satisfying manner is one of the most basic difficulties confronting modern organizations. Businesses need to do this since they are increasingly catering to niche markets or even individual clients. One of the biggest problems in service provision is the difficulty of maintaining both high quality and high productivity. According to Baratcu and Süleyman (2007), there are commercial, marketing, and manufacturing strategies that are related to personalized goods. As a result of the fact that mass customization was birthed in the manufacturing sector (that is, producers who create and sell physical items), the manufacturing sector predominates in the research environment pertaining to mass customization. This is one of the research gaps in the existing body of literature on mass customization in the service industry, as stated by Piller and Tseng (2010). This is reflected in the five competitive features we've just covered, where the phrase "product" appears often but "service" is conspicuously absent. However, service industry businesses may also benefit greatly from adopting a mass customization strategy, as shown by the findings of study by Piller and Tseng (2010).

2.3.3 Positioning

According to Cravens and Piercy (2009), "positioning" involves determining how you want consumers in a certain market group to think about your company or brand, and then designing a marketing strategy to match (or even surpass) their expectations in that regard. According to Temporal (2002), brand positioning is one of the most important strategic

pillars that controls the complete brand management procedure. Any brand-related strategic choices must consider the positioning's underlying assumptions. Positioning's strategic significance may be broken down into two broad categories: internal and external. When a company uses positioning tactics, it may influence how its target market thinks about it, which is a crucial step in building a valuable brand (Porter,2001). Because of this, positioning strategy comes before brand management and serves as the basis for where a brand stands in the industry (Blankson & Kalafatis, 2007a; de Chernatony, 2009).

In their book "Positioning: The Battle for your Mind," authors Trout and Ries (2001) claim positioning is not something that a product undergoes. Positioning is the mental work that is done on a prospective consumer before they become a customer. Keller (2013) explains that brand positioning is the procedure of shaping the company's offering and image so that it has a unique and highly regarded place in the minds of the intended consumers. According to Kotler (2003), positioning includes communication activities that pertain to the construction of pictures of the brands that organizations provide. When it comes to building a successful and influential brand, "being unique" from one's competitors is one of the prerequisites that must be met. While positioning, a company should think about developing a positioning idea for a single brand, as opposed to all brands in a given product class or category, and sticking to that concept for as long as possible (Cravens & Piercy, 2009).

According to Kotler (2003), when trying to position a brand, it is important for marketers to note and discuss the product's similarities and differences from those of its competitors. According to subsequent research conducted by Trout and Ries (2001), the term "product

positioning" should not be used to refer to the notion. You are not actually making any changes to the product itself in any significant way. Although brand communication has traditionally been the focus of positioning, it is currently recognized that a company's positioning affects the market as a whole and encompasses a variety of marketing endeavors. Because of this, brand positioning encompasses the whole of the company's outward operations and also serves as the basis for how the brand operates inside (Ellwood, 2009). More recently, it has become clear that brand positioning is a crucial factor in determining where a company stands in the marketplace (Guidry, 2011). Positioning a product helps it become more notable in the eyes of the consumer by encouraging the formation of memorable and favorable connections with the brand. This leads the customer to see the product as having more value (Keller, 2013).

Companies place their goods and services on a number of different pillars, including attributes, price and quality, use or applications, product user, product class, competition, and emotion, as stated by Lamb, McDaniel, Shearer, Kapoor, Hair, Boivin, and Appleby (2010). There are two main positioning techniques described by Elliot and Percy (2007): central positioning and differentiated positioning. A brand with a core approach is one that people think of when they think of all the best qualities associated with the category as a whole. Brands who take this tack are sometimes referred to be "category-leaders" or "the greatest brand in the category" and don't have to constantly reintroduce their advantages. Differentiated positioning, however, is successful only if customers already consider the brand to be the market leader.

2.3.4 Organizational factors

The organizational factors moderating the effect of niche marketing on performance of international courier companies in Kenya are marketing orientation and management styles. They are discussed below:

2.3.4.1 Marketing Orientation

Academic literature first began to include a commercial perspective as early as the 1920s, according to Gheysari, Rasli, Roghanian and Norhalim (2019). In the 1950s, its value and direction features had caught the eye of higher management, who began to see it as the marketing operationalization at the organization level. In the mid-1960s and the years that followed, a small number of empirical researches assessed the consequences of market orientation. Gheysari et al. (2019) further say concurrently, researchers tested the idea of building to learn how companies might improve their market focus by restructuring their internal structures. The next decade saw a change in attention, this time to the selling corporation. The sales team's market orientation was analyzed when the measurement and reward systems were being implemented. Researchers kept their focus on theories built around the selling company and found that information flow inside an organization is the aspect that increases organizational marketing orientation while divergence was identified as an impediment. Customer satisfaction and credibility are now widely acknowledged as having substantial impacts on market orientation and the outcomes it produces, thanks to the uptick in interest in relationship marketing that started about 30 years ago.

The marketing management concept, as stated by Kotler, Roberto and Lee, (2008), asserts that the success of a business depends on its ability to satisfy the demands and requirements of its target customers more effectively than its rivals. During the middle of this century, the marketing orientation became widely accepted as a management and marketing philosophy as a response to the shortcomings of the production orientation and the sales orientation. This is according to research that was conducted by Sharp (2007). According to Kotler (2002), both the function of marketing and its position within the larger organization have been subject to a degree of evolution throughout the course of time. It has gone full circle, from a scenario in which marketing was considered as a selling arm of the factory to a situation in which marketing "dictates" what will be produced in the factory.

Both a behavioral and cultural point of view might be taken into consideration while analyzing marketing orientation (Kirca, Jayachandran & Bearden, 2005). The cultural approach is one that is supported by Narver and Slater (1990) in respect to the fundamental qualities of an organization. They identified the marketing orientation by considering three primary factors: client focus, rival focus, and cross-departmental collaboration. These three elements illustrate the significance of collaboration across different parts of a business and the coordinated use of resources to maximize value for consumers. They were able to determine the marketing orientation by including these three components (In: Panayides, 2004, p. 46-47). Waris (2005) found a proportionate association between an employee's commitment and marketing orientation. He went on to explain that an employee's loyalty

functions as an incentive for the employee to be aware of the demands of customers and the activities of rivals.

According to Sharp (2007), a marketing orientation sets the requirements of the marketer as the highest priority, despite the fact that it acknowledges that these needs can only be satisfied via the process of meeting the demand of customers. In order to realize its objectives, a company that prioritizes marketing would carefully choose its target demographics and oversee the development of its internal production capacities. When a company has a marketing orientation, it demonstrates a dedication to strategic thinking. It takes a long-term perspective while conducting environmental change research and evaluates findings in the context of the organization's mission statement and capabilities. The recognition that according to the firm's aims there are certain areas where a company should not enter, and some parts of its operations which it should not modify is inherent in this approach. In other words, this method recognizes that there are some areas where a business should not enter.

2.3.4.2 Management Style

The phrase "management style" is often used in the field to describe an individual's approach to management. One's manner is a reflection of their character (McGuire, 2005). All organizations may do this by using the power of management to transform the vast array of available resources into tangible products (Field & Dubey, 2001). In the past, different managers have adopted a variety of strategies while carrying out their tasks as part of their official employment, which has led to the development of many unique management styles. Authoritarian management, coercive management, authoritative

management, democratic management, affiliative management, permissive management, indifferent management, coaching management, pacesetter management, visionary management, bureaucratic management, and defensive management are all examples of commonly seen management styles in recent years (Effere, 2005).

According to Luthans (2008), workers see the conduct and actions of managers as reflecting those of the company as a whole. Pathack (2005) provides more confirmation that different management styles have an influence on the efficiency and effectiveness of companies. Watson (2003) defines management styles as "the many strategies by which managers encourage subordinates to contribute willingly to the achievement of organizational goals." The basic objective of any given management style, as stated by Prasetya and Kato (2011), is to enhance the performance of employees in order to realize the company's ultimate objective. Kanyabi and Devi (2011) argue that a company's management style is both a complex entity and a crucial component in determining the success or failure of the enterprise. On the other hand, a company's success relies on the efforts of its personnel.

Uhl-Bien and Maslyn (2005) argue that the operational management style, together with the accessibility and availability of personnel, funds, equipment, and raw resources, is what ultimately determines the performance of corporate duties. According to Effere (2005), there are six different types of management styles: authoritarian, participatory, democratic, paternalistic, persuasive, and laissez faire. According to Ardichvili, Kuchenke, and Egwunyenga (2010), an authoritarian leader would never allow staff members to make choices, and the leader will typically keep a significant distance from staff members. A

kind of leadership that is imposed on a group; often called "coercive leadership" (Baughman, 2008).

Management in the paternalistic tradition combines the strictness of power with the moral rectitude and warmth often associated with a father figure (Farh & Cheng, 2000). It has also been noted that this style of management has a beneficial impact on the connection between subordinates and supervisors, as well as on workers' morale (Chang & Chao, 2008). A management style known as persuasive allows managers to have indirect influence over every facet of the firm. These managers function by providing explanations as to why duties need to be carried out in a certain manner rather than issuing commands directly to their employees. When it comes to influencing people at work, the term "laissez-faire" refers to a "hands-off, let things-ride" attitude (Northouse, 2010), as described in the leadership literature.

Laissez-faire leaders distribute tasks to their subordinates and then step back, allowing those subordinates to figure out how to get things done without much interference from higher-ups (Wu & Shiu, 2009). Daft (2014) argues that a democratic leader is one that gives subordinates significant autonomy and responsibility, defers to their judgment, and relies extensively on the knowledge and skills of those under them. Members of the group are given more say in how the organization is governed, what policies are developed, and what procedures are put in place (Mullins, 2007). The authors Jooste and Fourie (2009) provided data to back up their assertion that more democratic leadership leads to higher rates of productivity and job satisfaction.

2.3.5 Performance

Because of its commonplace nature in the field of management studies, the structure and concept of organizational performance are seldom defined openly. According to Hult, Ketchen, Griffith, Chabowski, Hamman, Dykes and Cavusgil (2008), there are three ways to assess whether or not an organization is meeting its objectives: by looking at how well it is doing its operations, its finances, and its overall performance. Financial success is the primary metric used in studies of empirical strategies. Iuliana and Maria (2016) explains that organizational performance is often synonymous with other concepts like as production, efficiency, effectiveness, economies, earnings potential, competitiveness, competitiveness. To that end, it is becoming more crucial to provide a simple definition of performance. Instead of focusing on the economic features of efficiency and effectiveness, dictionaries in French, English, and Romanian describe the notion of performance via the lens of result, accomplished goal, and quality. According to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language, the best outcome achieved by a technological system, machine, gadget, etc.; the result (especially spectacular) won by someone in an athletic event; a great accomplishment in an area of effort; a performance.

Improvements in technology are essential for the development of the postal and courier industries. The expansion of e-commerce and home delivery, along with improvements in transportation and other infrastructure in emerging nations, will lead to sustained growth in the sector (Crew & Kleindorfer, 2012). Although most businesses now use some kind of courier service, others absolutely must have overnight and same-day deliveries made on a regular basis. Distribution is essential for many businesses, including banks, which need help moving cheques and vouchers, managing their mailrooms, and sending out

statements, factories, which need to ship out finished products, and pharmaceutical distributors, which must get their drugs to pharmacies all over the country (Crew & Kleindorfer, 2012). The advent of competition between different organizations that provide courier services has resulted in a very high degree of professionalism among the many competitors in the courier sector, and at the same time controlling the rates that are being given on the market. Because the vast majority of businesses operating in this sector are locally owned and operated, Kenyans have been afforded new job possibilities, and the country has been able to keep more of its earnings inside its borders (Taylor & Hallsworth, 2010).

In this study, organizational performance measures of international courier firms used were the number of referrals, new customer traffic, customer retention and customer loyalty. These qualitative measures were used to indicate the performance of the international courier companies. These are expected outcome of niche marketing strategy implementation by the courier firms in Kenya meaning that effective implementation of niche marketing will results in increased number of customer referrals, there will be new customers streaming in the firms, the firm will retain its current customers from deflecting and both the new and current customers will be retained.

Modern leadership is based on different principles of action that highlight action' directions that lead to performance at both individual and organizational levels. An efficient leader takes decisions based on value requirements, and his/her experience and professionalism can only lead the team to performance. By creating strategies and appealing to emotions, true leaders mobilize teams to act. "Leaders are formed, not

born," research suggesting that leaders gradually acquire skills throughout their life and careers that make them so effective (Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee, 2007)

2.4 Empirical Review

This part consists of the elements of niche marketing which are concentrated marketing, positioning and customization as discussed below:

2.4.1 Effect of concentrated marketing on firm performance

Chia, Sin, Keoh, Leong, Lim and Shiang. (2015) intended to examine the impact of market concentration on firm performance in the Malaysian general insurance industry. The analysis was carried out by using panel data covering the period from 2000 to 2012. The paper used firm-level data made available from the Central Bank of Malaysia (BNM) and the Department of Statistics Malaysia to analyze the relationship between market concentration and firm performance in the Malaysian general insurance industry. The analysis shows that market concentration does not affect firm performance, and hence do not provide support to the SCP hypothesis of which higher market concentration would lead to better firm performance. A plausible explanation is that the insurance industry in Malaysia is governed by the government via regulation and hence the insurers could not freely change their prices unless approval from Central Bank of Malaysia is obtained.

The researcher examined the relationship between sector specialization and separate venture capitals, as well as between sector specialization and various indicators of market competition, using a sample of all US venture capital investment data from 1975 to 2003.

There is a general tendency for markets to become more specialized when competition increases. Nonetheless, the selection of a particular area of expertise is significantly influenced by firm-level attributes such as tenure and experience. When entering a competitive market, the researcher discovered that new entrants to the venture capital industry or a particular region tend to make investments that increase their specialization. On the contrary, established venture capital firms seem to react to competition by expanding their portfolios across various sectors, thereby reducing their overall degree of specialization. This discovery aligns with the concept that local venture capital firms, once well-established in the market, benefit from enhanced visibility and credibility. As a result, they are able to pursue favorable local investment prospects in alternative sectors in response to heightened specialized competition from new entrants. In a similar vein, we find that in response to increased competition, less experienced VCs tend to become more specialized, whereas more experienced VCs diversify into new sectors and become more generalist. (2008) Hochberg, Mazzeo, and McDevitt

In order to examine the effects of specialization on franchising choice and profitability, as well as the influence of scale on industry leadership, delinquent status, and follower status according to changes in productivity, Oh (2020) conducted two distinct studies. The researcher conducted an analysis of changes in hotel chain productivity and profitability at over 5,000 properties for hotel brands operating in the United States, utilizing data from these properties. The researcher investigated the potential impact of specialization on franchising selection and profitability in the initial study. Specialization was quantified by the researcher as the extent to which a company focuses on a particular market segment.

The researcher established empirical evidence indicating that hotel companies are less inclined to franchise properties that fall within their specialized market. Furthermore, the researcher discovered that company-managed properties exhibit greater profitability in the specialized market segment of the company compared to franchised properties. In contrast, when a property excludes a company's specialized market segment, the profitability of franchised properties is greater than that of company-managed properties, according to the researcher. Therefore, it can be concluded that the economics of specialization play a significant role in influencing the choice to franchise.

2.4.2 Effect of Customization on firm performance

Niu's research in 2021 tried to show that the link between customizing a service-oriented manufacturing information system (SMIS) and performance was real. He did this by looking at performance from three angles: data flexibility, process flexibility, and system flexibility. This study has developed the conceptual model and research hypothesis of Smart Manufacturing Information System (SMIS) based on the background of intelligent manufacturing. The examination of data unveils the internal relationship between customisation, adaptability, and performance of information systems in SOM organizations. The hypothesis is examined through the utilization of principal component analysis, process return analysis, and structural equation modeling on a sample of 230 manufacturing factories. The findings indicate that the performance of a tailored SMIS is significantly enhanced, mostly due to its data flexibility, process flexibility, and system flexibility.

In their study, Njaramba (2017) aimed to examine the impact of mass customization capabilities on the operational performance of multinational manufacturing enterprises operating in Kenya. The data was obtained through the administration of questionnaires to a sample of 93 multinational manufacturing enterprises operating in Kenya. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple correlation analysis. The findings of the study indicate that solution space development was the most commonly utilized capability for mass customisation, followed by robust process design and customer choice navigation, as supported by the average scores obtained. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the independent factors of solution space development and resilient process design do not exhibit a statistically significant impact on operational performance. The implementation of customer choice navigation in isolation was found to have a notable and favorable impact on operational performance. The examination of the collective impact of mass customization capabilities on operational performance revealed that robust process design and client choice navigation capabilities had a key role in elucidating the variations in operational performance. The statistical model exhibits a level of significance of 0.000. The coefficient of determination indicated that the mass customisation capabilities had a moderate influence on operational performance, accounting for 39.1% of the variability observed.

The objective of this study was to examine the financial implications associated with the implementation of product modularization as a strategic approach for addressing the requirement for product customization. The present study is centered on the examination of data obtained from an online survey conducted among industrial companies in Sweden.

The findings indicate that there exists a mediating relationship between the demand for customization and financial success, wherein product modularization serves as an effective technique for enabling enterprises to effectively meet their requirements for creating tailored products. The participants of the survey were individuals occupying the position of Research and Development (R&D) managers or those with comparable responsibilities within the various business divisions. The sampling frame comprised of Swedish manufacturing enterprises with a workforce of over 100 individuals, which were anticipated to engage in product development activities within their respective business divisions. According to the findings of the researchers, as demonstrated by model A1, it was observed that customization has a direct impact on return on equity (ROE), albeit statistically negligible. This observation was made while taking into account the factors of firm size and the debt-to-equity ratio. Therefore, within the selected organizations for analysis, there appears to be a correlation between a higher demand for customization and a poorer return on equity (ROE). However, it is important to note that this relationship does not exhibit statistical significance. According to Model A2, there exists a statistically significant and positive correlation between the demand for customisation and modularization. Consequently, a higher level of customization requirement is associated with an increased utilization of product modularization. In conclusion, the findings of model A3 indicate a statistically significant positive correlation between the utilization of modularization and return on equity (ROE), while accounting for factors such as business size, the debt-to-equity ratio, and customization. Therefore, it can be observed that customization has a notable beneficial impact on return on equity (ROE) through the mechanism of product modularization. Consequently, product modularization acts as a

mediator in the association between customization and ROE, as depicted in Figure 2. Nevertheless, the impact was quite minor. According to Persson and Lantz (2022),

The study conducted by Uma and Chandramowleeswaran (2015) examined the influence of service personalization on customer satisfaction, loyalty, and trust. The research conducted was characterized by its descriptive and correlational nature. The research encompassed a combination of primary and secondary data sources. The study's sample frame encompassed clients who were present during sales, and subsequent post-sales and servicing activities took place at HUL, Water Purifier Division in Chennai. The research primarily focused on individuals who had made a purchase and subsequently received first service for the product. The questionnaire was distributed exclusively to individuals who provided their consent to participate in the study. The assurance of maintaining confidentiality was provided. During a span of two months, a total of 642 surveys were disseminated, resulting in the receipt of 572 completed questionnaires that met the criteria for usability. This equates to a response rate of 89%. The study revealed a strong positive correlation between customization and other key factors, including service quality ($r = .859$), customer satisfaction ($r = .789$), customer loyalty ($r = .740$), and trust ($r = .777$). There was a strong positive correlation between Service Quality and Satisfaction ($r = .823$), as well as between Satisfaction and loyalty ($r = .698$), and Satisfaction and trust ($r = .684$). There was a significant positive correlation seen between customer satisfaction and both customer loyalty ($r = .746$) and customer trust ($r = .655$). There is a strong positive correlation ($r = .693$) between customer loyalty and trust. The study revealed a strong and

statistically significant correlation among all dimensions, with a significance level of 0.001.

2.4.3 Effect of Positioning on firm performance

Blankson et al. (2008) state that subsequent to the discussion of quantitative analysis, the outcomes of qualitative research regarding the sub-positioning strategies implemented by companies and their influence on performance are presented in the form of discussions. To be more precise, the post-hoc study's findings (in-person interviews) corroborate the quantitative results and show that the positioning techniques used in this research were known to the executives and owner managers. The results of the interviews demonstrated that, for certain sub-positioning strategies, the implementation of positioning strategies did affect the success of their companies, although in a mixed bag. To all appearances, service providers most often use the "Top of the range" sub-positioning technique when aiming for the middle- and upper-class demographics. Just as one would expect in the services area, nearly all respondents (48 out of 50) firmly said that the "Service" subpositioning strategy is crucial and served as the basis for their overall positioning discussion. Their view was that it was crucial to the public's opinion of the brand, the company's reputation, and the bottom line.

Mokaya, Kanyagia, and Nchebere (2017) utilized an exploratory design in their study, which involved a stratified sample of 215 participants selected from a larger population of 1230 individuals, including both personnel and customers. We utilized both descriptive and inferential statistics to examine the data collected from a semi-structured survey questionnaire. We set out to analyze how Kenya Airways Limited's marketing positioning

initiatives affected the company's bottom line. Focusing on Kenya Airways Limited, the study aimed to determine the impact of pricing strategies, perceived service quality, innovation strategies, differentiated benefits, and cost strategies on the company's performance. Using a market positioning perspective in relation to organizational performance, the study aimed to examine the market domain of Kenya Airways as seen by the respondents. The majority of respondents (89% to be exact) think the airline's positioning falls squarely inside the segmentation-targeting-positioning framework, while a small minority are unsure. With a rate of 98% for very great usage and 2% for great extent, nearly all respondents agreed that marketing positioning is the foundation of Kenya Airways' business plan. Despite the fact that consumer and corporate marketing share similar underlying concepts of market positioning and that various tactics are necessary for implementation, Kenya Airways offers a blend of features that the target market finds appealing.

Wayua and Kimenchu (2020) set out to investigate how Bamburi Special Products Limited's specialty marketing strategy impacted the company's success in Kenya. This study aims to analyze Bamburi Special Products Limited's (a Kenyan firm) performance in relation to market segmentation, product differentiation, and positioning. The research team that made decisions at the company and its parent company, Bamburi Cement Limited, were the subjects of the study, which used a descriptive research design based on a case study technique. In order to demonstrate the connection between the dependent and independent variables, a basic regression analysis was conducted. Results showed that Bamburi Special Products Limited, a Kenyan firm, benefited from a well-positioned

market. Market positioning has a positive and substantial effect on the performance of Bamburi Special Products Limited in Kenya, according to the study. What's more, the study found that this effect was statistically significant. According to the research, Bamburi Special Products Limited will see an uptick in business in Kenya if it takes a more prominent position in the market.

The purpose of this research was to determine how listed commercial banks in Kenya fared in relation to their strategic positioning and how it affected their business performance. Two theories—the market-based perspective of the firm theory and Porter's five forces model—formed the basis of this research. Personnel from the eleven commercial banks in Kenya that were included in the list formed the study's target population. Personnel in the carder's senior management team, middle management, and functional level served as the unit of analysis, while eleven listed commercial banks in Kenya served as the unit of observation. Three hundred eighty-four management staff members were selected using a systematic random sampling method. In order to identify shortcomings in the design and instruments, a pilot test was carried out with 38 participants. Researchers favored a mixed-methods approach for this investigation. Data was mostly collected through the use of a questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were used to examine the data. The data was analyzed using ANOVA, t-test, Pearson correlation, p-values, and coefficient of determination. Bar charts, histograms, frequency polygons, pie charts, graphs, and tables were all used to display the data. There was a positive correlation between strategic positioning and the performance metrics of earnings, return on assets, and equity as they increased slightly. According to the results of the correlation study, there is a substantial relationship between

Kenya's commercial banks' performance and their strategic positioning (Hussein & Sije, 2023)

2.4.4 Moderating effect of organizational factors on niche marketing and performance of international courier companies

This part discusses the organizational factors which are marketing orientation and management style.

2.4.4.1 Marketing Orientation

The objective of the study conducted by Šályová, Petrovičová, Nedelová, and Ďaĝoa (2015) was to assess and analyze the extent to which Slovakian businesses in the foodstuff industry were oriented toward marketing, as well as to establish correlations between that orientation and business performance. The behavioral perspective was utilized by the researchers to assess marketing orientation, with the MARKOR scales serving as the foundation. By employing regression and correlation analysis, the researchers investigated the connection between marketing orientation and business performance as measured by a single market indicator and financial indicators. The researchers examined the relationship between marketing orientation and each individual indicator separately. The researchers provided support for the hypothesis that a correlation exists between marketing orientation and business performance, as measured by financial and non-financial indicators excluding market share, through the utilization of regression analysis. The primary influence on customer satisfaction was found to be marketing orientation, as determined by correlation analysis.

In their study, Bamfo, Kraa, and Wright (2019) examined the influence of market orientation on the performance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), with innovation serving as a mediating factor. Out of a total of 500 SMEs that participated in the study, 391 were received, representing a response rate of 78.2%. The selection of SMEs was conducted utilizing questionnaires and purposive and convenience sampling methods. Utilized was an explanatory research design. The research investigation employed the Structural Equation Model (SEM) to analyze the data and examined a range of relationships as postulated in the hypothesis. The results of the study revealed that customer orientation positively and significantly predicts performance in the market orientation variable. However, competitor orientation predicts performance positively but not significantly. Performance of Ghanaian SMEs is inversely and insignificantly impacted by inter-functional orientation. Performance is partially mediated by innovation in relation to consumer orientation. Inter-functional orientations and performance are entirely mediated by innovation, whereas competitor orientation and performance are not mediated by innovation. In order to maximize performance, businesses, especially SMBs, are encouraged to adopt and implement market orientation practices and innovative procedures.

The primary aim of this research was to ascertain the impact that marketing orientation had on the operational effectiveness of mobile phone companies operating in Kenya. Primary data for the study were obtained through the administration of self-administered questionnaires. Using a statistical package for the social sciences, the gathered information was analyzed and presented in the form of tables and figures. A regression analysis was

conducted in order to ascertain the correlation between performance and marketing orientation. According to the study, customer orientation has empowered businesses to increase customer value, guarantee customer satisfaction, comprehend customer requirements, and closely monitor and evaluate the organization's level of dedication to meeting those requirements. Customer orientation empowered sales personnel to disseminate information regarding competitors' strategies on a regular basis, target consumers when the company had the opportunity, analyze the strengths and weaknesses of competitors, and react swiftly to competitive actions. Companies achieved inter-functional coordination by means of communicating customer information, ensuring that all departments are receptive to one another's needs and requests, having managers recognize the ways in which employees can add value for customers, and integrating all business functions in order to meet the demands of target markets. The findings of the regression analysis indicate that inter-functional coordination, customer orientation, and competitor orientation all have a combined impact on the performance of the firm (Mbonoka, 2015).

In their study, Hardeep, Dangwal, and Swati (2016) aimed to investigate the combined effects of strategic orientation (SO) and marketing orientation (MO) on business performance (BP). Additionally, they aimed to discern the influence of entrepreneurial qualification (as a moderator) and SO (as a mediator) on the relationship between MO and BP. A total of one thousand proprietors/managers of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that are operational in the Jammu District of Northern India were contacted between October 2013 and February 2014. This study verifies the multi-dimensionality of

SO (defensive, proactive, analytical, and risk-averse) and MO (marketing strategy, customer philosophy, operational efficiency, and integrated marketing). Despite the fact that both orientations positively affect the performance of SMEs, their synergistic effect is minimal. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that MO influences BP both directly and indirectly (via SO). Finally, entrepreneurial qualification serves as a moderating factor in the relationship between MO and SO.

2.4.4.2 Management style

Agarwal (2020) conducted a study to evaluate the connection between a leader's style or styles and the output of workers in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) banking industry. Using simple random sampling techniques, this quantitative research is conducted with a sample of 200 employees from five distinct banking institutions in the UAE. Version 21 of SPSS was utilized for the data analysis. The findings indicate that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between democratic and transformational leadership and employee performance ($p\text{-value} = 0.00, P < 0.05$). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was computed within the acceptable range of 0.7 to 0.8. It has been demonstrated that democratic and transformational leadership styles are beneficial to the banking industry, as they assist in achieving objectives and improving employee performance.

The primary objective of this study was to examine the relationship between leadership styles and job performance and employee retention. Three primary variables comprise the conceptual framework of this study. The independent variables consist of three distinct leadership styles: autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire. The intervening variable is employee retention, and the dependent variable is individual employee performance. A

random sampling technique was employed to select 150 respondents from the Sri Lankan D.G Fashion Garment (Pvt) Ltd. The sample was selected using a simple random method, and structured questionnaires were utilized to acquire primary data. The preferences of the respondents were requested to be indicated using a five-point Likert scale. The statistical software utilized to analyze the data was Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 13.0). Various statistical techniques were applied, including Cronbach's alpha, mean, mode, variance, standard deviation, correlation, and regression analysis. In addition, tables and graphs were utilized to present the data. This study additionally demonstrated that the results regarding the performance of individual employees varied according to the leadership styles implemented by managers and supervisors. Specifically, it found that a one-unit increase in variation for democratic leadership styles corresponds to 0.625 variations in individual performance, while a one-unit increase for laissez-faire leadership styles corresponds to 0.326 variations in individual performance. This is consistent with Porter's (2006) assertion that "the behavior of the same group of individuals will vary depending on the leadership style employed." As a result, the effects of various leadership styles on employee retention and individual performance are distinct. Pruyashantha and Win (2016) state the following.

Puni, Ofei, and Okoe (2014) aimed to analyze how leadership impacted the bottom lines of two banks in Ghana. Theories concerning autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles have been the subject of considerable discourse. In order to ascertain the predictive relationship between the dependent variable (financial performance) and the independent variables (autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles), a

correlational research design was implemented. Utilizing a multiple regression test, the study's hypothesis was examined. None of the leadership styles substantially predicted the financial performance of the two banks, according to the findings. In contrast, it was discovered that democratic leadership ($\beta=-.222$) accounted for a greater proportion of the variance in financial performance than autocratic ($\beta=-.043$) and laissez-faire ($\beta=-.039$) styles. The research findings indicate that while no statistically significant predictive relationship was found among the three leadership styles and financial performance, the democratic leadership style ($\beta=-.222$) significantly contributed to the variance in financial performance, surpassing the autocratic and laissez-faire styles. This cannot be disregarded, as democratic leadership fosters motivation, team spirit, and cooperation among work groups. In order to enhance competitiveness, the researchers advise organizations, particularly those in the service sector, to contemplate embracing a democratic leadership approach. This is due to the fact that democratic leadership is correlated with superior financial performance and long-term viability when compared to autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles.

2.5 Summary of the chapter and Gaps

The study sought to investigate the effect of niche marketing on performance of international courier companies in Kenya. The chapter examined theoretical framework, conceptual review, conceptual framework and empirical review according to study objectives. Each of the section yielded gaps which this study will seek to fill.

Theoretically, the study examined two theories: Market segmentation theory and theory of Porter's Generic Competitive Strategies which elaborate how institutions need to relate and

interact with the environment to create a formidable competitive advantage in the Courier industry. Previous studies have focused more on Resource based view theory. Its very important to note that Market segmentation is key when dealing with niche marketing and this hasn't been used in other studies. To overcome this theoretical gap, the current study took a different dimension by examining two theories which complement and supplement each other. Market segmentation theory provides a means upon which niche marketing can be applied by the firms. Porter's Generic Competitive Strategies explains how an organization can achieve competitive edge in the marketplace and ensure its survival.

The study examined conceptual review as derived from dependent and independent variables of the study. The independent variable has been conceptualized into concentrated marketing, positioning and customization. On the other hand, performance was based on number of referrals, new customer traffic, customer retention and customer loyalty. During the review, the study established that the conceptualization of niche marketing and performance has been a subject of debate in maiden studies. Previous research into niche marketing includes: (Akbar, 2015) "Niche marketing strategy and firm success: review of SME's in Peninsular Malaysia," which argued that Peninsular Malaysia's small and medium-sized furniture businesses should adopt a niche marketing strategy in order to increase their market share and thereby their economic impact; According to research by Echols and Tsai (2005) titled "niche and performance: the moderating role of network embeddedness," it is more probable that a Venture capital company will make money in a certain market if it is surrounded by other Venture capital companies that are entrenched in the network in strong ways, rather than if its neighbors are spread out and less connected;

The authors Hernandez (2008), Toften and Hammervoll (2009), and Zhao (2017) all argue that construction-related businesses whose strategy is on capitalizing on a certain niche market are more likely to succeed than those that attempt to cater to everyone. Local research includes: (Wayua, 2020) on niche marketing strategy and firm performance of Bamburi Special Products Ltd, which found that market segmentation, market positioning, and product differentiation positively impacted Bamburi Special Products Limited's performance in Kenya; (Nyaga, 2017) researched on factors affecting performance of courier service industry in Kenya, which found that most respondents are motivated on the basis of a desire to increase their firm's profitability. None of these researches has been done on courier companies and for that matter international courier companies to establish if utilization of niche strategies, with concentrated marketing, positioning and customization as the variables under study will influence their performance. Furthermore, these international courier firms, who have come to do business in a foreign country need to stay competitive by adopting marketing strategies that will allow them have sustained competitive edge and outsmart the local companies in the same industry and thus need to embrace niche marketing. It's in light of these reasons that the above study will be conducted.

Lastly, the study examined empirical studies which are related to the study objectives. The study acknowledges effort of other authors and their contribution toward niche marketing and performance. However, it has been deduced that few studies have indeed examined niche marketing in developing countries. Most of the studies have been on niche marketing strategies and not on what are the essential constructs of niche marketing. Studies done

include Ngugi, Muchemi and Maina (2022) examined effect of niche market penetration strategy on performance of selected telecommunication application service firms in Kenya and the study operationalized niche market penetration strategy in terms of market segment, specialization and relationship management and firm performance in terms of customer retention and profitability growth. Wayua and Linda (2020) examined the effect of niche marketing strategy on firm performance of Bamburi Special Products Limited in Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to establish the effects of market segmentation, product differentiation and market positioning on firm performance of Bamburi Special Products Limited in Kenya.

2.6 Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework is a set of guiding ideas that acts as a basis for further investigation (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Robson, 2011). The conceptual framework of this study comprised of niche marketing, which was the independent variable while organizational performance of international courier companies was the dependent variable. The conceptual framework is diagrammatically illustrated by Figure 2.1 revealing the link between Niche marketing and performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

The conceptual framework of this study comprised of niche marketing, which was the independent variable while organizational performance of international courier companies was the dependent variable which included number of referrals, new customer traffic, customer retention and customer loyalty. Organizational characteristics such as marketing orientation and management style mitigated the connection between niche marketing and the success of international courier firms.

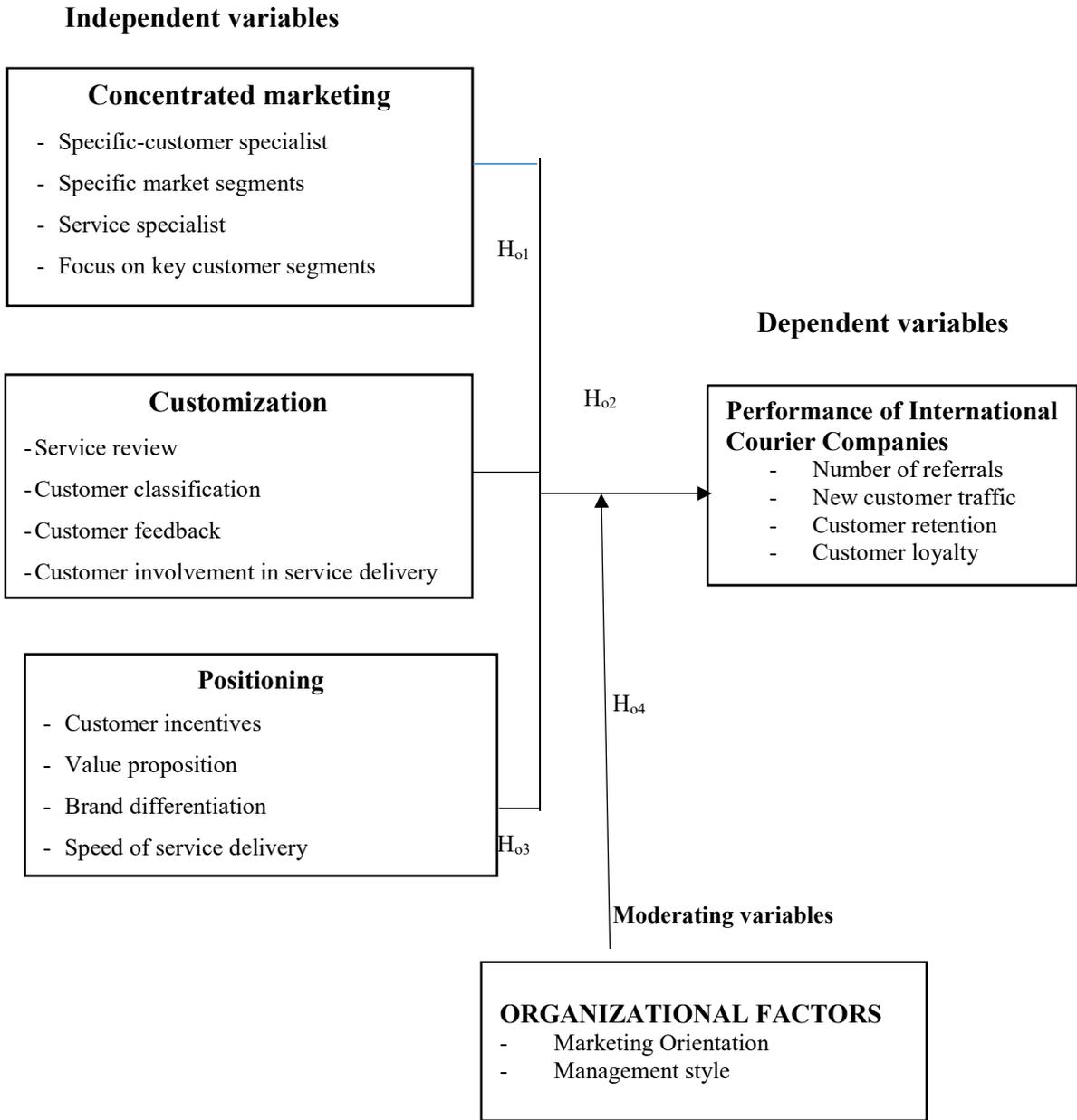


Figure 2. 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher's Own Self conceptualization (2020)

The first variable of Niche marketing is Concentrated marketing. By implementing a concentrated marketing strategy, organizations have the potential to optimize resource allocation, enhance consumer loyalty, and personalize marketing endeavors. Concentrated marketing companies highlight the ways in which their products can fulfill the specific requirements of their niche market.

The second variable is Customization. Customizing success requires providing customers with an assortment of products from which to choose. Therefore, it is important to managers to understand the different aspects of consumer behaviors as they pertain to customization.

Positioning is the third variable of niche marketing. Positioning should differentiate the brand from other alternative brands in the market. Organizational strategic managers must therefore plan the product mix that will result in a combination of elements that make up the product.

Lastly, we have management style and marketing orientation as sub variables of organizational factors as moderating variable. Leadership is an essential element and key factor in the efficiency of organizations. Managers should ensure marketing is at the core of the firm's operation. The customer should be the key focus.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides readers with a comprehensive explanation of the study design that was used. It provides a detailed explanation of what had been done and how it had been done. It covered the demographic that was intended to be targeted, the sample design, the technique for data collecting, as well as validity and reliability assessments.

3.2 Research Design

The research design, as defined by Kothari (2004), serves as the comprehensive theoretical structure that guides the execution of the research. This strategy governs the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. The investigators employed an explanatory research design in this investigation. Explanatory research aims to provide an explanation and rationale for the descriptive data. Descriptive studies primarily inquire about the "what," whereas explanatory studies aim to elucidate the "why" and "how" aspects (Grey, 2014). Subsequent to exploratory and descriptive research, it proceeds to ascertain the true causes behind the occurrence of a phenomenon. Explanatory research provides evidence to support or refute a hypothesis or explanation by seeking causes and reasons. Its purpose is to identify and report relationships between various facets of the phenomenon being investigated. Determining whether international courier companies in Kenya could have derived advantages from employing more specialized marketing strategies was the objective of the study. Due to the fact that explanatory studies are defined by research

hypotheses that specify the nature and direction of the relationships between or among the variables under investigation, an explanatory research design was considered suitable.

3.3 Target Population

Cooper and Schindler (2003) state that the term "population" refers to the whole set of factors from which inferences are made. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), a population is "the set of all things that share some feature." Appendix III provides a list of Kenya's international courier service providers, which totals 55. The research targeted marketing managers of international courier services. The study targeted a population of 55 with the operations managers as the respondents who constituted of stakeholders in the international courier companies in Kenya. This was done as illustrated in table 3.2.

Table 3.1: Target population

Categories	Target
Marketing Manager	55
Total	55

Source: Research data (2022)

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

For the purposes of scientific study, a sample is a random selection from the whole population (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Sampling is a vital part of every research project. For this study, the researcher focused on a subset of the population consisting of marketing

managers at various types of businesses. Purposive sampling technique was used through census method.

3.4.1 Sample size Determination

According to Sekaran (2000), a study sample is a "subset of the population. It is a subset of the population, as described by Bryman and Bell (2003), which means that it is the portion of the population that is chosen for examination. The census approach was used and the researcher sent questionnaires to each of the 55 companies.

3.5 Data collection Instruments

New, never-before-seen information makes up the primary data. As an alternative, secondary data is defined as data that has already been collected and statistically analyzed (Kothari, 2004). The study employed both primary and secondary sources to do the analysis. The most important main source was questionnaires delivered to the participants. Important demographic data may be gleaned from population surveys using questionnaires, as stated by (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). In addition to making it simpler to analyze the data, this also increased the capacity for action. Performance was measured using qualitative measure

The questionnaires were divided into two parts i.e. section A which had the bio data including age, gender, education and number of years that the managers have been in the company. Section B having the elements of niche marketing (i.e. concentrated marketing, customization and positioning) and organizational factors explained with questions to the respondents. Likert scale was used where the answers to the questions asked to the

respondents were organized into Strongly Disagree (**SD**), Disagree (**D**), Neutral (**N**), Agree (**A**) and Strongly Agree (**SA**). Each construct consisted of nine questions in the Likert scale.

3.6 Pilot Test

Typically, the focus of a pilot study is on an activity that will be repeated on a larger scale in a next experiment, project, or development (Eldridge, Lancaster, Campbell, Thabane, Hopewell, Coleman, and Bond, 2016). A pilot research was done and questionnaires were sent to managers in order to do a preliminary test of the questions. It was helpful for the researcher to determine if there are defects, limits, or other types of shortcomings, as well as problems, that the responder could experience. The pilot research was conducted on five national courier businesses within the municipality of Kisumu.

3.6.1 Instruments Validity

According to Drost (2011), a measure is valid if and only if it provides a reliable reflection of the construct it is designed to evaluate. The construct might be any skill, piece of knowledge, attribute, or mindset that the researcher is studying. Validity was achieved through:

Construct validity-This pertains to the process by which a construct, be it a concept, idea, or behavior, is converted or operationalized in the physical world (Trochim, 2006). This occurs particularly if the relationship is cause-and-effect; therefore, the construct validity provides justification for the relationship's existence. A literature review was used to generate questions for the questionnaire items; the sample size was adequate to be

representative of the phenomenon under study; and finally, every effort was made to ensure congruence between the research questions, objectives, investigation, and results and recommendations. Also, validity was achieved through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (also known as CFA) was selected because of its potential use in the validation of the factor structure of a collection of observed variables. In the case of CFA, the observed variables are put through a factor analysis to see whether they, in fact, belong to the latent variable to which they are presumptively assigned on the basis of previous research, both theoretical and empirical. According to the CFA model, it is anticipated that the observed items will have a loading on the latent variable that is greater than 0.

Content validity - This is an evaluation of the degree to which a set of items on a scale correspond to the relevant domain of the construct that it is attempting to quantify. Drost (2011) cites Bollen (1989) as noting that content validity is a qualitative form of validity in which the analyst determines if the measurements completely reflect the domain after the concept's domain is defined. The content validity of the questionnaire was evaluated based on how well it represented the aims of the research. This was done by determining the degree to which the study's goals were reflected in the responses to the questionnaire.

Expert judgement-The employment of supervisors and several other specialists allowed for the use of Expert Judgment on the content.

Additional validity tests were conducted using the SPSS version 21.0 statistical package. The variable view of the SPSS program was updated with all of the variables that were entered. The Likert scale was then used to assist in entering the data into the data display.

3.6.2 Instruments Reliability Test

The reliability of a study's results is measured by how well they hold up over time and how accurately they represent the whole population studied. Also, if the results of a study can be duplicated when following the identical protocols, it strengthens the instrument's credibility as a reliable research tool. The following is the definition of dependability given by Joppe (2000): According to Salkind (1997), reliability is the capacity to keep functioning in the same manner as before. Repeated administration of a reliable test or evaluation of behavior ensures that results are reliable and stable.

The following measures were taken by the researcher to assure the trustworthiness of their findings: The questionnaire's questions will be produced in light of the study's aims; the questionnaire's items were written in simple language to help respondents comprehend (comprehension); the questionnaire's items were phrased clearly; A pilot research was conducted with respondents who had certain features with the final sample, but these people were deemed ineligible for the main study. This was done with the intention of modifying the questionnaire, which included locating ambiguities in the phrasing, delicate questions, and incorrectly positioned questions among other things. In addition to that, the answer was analyzed using the reliability statistics of Cronbach's alpha.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Data to be collected was obtained using questionnaire. The Questionnaires were delivered by hand to the respondents. Some of the questionnaires dropped and picked immediately while others were picked later. Each questionnaire included a cover letter that guarantees the confidentiality of the responses. Kothari (2004) argues that the questionnaire plays a pivotal role in every survey.

3.8 Data Analysis

Both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to examine the quantitative data collected for this study. Descriptive statistics are used to summarize or describe the data collected for a specific group or collection of units of analysis (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003). Before running inferential statistics, categorical data that was collected using Likert scale of measurement was transformed into continuous data to allow running regression analysis. This included normality and multi-collinearity. Descriptive analysis used percentages, frequencies, means and standard deviation to show the response from the respondents. The respondents were required to state their level of agreement on various statements on each variable. Performance was measured using qualitative measures.

Inferential statistics involved the use of statistical measurement tools such as regression and Pearson correlations. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis test was used to establish the association between niche marketing constructs and Firm performance. Further the variables were subjected to Simple Regression Analysis to establish the effects

of individual Niche marketing and Performance of international courier companies in Kenya. Later, Multiple Regression Analysis test was used to establish the combined effect Niche marketing and Firm performance. Hierarchical Regression Analysis test was conducted to establish the moderating effect of organizational factors on the relationship between niche marketing on performance of international courier companies in Kenya. To find out the strength of the relationship between the niche marketing constructs and performance, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was conducted and the results are presented in tables. The study also sought to find out the regression coefficients between niche marketing constructs and performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

The data was examined to see whether or not there were any gaps, inaccuracies, missing information, or other types of irregularities. After that, the data were placed through a numerical coding process in order to organize them into a select few categories. The report includes tables and graphs displaying the results of the SPSS (21.0) analysis, which was selected because it is more user friendly and is best suited for the evaluation of management-related attitudes (Martin & Acuna, 2002). In order to make the data obtained easier to interpret and analyze, they were presented using tables and many other types of graphical presentations where applicable. Tables were used to ease comparison and to provide a summary of the replies for future investigation. As a result, quantitative reports in the form of tabulations, percentages, and measures of central tendency were created.

3.9 Ethical considerations

The researcher noticed several ethical problems when they were carrying out the investigation. This was accomplished by the researcher making an application to MMUST

for permission and authorization in order to carry out the study. Before commencing the research, careful attention was paid to the questionnaire's formulation to guarantee that no questions of an offensive or sensitive character would be asked of the respondents. In order to avoid putting the respondents through unnecessary hassle, the researcher made previous preparations and booked sessions with them. Respondents were informed that they would not be financially reimbursed for their time, as well as the study's purpose and goals. The respondent was told by the researcher that their replies would be kept confidential, and that any data collected would be handled with dignity and utilized only for the stated aims of the study. The researcher obtained informed permission from the participants before administering the questionnaire, and participants were given the option to stop participating at any moment.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of descriptive and inferential statistical analysis of data as well as their interpretation on the effect between niche marketing and performance of international courier companies in Kenya. The results are reported in sections. Section one describes the response rate and reliability of the research instrument. Section two presented respondents' demographic characteristics while Section three and four describes descriptive and inferential data analysis respectively.

4.2 Response Rate

The study sought to get opinions from 55 respondents from the International courier companies in Kenya. However, only 41 questionnaires were collected from sampled respondents for analysis. The response rate was high enough to get sufficient quantitative information on the study variables as the response rate was 74.5%. Baruch and Holtom (2018) regarded an overall institutional response rate for the course experience questionnaire of at least 70% to be both desirable and achievable. The response rate of 74.5% which was attained during this study is acceptable because it is above the 70%.

4.3 Preliminary Quantitative Analysis of Data

Initial Investigations Prior to testing the four predetermined null hypotheses, an examination of the acquired data was performed to ensure it was enough for analysis.

4.3.1 Validity and Reliability Test

Validity ascertained using content validity where comment from the supervisors and pilot study was considered. It focused on clarity, adequacy and suitability of questionnaire items. All the respondents indicated that questionnaire was clear and precise therefore, all questions had adequate content as per the study variables to achieve the general objective of the study.

Cronbach alpha coefficient tests were used to establish the reliability of niche marketing on organizational performance. Taber (2018) advises that the best measure for testing reliability is Cronbach's alpha (α) which is expected to be 0.70. For reliability tests Cronbach alpha was applied for each variable which had a range 0.710 to 0.961 thus for this, Cronbach alpha statistic with a value of 0.7 or more was considered reliable. The test items were retained and used in this study hence considered reliable as shown in the Table 4.1.

Table 4. 1: Reliability.

Variable	N	Cronbach alpha
Concentrated marketing	9	0.710
Customization	9	0.832
Positioning	9	0.744
Performance	9	0.921
Organizational factors	9	0.961
Overall	45	0.834

Source: Research data (2022)

It is clear from looking at Table 4.1 that all of the results of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient were more than the minimum needed value of 0.70, resulting in an overall value of 0.834, which indicates that the instruments were dependable.

4.3.2 Assumptions of Linear Regression Analysis

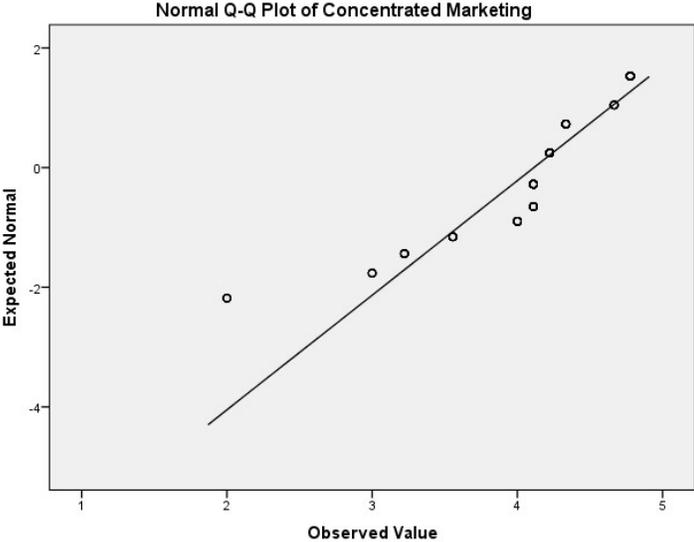
Categorical data obtained using a Likert scale of measurement was translated into continuous data to facilitate running regression analysis, and the necessary assumptions of performing multiple regression analysis were reviewed and satisfied before running inferential statistics. Multi-collinearity and normalcy were among those considered.

4.3.2.1 Normality Test

It is recommended by Ghasemi and Zahedias (2015) that visual inspections be used to determine whether or not things are normal. Figure 4.1 is a typical Q-Q plot for targeted marketing, showing that the gap between the data and the line of best fit is less than what

would be expected by chance. As a result, the information was sufficiently close to normal for use in a regression analysis.

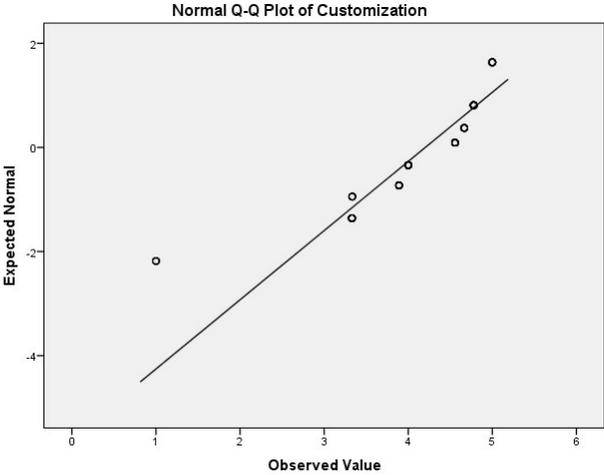
Figure 4. 1: Normal Q-Q plot of concentrated marketing



Source: Research data (2022)

From Figure 4.2, normal Q-Q plot of customization the deviation from normality was not significant as from the approximation to the line of fit. Since the data followed a nearly normal distribution, it could be utilized in parametric tests like linear regression.

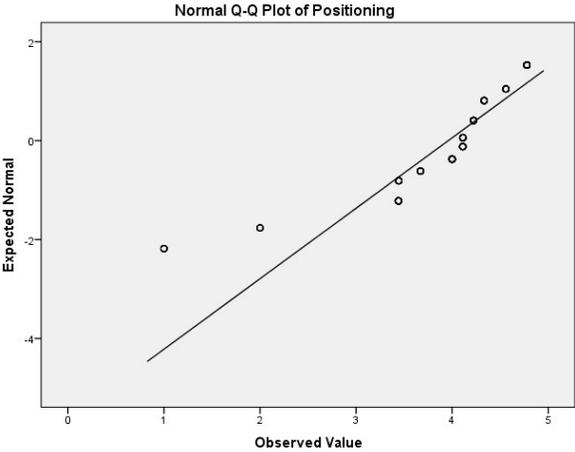
Figure 4. 2: Normal Q-Q plot of Customization



Source: Research data (2022)

From Figure 4.3, normal Q-Q plot of positioning departure from normality was not great as from the approximation to the line of fit. Accordingly, parametric tests, including linear regression, could be performed since the data were almost normally distributed.

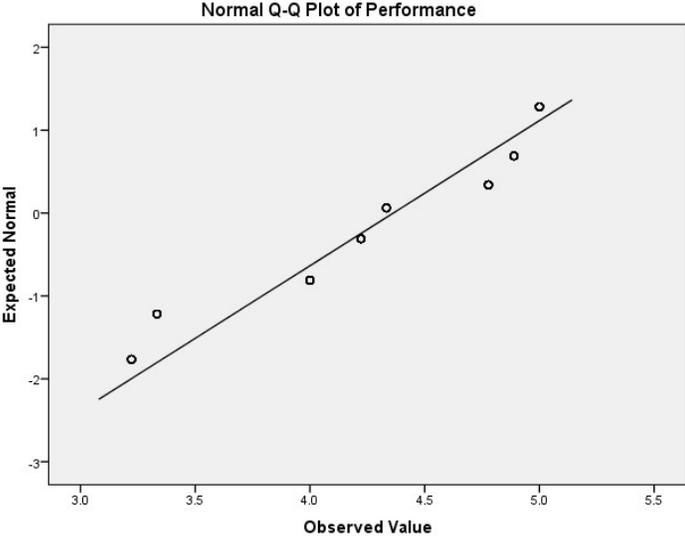
Figure 4. 3: Normal Q-Q plot of positioning



Source: Research data (2022)

Figure 4.4 shows a normal Q-Q plot of the organization's performance; the deviation from normality is little compared to the deviation from the line of best fit. Since the data followed a nearly normal distribution, parametric tests could be performed on them.

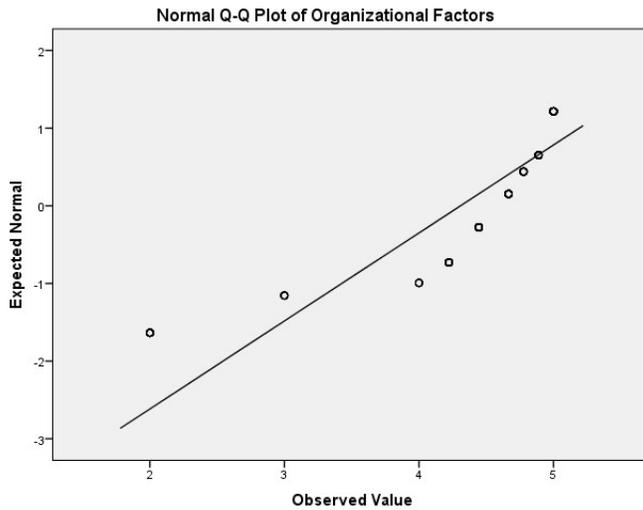
Figure 4. 4: Normal Q-Q plot of organization performance



Source: Research data (2022)

Figure 4.5 shows a normal Q-Q plot of organizational components, and although there was some deviation from normality, it was not as extreme as the deviation from the approximate line of fit. As a result, the data was sufficiently close to normal for use in a regression analysis.

Figure 4. 5: Normal Q-Q plot of organizational factors



Source: Research data (2022)

4.3.2.2 Multi-Collinearity

Table 4. 2: Multi-Collinearity

Independent variable	Tolerance	VIF
Concentrated marketing	.613	1.633
Customization	.795	1.258
Positioning	.676	1.478
Organizational Factors	.601	1.663

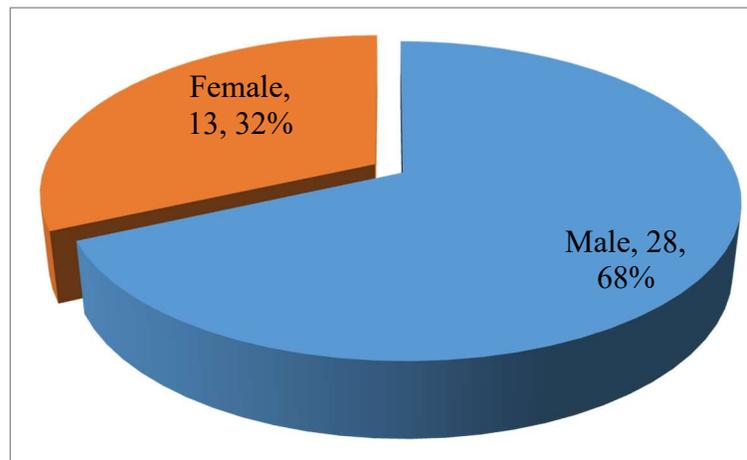
Source: Research data (2022)

Multi-collinearity problem cause ability to define any variable to diminish owing to their interrelationship. According to Besley 1980 as sighted in (Jingyu, 2015) researchers have used VIF= 10 as critical value rule of thumb to determine whether there is too much correlation. The VIF value in the table 4.2, are less than 10 so there is no multi-Collinearity problem in study variables.

4.4 Socio- Demographic Profiles of Respondents

There is a strong belief that the respondent's demographic information is essential for the results to be credible and generalizable, as well as for any following discussions of the findings. As such, demographic details about the respondents, including their gender, age, level of education, and length of time in their current employment, are included below.

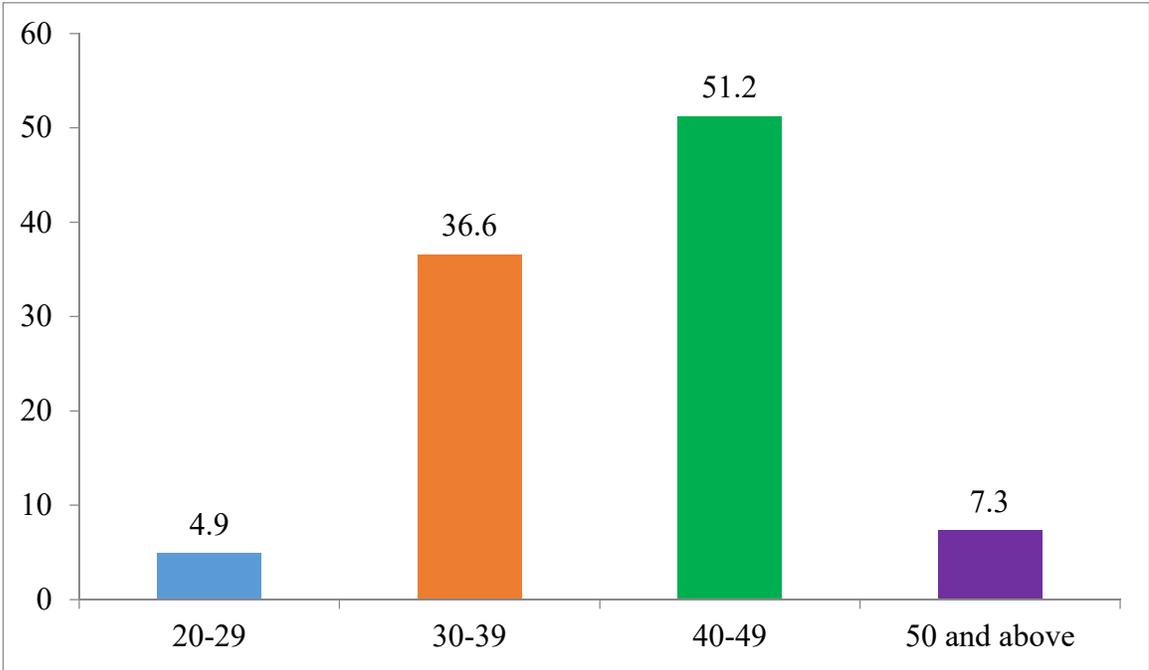
Figure 4. 6: Gender of the Respondents



Source: Research data (2022)

The results in Figure 4.6 show that gender was established at 68.3(28%) male and 13(31.7%) female from international courier companies in Kenya. It can be noted that the number of male respondents was higher than that of female with a margin of 36.6%.

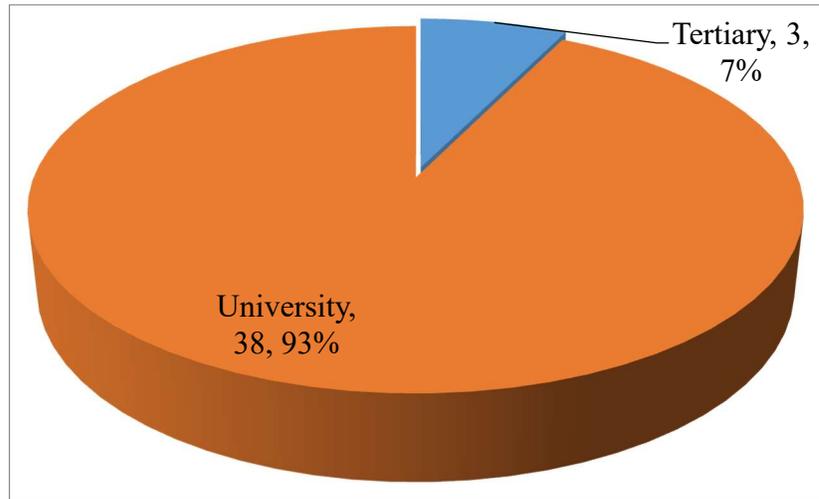
Figure 4. 7: Age of the Respondents



Source: Research data (2022)

From Figure 4.7, it can be seen that majority of the respondents were between 40 years and 49 years which constituted a total of 21(51.2%), followed by ages 30 to 39 15(36.6%). The results also revealed that above 50 years were 4(7.3%) and between 20 and 29 years were 2(4.9%). This depicted fair representation of all age groups which is key for succession in International courier companies in Kenya.

Figure 4. 8: Respondents Level of Education



Source: Research data (2022)

From Figure 4.8, it can be seen that the highest number of employees 38(92.7%) had university as their highest level of education followed by 3(7.3%) who had tertiary level of education as their highest level of education.

Table 4. 3: Work Experience of Employees

Years	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5 years	1	2.4
6-10 years	5	12.2
11-15 years	9	22.0
16-20 years	10	24.4
21-25 years	13	31.7
26 years and above	3	7.3
Total	41	100.0

Source: Research data (2022)

From the Table 4.3, it can be seen that slight majority of employees had worked for a period of 21 and 25 years (31.7%), followed by those who had worked for 16-20 years 10(24.3%) and 9(22.0%) having worked for 11-15 years. Less than 5 years was one of the respondents while over 25 years were 3(7.3%) of the respondents. It can be concluded that employees who had worked for over 10 years in International courier companies in Kenya were able to give reliable information on the understanding of niche marketing and performance.

4.5 Descriptive Statistics

The survey questioned participants about their thoughts on niche marketing, organizational characteristics and overall performance. As indicated in the tables below for each variable, descriptive analysis for this part employed percentages, frequencies, averages, and standard deviation to illustrate the answer from the respondents. These are all important measures of central tendency. It was requested of the respondents to indicate the degree to which they agreed with the different assertions about each variable. The level of agreement ranged from 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-agree and 5- strongly agree. The results are as follows.

4.5.1 Concentrated marketing

The sampled respondents were provided with 9 statements related to concentrated marketing. The results are as presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4. 4: Concentrated marketing

No	Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Our company has chosen specific market segments for some of its service offerings	41	1	5	4.51	.952
2	Focusing on specific market segments has enabled our company to deliver high-quality services	41	2	5	4.44	.838
3	The company focuses on differentiating its service packages from those of its competitors	41	2	5	4.41	.948
4	The company focuses on competitive pricing to remain competitive in the market	41	1	5	4.02	1.151
5	Our company focuses on service innovations to remain competitive in the market.	41	1	5	4.44	.923
6	We focus on our key customer segments where we have competitive advantage so as to satisfy their unique needs more than our competitors.	41	1	5	4.44	1.097
7	Our company offers services that are not available elsewhere (service specialist)	41	1	5	3.49	.978
8	Our company concentrates on supplying one or two major firms with specialist services. (specific-customer specialist)	41	1	5	3.24	1.220
9	Our organization places a greater emphasis on allocating resources to improve customer service, such as hiring individuals with strong interpersonal skills and providing them with appropriate training.	41	1	5	4.02	1.405

Source: Research data (2022)

From Table 4.4, the results indicated that respondents agreed that their companies have chosen specific market segments for some of its service offerings as indicated by mean of 4.51 with insignificant S.D of 0.952. Respondents agreed that focusing on specific market segments has enabled their company to deliver high-quality services as indicated by an average of 4.44 and insignificant S.D of 0.838. Similarly, respondents agreed that their company focuses on differentiating its service packages from those of its competitors as shown by an average of 4.41 with a S.D of 0.948.

The results also revealed that respondents agreed that their company focuses on competitive pricing to remain competitive in the market as proved by an average of 4.02. However, with a significant S.D of 1.151, there was some variation in regard to international courier companies focusing on competitive pricing to remain competitive in the market. With an average of 4.44, the respondent agreed that their company focuses on service innovations to remain competitive in the market with insignificant S.D of 0.923. However, with significant S.D of 1.097, respondents agreed that they focus on their key customer segments where they have competitive advantage so as to satisfy their unique needs more than their competitors. This implied that, not all international courier companies focused on their key customer segments where they have competitive advantage so as to satisfy their unique needs more than their competitors.

The results further revealed that respondents were neutral whether their company offers services that are not available elsewhere (service specialist) as indicated by an average of 3.49. With significant S.D of 1.220, the respondents were neutral that their company concentrates on supplying one or two major firms with specialist services as indicated by

an average of 3.24. Lastly the respondents agreed that their organization focuses more on allocating resources to improve excellence in customer service, such as workers with strong people skills and educating them in customer relations, as shown by an average score of 4.02 points. A significant S.D of 1.405 suggested that not all businesses depended more on allocating resources to improve their level of excellence in customer service.

4.5.2 Customization

The sampled respondents were provided with 9 statements related to customization. The results are as presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4. 5: Customization

No	Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Our company classifies customers according to services required by maintaining a customer database.	41	1	5	3.71	.918
2	Several methods are used by our firm in order to ascertain and foretell consumer requirements.	41	1	5	3.98	1.214
3	We involve our customers in the service delivery process to ensure their needs are met.	41	1	5	3.83	1.430
4	Our company uses the customer needs to review its services.	41	1	5	4.02	1.275
5	We provide different service packages for our clients.	41	1	5	3.80	.942
6	Our customers enjoy and are satisfied with our service packages.	41	1	5	3.90	.631
7	We frequently seek feedback from our clients on their satisfaction level of our services so as to note areas of improvement.	41	1	5	4.41	.840
8	Our pricing is determined by the needs of the segmented market	41	1	5	4.02	.712
9	Our source of customized services is drawn from and through service innovation and brand marketing	41	1	5	3.95	1.303

Source: Research data (2022)

From Table 4.5, respondents agreed that their companies classify customers according to services required by maintaining a customer database as indicated by mean of 3.71 with insignificant S.D of 0.918. Respondents also agreed that their organization makes use of a variety of methods to ascertain consumer requirements and to forecast both their current and future requirements as indicated by an average of 3.98 and significant S.D of 1.214. Similarly, respondents agreed that they involve their customers in the service delivery process to ensure their needs are met as shown by an average of 3.83 with a S.D of 1.430. This implied that not all international courier companies involve their customers in the service delivery process to ensure their needs are met.

Further, respondents agreed that their company uses the customer needs to review its services as provided by an average of 4.02 with significant S.D of 1.275. This implied that not all companies used the customer needs to review its services. The respondent agreed that they provide different service packages for their clients as shown by an average of 3.80 and insignificant S.D of 0.942. Similarly, respondents agreed that their customers enjoy and are satisfied with their service packages as indicated by an average of 3.90 with insignificant S.D of 0.631.

The results also revealed that respondents agreed that they frequently seek feedback from their clients on their satisfaction level of their services so as to note areas of improvement as indicated by an average of 4.41 with insignificant S.D of 0.840. Similarly, the respondents agreed that pricing is determined by the needs of the segmented market as shown by an average of 4.02 and insignificant S.D of 0.712. Lastly, with significant S.D of 1.303, respondents agreed that their source of customized services is drawn from and

through service innovation and brand marketing as shown by an average of 3.95. This implied that there is variation in the source of customized services is drawn from and through service innovation and brand marketing.

4.5.3 Positioning

The sampled respondents were provided with 9 statements related to positioning. The results are as presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4. 6: Positioning

No	Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	The company's brand positions the organization far above its competitors	41	1	5	3.68	1.213
2	Our service quality attributes are our major marketing points	41	1	5	4.20	.898
3	The firm employs various technologies to vary quality of services for various markets	41	1	5	4.10	1.136
4	Our firm is keen on speed of service delivery to its customers.	41	1	5	4.37	.779
5	Our company provides additional value-added services to entice customers	41	1	5	4.15	.947
6	The management are keen on ensuring very high service innovation strategies that are aimed at making the company better	41	1	5	4.39	.870
7	The company has provided many payment methods for our customers' convenience	41	1	5	4.51	.952
8	Our service provisions are consistently available in the market and at the company	41	1	5	4.32	1.213
9	We have or are working on customer incentive programs	41	1	5	4.12	1.249

Source: Research data (2022)

As shown in Table 4.6, respondents were in agreement that their company's brand positions the organization far above its competitors as shown by an average of 3.68 with significant S.D of 1.213. Significant standard deviation indicated that not all companies' brand positions the organization far above its competitors. On the other hand, respondents agreed (Mean=4.20) that their service quality attributes are their major marketing points with insignificant S.D of 0.898. Respondents also agreed that their firm employs various technologies to vary quality of services for various markets as indicated by an average of 4.10 and significant S.D of 1.136. This suggested that not all firms employ various technologies to vary quality of services for various markets.

The respondents also agreed that their firm is keen on speed of service delivery to its customers as shown by an average of 4.37 with insignificant S.D of 0.779. Similarly, the respondents were in agreement that their company provides additional value-added services to entice customers as shown by an average of 4.15 and insignificant S.D of 0.947. Further, respondents confirmed that management are keen on ensuring very high service innovation strategies that are aimed at making the company better as shown by an average of 4.39 with insignificant S.D of 0.870.

The respondents were strongly in agreement that their companies have provided many payment methods for their customers' convenience as shown by an average of 4.51 with insignificant S.D of 0.952. The respondents also agreed that their service provisions are consistently available in the market and at the company as shown by an average of 4.32 with significant S.D of 1.213. This implied that not all service provisions are consistently available in the market and at the company. Finally, the results revealed that respondents

were in agreement that they have or are working on customer incentive programs as shown by an average of 4.12 with significant S.D of 1.249. This implied that not all international courier companies have or are working on customer incentive programs.

4.5.4 Organizational Factors

The sampled respondents were provided with 9 statements related to organizational factors. The results are as presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4. 7: Organizational Factors

No	Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Marketing orientation has an effect on the successful application of niche marketing strategies	41	1	5	4.24	.943
2	Management style affects the application of niche marketing strategies	41	1	5	4.13	1.044
3	Motivation of employees leads to better overall company performance	41	1	5	4.46	1.027
4	Inter-functional coordination leads to improved company performance	41	2	5	4.34	.990
5	Our company emphasizes on transformational leadership for better management	41	1	5	3.76	1.300
6	We focus more on training our staff and managers for better managerial skills to improve our performance	41	1	5	3.41	.772
7	Our philosophy is to ensure that customers' needs are satisfied	41	1	5	4.51	1.098
8	The mission we have been given is to make marketing the dominant business culture.	41	1	5	3.93	.832
9	The customers and their needs form the nucleus of all the activities of our organization i.e. All the activities and tasks are organized around the customer	41	2	5	4.44	.950

Source: Research data (2022)

From Table 4.7, respondents agreed that marketing orientation has an effect on the successful application of niche marketing strategies as indicated by mean of 4.24 with insignificant S.D of 0.943. Respondents also agreed that management style affects the application of niche marketing strategies as indicated by an average of 4.13 and significant S.D of 1.044. This implies that not all management style affects the application of niche marketing strategies. Similarly, respondents agreed that motivation of employees leads to better overall company performance as shown by an average of 4.46 with a S.D of 1.027. This implied that not all motivation of employees leads to better overall company performance.

Further, respondents agreed that inter-functional coordination leads to improved company performance as provided by an average of 4.34 with insignificant S.D of 0.990. The respondent also agreed that their company emphasizes on transformational leadership for better management as shown by an average of 3.76 and significant S.D of 1.300. This implied that not all companies emphasize on transformational leadership for better management. Respondents were neutral whether they focus more on training their staff and managers for better managerial skills to improve their performance as indicated by an average of 3.41 with insignificant S.D of 0.772.

The results also revealed that respondents strongly agreed that philosophy is to ensure that customers' needs are satisfied as indicated by an average of 4.51 with significant S.D of 1.098. This implied that there is variation in regard to ensuring that customers' needs are satisfied. Similarly, the respondents agreed that our mission is to give marketing the highest possible priority in order to make it the dominant culture of the organization as

shown by an average of 3.93 and insignificant S.D of 0.832. Lastly, respondents agreed that the customers and their needs form the nucleus of all the activities of our organization i.e. All the activities and tasks are organized around the customer as shown by an average of 4.44 and insignificant S.D of 0.950.

4.5.5 Firm Performance

The sampled respondents were provided with 9 statements related to firm performance. The results are as presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4. 8: Firm Performance

No	Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Niche marketing leads to increased number of customer referrals.	41	2	5	4.37	.915
2	Niche marketing lead to increased new customer traffic to the firm	41	3	5	4.44	.634
3	Niche marketing leads to high customer retention	41	3	5	4.51	.637
4	Niche marketing ensures customer loyalty to the firm	41	3	5	4.59	.631
5	Niche marketing leads to enhanced customer relationship	41	3	5	4.51	.637
6	Niche marketing leads to increased customer satisfaction	41	4	5	4.51	.506
7	Niche marketing leads to improved brand image of the company	41	2	5	4.51	.840
8	Niche marketing ensures less competition	41	2	5	3.44	1.077
9	Niche marketing ensures efficiency in serving customers	41	3	5	4.29	.716

Source: Research data (2022)

As shown in Table 4.8, respondents agreed that niche marketing leads to increased number of customer referrals as shown by an average of 4.37 with insignificant S.D of 0.915. Similarly, respondents agreed that niche marketing lead to increased new customer traffic to the firm as shown by an average of 4.44 with insignificant S.D of 0.634. Respondents strongly agreed that niche marketing leads to high customer retention as indicated by an average of 4.51 and significant S.D of 0.637.

The respondents also strongly agreed that niche marketing ensures customer loyalty to the firm as shown by an average of 4.59 with insignificant S.D of 0.631. Similarly, the respondents were strongly in agreement that niche marketing leads to enhanced customer relationship as shown by an average of 4.51 and insignificant S.D of 0.637. Further, respondents strongly agreed that niche marketing leads to increased customer satisfaction as shown by an average of 4.51 with insignificant S.D of 0.506.

The respondents were strongly in agreement that niche marketing leads to improved brand image of the company as shown by an average of 4.51 with insignificant S.D of 0.840. However, the respondents were neutral on whether niche marketing ensures less competition as shown by an average of 3.44 with significant S.D of 1.077. This implied that not all niche marketing ensures less competition. Finally, the results revealed that respondents agreed that niche marketing ensures efficiency in serving customers as shown by an average of 4.29 with insignificant S.D of 0.716.

4.6 Inferential Analysis

An inferential statistical analysis was carried out with the purpose of determining the nature of the connection that exists between the independent variables of niche marketing specifically concentrated marketing, customization and positioning and the dependent variable of niche marketing, which was the performance of international courier companies in Kenya. In this investigation, the statistical significance of the association was analyzed to evaluate whether or not to accept the null hypotheses that were presented for the study. The Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis model was used to determine the link between the marketing constructions of niche markets and the performance of the companies.

The model of simple regression analysis was used in order to demonstrate the level of significance of individual niche marketing on firm performance and to assess the state of the null hypotheses. A model based on multiple regression analysis was used to ascertain the level of significance of combined niche marketing and performance of international courier companies in Kenya. This study used hierarchical regression analysis to examine whether or not organizational variables moderate the association between niche marketing and the success of international courier businesses in Kenya.

The relationship between the niche marketing elements and the firm's success was analyzed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Test. Additionally, a simple regression approach was used to assess the variables and draw conclusions on the connection between niche marketing and the success of Kenya's international courier

businesses. Subsequently, multiple regression analysis was used to show the combined effect of niche marketing on business outcomes.

4.6.1 Concentrated marketing and Firm performance

The purpose of the research was to determine whether or not there is a connection between concentrated marketing and the performance of international courier firms. In order to accomplish this goal, the Pearson correlation analysis test was carried out, and the findings are shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4. 9: Correlation Analysis Concentrated marketing

		Concentrated marketing	Firm performance
Concentrated marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	.628**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	41	41
Firm performance	Pearson Correlation	.628**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	41	41

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

Source: Research data (2022)

Table 4.9 shows that there is a significant relationship between concentrated marketing and the success of international courier companies in Kenya with $r = 0.628$, $P = 0.000$. There seems to be a robust correlation between the two factors. It follows that more investment in concentrated marketing will boost the efficiency of Kenya's international courier services. The study set out to assess the extent to which concentrated marketing helped international courier businesses in Kenya. This was possible because of the following initial null hypothesis:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between concentrated marketing and performance of international courier companies in Kenya

This was tested using simple regression analysis, and the findings are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4. 10: Model Summary; Concentrated marketing and Firm performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.628 ^a	.394	.379	.45469	1.401

a. Predictors: (Constant), Concentrated Marketing
b. Dependent Variable: Performance

Source: Research data (2022)

The data were summarized in table 4.10, which revealed that concentrated marketing had a value of r squared = 0.394, which was equivalent to 39.4% of the total. This is the percentage of a company's performance that can be attributed to concentrated marketing, while the remaining 60.6% can be attributed to other factors that were not explained in the study because it focused on the relationship between concentrated marketing and the performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

The study also sought to find out the direct effect of concentrated marketing on the level of performance achieved by international courier firms in Kenya. A test of analysis of variance was carried out, and the findings are reported in Table 4.11 below.

Table 4. 11: ANOVA; Concentrated marketing and Firm performance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.246	1	5.246	25.377	.000 ^b
	Residual	8.063	39	.207		
	Total	13.309	40			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Concentrated Marketing

Source: Research data (2022)

According to the findings, the table 4.11 revealed that the F (1,40) value was 25.377, and the P value was 0.000. The significance threshold used in the tests was either 0.5 or 5%. According to the findings, concentrated marketing has a statistically significant impact on the profitability of international courier firms operating in Kenya.

The findings of the research, which can be seen in Table 4.12, were also aimed at determining the regression coefficient that exists between concentrated marketing and the performance of international courier firms in Kenya.

Table 4. 12: Regression Coefficient; Concentrated marketing and Firm performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.538	.565		2.720	.010
Concentrated Marketing	.687	.136	.628	5.038	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

Source: Research data (2022)

Based on the value of the regression coefficient B, which was found to be 0.687 in table 4.12, it could be deduced that an increase in one unit of concentrated marketing was related with an increase in 0.687 units of firm performance. As a consequence of this, the initial

null hypothesis was shown to be incorrect as a result of the findings, and it was determined that concentrated marketing had a statistically significant impact on the performance of international courier businesses in Kenya. The equation for the simple linear regression model was developed as follows on the basis of the findings of the regression coefficients:

$$Y = 1.538 + 0.687X_1$$

Where

Y = represents Firm performance

X₁ = represents Concentrated marketing

From the results, it is evident that concentrated marketing has positive influence on performance of international courier companies in Kenya. This implies that when concentrated marketing increases, firm performance also increases. These results are also supported by Pearson correlation analysis whereby, concentrated marketing had significant positive relationship with performance of international courier companies in Kenya. This supports the assertion that firm performance depends on niche marketing such concentrated marketing at organizational level. The results are consistent with those of Mirzaei (2014), who discovered a statistically significant link between targeted advertising and increased profits at Islamic financial institutions. Less competition and more profits result from a more concentrated market. Based on their analysis, Muñoz, Yelpe, Ramos and Fuentealba (2020) conclude that market concentration and income diversification positively and non-linearly impact bank performance. The findings of Goddard, Molyneux and Wilson (2014), who discovered a causal link between market concentration and

profitability, corroborated this view. Demircuc-Kunt and Huizinga (2009) and Athanasoglou, Staikouras and Delis (2006) found a favorable correlation between market concentration and firm profitability. Concentration and ROE were shown to be positively and significantly related by Molyneux and Thornton (2012). Their results suggest that bank concentration increase bank profitability, and capitalization and management efficiency enhance bank performance.

Pahlevi and Ruslan (2019), on the other hand, found that the market concentration index had a negative and substantial effect on bank performance, therefore these findings don't hold up. The greater the market concentration index value, the more clearly the monopolistic effects of market concentration on bank performance may be shown. However, Smirlock (2015) finds no correlation between focus and decreased profits. In their study, Mamatzakis and Remoundos (2013) found no correlation between market concentration and financial results. According to Chia, Sin, Keoh, Leong and Shiang (2015), the correlation between market dominance and company success is weak. Research in this area suggests that when banks are too consolidated, executives become more interested in living the "peaceful life" than in seeking out ways to increase earnings.

4.6.2 Customization and Firm performance

The purpose of the research was to determine whether or not there is a connection between customization and the performance of organizational firms. In order to accomplish this goal, the Pearson correlation analysis test was carried out, and the findings are described in Table 4.13 below.

Table 4. 13: Correlation Analysis Customization

		Customization	Firm performance
Customization	Pearson Correlation	1	.506**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	41	41
Firm performance	Pearson Correlation	.488**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	41	41

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

Source: Research data (2022)

It can be observed from table 4.13 that the significant positive link between customization and performance of international courier firms in Kenya was $r = 0.488$, $P = 0.000$. This proved the existence of a strong correlation between customization and performance. This indicates that improved performance from international courier companies in Kenya would follow from a greater degree of customization. The study's objective was to look at how customization affects international courier companies' productivity in Kenya. Following is the second null hypothesis that guided the studies:

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between Customization and performance of international courier companies in Kenya

The results of this effort which relied on a simple regression analysis, are shown in Table 4.14.

Table 4. 14: Model Summary; Customization and Firm performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.488 ^a	.238	.218	.50997	2.451

a. Predictors: (Constant), Customization
b. Dependent Variable: Performance

Source: Research data (2022)

From the table 4.14, the findings indicated that customization had a value of r squared = 0.238 which translated to 23.8%. This was the percentage of firm performance caused by customization, while 76.2% was responsible by other factors not explained because the study focused on customization and performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

The study also sought to find out the direct effect of customization on performance of international courier companies in Kenya. Analysis of variance test was undertaken and the results are presented in Table 4.15.

Table 4. 15: ANOVA; Customization and Firm performance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.166	1	3.166	12.175	.001 ^b
	Residual	10.143	39	.260		
	Total	13.309	40			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Customization

Source: Research data (2022)

From the table 4.15, the results showed that $F(1, 40) = 12.175$ and P value was 0.001. Tests were done at 0.5 or 5% level of significance. The results indicated that customization had a statistically significant effect on performance of international courier companies in Kenya and therefore, good predictor of firm performance

The study further sought to find out the regression coefficient between customization and performance of international courier companies in Kenya and the results are presented in Table 4.16.

Table 4. 16: Regression Coefficient; Customization and Firm performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.792	.457		6.104	.000
Customization	.397	.114	.488	3.489	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

Source: Research data (2022)

With the regression coefficient B calculated in table 4.16 to be 0.397, it was observed that a one-unit increase in customization was associated with a 0.397-unit improvement in business outcomes. The results showed that the second null hypothesis was rejected and the findings led to the conclusion that customization had a statistically significant impact on the success of international courier services in Kenya. Based on the data from the regression coefficients, the following equation for the simple linear regression model was derived:

$$Y = 2.792 + 0.397X_2$$

Where

Y = represents Firm performance

X₂ = represents Customization

From the findings, customization positively and significantly influences performance of international courier companies in Kenya. This implies that when customization increase, firm performance also increases. This supports the assertion that firm performance depends on niche marketing such as customization at organizational level. Allowances such as medical allowance, car allowance to employees improve their input which results to increase in firm performance especially in regards to customer satisfaction. Asgba (2017) came to the same conclusions, demonstrating that Customization has the most beneficial influence on marketing success, and they found the same outcomes. According to the findings of the study, a product that is effectively differentiated has the potential to be a point-of-difference in the market, contributing to increased customer acceptance through factors such as its ease of use, durability, and reliability, and can therefore serve as a source of competitive advantage. Mugwe and Kagiri (2015) found that customized marketing significantly influences performance at Coca cola Kenya.

4.6.3 Positioning and Firm performance

The purpose of the research was to investigate the connection that exists between positioning and the overall performance of an international courier firms. In order to evaluate the nature of the connection, a Pearson correlation analysis test was carried out, and the findings are shown in Table 4.17.

Table 4. 17: Correlation Analysis Positioning

		Positioning	Firm performance
Positioning	Pearson Correlation	1	.588**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	41	41
Firm performance	Pearson Correlation	.715**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	41	41

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

Source: Research data (2022)

It can be observed from table 4.17 that there was a strong positive link between positioning and organizational performance of international courier firms in Kenya. This was demonstrated by the fact that the r value was 0.715 and the P value was 0.000. This suggests that an improvement in positioning would result in an improvement in performance for foreign courier firms operating in Kenya. The purpose of this research was to determine how much of an impact positioning had on the success of international courier firms operating in Kenya. This was accomplished by putting the following third hypothesis to the test;

H03: There is no significant relationship between positioning and performance of international courier companies in Kenya

This was tested using simple regression analysis, and the findings are presented in Table 4.18.

Table 4. 18: Model Summary; Positioning and Firm performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.715 ^a	.512	.499	.40818	2.017

a. Predictors: (Constant), Positioning
b. Dependent Variable: Performance

Source: Research data (2022)

From the table 4.18, the findings indicated that positioning had r squared value of 0.512 which deciphered to 51.2%. This was the percentage of firm performance caused by positioning, while 48.8% was accounted for by other factors not captured because the study focused on positioning and performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

Moreover, the study sought to find out the direct relationship of positioning on performance of international courier companies in Kenya. ANOVA test was undertaken and the results are presented in Table 4.19.

Table 4. 19: ANOVA; Positioning and Firm performance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	6.812	1	6.812	40.884	.000 ^b
1 Residual	6.498	39	.167		
Total	13.309	40			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Positioning

Source: Research data (2022)

From the table 4.19, the results showed that $F(1, 40) = 40.884$, $P = 0.000$. Tests were done at 0.5 or 5% level of significance. The results indicated that positioning had a statistically significant effect on performance of international courier companies in Kenya and therefore, good predictor of firm performance.

The study also sought to find out the regression coefficient between positioning and performance of international courier companies in Kenya and the results are presented in Table 4.20.

Table 4. 20: Regression Coefficient; Positioning and Firm performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.081	.363		5.742	.000
Positioning	.543	.085	.715	6.394	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

Source: Research data (2022)

The result of the regression coefficient $B = 0.543$, which was shown in table 4.20, showed that an increase in one unit of positioning was linked with an increase of 0.543 units of firm performance.

As a consequence of these findings, the third of the null hypotheses was refuted, and it was shown that placement had a statistically significant impact on the performance of international courier businesses operating in Kenya. On the basis of the findings of the regression coefficients, the equation for the simple linear regression model was formulated as

$$Y = 2.081 + 0.543X_3$$

Where

Y = represents Firm performance

X_3 = represents Positioning

The study established that positioning has positive and significant influence on performance of international courier companies in Kenya. This implies that when Positioning increases, firm performance also increases. This supports the assertion that firm performance depends on niche marketing such as positioning. These results corroborate the conclusion reached by Mokaya, Kanyagia, and M'Nchebere (2017), who found that positioning plays a crucial role in marketing strategy and is firmly established within the overall segmentation-targeting positioning framework. According to Mokaya, Kanyagia, and M'Nchebere's (2017) findings, positioning falls well within the broader segmentation-targeting framework. The market positioning tactics that were used resulted in improvements in performance. Blankson, Kalafatis, and Coffie (2013) came to the conclusion that financial institutions must use positioning strategies since doing so will boost quick business expansion and increase profits in comparison to rivals, increased interest in brand-new offerings in the marketplace, provide financial institutions the opportunity to provide services with key characteristics for their clients, get a sizable portion of the market, market segmentation and isolation, and provide the intended audience with a benefit of such high perceived value that they are willing to pay more for it. Kiviti (2018) concluded that banks need to implement positioning strategies because doing so would result in increased rapid firm growth and greater profitability in comparison to the firm's competitors, improved sales of new products, and the ability for banks to provide financial services.

4.6.4 Niche marketing and Firm performance

The study also sought to find out the effect of the combined niche marketing namely concentrated marketing, customization, positioning and niche marketing on performance of international courier companies in Kenya. To accomplish this, Multiple Regression Analysis test was used and the results are presented in Table 4.21.

Table 4. 21: Model Summary; Niche marketing and Firm performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.815 ^a	.664	.637	.34774	1.717

a. Predictors: (Constant), Customization, Positioning, Concentrated Marketing
b. Dependent Variable: Performance

Source: Research data (2022)

Table 4.21 displays the results of the analysis of the relationship between niche marketing and the performance of international courier companies in Kenya. The results show that $r = .664$, which indicates that 66.4% of variations in firm performance were caused by niche marketing, while 33.6% of variations in firm performance were caused by other unexplained factors.

The goal of this research was to determine whether or not niche marketing had a significant impact on the success of international courier firms in Kenya. The results of the analysis of variance test are shown in Table 4.22.

Table 4. 22: ANOVA; Niche marketing and Firm performance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	8.835	3	2.945	24.355	.000 ^b
Residual	4.474	37	.121		
Total	13.309	40			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Customization, Positioning, Concentrated Marketing

Source: Research data (2022)

From the findings, the results showed that $F(3, 40) = 24.355$ and $P = 0.000$ which indicated that niche marketing had statistically significant effect on performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

Table 4.23 displays the findings of the research, which included an examination of the relationship between niche marketing and the success of Kenya's international courier firms. Table 4.23 shows that concentrated marketing had a regression coefficient of $B = 0.384$, $t = 3.204$, which means that a one-unit shift in concentrated marketing is correlated with a 0.384-unit improvement in company performance. $B = 0.197$, $t = 2.359$ for customization suggested that a one-unit shift in customization was related to a 0.197-unit improvement in firm performance. The regression coefficient for Positioning was $B = 0.345$, $t = 3.970$, indicating that for every one unit shift in Positioning, there was a corresponding shift in firm performance of 0.345 units. Consequently, the research found that concentrated marketing, customization and positioning significantly boosted company output.

Table 4. 23: Regression Coefficients; Niche marketing and Firm performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	.554	.485		1.140	.261
1 Concentrated marketing	.384	.120	.351	3.204	.003
Customization	.197	.084	.242	2.359	.024
Positioning	.345	.087	.455	3.970	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Firm performance

Source: Research data (2022)

Based on the beta coefficient results, the equation of Multiple Linear Regression model was written as,

$$Y = 0.554 + 0.384X_1 + 0.197X_2 + 0.345X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Where;

Y = Performance of international courier companies in Kenya (Dependent variable)

X₁ = Concentrated marketing

X₂ = Customization

X₃ = Positioning

Similar results were found by a study conducted by Wayua and Linda (2020) who found that niche marketing strategies significantly and influenced performance. According to the findings of Rahab (2022), niche marketing has a favorable and substantial influence on the performance of a number of different application service companies. A favorable correlation between niche marketing and good worldwide performance was found by Zucchella and Palamara (2016). This correlation was measured in terms of export intensity, precocity, speed, and scope. The horizontal micro-segmentation of the global market is the foundation for the international expansion of niche companies. These companies move internationally to follow their global customers, regardless of the psychic or geographical

distance between them, and compete primarily on the basis of factors other than price. According to the findings of Alao, Egwuonwu, and Adeeko (2019), the footwear business in Nigeria has a substantial association between niche marketing and value differentiation. According to the findings of the research, niche marketing is an effective method for achieving value difference and driving customers' purchasing choices, particularly in the retailing outlets that make up the footwear subsector in Nigeria.

4.7 Moderating Effect of Organizational factors on the Relationship between Niche marketing and Organizational Firm performance

The research also aimed to determine whether or not there was a moderating effect of organizational factors on the connection between niche marketing and organizational firm performance. In order to do this, it applied the fourth null hypothesis, which is as follows:

H04: Organizational factors have no significant moderating effect on the relationship between niche marketing and performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

To determine whether or not there was a moderating effect of organizational factors, hierarchical regression analysis test was for each moderating variable. In this analysis, niche marketing was added in the model, thereafter, the interaction of niche marketing and moderator were added in the model. The study observed change in R square, F and significance level. The study also observed the regression coefficients. The results are presented in Table 4.24.

Table 4. 24: Moderating Effect of Organizational factors (OF)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.815 ^a	.664	.637	.34774	.664	24.355	3	37	.000
2	.840 ^b	.705	.673	.33009	.041	5.063	1	36	.031
3	.887 ^c	.788	.743	.29265	.083	4.266	3	33	.012

a. Predictors: (Constant), Customization (C), Positioning (P), Concentrated Marketing (CM)
b. Predictors: (Constant), C, P, CM, Organizational Factors (OF)
c. Predictors: (Constant), C, P, CM, OF, COF, POF, CMOF

Source: Research data (2022)

The analysis produced two r square values per each model. The first r square is for independent variables $r^2=0.664$ (66.4%) which is before interaction of organizational factors as a moderating factor. The introduction of interaction terms of organizational factors and niche marketing moved R squared from 0.664 to 0.788 (78.8%). The change (12.4%) in R square was significant as indicated by $P=.012$ implying that organizational factors are a significant moderating factor between niche marketing and performance of international courier companies in Kenya. Therefore, the fourth null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 4. 25: Regression Coefficient for Moderating Variables

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1 (Constant)	.554	.485			1.140	.261
Concentrated Marketing	.384	.120	.351		3.204	.003
Positioning	.197	.084	.242		2.359	.024
Customization	.345	.087	.455		3.970	.000
2 (Constant)	.657	.463			1.418	.165
Concentrated Marketing	.259	.126	.237		2.047	.048
Positioning	.145	.083	.178		1.754	.088
Customization	.318	.083	.419		3.806	.001
Organizational Factors	.170	.076	.263		2.250	.031
3 (Constant)	-1.571	.787			-1.997	.054
Concentrated Marketing (CM)	1.489	.878	1.362		1.697	.099
Positioning (P)	3.809	1.351	4.681		2.820	.008
Customization (C)	-.005	.532	-.006		-.009	.993
Organizational Factors (OF)	4.569	1.254	7.059		3.645	.001
CM*OF	1.474	.614	2.803		2.402	.010
P*OF	1.287	.308	7.846		4.182	.000
C*OF	.282	.838	.374		.337	.738

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

Source: Research data (2022)

In model 1, concentrated marketing had a regression coefficient of $B = 0.384$, $t=3.204$, which means that a one-unit change in Concentrated marketing is correlated with a 0.384-unit improvement in performance. $B = 0.197$, $t=2.359$ for Customization suggested that a one-unit change in customization was related to a 0.197-unit improvement in firm performance. The regression coefficient for Positioning was $B = 0.345$, $t=3.970$, indicating that for every one unit change in positioning, there was a corresponding shift in firm performance of 0.345 units.

In model 2, when organizational factors were entered in the model, it also had a positive and significant effect on performance ($\beta=0.170$, $P=0.031$). This implies that if organizational factors change by one unit, the performance significantly changes by 0.170 units in same direction. However, in the same model, positioning had insignificant predictive power on performance ($\beta=0.145$, $P=0.088$) while concentrated marketing ($\beta=0.259$, $P=0.048$) and customization ($\beta=0.318$, $P=0.001$) had significant positive predictive power.

In model three, upon the introduction of the interaction term (cross-product between niche marketing and organizational factors), Organizational factors remained its significant predictive power although the power and significance increased from ($\beta=0.170$, $P=0.031$) to ($\beta=4.569$, $P=0.008$). However, concentrated marketing lost its positive significant power ($P=0.099$) while customization lost its positive significant power ($P=0.993$) in comparison to model 1.

Further, it can be seen that the results before introducing organizational factors as moderator, concentrated marketing had regression coefficient of 0.384, $p=0.003$ while after moderating the effect of organizational factors, the regression coefficient was 1.474, $P=.010$. This implies that organizational factors would result to significant increase on the effect of concentrated marketing on firm performance. Before introducing organizational factors as moderator, positioning had regression coefficient of 0.197, $p=0.024$ while after moderating the effect of organizational factors, the regression coefficient was 1.287, $P=.000$. This implies that organizational factors do significantly moderate the effect of positioning on firm performance. Lastly, before introducing organizational factors as

moderator, customization had regression coefficient of 0.345, $p=0.000$ while after moderating the effect of organizational factors, the regression coefficient was 0.282, $P=.738$. This implies that organizational factors would results to insignificant increase on the effect of customization on firm performance.

Finally, organizational factors significantly moderated the effect of Concentrated marketing and Positioning on performance. The same was not reflected in regards to customization. This implies that a unit increase in organizational factors will cause the effect of Concentrated Marketing on performance to significantly increase by 1.474 units ($\beta=1.474$, $P=0.010$). Similarly, a unit increase in organizational factors will cause the effect of positioning on performance to significantly increase by 1.287 units ($\beta=1.287$, $P=0.000$). However, a unit increase in organizational factors will cause the effect of customization on performance to insignificantly increase by 0.282 units ($\beta=0.282$, $P=0.738$) implying that organizational factor has no significant moderating effect on customization. Based on the beta coefficient results, the equation of hierarchical multiple linear regression models was written as

$$Y = 0.554 + 0.384X_1 + 0.197X_2 + 0.345X_3$$

$$Y = 0.657 + 0.259X_1 + 0.145X_2 + 0.318X_3 + 0.170X_3 M$$

$$Y = -1.571 + 1.489X_1 + 3.809X_2 - 0.005X_3 + 4.569M + 1.4746X_1M + 1.287X_2 M + 0.282X_3 M$$

Where;

Y = Performance of international courier companies in Kenya (Dependent variable)

X_1 = Concentrated marketing

X_2 = Customization

X_3 = Positioning

M = Organizational factors

This finding is consistent with that of Waithaka, (2016), who found that the relationship between competitive marketing intelligence practices and the performance of firms listed on the NSE, Kenya was moderated by organizational factors, in particular leadership style toward competitive marketing intelligence. According to research conducted by Hsieh, Tsai, and Wang (2018), market orientation does attenuate the connection between market niche and new product performance. According to research by Azegele, Okeyo, and yambegera (2021), the link between market mix and organizational performance of insurance firms in Kenya is significantly tempered by a leadership style characterized by transformational management.

The overall importance of the association between worker diversity and university performance was not moderated by organizational characteristics, as shown by Yegon, Kahara, and Okibo (2014). Proof of this is seen in the fact that the combined importance of these variables was higher than the predetermined threshold. Azegele, Okeyo, and Yambegera (2021) found that the transactional leadership style did not significantly moderate the relationship between market mix and organizational performance among Kenyan insurance firms.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This last chapter provides a summary of the results that were presented in the chapter that came before it. The data are analyzed, and many conclusions and suggestions are formed as a result of the analysis. Also recommended are areas for further research to be conducted.

5.1. Summary of Findings

The primary objective of this study was to determine the effect of niche marketing on performance of international courier companies in Kenya. The specific objectives were to assess the effect of concentrated marketing on performance of international courier companies, to examine the effect of customization on performance of international courier companies, to evaluate the effect of positioning on performance of international courier companies and finally to investigate the moderating effect of organizational factors on niche marketing and performance of international courier companies in Kenya. Data was collected via the use of questionnaires, and descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized to examine the results.

5.1.1 Effect of Concentrated marketing on performance of international courier companies

In regards to first objective of the study, Pearson correlation indicated that there is significant strong relationship between concentrated marketing and performance of

international courier companies in Kenya as shown by $R=0.628$, $P=0.000$. From simple linear regression model summary findings on concentrated marketing indicated that 39.4% ($R^2=0.394$) of variation in performance of international courier companies in Kenya is significantly accounted for by concentrated marketing ($P=0.000$). Multiple linear regression revealed that when other variables in the model are controlled, a unit change in concentrated marketing would result to significant increase in firm performance by 0.384 units ($\beta_1=0.384$, $P=0.003$). This led to rejection of the first null hypothesis and concluded that concentrated marketing had statistically significant influence on performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

5.1.2 Effect of Customization on performance of international courier companies

As per the second objective of the study, results from Pearson correlation showed that there is significant moderate relationship between customization and performance of international courier companies in Kenya as shown by $R=0.488$, $P=0.000$. Results from simple linear regression, model summary findings on customization indicated that 23.8% ($R^2=0.238$) of changes in performance of international courier companies in Kenya is significantly explained by customization ($P=0.001$). Multiple linear regression indicated that when other variables in the model are controlled, a unit change in customization would result to significant increase in firm performance by 0.197 units ($\beta_2=0.197$, $P=0.024$). This led to the rejection of the second null hypothesis and concluded that customization had significant effect on performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

5.1.3 Effect of Positioning on performance of international courier companies

In regards to objective three of the study, Pearson Correlation revealed that there is significant strong relationship between positioning and performance of international courier companies in Kenya as shown by $R=0.715$, $P=0.000$. From simple linear regression, model summary findings on positioning indicated that 51.2% ($R^2=0.512$) of variation in performance of international courier companies in Kenya is significantly accounted for by positioning ($P=0.000$). Multiple linear regression revealed that when other variables in the model are controlled, a unit change in positioning would results to significant increase in firm performance by 0.345 units ($\beta_3=0.345$, $P=0.000$). This led to rejection of the third null hypothesis and concluded that positioning had a statistically significant influence on performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

5.1.4 Moderating effect of Organizational factors on niche marketing and performance of international courier companies

Moderating effect of organizational factors on the relationship between niche marketing and performance of international courier companies in Kenya indicated that the factors had significant moderating effect as obtained from model summary and ANOVA results. Moderating effect of organizational factors significantly moved r –square from 66.4% (unmoderated R square= 0.664 , $P=0.000$) to 78.8% (Moderated R square= $0.78.8$, $P=0.000$) representing a significant 12.3% change in R square before and after introduction of organizational factors as a moderator. Therefore, the fourth null hypothesis was rejected.

Organizational factors significantly moderated the effect of concentrated Marketing and Positioning on performance. The same was not reflected in regards to customization. This implies that a unit increase in organizational factors will cause the effect of Concentrated Marketing on performance to significantly increase by 1.474 units. Similarly, a unit increase in organizational factors will cause the effect of positioning on performance to significantly increase by 1.287 units. However, a unit increase in organizational factors will cause the effect of customization on performance to insignificantly increase by 0.282 units (P=0.738).

5.2 Conclusions

The following were the conclusions of the study:

5.2.1 Effect of concentrated marketing on performance of international courier companies

According to the findings of the research, the concentration of marketing efforts has a major impact on the success of international courier firms in Kenya. International courier firms have selected certain market categories for some of their service offerings; they have zeroed in on particular market segments in order to be in a position to provide high-quality services to those particular market segments. Further, they have focused on differentiating its service packages from those of its competitors; they have focused on service innovations to remain competitive in the market and they have focused on their key customer segments where we have competitive advantage so as to satisfy their unique

needs more than our competitors. This led to increase in performance of international courier companies in Kenya.

Concentrating on a niche allows firms to understand customer problems and thus making them engage their clients in their services. Focusing on a narrow market enables the firms to also develop expertise which leads to customer loyalty, retention and increased referrals. The expertise leads to professionalism which will lead to many customers highly relying on the firms for their services.

5.2.2 Effect of Customization on performance of international courier companies

According to the findings of the research, employee customization has a substantial amount of effect on the success of international courier firms in Kenya. According to the findings of the study, international courier companies use a variety of methods to both identify customer needs and predict their present and future needs, they also use customer needs to review their services, they frequently seek feedback from their customers on the satisfaction level of their services so that they can identify areas in which services can be improved, and their pricing is determined by the needs of the various market segments.

Customized services or products can ensure courier firms have competitive advantage as they will help them meet the unique needs of their customers. It will ensure the firms become innovative by ensuring that they come up with varieties of products and services based upon customers tastes and preferences. It will also ensure the firms have a good and closer relationships with their customers.

5.2.3 Effect of Positioning on performance of international courier companies

The study concluded that positioning has significant influence on performance of international courier companies in Kenya. The study established that international courier companies are keen on speed of service delivery to its customers; the management is keen on ensuring very high service innovation strategies that are aimed at making the company better. Further, the companies have provided many payment methods for our customers` convenience and service provisions are consistently available in the market and at the company.

Positioning helps firms to differentiate its service offering from those of its competitors. It creates a positive image of a firm's brand. To achieve positioning, firms need to capitalize on their unique selling position and deliver on their promises. It ensures the firms offer superior value to customers in relation to their competitors.

5.2.4 Moderating Effect of Organizational factors on the Relationship between Niche marketing and Organizational Firm performance

The study concluded that organizational factors namely, marketing orientation and management style had statistically significant moderating effect on the relationship between niche marketing and performance of international courier companies in Kenya. Improvement in management style and market orientation would results to increase in the effect of concentrated marketing and positioning on performance of international courier

companies while the increase would have insignificant effect of customization on firm performance.

The study concluded that niche marketing has significant positive influence on the performance of international courier companies in Kenya. The influence is significantly moderated by organizational factors implying that observing marketing orientation and management style while implementing niche marketing would results to improvement in firm performance.

5.3. Recommendations

The following suggestions were developed in light of the results of the research and the conclusions that were reached:

5.3.1 Effect of Concentrated marketing on performance of international courier companies

According to the conclusions of the study, concentrated marketing has a significant impact, both positively and negatively on the performance of businesses. As a consequence of this, the findings of the study indicated that the management of courier companies operating in Kenya should target certain market segments with some of the services that they provide. This can be achieved by defining some of the scenarios in which people choose a courier service. Some of the examples for target market for courier firms are: (1) Businesses which need to send or receive important documents or packages quickly. (2) Individuals who need to send or receive time sensitive items. (3) People who live in rural areas and don't have easy access to traditional mail delivery. (4) People who need to transport large or

heavy items. (5) People who need a secure, professional delivery service. (6) People who need to send or receive items internationally. (7) People who are unable to transport items themselves due to illness, disability, etc.

In addition, while utilizing concentrated marketing, the managers of courier companies find it much simpler to become experts in their respective fields. This is because concentrated marketing teaches them how to advertise to customers in their particular business in the most effective way possible. The development of client trust and loyalty, which is essential to a company's long-term success, would be facilitated for courier firms by this measure.

5.3.2 Effect of Customization on performance of international courier companies

Customization has a significant and positive effect on the efficiency of Kenya's courier businesses, the study's results indicate. According to the study's findings, management should devote more effort to gathering consumer feedback on their level of satisfaction with the company's services in order to pinpoint spots for improvement. This can be achieved through (1) use of survey cards where customers rate aspects of the firm service, (2) follow up a product or service purchase with an email survey or feedback form (3) ask for feedback on specific aspects of your business or leave forms open-ended, like a suggestion box. (4) Include a feedback page or section on website with a statement that you appreciate, value and assess all feedback.

5.3.3 Effect of Positioning on performance of international courier companies

The study of firm performance of courier companies operating in Kenya is significantly influenced by positioning. The study recommended that management should strive to ensure that the company's brand positions the organization far above its competitors. This may be accomplished by (1) communicating the unique selling proposition of their services through positioning statements (2) Differentiating themselves through the use of innovative tools and techniques that offer clients exceptional value or singular benefits (3) have a brand promise that tells clients what they can expect to receive every time they interact with your professional services company (4) Gaining a more in-depth knowledge of customers through research, data analysis, and other information sources such as surveys

5.3.4 Moderating effect of organizational factors on niche marketing and performance of international courier companies

This study recommends that courier companies should be marketing-oriented which will enable the companies to get insights on the actual needs and wants that customers have. This can be achieved through embracing client focus, rival focus, and cross-departmental collaboration. As a consequence of this, they are able to design goods and services that are suitable for the requirements of the market. According to the findings of this research, courier businesses should consider adopting transformational leadership since it gives them the ability to choose their level of market concentration, positioning, level of customization, and amount of resources allocated. It is most effective when it is an integrated component of the overall market niche strategy, which defines how the firm will effectively engage customers, prospects, and rivals in the market arena.

5.4. Areas for further Research

Areas for further studies could consider national courier companies operating in Kenya as well as other service-based organization such as financial institutions.

The study used three variables that influence firm performance with organizational factors as moderating variable. These variables did not explain 100% variation in regard to performance of international courier companies in Kenya. Further study should consider moderating variable such as organizational culture since firm performance is strongly correlated with organizational culture.

The study established that interaction between customization and organizational factors has insignificant effect on firm performance. Therefore, the study suggests that further studies should focus on organizational factors, customization and organizational performance to ascertain the current outcome.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: REQUEST TO CARRY OUT DATA COLLECTION

I wish to submit this letter of expression of interest to carry out a study on niche marketing and performance of international courier companies in Kenya

I am a student at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology pursuing masters of Business Administration (Marketing Option). As a requirement for the award of the masters, I am expected to carry out a research in the study. Since my interests are in marketing; I have identified your organization as a perfect avenue of concentration to achieve my study`s quest.

The study will collect data for academic purposes only. Thanks in-advance. I look forward to a favorable consideration to my appeal.

Yours faithfully,



Swinfen Ananda Mbogani

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A: BIO DATA

Introduction

All replies will be kept strictly secret and used only for the purposes of this research.

Please do not include your name anywhere on this survey.

There are no wrong or right answers (Your answer is the right answer).

Please fill out the questionnaire in the spaces below. Kindly tick only one response.

Name _____ of _____ the
organization.....

Kindly tick (√) in the box next to the right option

1. Kindly state your Gender?

Male Female

2. What bracket does your age fall?

20 years and below 20-29 years 30-39 years 40-49 years 49
years and above

3. What is your highest level of education?

Primary Secondary Tertiary
University

4. Number of years that the managers have been in the company?

Below 5 years 6-10 years 11- 15 years

16-20 years 21-25 years 26 years and above

SECTION B: NICHE MARKETING AND FIRM PERFORMANCE

Constructs of niche marketing have been developed in this section. The main niche marketing herein are: concentrated marketing, customization and positioning.

B1: CONCENTRATED MARKETING

This sub-section details the many concentrated marketing structures used by your company as a part of its niche marketing strategy. Tick the checkboxes (✓) next to the statements that best reflect your degree of agreement or disagreement.

Key: Strongly Disagree (**SD**), Disagree (**D**), Neutral (**N**), Agree (**A**) and Strongly Agree (**SA**)

	Constructs	SD	D	N	A	SA
B1.1	Our company has chosen specific market segments for some of its service offerings					
B1.2	Focusing on specific market segments has enabled our company to deliver high-quality services					
B1.3	The company focuses on differentiating its service packages from those of its competitors					
B1.4	The company focuses on competitive pricing to remain competitive in the market					
B1.5	In order to maintain our position as a competitive player in the industry, our organization concentrates on developing new service offerings.					
B1.6	We focus on our key customer segments where we have competitive advantage so as to satisfy their unique needs more than our competitors.					
B1.7	Our company offers services that are not available elsewhere (service specialist)					
B1.8	Our company concentrates on supplying one or two major firms with specialist services. (specific-customer specialist)					

B1.9	To improve the quality of our customer service, our organization places a greater emphasis on allocating resources, such as hiring personnel with strong people skills and providing them with training in customer relations, among other things.					
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B2: CUSTOMIZATION

In this sub-section, you will see a set of models illustrating how customization might function as one facet of your company's niche marketing strategy. For each statement below, please check the box to indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement.

Key: Strongly Disagree (**SD**), Disagree (**D**), Neutral (**N**), Agree (**A**) and Strongly Agree (**SA**)

	Constructs	SD	D	N	A	SA
B3.1	Our company classifies customers according to services required by maintaining a customer database.					
B3.2	Our business makes use of a wide range of methods to ascertain client requirements and to forecast both their current and future requirements.					
B3.3	We involve our customers in the service delivery process to ensure their needs are met.					
B3.4	Our company uses the customer needs to review its services.					
B3.5	We provide different service packages for our clients.					
B3.6	Our customers enjoy and are satisfied with our service packages.					
B3.7	We frequently seek feedback from our clients on					

	their satisfaction level of our services so as to note areas of improvement.					
B3.8	Our pricing is determined by the needs of the segmented market					
B3.9	Our source of customized services is drawn from and through service innovation and brand marketing					

B3: POSITIONING

This section presents a set of models for positioning as a kind of niche marketing for your company. Click the checkboxes (✓) next to the statements that best reflect your degree of agreement or disagreement.

Key: Strongly Disagree (**SD**), Disagree (**D**), Neutral (**N**), Agree (**A**) and Strongly Agree (**SA**)

	Constructs	SD	D	N	A	SA
B2.1	The company's brand positions the organization far above its competitors					
B2.2	Our service quality attributes are our major marketing points					
B2.3	The firm employs various technologies to vary quality of services for various markets					
B2.4	Our firm is keen on speed of service delivery to its customers.					
B2.5	Our company provides additional value-added services to entice customers					
B2.6	The management are keen on ensuring very high service innovation strategies that are aimed at making the company better					
B2.7	The company has provided many payment methods for our customers' convenience					

B2.8	Our service provisions are consistently available in the market and at the company					
B2.9	We have or are working on customer incentive programs					

B4: FIRM PERFORMANCE

This sub-section shows a series of constructs on firm performance. Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement by ticking (√) against each of them in the space provided

Key: Strongly Disagree (**SD**), Disagree (**D**), Neutral (**N**), Agree (**A**) and Strongly Agree (**SA**)

	Constructs	SD	D	N	A	SA
B4.1	Niche marketing leads to increased number of customer referrals.					
B4.2	Niche marketing lead to increased new customer traffic to the firm					
B4.3	Niche marketing leads to high customer retention					
B4.4	Niche marketing ensures customer loyalty to the firm					
B4.5	Niche marketing leads to enhanced customer relationship					
B4.6	Niche marketing leads to increased customer satisfaction					
B4.7	Niche marketing leads to improved brand image of the company					
B4.8	Niche marketing ensures less competition					
B4.9	Niche marketing ensures efficiency in serving customers					

B5: MODERATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS

This section presents a framework of organizational considerations. Mark (√) each statement that best expresses your agreement or disagreement with it.

Key: Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Neutral (N), Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA)

	Constructs	SD	D	N	A	SA
B5.1	Marketing orientation has an effect on the successful application of niche marketing strategies					
B5.2	Management style affects the application of niche marketing strategies					
B5.3	Motivation of employees leads to better overall company firm performance					
B5.4	Inter-functional coordination leads to improved company firm performance					
B5.5	Our company emphasizes on transformational leadership for better management					
B5.6	We focus more on training our staff and managers for better managerial skills to improve our firm performance					
B5.7	Our philosophy is to ensure that customers' needs are satisfied					
B5.8	Our mission requires that we make a focus on promoting marketing to become the dominant culture of the organization.					
B5.9	the customers and their needs form the nucleus of all the activities of our organization i.e. All the activities and tasks are organized around the customer					

Thanks for your cooperation!

APPENDIX III: COURIER COMPANIES IN KENYA



INTERNATIONAL POSTAL AND COURIER OPERATORS		
1	DHL WORLDWIDE EXPRESS	international courier service provider
2	G4S KENYA LIMITED	international courier service provider
3	SKYNET WORLDWIDE EXPRESS	international courier service provider
4	BOLLORE TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS KENYA LIMITED	international courier service provider
5	ARAMEX KENYA LIMITED	international courier service provider
6	NATION CARRIERS DIVISION	international courier service provider
7	UNION GREEN LOGISTICS LIMITED	international courier service provider
8	FARGO COURIER LIMITED	international courier service provider
9	EASY COACH LIMITED	international courier service provider

10	FREIGHT IN TIME LIMITED	international courier service provider
11	RAINBOW LOGISTICS KENYA LIMITED	international courier service provider
12	CROWN COURIER LIMITED	international courier service provider
13	BISHARO PARCELS SERVICES LIMITED	international courier service provider
14	TNT EXPRESS WORLDWIDE (KENYA) LIMITED	international courier service provider
15	MASTERPIECE COURIER SERVICES LIMITED	international courier service provider
		international courier service provider
16	MASH EAST AFRICA LIMITED	international courier service provider
17	MODERN COAST COURIER LIMITED	international courier service provider
18	ADONAI LOGISTICS AND FREIGHT SERVICES	international courier service provider
19	PAN AFRICA EXPRESS TRANSPORT LIMITED	international courier service provider
20	GUARDIAN COACH LIMITED	international courier service provider
21	NETLINK BUSINESS SERVICES	international courier service provider
22	M&S COURIER LIMITED	international courier service provider
23	URBAN CARGO NETWORKS LIMITED	international courier service provider
24	INDO AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL LIMITED	international courier service provider
25	FIRST FLIGHT COURIER	international courier service provider
26	MEX LOGISTICS AFRICA LIMITED	international courier service provider
27	FLASH INTERNATIONAL COURIER SERVICES	international courier service provider
28	GLOBAL FREIGHT LOGISTICS	international courier service provider

	LIMITED	
29	SPEEDEX LOGISTICS LIMITED	international courier service provider
30	UNIVERSAL EXPRESS LIMITED	international courier service provider
31	RIOMA COURIER SERVICES LIMITED	international courier service provider
32	GLOBE FLIGHT WORLDWIDE EXPRESS LIMITED	international courier service provider
33	NATIONAL CARGO LIMITED	international courier service provider
34	JC EXPRESS LOGISTICS LIMITED	international courier service provider
35	TENCENT COURIER	international courier service provider
36	GLOBE ONE COURIER AFRICA LIMITED	international courier service provider
37	MARIS LOGISTICS LIMITED	international courier service provider
38	SKYLINE EXPRESS SERVICES LIMITED	international courier service provider
39	JUST FOR U HOLDINGS LIMITED	international courier service provider
40	COURIER PLUS LOGISTICS LIMITED	international courier service provider
41	SENDY WELFARE SELF HELP GROUP	international courier service provider
42	AFRICAN GLOBAL EXPERTISE LIMITED	international courier service provider
43	DYNAMEX GROUP LIMITED	international courier service provider
44	DK EXPRESS	international courier service provider
45	SHARDI EXPRESS	international courier service provider
46	AFRASIA COURIER EXPRESS LIMITED	international courier service provider
47	TRIPTIME ASSOCIATES LIMITED	international courier service provider
48	NEWTON INTERNATIONAL COURIER LIMITED	international courier service provider
49	DELUCA GROUP LIMITED	international courier service provider
50	MODERN MAIL LIMITED	international courier service provider
51	SENDEX DELIVERY (K) LIMITED	international courier service provider
52	FEDEX EXPRESS KENYA LIMITED	international courier service provider
53	ROLLING CARGO LIMITED	international courier service provider
55	RISING FREIGHT LIMITED	international courier service provider

	provider
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