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STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND ITS INFLUENCE ON PERFORMANCE OF TELECOMMUNICATION FIRMS IN KENYA

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to assess stakeholder management strategies and how they affect the performance of telecommunication companies in Kenya. This is because of the telecommunications sector`s significance in communication, GDP contribution, monetary possibilities thru cellular cash agents, facilitating monetary activities, and facilitating the availability of cellular cash and net services. This study's precise objective was to assess the outcome brought by use of defensive strategy on the performance of Kenyan telecommunications firms. Stakeholder theory was used as study theories with an explanatory research design. Employees of Safaricom Kenya Limited, Airtel Kenya Limited, and Telkom Kenya were the chosen target populations in the Nairobi Region. There were a total of 209 respondents with a sample 137 respondents obtained by cluster sampling and simple random sampling. Questionnaires were used to collect data. To examine quantitative data, descriptive records which include percentages, frequencies, mean, and widespread deviation was used. Multiple regression model was used to check the connection among variables and their affect on one another. The study findings indicated that defensive strategy ($\beta = 0.263$; $p<0.05$) was a significant factor that influence performance of telecommunication companies in Kenya. It was therefore concluded that there is a significant relationship between stakeholder management strategies and the performance of telecommunication companies. The study recommends that *the government should come up with a policy requiring firms to means of monitoring the situation and do not maintain status quo in order to improve performance. Telecommunications companies should make sure that their strategies are regularly monitored to improve performance, that they develop training programs with their stakeholders to improve the quality of their products, that they work cautiously together, that they follow influence rules, that they concentrate on the transaction process and support relationships with their stakeholders, and that they take stakeholder involvement into consideration to improve operational performance.*

Keywords: Stakeholder Management, Strategies, Defensive Strategy, Performance, Telecommunication Firms

INTRODUCTION

Organizational overall performance is the potential of a company to reap its targets with the aid of using utilising assets in an efficient and effective way (Pamela, Umoh & Worlu, 2017). It is the real effects of a company compared to its outputs. (Amin, Ismail, Rasid,and Selemani, 2014). Organizations are operating tough to enhance their overall performance via powerful stakeholder control techniques. Whatever era and mechanization are developed, stakeholder control techniques stay the unmarried maximum crucial supply of any a hit company (Lawler, Benson & McDermott, 2012). By forming strategic constituencies, the stakeholder control strategy provides awareness to the structures approach. A enterprise must handiest be worried with strategic constituencies, in line with Robbins (Kinyua, 2016). This recognizes that a company has to cope with each external and internal stakeholders (Snape & Redman, 2010).

Stakeholders are individuals who have a vested interest (stake) in the organization. They are the individuals or organizations who have a say in how the company makes decisions and whose interests the company tries to serve. Shareholders, personnel, clients, the authorities, providers, financiers, alternate unions, exchange institutions, and competitors are only a few of the stakeholders (Kasimbu, 2010). Stakeholders are given the possibility to make contributions their personal thoughts for the duration of the method formula manner, according to Njogu (2016). They can also evaluate and evaluation ideas whilst growing a strategy, and they can make joint choices with stakeholders at any factor in the course of the task. However, a large percentage of businesses do not include their stakeholders in strategy development, implementation, or evaluation.

More recent research has begun to look at how stakeholder management affects firm performance, examining how understanding stakeholders' claims can help achieve business goals (Rana ngen and Zobel, 2014; Matos and Silvestre, 2013). Furthermore, SM is gaining popularity among practitioners. The developing importance is being driven by way of increased stakeholder awareness of the results of agency pastime and the need to demonstrate a commitment to proper commercial enterprise practices. Managers are an increasing number of conscious that SM makes properly commercial enterprise feel and consequences in stepped forward usual overall performance (Heikkurinen and Bonnedahl, 2013).

Globally, in both developing and developed countries, the performance of telecommunications players is critical to a variety of stakeholders. Customer experience and loyalty have been discovered to be key signs of telecommunication company performance in Thailand with the aid of Sirapracha and Tocquer (2012). The quantity of cell service providers turned into used to assess the telecommunications region's company performance in Malaysia, in keeping with Ramalingam, Karim, Piaralal, and Singh (2015). In line with Ramalingam et al. (2015), cell range carrier companies' subscribers expanded from round three million in 1999 to around 20 million in 2006. This amounted to a six hundred% boom within the quantity of subscribers. Hsu (2018) placed that company image, purchaser satisfaction, and purchaser loyalty have been key signs of firm performance in Taiwan's telecommunications sector, much like Sirapracha and Tocquer (2012). The telecommunications sector in Indonesia is extremely competitive, Natasaputra and Kusumastuti (2017), in the USA having eight telecommunication firms' gamers, making the world extremely aggressive. In this context, companies have used a spread of stakeholder management techniques to enhance organizational performance. Three of these strategies aim to determine the quantity and quality of services provided by telecommunications companies: defensive strategy, swing strategy, and offensive strategy (Natasaputra & Kusumastuti, 2017).

Various European telecommunications companies have had varying levels of performance. Three mobile service providers, Hrvatski, A1, and Tele companies, serve Croatia's over four million mobile service subscribers. The Hrvatski has the largest market share, accounting for nearly half of all sales. In contrast, three telecommunications companies serve over thirteen million mobile phone subscribers in Portugal. These three companies are Meo, Vodafone, and Nos (Newton & Ragel, 2017). With 7.7 million subscribers, Meo Telecommunications has the biggest marketplace share, accounting for greater than 1/2 of the market. Seven telecommunications corporations in Russia serve a population of above 250 million humans (Natasaputra & Kusumastuti, 2017). Cell Tele Systems has United States's largest market share (Natasaputra & Kusumastuti, 2017). Everything anywhere, O2, Vodafone, and three other telecommunications organizations serve a marketplace of ninety two million subscribers in the united kingdom. The telecommunications organisation the whole lot everywhere has the most important market share (Natasaputra & Kusumastuti, 2017).

Telecommunications companies in Sri Lanka continue to struggle with a wide range of performance issues. According to Newton and Ragel (2017), The five cellular provider companies, conversation, Airtel, Mobitel, Hutch, and Etisalat, have multiplied their competition. The telecommunications industry's pinnacle issues encompass purchaser switching carrier providers, marketplace percentage, and consumer loyalty (Newton & Ragel, 2017). In terms of subscriber numbers, technological innovation, and government regulatory concerns, Venkatram (2012) finds that the Indian and Chinese telecommunications markets face similar firm performance challenges. By improving mobile service providers, Khan (2014) observed increased growth in the sector in Pakistan.

Nigerian telecommunications companies compete in a fiercely competitive market. Nigeria has one of the world's largest telecommunications sectors, according to Nwakanma et al. (2018). According to estimates, the country had 148.9 million subscribers and contributed 8.9 percent of Gross Domestic Product. Due to intense competition among players and the implementation of Mobile Number Portability, the sector is experiencing difficult firm performance (MNP). These factors have influenced the growth and performance of telecommunications companies in various categories such as; quality service, network coverage, and service/product prices.

The Somali telecommunications firm, according to Mohamed (2018), is extremely competitive. Hormuud Telecom, Telecom Somalia, Telesom, Somafone, Nationlink, and Golis Telecom are among the country's telecommunications players. Price wars have erupted in Somalia's telecommunications sector as a result of the large number of players, resulting in lower financial performance. Cost leadership, differentiation, and focus strategies were among the competitive strategies used by the telecommunications industry (Mohamed, 2018).

Vodafone, Orange, Etisalat, and We, 4 cell telecommunications corporations in Egypt, serve about 99 million telecommunications subscribers. As the marketplace leader, Vodafone changed into predicted to have extra than 38 million subscribers. MTN Ghana is the country's biggest telecommunications agency, with Vodafone, Tigo, Airtel, Glo, and Expresso Telecom following intently behind.

Kenya's telecommunications zone grew at a speedy pace in 2018, due to rising virtual economy, mobile telephony, and internet penetration access to the net is commonly acquired thru cell phones, which have end up increasingly available and low cost, with forty six. 8 million records subscriptions, almost half of of which had been on broad band. The Kenyan government has recognized telecommunications companies as a vital region for supporting speedy monetary growth, and the industry is currently the usage of a wave of digital advancement that is anticipated to have an effect at the telecommunications, virtual services, and cyber safety markets especially (Nwakanma et al., 2018).

The performance of Kenya's telecommunications sector has been studied by academics from various disciplines. Quality service (Odhiambo 2015; Obambo, 2013), customer satisfaction (Obambo, 2013), market share (Mwacha & Ouma, 2017), customer relationship (Karanja, 2013), and profitability are among the noted performance challenges in Kenya’s telecommunications industry (Mbesa & Kihara, 2017). Kenya now has a thriving ecosystem, with a slew of software apps, services, and even social habits sprouting as a result of the country's aptitude and appetite for mobile payment platforms. As a result of the industrialization and information age, telecommunication agencies have the need to diversify their features to support the boom of technology advancement and meet the services demanded by its users (Sultana, Irum, Ahmed, & Mehmood, 2012). Its significance for any country cannot be overstated. In present day commercial enterprise weather, telecommunications operators in both rapid-growing and mature markets are beneath excessive pressure. These modifications offer new possibilities, however in addition they increase competition inside agencies and throughout industries. Thus this study seeks to study the influence of stakeholder management strategies on performance of telecommunication firms in Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

The telecommunications sector, which contributes to GDP, leads to growth in economy through creation of different opportunities such as mobile money agents, facilitates economic activities, and facilitates the provision of mobile money and internet services which relies heavily on communication (Paulrajan & Rajkumar, 2011; Nwakanma et al., 2018, Venkatram, 2012). As a result, telecommunications companies' performance is critical in Kenya. Despite this, the sector regulator continues to monitor changes in firm performance throughout the year. Between July and September of 2018, the Communications Authority of Kenya (2019) reports a 2.4 percent increase in mobile phone subscribers for the 2018/2019 fiscal year. Over the same time period, this resulted in a 2.3 percent increase in mobile phone service penetration. Safaricom PLCs' mobile subscription market share fell 1.2 percentage points to 64.2 percent during the quarter, while Airtel Networks Limited increased its share of the market to 21.9 percent (CAK, 2019). During the review period, the number of mobile money agents and users increased. During this time, there was also a slight increase in number portability. Notwithstanding the growth, the COVID-19 pandemic has aggravated the tough economic conditions which can be using the virtual divide, with economic contraction, slower growth, and growing unemployment posing good sized financial challenges for users of virtual services. Furthermore, the pandemic has widened the gap in connectivity availability and high-quality among and inside markets (between city and rural settings, primary versus secondary cities). In a take a look at of 596 Malaysian listed groups, Lik-Jing Ung and Chin-Hong (2018) checked out the relationship between shielding approach and company fee In Kenya's telecommunications region, Kiage and Namusonge (2016) investigated the impact of CSR project monitoring, evaluation, and risk management practices on firm performance. Although there have been studies on stakeholder management strategies and firm performance, the results have been inconclusive. The impact of stakeholder management strategies on telecommunication firms and its performance is not clearly defined, with respect to positive and negative relationships identified. Furthermore, there are few studies on Kenyan telecommunications companies' performance. This therefore calls for the need to assess the stakeholder management strategies and its influence on performance of telecommunication firms in Kenya.

Research Objectives

To assess the effects of defensive strategy on performance of telecommunication firms in Kenya.

Research Questions

What are the effects of defensive strategy on performance of telecommunication firmsin Kenya?

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study was underpinned on Stakeholder Theory by Freeman (1984). The theory identifies the groups that comprise an organization's stakeholders. A company should strive to maximize value for its stakeholders, according to stakeholder theory. It emphasizes the interdependence of commercial enterprise and all stakeholders, consisting of customers, personnel, providers, buyers, and the majority. The stakeholders' interests are first-rate served by Freeman's. Stakeholder idea has piqued the hobby of many theorists on account that its inception in the 1980s, attributable to the truth that growing shareholder wealth isn't a sustainable purpose for companies in preferred (Gathungu & Ratemo 2013). The following assumptions are addressed by the principle: As a significant driver of an organization, cost introduction acknowledges that it should be shared by all stakeholders, that includes now not handiest shareholders and bosses, however also societal groups interested in how the firm operates (Freeman, 2000).

The theory is prepared round two foremost questions: what is the company's motive? And what's the reason of the firm? And what is the firm's task? What is the function of management in phrases of stakeholders? To be able to achieve their targets, executives must recall how they need to behavior enterprise, in addition to the styles of relationships and emphasis they need and need to set up with diverse hobby businesses (stakeholders) (Freeman, 2000).

The stakeholder model framework clarifies the relationships among diverse agencies of actors within and outside of the corporation. Based totally on big literature opinions on organizational idea and company method, in addition to extensive studies and observation, Freeman supplied a brand new and simplified view of the agency. The stakeholder version have become added with the aid of Freeman (1984) as a map in which the corporation is the hub of a wheel and stakeholders are the ends of spokes that circle the rim (Freeman, 1999). Every oval represented a set of stakeholders and come to be surrounded via a variable extensive sort of different circles or ovals with bi-directional arrows pointing inside the path of and far from the critical oval. On a non-exhaustive foundation, Freeman's precise framework covered 11 stakeholders (Freeman, 1984).

As a end result, stakeholder theory is inextricably linked to the exercise of business, value advent, and change, and it addresses how managers carry out their responsibilities (Laplume, Sonpar & Litz, 2018). It additionally expressly recognizes that while shareholders are important stakeholders, they are most effective considered one of many. It additionally recognizes that even as income and financial performance are an essential a part of a corporation's day-to-day operations, they are only one possible final results of the fee advent technique. The theory can be studied from three perspectives, according to Donaldson and Preston (2015): descriptive, instrumental, and normative.

The descriptive point of view assumes that the principle will be applied empirically to define how an idea relates to facts. The instrumental perspective focuses on demonstrating the hyperlink between stakeholder management and multidimensional corporate overall performance through using principle. Ultimately, the normative attitude is to define how stakeholders must behave and what motivates them to achieve this.

This theory is significant to this study because it aids the researcher comprehend on how the managers will perform their duties while connecting to business practice and the value of coexistence with other stakeholders. Similarly, the researcher will comprehend how managers recognize that profits are an important aspect of the firms' day-to-day operations. As a result, it will be used to explain stakeholder management strategies and their impact on performance.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

The primary goal of defensive strategy is to deter competitors from attacking the incumbent firm's market by making potential attacks less appealing. Its goal is to keep incumbent firms' market share, position, and profits safe. The majority of the time, customer trust is maintained by employing a defensive strategy. Defensive strategies are extra powerful if applied before the challenger invests within the corporations or earlier than exit limitations are brought forward, preventing the challenger to go out of an enterprise (Yonnopoulus 2011). Organizations should use effective warfare strategies and tactics, according to Dudik (2000), in order to succeed in a competitive market structure.

Companies and researchers place a strong emphasis on the role of customers, according to a case study on defensive stakeholder strategy conducted by Makalova (2012), implying that businesses are increasingly aware that a defensive strategy improves critical aspects of their behavior and performance. Paying attention to stakeholder concerns can aid a company in avoiding decisions that will jeopardize or prevent it goals. This likelihood arises due to the fact stakeholders have power over belongings that may assist or limit the implementation of business enterprise selections; in specific phrases, stakeholder control is a method to a stop. The quit end result may additionally do not have anything to do with the general nicely-being of stakeholders. Instead, the business enterprise's purpose is to serve simplest one employer of stakeholders: its shareholders.

Lik-Jing Ung and Chin-Hong (2018) studied the existing relationship between defensive strategy and its impact on the firm in a sample of 586 Malaysian publicly traded companies from 2008 to 2015. The purpose of this study was to see if a company's ownership structure influenced the value of its defensive strategy. Family businesses, government-linked businesses, and foreign businesses are all compared in terms of defensive strategy value creation. In step with the findings of this have a look at, defensive method, especially retrenchment approach, has a fine impact on a company's excess price. As a result, protective approaches will useful resource a organization’s performance. Decreasing prices and property, enhancing the efficiency of the tracking shape, threatening dismissal, and inspiring stewardship can all improve a organization's benefits. Low profitability has been found to improve company performance. But, whilst authorities-related and overseas agencies reduce back, their possession structures tend to discount the greater fee.

A review of defensive strategies for market success was conducted by Grend, Nwiepe, Naata, and Kpunee (2017). This research used a desktop review to discuss several defensive strategies that managers can use to succeed in the market. The study divides defensive strategies into two categories: pre-entry and post-entry strategies. Before a potential entrant enters the market, marketing managers should try to discourage them. They can accomplish this by implementing pre-entry strategies. After new entrants have entered the industry, it is more difficult to persuade them to leave. As a end result, marketing executives should use a spread of shielding strategies to shield their positions in each pre-entry and put up-entry conditions.

Before competitors enter their market, Yannopoulos (2015) investigated how business students perceive the importance of defensive marketing strategies. To categorize the responses, the researchers used principal component analysis, followed by ANOVA analysis to see how different demographic and other variables influence participant perceptions of the importance of defensive strategies. The study's main finding is that graduate business students' mental models and perceptions of competitors' entry are not universal, but vary depending on student gender, nationality, and academic level.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Because it was a quantitative, this study used an explanatory research design. According to Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011), Explanatory research aims to explain why things happen while also constructing, extending, elaborating, or testing a theory. Because it determines the quantity and nature of cause and effect relationships, other pupils refer to this layout as causal studies(Newman & Benz as cited in Creswell, 2013). This study's design has the benefit of helping inside the identity of causes for a wide range of techniques as well as comparing the impact of present day processes. As a result of the systematic selection of respondents, the layout is likewise connected to higher stages of internal validity. Finally, in the event that replication is required, it is possible (Zikmund, et al., 2012).

Research Philosophy

The research paradigm for this study was positivist, which is an epistemological position. The effects of stakeholder management strategies on telecommunication firms performance in Kenya is examined in this study. The study added to knowledge by collecting objective data using questionnaires as the primary research tool (Oates, 2010; Muijs, 2008), and the collected data was in numerical form (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2010; Cooper and Schindler, 2011), Because the positivist paradigm's goal is to discover the truth through empirical investigation, hypotheses must be empirically tested (Koul, 2008).

Target Population

The study population was all the employees of Kenya telecommunications sector consisting of Safaricom, Airtel and Telkom. The study targeted those personnel in Nairobi county-based facilities. The Nairobi region was chosen because it is the location of the organization's headquarters. This is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Target Population

Firm	Finance department	Marketing department	Human resource department	Projects department	Total
Safaricom	13	37	5	18	77
Airtel	9	31	6	17	63
Telkom	11	39	5	15	69
Total	**33**	**107**	**16**	**50**	**209**

Source: (CAK, 2021)

Sample Size

From the target population of 209 respondents, Taro Yamane (1967), as shown below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where,

n = sample size

N = population size

e = the error of smapling

The sample size was therefore as follows:

$$n = \frac{209}{1 + 209x0.05^2}$$

= 137

Sampling procedure

This analysis used proportionate, simple random sampling and stratified random sampling techniques in selecting survey respondents .Telecommunications companies created the Strata. The number of employees sampled at each company was calculated proportionately depending on their population. With a view to accounting for the disparity in sub-group traits, it aims at proportionate representation. By reducing the degree of sampling error, this sampling strategy enhanced the interpretation of the sample. To choose the respondents, basic random sampling was used. A basic random sample was generated by collecting samples in such a way that each element of the population had an equal chance of being chosen.

Research Instruments

Self designed questionnaires were utilized in collecting data. The questionnaire consisted of closed ended questions; it was structured to assess expectations, behaviors, values and actions using the 5-point Likert scale widely used in social sciences. The questions were on a Likert Scale (1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree). The questionnaire was deemed suitable for conducting a survey of respondents across a large geographic area and gathering a large number of respondents in a short period of time (Fowler, 2013). To test for the instruments reliability, a pilot study was done among employees of the telecomunications firms Nakuru offices. The results showed a Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0.913), with 4 test items. This implies that the research questionnaire met the threshold since all the variables constructs had Cronbach's alpha coefficients greater than 0.7. This was according to (Matkar, 2012; Maniu & Maniu, 2015), who stated that a cronbach's alpha of 0.7 as a minimum level is acceptable.

Data Processing and Analysis

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics included, mean, frequency, percentages, variance and standard deviation. These tools were used to describe and determine the respondent‘s degree of agreement or disagreement with various statements under each variable (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2011). Inferential statistics included Pearson Product Moment Correlation which was used to determine significant relationships between dependent and independent variables, as well as the magnitude of various independent variables effects on a dependent variable.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section puts into viewpoint the relationship amongst the independent variables and the dependent variable. It also put into view the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. This part outlines the findings of both correlation and multiple regression analysis.

Correlation Analysis

The combine effect of independent variables on the dependent variable was established through correlation analysis. The decision rule for correlation was in accordance to Saunders (2003) who postulated that that $r=1$ shows a Perfect linear correlation, $0.9 < r < 1$ indicates

Positive strong correlation, 0.7 <r < 0.9 Positive high correlation 0.5 < r < 0.7 Positive moderate correlation, 0< r < 0.5 Weak correlation r=0 No, relationship and -1 <r = < 0 Negative relationship. This is presented in Table 2

Table 2 Correlation Analysis

		Social economic development
Self reliance assistance	Pearson Correlation	.855**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

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

From the study the results indicate that defensive strategy had positive high correlation with performance of telecommunication firms in Kenya, this was indicated by r=0.915 and p < 0 .01. This implies that when Defensive strategy is positive, performance of telecommunication firms in Kenya are also positive. From the study it will be noted, the above table was at 99% level of confidence (significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), since a unit change in defensive strategy leads to 0.855 unit change in performance of telecommunication firms in Kenya.

Multiple Regression Analysis

The study employed multiple regression analysis to test the hypotheses. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the effect of the study variables defensive strategy on performance of telecommunication firms. This was done with a significance level of 0.05, such that when the significance value is less than the 0.05. These results were presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Individual Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.224	.119		1.875	.064
Defensive strategy	.263	.051	.314	5.130	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of telecommunication firms

Thus the regression equation becomes;

$Y= 0.224+ 0.263 X_1$……………………………Equation 1

The study findings indicated that defensive strategy was positive and significant effect on Performance of telecommunication firms with ($\beta = 0.263$; $p < 0.05$). This implies that defensive strategy enhance Performance of telecommunication firms. This study concurs with the study by Makalova (2012), who stated that businesses are increasingly aware that a defensive strategy improves critical aspects of their behavior and performance. Paying attention to stakeholder concerns can aid a company in avoiding decisions that will jeopardize or prevent it goals. In addition, Lik-Jing Ung and Chin-Hong (2018) stipulated that, protective approaches will useful resource a organization's performance. Decreasing prices and property, enhancing the efficiency of the tracking shape, threatening dismissal, and inspiring stewardship can all improve a organization's benefits. Low profitability has been found to improve company performance. But, whilst authorities-related and overseas agencies reduce back, their possession structures tend to discount the greater fee.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that defensive strategy positively and significantly affect performance of telecommunication firms, it was also concluded that diversification into new markets is essential for your business growth, introduction of new products provides clearly defined financial goals for the organization, reduction of dependence on competitors enhances firms' control of cost and elimination of wastage and defensive strategies enhance decisive factors of company's behavior and performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

Government, private sector and NGOs should collaborate to establish a mechanism for a Holding the current situation and continuing the current stakeholder management strategies in the telecommunication sector, the study recommends that the government should come up with a policy requiring firms to means of monitoring the situation and do not maintain status quo in order to improve performance.

Further Telecommunication firms should ensure that monitoring of their strategies is frequently conducted to improve the performance and enhance their competitive advantage. This is an important practice for managers' stakeholder management process.

The findings also indicated that a positive relationship between stakeholder management strategies and performance therefore, the firms should come up with training programs with the stakeholders to improve the quality of their products.

Management of Telecommunication firms should ensure that cautious collaboration, influence rules, and focus on the transaction process and supporting relationship with their stakeholders to enhance operational performance.

Lastly, Telecommunication firms should consider stakeholders involvement to enhance operational performance of the small holder tea sector in the country. This means that managers need to adopt a flexible and balanced approach for stakeholder management, and be able to change back and forth from stakeholder engagement to disengagement, when circumstances change.

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The researcher faced challenges in reaching the target population as a result of policy requirements and the nature of the information being sourced. This limitation was mitigated by utilizing the research permit, as well as obtaining permission from human resource managers of telecommunication firms and scheduling appointments with the managers chosen as respondents.

According to the research, emphasis was only placed on creating insight into the relationship between stakeholder management strategies and the performance of telecommunication firms. Despite this research, further research should be conducted to determine the level of implementation of stakeholder management strategies in the construction industry. The research further suggests that research should be conducted targeting other sectors to determine if stakeholder management strategies can enhance performance.

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