

**EVALUATION OF COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES FOR
ENHANCING THE PERFORMANCE OF CONSTRUCTION
FIRMS IN TANZANIA**
(The Case Study of Public Construction Firms)

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**MSc. in Construction Economics and Management
Ardhi University
November 2022**

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ENHANCING THE PERFORMANCE OF CONSTRUCTION
FIRMS IN TANZANIA**
(The Case Study of Public Construction Firms)

By
Ibrahim Charles

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Science in Construction Economics and Management of
Ardhi University**

Ardhi University

November 2022

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that he has read and hereby recommend for examination a dissertation entitled *Evaluation of Competitive Strategies for Enhancing the Performance of Construction Firms in Tanzania: The Case Study of Public Construction Firms* in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science (Construction Economics and Management) of Ardhi University.

Dr. Kimata N. Malekela
(Supervisor)

Date: _____

DECLARATION AND COPYRIGHT

I, **Charles, Ibrahim**, declare that this dissertation is my own original work and that it has not been presented and will not be presented to any other University for a similar or any other degree award.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my lovely wife Dr. Deborah K. Manumbu and our beloved son Daniel I. Mwera who have given me intimate support throughout my academic life. The dedication also goes to my beloved parents Mr. & Mrs. Charles Mwera, my beloved father in-law and mother in-law Mr. & Mrs. Koheleth M. Manumbu for their prayers, love, encouragement, and counsel they have provided up to this moment.

(Psalm 91: 2, NKJV)

I will say of the Lord, "He is my Refuge and my Fortress; My God, in Him I will Trust."

ABSTRACT

Public construction firms are faced with performance challenges such as contract mismanagement, time, and cost overruns at the construction firms' and projects' levels. But these challenges can be mitigated by adopting appropriate competitive strategies and enhance their general performance. The study evaluated the competitive strategies adopted and practised in public construction firms.

The data were collected through interviews with fifteen (15) directors, senior and middle managers from five organisations (NHC, TBA, CSWS, SUMAJKT, and SHIMA) as case studies. Also, data were collected through document reviews of the case studies, which were strategic plans, financial reports, and company profiles. There were six (06) reviewed documents from all five organisations. The study employed a multi-case study design and the technique adopted was cross-case analysis. Data from all sources were analysed thematically with help of NVivo 12 plus (CAQDAS).

The general findings indicate that all participated organisations practised competitive strategies, though the modes of practice were varied from one firm to another. The identified competitive strategies were categorised into three levels such as corporate (Brand, Image, growth, joint ventures), business level (low cost, differentiation, time-based), and functional or operation levels (Human resource, Marketing, relationship, research, and development). However, it was revealed that the majority of participated organisations practised competitive strategies just as business as usual rather than for competitiveness. Also, it was revealed that competitive strategies at all levels influenced firms' performance. At the corporate level growth and diversification were more practised. At the business level cost strategies were more considered and at functional or operational the human resource strategies were found to be significant. Other factors such as organisational structure, internal and external firms' environments were found to have some effects that intervene between competitive strategies and organisational performance.

Also, the implementation guidelines for improving performance in public construction firms through competitive strategies were developed. The guidelines are based on competitive strategy development, strategic levels, and organisational performance. Finally, public construction firms were recommended to adopt competitive strategies effectively, and then the reward is enhanced performance.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------------|---|
| AQRB | Architects and Quantity Surveyors Registration Board |
| BSC | Balanced Scorecard |
| CAG | Controller and Auditor General |
| CAQDAS | Computer-Assisted (or Aided) Qualitative Data Analysis Software |
| CRB | Contractors Registration Board |
| CSWS | Corporation Sole Works Superintendent |
| CWT | Chama cha Walimu Tanzania (Tanzania Teachers Association) |
| ERB | Engineers Registration Board |
| EURA | Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority |
| LGAs | Local Government Authorities |
| MISTECo Ltd | Mbeya Institute of Science and Technology Engineering Contractors Limited |
| MoW | Ministry of Works |
| MUST | Mbeya University of Science and Technology |
| NBS | National Bureau of Statistics |
| NCC | National Construction Council |
| NHC | National Housing Corporation |
| PORALG | President's Office – Regional Administration and Local Government |
| PPA | Public Procurement Act |
| PPRA | Public Procurement Regulatory Authority |
| RC | Regional Commissioner |
| ROCE | Return on Capital Employed |
| SCEs | State-Owned Construction Enterprises |
| SHIMA | Shirika la Magereza (Prisons Corporation Sole) |
| SUMA JKT | Shirika la Uzalishaji Mali la Jeshi la Kujenga Taifa (National Service) |
| TACECA | Tanzania Civil Engineering Contractors Association |
| TANROADS | Tanzania National Roads Agency |
| TBA | Tanzania Building Agency |
| TEMESA | Tanzania Electrical, Mechanical and Services Agency |
| TMDA | Tanzania Medicines and Medical Devices Authority |
| TPDF | Tanzania Peoples Defence Forces |

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

A Competitive strategy may be defined as a long-term action plan for a business to achieve a competitive edge over its market rivals by assessing its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (Farooq, 2018, pg.1), this is just a general definition from the business sector. In the construction sector, Lu (2006) described the competitive strategy as the ability of a firm to bid successfully for construction projects, to provide construction services with superior quality, and costs in a shorter time than its domestic and international competitors, and in the long-run to consistently achieve superior firm performance. Abonda and Machuki (2018) found that construction companies in Kenya adopt a mix of various competitive strategies that seek to enhance their performance.

Globally, the construction industry is an important sector that transforms a variety of resources into social, economic, and environmental infrastructure. The gross domestic product (GDP) of all nations is heavily influenced by the construction industry. It employs a lot of people. An estimated 220 million individuals, or an average of 7% of the world's population, are employed in the construction sector. In developing nations, construction often makes up 5–9% of the GDP (International Labour Organization, 2019).

In order to increase their chances of winning contracts in the East African construction industries, businesses are encouraged to adopt best practices by strict building planning requirements and high infrastructure standards. Additionally, it is anticipated that east Africa's construction industry would continue to expand due to the significant economic growth projected for the region ((BUILDMART, 2022)

Furthermore, Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics (2019) in its report of the gross domestic product (April – June) 2019, recorded a growth rate of 19.6 percent in the second quarter of 2019, compared to 5.2 percent in the corresponding quarter of 2018. This shows that the Tanzanian construction industry is among the fast-growing industries and has been contributing to the growth of the national economy. Though the development of the construction sector in Tanzania is promising still there are several challenges facing the construction industry in general. According to National Bureau of Statistics (2013) and

Clyde and Co (2013) as cited by Kikwasi and Escalante (2018) outlined some challenges facing the construction industry in Tanzania such as incapability of local contractors, unreliable work opportunities, inappropriate procurement systems, financial mismanagement in both public and private sectors, inappropriate working environment, low technological facilities, lack of capital, unfavourable donor conditions, and application of inappropriate delivery practices.

Additionally, Kikwasi and Escalante (2018) reported that the number of contractors or construction firms in Tanzania has been increasing in recent years and this has led to stiff competition and many other challenges as firms compete for fewer available resources and work. According to the Contractors Registration Board (2021), the number of building and civil contractors from class I-III is about 1040 (Foreign and local contractors). Muhegi and Malongo (2004) showed that due to globalisation a large number of Tanzanian construction firms are subjected to stiff competition from foreign firms.

Tanzania building Agency (2013) in its strategic plan 2012 – 2017 and National Housing Corporation (2015) in its Strategic Plan 2015/16 - 2024/25 reported the competition as a challenge from the external environment. To mitigate the effects of these challenges and to achieve the goal of the Tanzanian construction industry which is to attain international competitiveness. There must be long and short action plans (Strategies) starting from individual firms to the construction industry at large, including competitive strategies at local, regional, and international levels.

On other hand, some of the public firms have been challenged in terms of their performance and the way they deliver the undertaken construction projects, as the results provide a competitive advantage to their rivals. For instance in Songwe Region News (2018) pointed out the directions of the minister for President's Office – Regional Administration and Local Government (PORALG) to the Regional Commissioner (RC) of the Songwe region. The directions were concerned with the performance and completion of the construction projects on time by one of the public construction firms. If failed to comply then the contract should be terminated and given to other public construction firms (Its competitors).

Another evidence of performance challenge to the public construction firms or organisations is the construction of the Vingunguti abattoir. President's Office (2019) reported the directions of his Excellency President of the United Republic of Tanzania to the one among the public construction firms concerning the performance of that particular project. So all these could be an issue of strategic management in which competitive strategy is part and parcel of it.

1.2 Research Gap

Most of the previous studies about competitiveness and performance such as (Abonda and Machuki, 2018, Wang, 2016; Budayan et al. 2015; Waweru and Omwenga, 2015; Oyewobi, Windapo, and Cattell, 2014; Juma, 2013; Kellei, 2013; Popa et al. 2011) have contributed to the body of knowledge but still, there is the knowledge gap that existed. Such as gap is the means of adopting and implementing competitive strategies in public construction firms.

Several empirical studies have been done such as Abonda and Machuki (2018) conducted a study to establish the competitive strategies adopted by construction firms at Kisumu in Kenya and how those strategies influenced the performance of particular firms. The study concentrated on three independent variables which are generic strategies, growth strategies, and grand strategies all these are competitive strategies and a single dependent variable is performance. The study was limited to some of the competitive strategies, theories, and models, while there were other theories such as resource base theory, and profit-maximizing theory. Also, the study did not explain how these strategies can be implemented in those firms, This leaves a conceptual gap.

Budayan et al. (2015) investigated the alignment of project management with business strategy in construction with evidence from Turkish contractors. This research checks whether or not the relationship between the achievement of a strategy at the business level, that is differentiation, and the process carried out in the construction project. The study focused on one part of business strategy while leaves other strategies of business such as cost, time bases, focus at the business level of organisational strategies which are corporate and functionals. So there are conceptual and methodological gaps that existed.

Waweru and Omwenga (2015) investigated the effect of strategic management strategies on private construction firms in Kenya. The research was performed in three construction firms and data from two sources (primary and secondary) were used. The study focused on private construction firms while leaving the public ones in which there were salient features of public construction firms such as organisational structures and bureaucracy. Also, the method used was a survey while this study employed a case study design so there are conceptual and methodological gaps that existed.

Oyewobi et al. (2014) investigated the competitive strategies being used by large construction companies in South Africa. The study focused on some parameters such as generic strategies, environmental factors (exogenous and endogenous), and financial performance. The study leaves corporate and operational strategies and non-financial performance so a conceptual gap existed.

Juma (2013) investigated the regulations and policy factors influencing the competitiveness of local contractors in Tanzania. The researcher concentrated on external environment factors (Policy and regulations) only but also there are other factors from the internal environment such as Project management, Innovation, Research and Development, Technical or Technological, Financial capacity, and others. So there is the methodological and conceptual gap that existed.

Kellei (2013) conducted a study on the assessment of market strategies used by local building contractors in Tanzania. Though market strategies and competitive strategies of the firms have common features such as competitive price or cost, types of competitors but still the concepts, variables, and methods, are different. So there is the methodological and conceptual gap that existed.

Asman (2013) conducted a report on the influence of diversification strategies on the performance of the state-owned commercial corporation in Kenya. The previous study focused just on one strategy at the corporate level while this study focuses on three levels of the firm's competitive strategies. Also, the previous study focused on multi-industrial corporations while this focuses on construction industry firms. Therefore there is a methodological, contextual gap that existed. Table 1.1 in next page provides a summary of reviewed related previous studies.

Table 1.1: Summary of Previous Related Studies to Competitiveness

| Sn | Topic | Authors & Year | Issues focused | Key findings | Remarks |
|----|---|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| 1. | Competitive Strategies and Performance of Construction Companies in Kisumu County, Kenya | Abonda & Machuki, 2018 | Evaluating the competitive strategies adopted in construction firms and fixing their effects on firms' performance. | There was a positive association between the competitive strategies of an organisation and its performance | The study was limited to some competitive strategies, theory, and model but there other theories such as resource base theory |
| 2. | Alignment of Project Management with Business Strategy in Construction: Evidence from the Turkish Contractors | Budayan et al. 2015 | Checking the coordination between differentiation and project management | There was a link between differentiation strategy and project management | The study focused just on one strategy at the corporate level while there other two levels of strategies |
| 3 | The Influence of Strategic Management Practices on Performance of Private Construction Firms in Kenya | Waweru and Omwenga, 2015 | Study the effects of corporate, business, and operational strategies on organisational performance | All three strategic levels found to influence performance in the studied companies | The study conducted in private construction companies and not public firms |
| 4 | Competitiveness of Construction Organisations in South Africa | Oyewobi, Windapo, and Cattell, 2014 | The study on competitive strategies, the financial tactics, view of business context assisting to achieve a strategic fit and fiscal results | Competitive methods for achieving high quality and time differentiation were correlated adversely to financial results | Some variables were not included such as non-financial performance and other strategic levels at corporate and operational |
| 5 | Regulations and policy factors influencing the competitiveness of local contractor in Tanzania | Juma, 2013 | To investigate the external factor (policy) and its effects on the competitiveness of local contractors | 62% percent of local contractors not benefited from various strategies aimed to foster competitiveness due to ineffective regulations used | The study focused on part of external factors and did not condenser other factors |
| 6 | Assessment of marketing | Kellei, 2013 | Tactics used by contractors to get | There were many market strategies | The study focused on part of |

| Sn | Topic | Authors & Year | Issues focused | Key findings | Remarks |
|----|--|------------------|--|---|--|
| | strategies used by local building contractors in Tanzania | | the market share such as price competition, quality of products and services | such as high-quality construction but many contractors ignore them for different reasons. | operational strategies but there other operational strategies like production |
| 7 | Diversification strategy and performance of Kenyan commercial state-owned corporations | Asman, 2013 | Diversification hypotheses, forms of diversification and organisational efficiency | Diversification was positively related to growth in the commercial state of Kenya. | The study concentrated on one corporate strategy and not all strategic levels |
| 8 | Competitive advantage in the public sector | Popa et al. 2011 | Peculiarities of competitive advantage in the public sector | Competitive advantage assisted the public sector; to increase public services, but also helps to eliminate inefficiencies and unnecessary costs | The study focused on the public sector in general and not specific public construction firms |

1.3 Problem Statement

Competitive strategy as part of strategic management has been found to influence the performance of construction organisations as defined by Lu (2006). As the result of increased competition in the Tanzanian construction industry, the management of construction firms needs to find and formulate strategies for achieving and maintaining their competitive advantage and improving their performance. In order to achieve the intended goal and improve their performance, public construction firms should not duplicate (Copy and paste) the competitive strategies from other construction firms rather than take the strategic fit in their organisations. Setting goals for public organisational performance requires strategic fit and making clear choices of competitive strategy by considering both the internal and external environments of the public firms.

The clients' requirements and expectations become a driving force for public construction firms to find different techniques or strategies to satisfy their clients. The bureaucratic characteristics, political influence, legal and regulatory issues distinguished the public

organisations from other organisations. So these propose some distinguishing features of competitive strategy on the performance of these organisations.

Abonda and Machuki (2018) showed that a competitive strategy was planned to grant an organisation the ability to outperform its competitors and gain market leadership. Also, Asman (2013) indicated that the adoption of an appropriate competitive strategy by a state-owned corporation improved its performance. Furthermore, Wang (2016) found that when a state-owned corporation adopted a competitive strategy at a certain level is going to have more chances of earning more projects. These previous studies suggested that competitive strategy is an important part of strategic management that can enhance the firms' and projects' performances. Though the previous studies had contributed a lot to the knowledge about competitive strategy and public or state-owned organisational performance still there are some areas not covered, such as how the distinguishing features outlined in the paragraph above linked to competitive strategies to influence organisational performance of the public construction firms.

The evaluation of the competitive strategy by identifying the strategies, assessing the performance indicators, and implementing guidelines may assist the management of public organisations to establish the strategic fit that will help to achieve, and sustain their competitive advantage and improve their organisational performance. To achieve the aim of this study the researcher had to use the purposive or judgemental sampling of five case studies from public construction firms and conduct the in-depth study.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study was to evaluate competitive strategy practices and the performance of public construction firms

1.4.1 Specific Objectives

- i. To identify the competitive strategies adopted and practised in public construction firms
- ii. To assess the performance improvement measures of public construction firms through competitive strategies.

- iii. To recommend the implementation guidelines for competitive strategies in public construction firms

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What are the competitive strategies practised in public construction firms?
- ii. How do competitive strategies influence the financial and non-financial performance of public construction firms?
- iii. What are the proper implementation guidelines for competitive strategies in public construction firms?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is important because it makes valuable contributions to the Tanzanian construction industry stakeholders regarding strategic management specifically the part of competitive strategies. The distinguishing features of public construction firms that will be discussed in this study will help public construction firms to choose or adopt competitive strategies based on their strategic fit and hence improve their performance. The findings of this study will help the management of public construction firms (Directors, managers, immediate supervisors, and project managers) to formulate and practice competitive strategies from corporate to functional or operational levels hence achieving and sustaining their competitive advantage and improve their organisational performance. The results of this study might inspire more researchers in the field of strategic management and save as the point of reference for future research concerning this field in public/state-owned construction firms.

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focused on competitive strategies as part of strategic management. Also, the study was concentrated on class one to class three public construction firms (Buildings and Civil Contractors). These classes were selected because the majority had considered the issues of competitiveness in their strategic plans, company profiles, and other firms' reports so relevant information was obtained. Also, due to the time limit and inaccessibility of data, some financial performance indicators such as Return on Assets (ROA), Return on Investments (ROI), Return on Equity (ROE), profitability ratios were not included in this study.

1.8 The Organisation of the Dissertation

Chapter one starts by describing the background information, research gap, and a statement of the problem then followed by research objectives and associated research questions. The significance, scope, and limitations of the study were also part and parcel of this chapter. The chapter concludes with the organisation and composition of the entire dissertation. Chapter two is the literature review which starts with an introductory part and then an overview of the Tanzanian construction industry and its competitiveness. The chapter also explains the competitive strategies at different levels. The theoretical framework and descriptions of variables found in the conceptual framework which assisted the researcher to prepare instruments for data collection were also included, followed by empirical reviews and then the research gap concluded this chapter.

Chapter three is the methodological part that demonstrates the conceptual frameworks of this study. These provide the researcher with a roadmap and milestones for this research. This chapter described the methods, techniques, and tools employed in this research. Also summarizes the background of selected organisations as case studies. Chapter four is the analysis of data obtained from primary and secondary sources and then discussions of findings, the analysis of data based on research objectives. Chapter five consists of three main parts which are the conclusion, recommendations, and areas for further study.

1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides an overview of the Construction Industry globally, regionally, and nationally. The empirical literature was reviewed to identify the research gap that was left by the previous studies. The explained problem was based on the background information, relevance, and research gap. The significance of the study was focused on its contributions to the Tanzanian Construction Industry in general and public construction firms. There were some limitations explained therein which in one way or another hindered the execution of this research.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter started by providing an overview of the Tanzanian construction industry so as to get a picture of how it is structured. Based on the acts the importance of competitiveness was explained. This chapter provides knowledge about various terminologies such as competitive strategy, and competitive advantage that was used in this research as well as various theories applied therein. Also, the conceptual framework was explained and the framed variables (Independent, dependent, and intervene) were demonstrated in this chapter.

2.2 Tanzanian Construction Industry in General

Tanzania Ministry of Works (MoW, 2003) showed that the construction industry in Tanzania includes the mechanism by which physical infrastructures are prepared, built, procured, installed, updated, restored, preserved, and demolished. The Tanzanian construction industry is formed by various stakeholders starting from an individual to organisations working as consultants and contractors. Clyde and Co. (2013) pointed out the current list of registered contractors in Tanzania. In which the building and civil construction activities are governed by the policies, Acts, Regulations, and By-laws formulated by authorities for construction professionals. Among other authorities are National Construction Council (NCC), Architects and Quantity Surveyors Registration Board (AQRB), Engineers Registration Board (ERB), Contractors Registration Board (CRB), these are under the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communications. Other related authorities are the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) and Local Government Authorities (LGAs).

2.3 Competitiveness of Construction Firms in Tanzania

According to s. 59.2(a) of the *Public Procurement Act 2011*(Tz) all tenders or proposals are supposed to be rejected if found that there was no effective competition during the proceedings. Muhegi and Malongo (2004) stated that most of the construction firms in Tanzania are not capable to mitigate the challenges of globalisation. Also, the structures and the resources of these firms are not conducive to allow the local firms to compete with foreign contractors and these firms are not in the position of joint ventures with more advanced foreign firms. Tanzania Civil Engineering Contractors Association (TACECA,

2013) outlined some challenges in construction contracts such as local contractors fail to win high-value projects, outcompeted by foreign counterparts. According to CRB (2021), there are about 9131 registered contractors in Tanzania who struggle for the few construction works. Table 2.1 in this page shows the distribution of contractors in Tanzania as of January 2021.

Table 2.1 Distribution of Contractors by Categories and Class as of January 2021

| Type | Class I | | | Class II | Class III | Class IV | Class V | Class VI | Class VII | Total local Contractors |
|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| | Foreign | Local | Total | | | | | | | |
| Building | 38 | 81 | 119 | 57 | 61 | 295 | 881 | 847 | 1252 | 3474 |
| Civil | 37 | 49 | 86 | 24 | 60 | 281 | 786 | 1298 | 891 | 3389 |
| Electrical | 23 | 31 | 54 | 16 | 9 | 101 | 205 | 111 | 321 | 794 |
| Mechanical | 14 | 8 | 22 | 4 | 4 | 27 | 45 | 50 | 61 | 199 |
| Specialists | Building | 5 | 9 | 14 | 7 | 6 | | | | 22 |
| | Civil | 15 | 14 | 29 | 39 | 538 | | | | 591 |
| | Electrical | 24 | 41 | 65 | 135 | 155 | | | | 331 |
| | Mechanical | 28 | 48 | 76 | 95 | 188 | | | | 331 |
| Total | 184 | 281 | 465 | 377 | 1021 | 704 | 1917 | 2306 | 2525 | 9131 |

Source: Tanzanian Contractors Registration Board (2021)

2.4 Competitiveness in the Construction Industry

Orozco et al. (2011) suggested that competitiveness in the construction industry can be examined at four different levels such as country, industry, firm, and project levels. (Ibid) indicated that factors for competitiveness in construction firms can be categorised as endogenous (Internal factors), and exogenous (External factors). Endogenous factors are the ones that the management of a firm can act upon such as leadership, training, and innovation and exogenous factors are those over which management has little control such as regulations, number of competitors, interest rates, public investment, etc. These sections explain the competitiveness in the construction industry.

2.4.1 Competitiveness in the Public Construction Firms

Public construction firms also known as State-Owned Construction Enterprise(SCEs) contribute to the growth of the economy of different countries. Some of the top SCEs do

exceptionally well in some regions and nations, but overall performance is still lacking. Taking the example of Chinese State-Owned Construction Enterprises in the study conducted by Zhou and others. In terms of foundational competencies, Fig. 2.1 on the next page contrasts SCEs with their global rivals. For benchmarking organizations, all other indicators aside from "human resource capability"—are given a score between 7 and 8. The lowest grade for SCEs is "financial capabilities," which is 4.875, and the other scores range from 5 to 7. Additionally, Fig. 2.1 demonstrates that the international rivals outperform the Chinese SCEs in each of the eight fundamental competencies. The largest difference, 2.63, is in the "financial capabilities" disparity. Among the indicators, "market development" and "procurement management" have the smallest differences (less than 1). The difference between 1 and 2 is only slightly different for the remaining 5 indicators (Zhou et al. 2009).

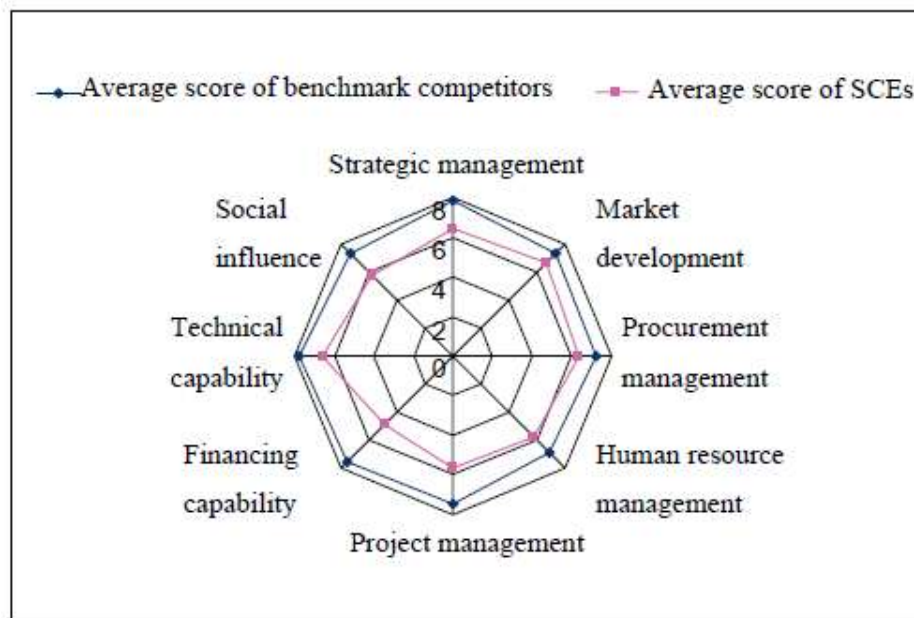


Figure 2.1 Comparing the SCEs and their targeted foreign competitors in competencies; Source: Zhou et al. (2009)

2.5 Competitive Advantages

Popa et al. (2011) claimed that a corporation has a strategic edge as it can generate greater economic worth than competing firms. And economic worth is the difference between the expected benefits of a buyer who orders products, services, or functions of a business and the economic costs of such goods and services. Sigalas and Pekka-Economou (2013) pointed out two perspectives regarding the concept of competitive advantage. The first one was a competitive advantage in the direction of a firm's performance such as profit maximisation,

reduction of operational costs, balancing between market demand and marginal cost, and profits over opportunity cost. The Second perspective was the sources of competitive advantage of a firm which are Cost leadership, differentiation, technology, product or service market, locations, firms' resources, and capability.

2.6 Competitive Strategy

Pisano and Hitt (2012) described competitive strategies as a set of decisions required to support organisational goals within a particular business. So this definition suggests that competitive strategy can be a guiding map that enables the organisation to achieve its goals and objectives, and one of the common objectives is performance. Jofre (2011) pointed out three levels of strategy formulation which are: Corporate, Business, and Functional or operational level.

Additionally, Zhou et al. (2009) pointed out six strategies to be considered by State-owned construction firms to increase their competency and improve firms' performance. The strategies were research and development (R&D), maintaining aptitude with international experience, mergers, and acquisitions, financial capacity, focusing on the core business, and enhancing risk management. Table 2.2 on this page provides the summary of identified strategies from reviewed literature.

Table 2.2: Identified Strategy Levels From Previous Studies

| Sn. | Strategic Levels | Reviewed Previous Studies |
|----------|---|---|
| 1 | <i>Corporate Strategy</i> | (Jofre, 2011; Fuertes et al.2020; Zhou et al. 2009) |
| a | Growth and Diversification | |
| b | Firms' Brand & Images | |
| c | Joint Ventures | |
| 2 | <i>Business Strategy</i> | (Porters,1980, 1985; Viltard 2017) |
| a | Cost leadership | |
| b | Differentiation | |
| c | Focus | (Adminnour-Helm, 2000; Boguslauskas & Kvedaraviciene, 2009) |
| d | Time based | |
| 3 | <i>Functional/Operational Strategy</i> | |

| Sn. | Strategic Levels | Reviewed Previous Studies |
|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a | Market | (Jofre 2011; Zhou et al. 2009) |
| b | Relationship | |
| c | Production | |
| d | Research and Development | |
| e | Human resource | |

2.6.1 Corporate Level Strategy

Jofre (2011) described corporate strategy as the broad decisions about the scope, direction, and position of the organization in the long term. Fuertes et al. (2020) stated that if an organisation practices more than one kind of business the appropriate strategy at the corporate level can be diversifications. The corporate-level strategy is the strategy that contributes to the performance at organisational level but all levels of the organisational strategies must be coordinated to produce the required results. Waweru and Omwenga (2015) recommended that any firm that wants to adopt a business strategy should consider all three levels of an organisational which are corporate, business, and functional or operational. Jofre (2011) summarised the corporate strategy with these questions that the strategy must focus on. What does a firm sell? And where does it sell?

2.6.2 Business-Level Strategy (Porters Generic Strategies)

Porters (1980, 1985) found and derived the concept of business strategy and classify them as generic strategies. He concluded that superior performance in a dynamic market could be obtained by following a generic approach, which he defined as developing overall cost leadership, differentiation, or focus approach to industry competition. Abonda and Machuki (2018) showed that generic strategies influenced firms' performances within different contexts and are highly implemented by firms that aspire to outperform their competitors.

According to Fuertes et al. (2020), business strategies can be used by the management of an organisation as approaches for producing an effective performance for a particular business. Business strategies are very crucial and help management to create and emphasise the competitive position of a firm for the long term in the market. Therefore these studies suggest that the adoption of an appropriate business strategy provides chances for a firm to

gain and sustain its competitive advantage. The following sections describe the types of business strategies.

2.6.2.1 Cost Leadership Strategy

According to Porter (1980), a cost leadership strategy aimed to create a competitive advantage through generating and maintaining low-cost positions relative to competitors. By using this strategy a firm is trying to use different alternatives to reduce operation and other associated costs of services or works so that can be able to provide the same services at a low cost compared to that of its competitors. Porter, (1985) indicated that a strategy is characterised by tight control of costs and overheads, minimization of operational costs, and reduced labour costs.

Though low-cost strategies or cost leadership is the most preferred strategy, you may find some firms may face some challenges in implementing low-cost strategies in the business units. And this can show the relationship between low-cost strategy and quality strategy or differentiation strategy. For instance, a business unit trying to distinguish itself through quality and service may suffer from an overarching cost reduction goal or company-wide personnel policies, just as a business unit trying to be the low-cost producer (Porter, 1985).

2.6.2.2 Differentiation Strategy

Through this strategy, the firms produce peculiar products or services that can increase customer loyalty to a firm hence outperform its competitors. Viltard (2017) showed the key issues for this strategy are uniqueness, brand loyalty, less price sensibility, and exclusivity. (Ibid) pointed out factors that can help to implement this strategy in a successful way, such as nurture research and development, innovation, capability for delivering high-quality products and services, and customer awareness. Arasa & Gathinji (2014) indicated that for successful implementation of this strategy, the firm should have internal strengths such as scientific research, high skilled, creative product development team, and a corporate reputation.

2.6.2.3 Focus Strategy

The third generic strategy is the Focus, as the word explains, this strategy concentrates on a certain segment of an industry. A focus strategy is to select a narrow strategic scope within the market. The focus strategy has two variants. Porter (1985) showed that cost focus

occurred when a firm has targeted a certain segment by looking at cost issues. The differentiation focus is when a firm differentiates itself within a targeted segment. Viltard (2017) suggested that a focus strategy depends on differentiation or cost strategy for a particular market section. A firm that adopted a focus strategy must provide an extra item in the selected market section.

2.6.2.4 Time-based Strategy/Competition

Time-based competition is defined as competition measured in response time. The core concept of time-based competition is the reduction of time spent on each stage of the general cycle, which entails speeding up the following processes: planning, designing, product creation, innovation introduction, and production (Adminnour-Helm, 2000). The firm can accomplish this by getting rid of operations that don't bring value, shortening the time required for ones that do, and effectively coordinating them. This will give a firm a competitive edge in terms of speed, which adds to quick delivery, low costs, flexibility, and reliable delivery (Boguslauskas & Kvedaraviciene, 2009).

2.6.3 Function or Operation Strategies

Jofre (2011) explained that functional strategies are required to focus on short-term activities and are aimed at assisting the implementation of business and corporate strategies. Fuertes et al. (2020) showed that operation strategies start from the environmental analysis of a firm, the market, and then the competitors' analysis. Also, internal resources should be considered in the operation strategies. Jofre (2011) provided examples of function strategies such as marketing, finance, production (or operations), Research and Development (R&D), and Human Resources strategies. Also, the operation strategies are ones that decide on the provisions of products and services such as technology and innovations, logistics of resources, and procurements.

2.7 Implementation Practices for Competitive Strategies

Mišanková and Kočišová (2014) described the execution of the strategy as part of the strategic management phase and are conditioned by the success of managers, workers, their organisation, and the transformation of the company's culture. And it found that the previous studies about the implementation guidelines for strategies such as (Jofre, 2011; Mišanková and Kočišová, 2014) are based on the four processes or modes of strategic management.

2.7.1 Environmental Analysis or Appraisal

Jofre (2011) described that the strategy development process is a cyclical effort that starts with the evaluation or review of the internal and external environments of the enterprise. The most prevalent method of internal atmosphere analysis includes the assessment and review of goals, the organisation's mission, and strategic objectives in light of significant strengths and weaknesses. Therefore there should be appropriate guidelines for performing this stage, such as using tools, methods, and techniques.

2.7.2 Strategy Formulation

According to Reitzig and Maciejovsky (2015), strategy formation is not only a job for executives but the concept of business methods and modern approaches. Strategy formation must include all layers of the hierarchy organisation (Head of the corporate unit, head of production, head of management, functional areas within a company or division, managers, and supervisors). The most general advice for formulating a strategy is to match a firm's assets and liabilities, especially its unique skill, to the possibilities and risks in its environment. May be much more precise and detailed about a firm's strengths, weaknesses, particular competencies, industry possibilities, and hazards (Porter M. E., 1998).

2.7.3 Strategy Implementation

According to Mišanková and Kočíšová (2014), efficient execution of strategy is not currently the sole choice for strategic implementation. But also should focus on the elements such as the executives of the company, the company's culture, corporate structure, and core methods for execution through control, rewarding, and administrative tools. So the guidelines may be established based on outlined issues such as corporate or organisation structures, tools, methods, and techniques.

2.7.4 Strategy Control or Monitoring

For strategic monitoring, according to Cokins (2017) all those environmental considerations, such as challenges or opportunities, which specifically influence the execution of the strategy and need an appropriate response, must be considered. To define these variables, it must be evaluated that the targets set are the right ones, the measurable outcomes are compatible with the existing situations, and the review of the plans and policies introduced are the right ones. In association with other factors, the guidelines for control and monitoring should include the stated parameters.

2.8 Performance of Construction Firms

Ali et al. (2013) suggested that stiff competition and intensive changes in the construction industry are driving construction management to improve the performance of their firms. Previously the performance of construction firms was based on financial performance but currently, the evaluation of a firm's performance is based on both financial and non-financial performance. Measuring the performance of a firm is challenging although some of the previous studies have tried to point out some measures or indicators used to demonstrate the firm's performance.

2.8.1 Financial Performance

According to Aliona (2016), financial performance is structured to evaluate and interpret the account of the corporation. The indicators of financial performance are profitability, financial uncertainty, rate of return, and ROCE. Aliona (2016), shows that ROCE is the basic one that indicates the profitability of a firm. Other financial indicators that demonstrated the firm's performance are financial management, profit maximizations, etc.

2.8.2 Non-Financial Performance

According to Kotane and Merlino (2011), the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) is the most used method to measure both the financial and non-financial performance of an organisation. Ja-Shen et al. (2009) pointed out non-financial indicators such as client loyalty, competitive advantage, the attraction of new clients, the firm's reputation, the firm's image, and the products and services' quality. Through these indicators, construction firms can measure their performance and compare it with their rivals.

2.8.3 Measures of Improving Performance in Construction Firms

Performance measures or methods are very important to any organisation. There are several methods used to improve performance in construction firms such as using various techniques and tools like Balanced Scorecard (BSC) and Six Sigma concepts and principles. According to Katic and Bevanda (2010) BSC has been seen as a robust implementation mechanism for strategies and reliable corporate success assessment. Construction companies are likely to experience survival issues if they don't adjust and deal with the challenges of the inventive environment (Tagesse, 2017). According to Ihome and Chiagorom (2018) sound and good management of the construction project is needed to produce outcomes that are satisfactory

in terms of aesthetic satisfaction, value for money, completion within budget, completion on schedule, health, and safety, and functional satisfaction.

Hwang et al. (2020) outlined some strategies which can improve performance at the functional or operational level. Those strategies are the firm's capability such as management skills, training, human resource management, and application of new technology. Generally, these tools, methods, and techniques comprise competitive strategies such as human resources, technology, production based on project management, etc.

2.8.3.1 Project Strategic Management

Some project management activities can improve the performance of construction firms through their construction projects. For instance, the contractual arrangements involving contractors early in the design process. El-Gohary & Aziz, (2014) advises using procurement techniques that encourage early contractor engagement to raise a design's constructability level. Weekly updates on project progress are discussed with project stakeholders. According to a study by Building Construction Authority (2012), drawing problems or the need for rework as a result of poor coordination are the primary factors that impact productivity. To address issues with inadequate coordination among project stakeholders, regular meetings are undertaken.

2.8.3.2 Human Resources

Making ensuring employees are proficient in their job scope through training for specific work tasks. Construction is a labor-intensive industry, thus manpower-related factors like experience and expertise have a big impact on productivity. The research by El-Gohary & Aziz, (2014) which ranks "laborer experience and skills" top in the labor/human category for factors influencing construction labor productivity, lends weight to this conclusion.

2.9 Theoretical Review

Ravitch and Carl (2016) showed that theoretical review offers assistance to scholars in situating and contextualising formal ideas in their real fields. It serves as a research focus and is connected to the research topic under study. It also directs the researcher's choice of study design and data analysis plan. According to Omalaja and Eruola (2011), strategic management theories can be regarded as the process and approach of identifying an organisation's objectives, formulating policies, programme, modelling, and plans. These

should be associated with resource allocation. Sammut-Bonnici (2015) described strategic management as the procedures for assessing, planning, and executing particular issues aimed to improve and sustain the competitive advantage. Hashim (2005) and Newbert (2007) as cited by Omalaja and Eruola (2011) pointed out the common strategic management theories such as explained in these sections.

2.9.1 Resource-Based Theory

According to Omalaja and Eruola (2011), the resource-based theory is rooted in management philosophy. The resources of a firm are the sources of its competitive advantage that are supposed to support its position in the external environment. Wright and Mc-Mahan (1992) as cited by Davis and Simpson (2017) showed that for a firm's internal resources (human or otherwise) to provide a sustainable competitive advantage, the following conditions should be considered; (a) the resource must bring value to the firm; (b) the resource must be exceptional or uncommon among existing and future competitors; (c) the resource must not be entirely imitated, and (d) the resource cannot be supplemented by another equally operating resource by its competitors.

2.9.2 Survival Based Theory

According to Abdullah (2010), the concept of survival-based theory, or others might name it “survival of the fittest” was originally developed by Herbert Spencer in 1864. From the strategic management perspective, the theory explains how an organization can adapt and survive in a dynamic competitive environment. (Ibid) show that for a firm to survive, had to differentiate itself from its competitors since the existence of the same two identical firms who serve an identical purpose.

2.9.3 Conceptual Framework

Luse et al. (2012) explained a conceptual framework as the logical structure that assists a researcher to specify and provide the definitions in the context of the study problem. According to Adom et al. (2018), the researchers and students must tactfully integrate the conceptual structure into their study enquiries to improve their strength in all its facets. Figure 3.1 in next page represents the conceptual framework for this study. The conceptual framework consists of three variables, which are independent, dependent, and intervening. The sections below explain the relationships between these variables in addressing the study problem.

The firm's competitive strategies are the independent variable. According to Kumar (2011), an independent variable is a cause to be accountable for bringing about change(s) to the phenomena or circumstance. If public construction firms adopt appropriate competitive strategies might enhance their performance. The adoption and practices of competitive strategies in public construction firms must look at various factors such as internal and external environments so as to have the strategic fit and have some impact on their performance.

According to Flannelly et al. (2014), a dependent variable is, quite literally, dependent on an independent variable in a certain way and is the one that a researcher is generally most interested in learning and likely in forecasting. The firm's performance can be considered from two perspectives namely; Financial performance and Non-financial performance. Therefore in this study, the performance depends on the adopted competitive strategies in public construction firms.

Rajasekar (2014) reported that the adaption of organisational structure for the aim of implementing strategy has positive effects on organisational performance. The organisational structure is regarded as the intervening variable between an independent variable and the dependent variable. So implementing a competitive strategy for enhancing firms' performance may be affected by public organisational structures.

Additionally, Bandić and Orešković (2016) showed that for a strategy to be efficient (Successful formulated and implemented) has to consider the firm's environmental analysis. And the firm's environmental analysis focuses on external and internal ones. The internal environment starts with the firm's strengths and weaknesses and the external are opportunities and challenges. Therefore these were the intervening variable since the implementation of competitive strategies for enhancing the firm's performance might be affected by its internal and external environments.

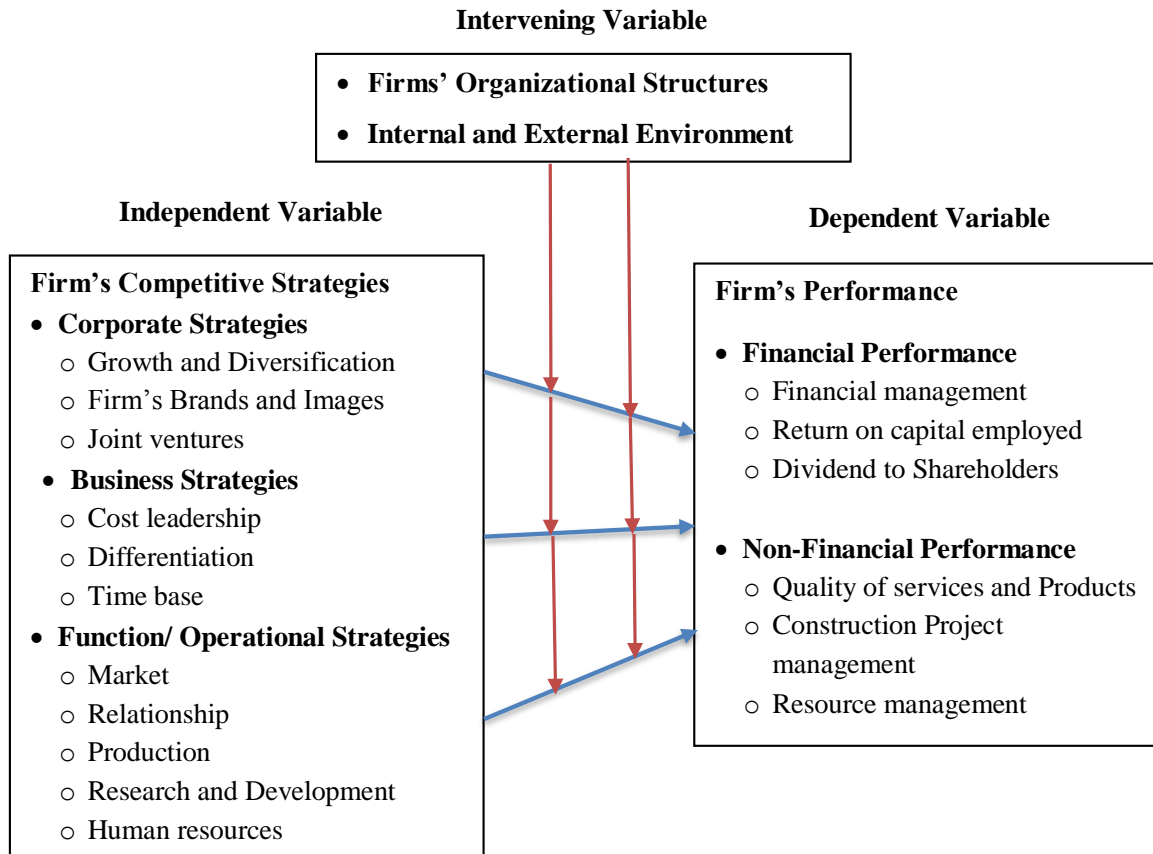


Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework

2.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter starts with an introductory part that briefly explains the definition and the contents of this chapter. The chapter also provides definitions for the concept of competitiveness and competitive strategy in public construction firms and the construction industry in general. Also, it includes the implementation guidelines for competitive strategies. The firms' performance was also considered with the associated measures for improving it. The previous studies concerning strategic management theories were reviewed such as Resource-Based Theory, and Survival Based Theory. Therefore, the knowledge obtained in this chapter provides the researcher with insights from previous studies about strategic management practices specifically the area of competitive strategy in construction firms.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the methods and various approaches used in this study. Figure 3.1 on page 25 provides a summary of the procedures followed in the entire research. This study employed a multi-case study as an approach in qualitative research and the justification for employing this approach was explained. Both primary and secondary data were collected and analysed by assisted with computer software. The type of information required from both primary sources (Interviewees) and secondary sources (Documentary reviews) were outlined so that the researcher to be focused. Thereafter the trustworthiness of the methods and the findings were explained.

3.2 Research Design

Kumar (2011) claimed that the research design is a research plan, framework, and technique conceived and implemented by a researcher to provide answers to research questions or problems. Sileyew (2019) argues that the research design is intended to provide an effective context for analysis and decide how relevant information can be gathered for the study. Figure 3.2 summarizes the path followed by a researcher in this study to address the research problem.

3.2.1 The Procedures Followed in this Research

This research started with enquiries about the research problem, so the identification of the research problem was the first task in this research process. Having recognised the research problem a researcher finds some of the preliminary literature to establish whether there was an issue to research, and also if the problem relates to the Tanzanian context. With the first task, the tentative study topic was formulated. Then the objectives of the study were developed. Thereafter an intensive literature review from previous journal articles, books, archives, previous dissertations, and the internet were conducted. The literature was about firms' competitive strategies and how those strategies relate to the firms' performance. In this part, the theories concerning competitive strategies were reviewed. The empirical

3.2.2 Study Design

Kumar (2011) argued that a good study design explains and clarifies the details in clarity way that if someone follows the procedures will act accordingly. This study employed a multiple case study

design in answering research questions. Creswell (2013) identified the case study approach as an investigation of a real-life, contemporary defined structure or structures by comprehensive data collection using different sources of information.

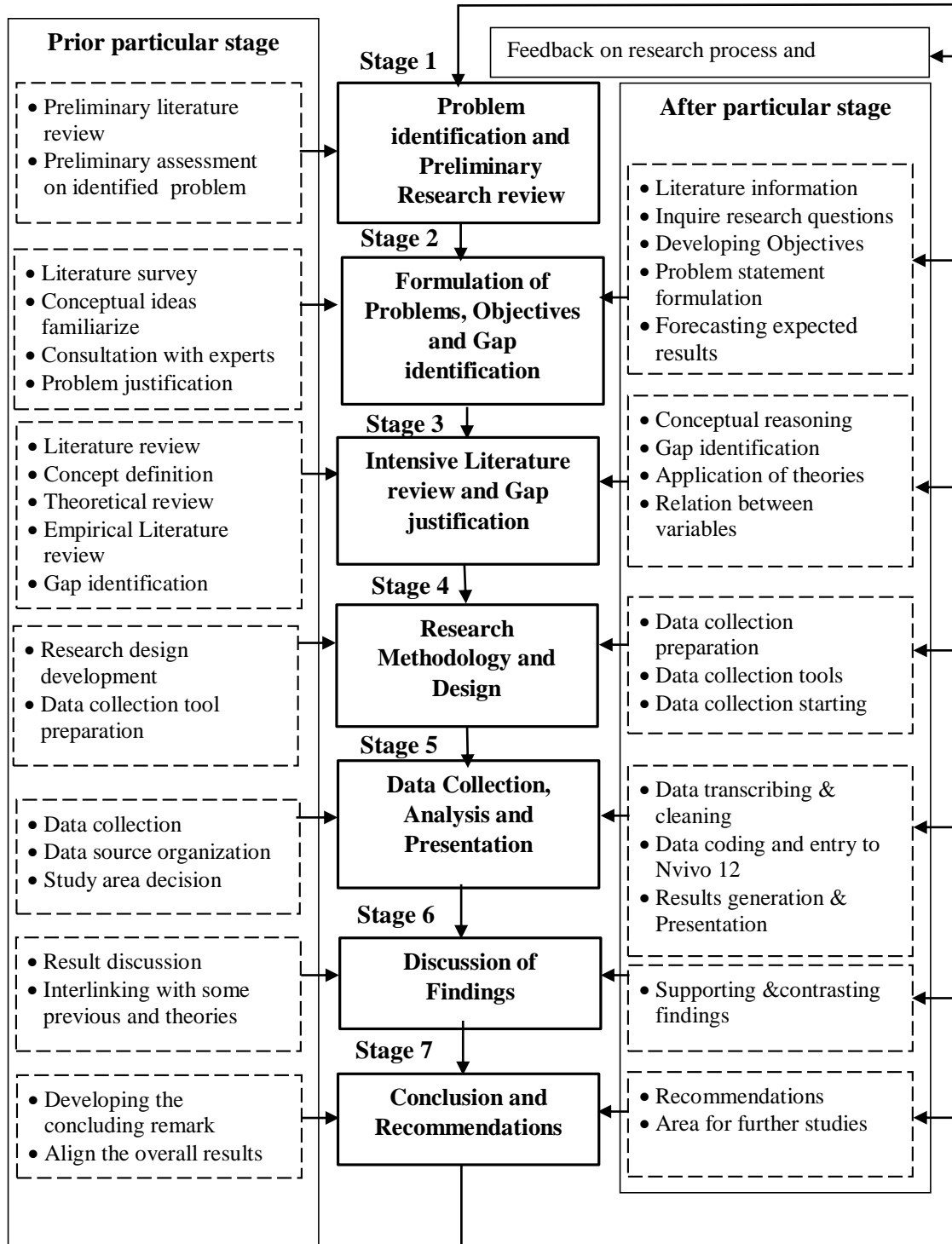


Figure 3.1: Summary of Research Procedures Followed

3.2.3 Justification for Selected Study Design

The case study design employed in this study is a multiple case study, for this design a researcher used five cases to study the competitiveness and performance of public construction firms (Building and Civil contractors from class I to III). The reason for selecting these registration classes is that the majority of identified public firms found in these classes operate from the corporate to the functional level. So as explained in section 3.3 below, the research could get more information from corporate to functional or operational levels. Baxter and Jack (2008) indicated that the recommendations made in the multiple case study are more sensitive and better. Since the general objective of this study was to evaluate the competitive strategies to enhance the performance of public construction firms. The case study design seems to be appropriate in describing such a phenomenon within the context of the construction industry.

3.3 Case Study Selection Criteria

Since the study employed a multi-case study design so the technique used in selecting those cases is purposive selection. According to Saunders et al. (2009) as cited by Marques et al. (2017) the strength of purposeful or intentional selection is rooted in the information that can provide an in-depth study of a specific issue(s). Though the researcher did not find the exact number of public (State-owned) construction firms because there is no specific category of public organisation in the database of the Tanzanian Contractors Registration Board (CRB). The following are some criteria used by a researcher to select five cases among the available State-owned construction firms in Tanzania.

First; the type of operations used by public organisations, since the information or data required in this study was based on the competitiveness, performance, and strategic levels of these firms. According to previous literature such as Jofre (2011), the strategic levels started at corporate to functional levels so the researcher selected the organisations which operate from corporate to functional levels.

The second criterion was to look on the considerations of competitiveness or strategy. Based on the strategic plans, the company profiles, and the mission or goals of organisations. The researcher found that the selected cases considered those issues.

The third criterion was the number and kind of construction projects undertaken by those public organisations. The number and the kind of construction projects were among of the criteria simply because the performance of these firms can be measured on the undertaken construction projects.

Fourth, the study was carried out within the construction industry in Tanzania where the public construction firms are very few compared to private ones. So other methods like surveys were not appropriate for this study. Therefore to address the challenges of a firm's competitiveness and its performance in a complex and fragmented industry the in-depth study was appropriate.

organisation was involved in this study because it considers some components of competitiveness in its mission.

3.4 Brief Description of Selected Cases

Due to limited time and resources, the researcher used purposive and judgemental techniques to select five (5) public construction firms (class one to class three) as case studies. Since the competitive strategies are considered at different levels, from corporate to functional or operational levels. Thus the researcher found that Class one to three for public construction firms were appropriate because most operate at the corporate level. Thus one criterion used by a researcher to select a specific construction firm was to check its operations. Another criterion was to check if a firm considers the issues of competitiveness in its strategic plans or mission, vision, goals, and other reports. These sections represent the selected organisations that participated in this study as case studies.

3.4.1 Corporation Sole Works Superintendent (CSWS)

CSWS is the government entity established under an act of parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania No. 23 of 1974. This is a semi-autonomous construction department in the Ministry of Works. It has been registered by the Contractor Registration Board in 2011 and currently is class two (2) for building and class Four (4) for civil works. The headquarters of CSWS is in Dar es salaam and has three branches in Dodoma, Arusha, and Mwanza. Its functions are to undertake the construction and maintenance works on a commercial basis for building and civil works. Some projects undertaken by CSWS are the construction of the Ultra-modern Conference Hall for Morogoro municipal council and the Maintenance of TAMESA's Workshop in Mbeya.

3.4.2 National Housing Corporation Contractor

National Housing Corporation (NHC) is the government organisation under the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Human Settlements Development. NHC was established by Act of Parliament No.45 of 1962 to address the problems of urban housing. It has established its offices in all regions of Tanzania's mainland. NHC contractor for the building was registered in 2012 and civil was registered in 2016 and is a class one contractor for building and civil. Some major projects undertaken by NHC contractors are the construction of the Vingunguti Abattoir for the Ilala district council, the Construction of EURA Headquarters in Dodoma, and the Construction of the TMDA Central Zone Office in Dodoma, which is under construction. The researcher selected this as the case study because has considered the competitiveness in its strategic plan 2015/16-2024/25 and participated in some of the major construction projects.

3.4.3 Prisons Corporation Sole Contractor

Prison Corporation Sole is a government entity under the Ministry of Home Affairs. It was established in 1983 under section 3(1) of Corporation Sole establishment Act No. 26 of 1974 cap 119. The act was revised in 2002 section 4(1) of the enabling Act which provides a mandate to the Prisons Corporation Sole to execute commercial activities. Prison Corporation Sole construction has been registered by the Contractors Registration Board in these categories: Building contractor class One (I), civil works contractor class four (IV). The headquarters of Prison Corporation Sole is in Dodoma City. Some projects performed are the Construction Office Block for the Ministry of Home Affairs at Ihumwa in Dodoma city, the Construction of Office Block for the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Vocational Training at Ihumwa in Dodoma city, and the Construction of Kilimanjaro International Leather Industries Ltd. at Moshi in Kilimanjaro region.

3.4.4 SUMA-JKT Construction Company Limited

It was established in 1982 under the public corporation act of 1974 for the aim of investment and maximising production in National Service. Among the key functions of SUMA-JKT are construction and engineering activities. SUMA-JKT construction company was registered in 2004 and currently is a class one building contractor, the contractor for civil works was registered in 2019 and is a class three civil contractor. Some projects undertaken by SUMA-JKT Construction Company are the Construction of Regional Office Blocks for CWT in 21 mainland regions, the Construction of a Modern Mbattoir at Ruvu coast region

for the ministry of livestock and fisheries, and the Construction of Command and Staff College for TPDF at Tengeru in Arusha region. This firm was selected because it operates at corporate and considers the issues of competitiveness in its company profile, also earned some major construction projects.

3.4.5 Tanzania Building Agency Construction Brigade

Tanzania Building Agency (TBA) is the government agency under the Ministry of Works (MoW), which was established in 2002 under the Executive Agencies Act No. 30 of 1997. The key functions of TBA are to provide quality accommodation to the government and public servants and building consultancy services for the government. TBA Construction Company was registered in 2017. It is a class one building contractor and has offices in all regions of the Tanzanian mainland. Some major projects performed by TBA are the construction of Magomeni Apartments in Dar es salaam, the client is TBA, The Construction of a Zonal Office for Ethics Commissioner, and the Construction of TANROADS Headquarters' Office in Dodoma. The researcher chose this organisation because has considered competitive issues in its strategic plan 2012-17 and experienced some performance challenges.

3.5 Data Collections

Kabir (2016) defined data collection methods as an important stage in the study journey, beginning with the identification of the types of data required and then the determination of how and where can be collected. There are two types of data collection basing on the sources in which can be obtained, namely; Primary data and Secondary data. The data collected in this study came from both primary and secondary sources.

3.5.1 Primary Source of Data Collections

The primary source of data collection was semi-structured interviews with study participants from selected case studies. Most interviews were conducted physically but few were conducted through phones. Before exercising data collection, the following were done; the researcher sent requesting letters to selected cases explaining the intention of the exercise. Also, the interview guides were prepared and sent to interviewees before the day of the interview. The interviews were recorded with a digital camera, personal computer (Laptop), and phone in the audio format and then transcribed verbatim before data analysis. Before recording, the interviewees were asked to seek their consent, some agree but some did not

agree. For those who did not agree, their pieces of information were collected as notes in the field notebook and cleaned before being analysed. The following sections elaborate on how the data collection exercise was conducted.

3.5.2 Interviews

Due to the time limit and nature of the informants who were senior and middle officers of the firms as shown in Table 3.1 and Table 4.3 thus their time was limited. The instrument for this method was an interview guide that comprised several open-ended questions as per Appendix 1. The reasons for using this method (interview) were as follows. First, the nature of the problem to be investigated. The research questions that were required to provide answers to the problem required in-depth information concerning competitiveness and firm performance. Second, the type of study design employed in this research was a case study, and as recommended by previous studies such as Qu and Dumay (2011) that the appropriate data collection methods for case study research are interviews, observations, and document review. The third reason is the type of informant; the targeted key informants were supposed to be at the managerial level (Directors and managers), who were required to provide in-depth information concerning their organisations. Also, are few in number so other methods like surveys would not be appropriate.

3.5.2.1 Interview Protocol

Yeong et al. (2018) found that accurate and quality interview data were heavily affected by the reliable interview protocol. They also indicated that the interview procedures should be clearly interpreted to include all research objectives in order to provide insight into research as a whole. The researcher of this study adopted the 4-step Interview Protocol Refinement (IPR) Framework stipulated by Yeong et al. (2018) during the development of the interview protocol of this study. The first was to align the interview questions with the research objectives as per Appendix 1. The second was to construct an inquiry-based conversation since some study participants were not very familiar with the topic thus the researcher simplified the questions. The third was to receive feedback on the interview guides, the researcher received feedback from three people. Two qualitative lectures, the first was the researcher's supervisor and the second lecture from another university, and the third one was the researcher's fellow student from Ardhi university.

3.5.2.2 Pilot Testing for the Interview Questions and Case Studies

Dikko (2016) has demonstrated that before the actual collection of data, the researcher must guarantee that the instrument will enable the achievement of the research objectives. Piloted interview guides assured the researcher that would operate as expected in the actual world. The pilot test was conducted at MIST Engineering Contractors Limited. This is public construction firm under Mbeya University of Science and Technology registered by the Contractors Registration Board in 2017 as a class four contractor. It is performing construction activities for building, civil, electrical, and mechanical works. One director for a construction company and two heads of sections (Constructions and Consultancy) were purposely selected and interviewed.

By using the prepared interview guide the researcher conducted interviews with one director and two heads of departments of MIST Engineering Contractors Limited. After performing the pilot test the following were revealed in the prepared interview guide; first, the number of questions was large and long for respondents. So the number was reduced by merging them. Second, the researcher planned to conduct structured interviews. But after the pilot test, the format was changed to semi-structured interviews, because some respondents required more probes for them to align with the prepared questions. Third, some questions were having ambiguities so the researcher rectified them before the actual data collection.

Table 3.1: Distribution of Interviewees and Information Sought

| Sn | Participants of Interviews | Data Coverage Area | No. Per each Firm |
|----|---|--|--|
| 1 | Directors, Managers heads of sections or departments (With the experience of three years and above) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Strategies Appraisal ii. Strategies Formulation (Decision-making process based on resource and capability) iii. Strategies Implementation (Firm's, Sections' and Project's levels) iv. Financial performance indicators (Firms, Sections, and Projects) v. Non-Financial performance indicators (Firms, sections, and Projects) vi. Links between Competitive strategies attributes and performance indicators | The number was three (3) interviewees per firm |

3.6 Document Review

The second source of data collection was document reviews or analysis. Bowen (2009) described document analysis or review as part of qualitative research in which the contents of the document are interpreted by the researcher to provide a clear understanding of the

particular topic. In this study, the document review refers to the examination of various firm's documents such as performance reports, strategic plans, and company profiles. Table 3.2 summarizes the reviewed documents and information obtained. This method was employed to increase the trust and validity of study findings and conclusions through triangulation. The second, was due to the limitations of this study which were financial and time limit since among the advantage of document review is cost and time efficiency.

There was a protocol to guide the reviewing of the documents listed in table 3.2, which was Appendix 4. The first was the accessibility of reviewed documents; most of the reviewed documents were obtained electronically through the website of case studies. The second was, preliminary examination; these issues were checked: authenticity, credibility, representativeness, and meaning. The third was the alignment with research objectives.

Table 3.2: Distribution of Documents for Review and Information Required

| S/N | Document for Review | Area Covered | Information Sought | No. Per Firm |
|-----|---|--|--|--------------|
| 1 | Firms strategic plans | i. Strategic management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firm's strategies on how competitiveness was addressed | 1 x 2 |
| | | ii. Firms organisational structures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptation of strategies in organisational structures | |
| | | iii. Strategic management development and implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development procedures Implementation measures of strategies | |
| 2 | Firms reports (Financials & Non-Financial reports) and company profiles | i. Reports related to financial management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial performance indicators (revenues and expenditures, return on capital employed, and dividend) | 1 x 1 |
| | | ii. Non-Financial reports (Both firms and project) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-financial performance indicators (Project management, the best utilization of firms' resources) | 1 x 3 |
| | | iii. Internal and external environments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengths and opportunities. | |

3.7 Data Analysis Methods and Techniques

According to Connaway and Powell (2010), data analysis can be defined as the representation of data and a tale that can make sense in the explanation of a given phenomenon. Data review includes sweeping up, sorting, defining trends, analysing results,

and deciding on the kind of report to address study goals. Generally, analysis of data obtained from case studies followed these procedures; Organisation of data from the case studies, categorisation of the data, identification of patterns and data entry, data analysis and interpretation of results, and finding discussions. This study employed qualitative thematic analysis and the following are the procedures.

3.7.1 Data Organisations

After data collection from two sources, the first step was for the researcher to familiarise himself with the collected data. Tools used for recording the interviews were; a digital camera, cellular phones, personal computers, notebooks, pens, etc. By using these tools the researcher organised the collected data. Familiarise started instantly after data collection from interviews and documents, transcribing was part of familiarising of data. Since the data from the interviews were collected in the Swahili language then translations of transcripts and cleaning were also part of data organisations.

3.7.2 Computer Software Processes

The computer software application started by transcribing the data found from the sources. The transcription was done basing on the arrangement of questions from interview and documentary review protocols. The transcribed softcopy and reviewed documents were uploaded in separate data files in NVivo 12 plus software. The created themes were put in the nodes (The container) in NVivo 12 plus software as shown in Appendix 5 and 6. Then the coding process continued until the final data entry. The entered data were easy to retrieve and check if were entered in an appropriate node (theme) as appeared in Appendix 5. Other important steps in the software process were displaying selected reduced data and reports preparation. The reduced data were displayed in various forms such as graphs, mapping, framework matrices, etc.

3.8 Trustworthiness: Reliability and Validity

In describing the meaning of trustworthiness or reliability, especially in qualitative research Grundmeyer (2012) demonstrated four components to be considered, which were: Credibility, Dependability, Transferability, and Conformability. The sections below describe the reliability of this study.

3.8.1 Credibility

To achieve this requirement, especially in the data collection process the researcher applied techniques of triangulation. By using different or multiple sources of data such as interviews with different participants and document reviews in the same organisation and instruments were tested. Also, the sources of information were considered to achieve this aspect. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), establishing credibility is among the most crucial elements in determining trustworthiness.

3.8.2 Dependability

This means that the same findings would be obtained if the study will be conducted again. To improve this area the researcher tried to explain how data were obtained through triangulation. The procedures followed through research design assisted the researcher to meet this criterion.

The study's procedures should be described in detail so that a future researchers can replicate the work, even if they don't necessarily get the same results, in order to address the dependability problem more directly (Shenton, 2004).

3.8.3 Transferability

This refers to the generalisations of findings in other contexts. The study design enhanced this part through multiple case studies that allowed the researcher to perform cross-case analysis or comparisons. So the findings can be generalised to other public construction firms that did not participate in this study Grundmeyer (2012).

3.8.4 Conformability

This means controlling the researcher's bias. In this part, the researcher consulted empirical literature about the issues to provide a wide and in-depth understanding of the study in general. Also, to get knowledge from previous related studies their findings and conclusions, then discussions were done to check the similarities and differences between this study and previous ones. Grundmeyer (2012).

3.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter starts with an introductory part which explained briefly the meaning and importance of research methodology. The research design is included in this chapter as the road map that guided the researcher to reach the target of this study. Then the associated study design which is the multi-case study is presented in this part. Thereafter the study

design was justified with associated techniques and protocols for selected case studies and also, brief descriptions of selected cases were provided. After the descriptions, the data exercise was introduced. But before actual data collection in the field, testing of the tools and instruments was conducted and the outcomes were presented. After data collection, the data analysis procedures which involved the application of Nvivo 12 plus software was described. Last, the trustworthiness of this study was demonstrated followed by this summary.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the analysis of collected data from selected cases. The chapter started by presenting the demographic characteristics of participants from five selected cases and reviewed documents. The analysis was based on the emerging themes and sub-themes related to the objectives of this study. After the analyses of each section then the discussions of findings were done. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main findings of this study.

4.2 Characteristics of Participants

Table 4.1 shows the codes used to represent the participated organisations. Table 4.2 shows the general characteristics of the study participants who faced physically and contacted through phones with the researcher. The aim of this study required the informants to be part of the management in public construction firms. The experiences of participants in table 4.2 are for managerial positions but some participants had more experience in the construction industry. Table 4.3 shows the codes used to represent the reviewed documents of participated organisations.

Table 4.1: Codes used to Represent Participated Organisations

| Sn. | Codes used for Organisations | Participated Organisations |
|-----|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. | A | First Organisation |
| 2. | B | Second Organisation |
| 3. | C | Third Organisation |
| 4. | D | Third Organisation |
| 5. | E | Fifth Organisation |

Table 4.2: Characteristics of the Study's Participants (Interviewees)

| Sn | Codes of Organisation / Firms | Codes used to represent Participant (Interviewees) | Profession | Experience in Managerial (Years) | Number of Participants |
|----|-------------------------------|--|------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | A | A1 | Civil Engineer | 1 to 5 | 3 |
| | | A2 | Civil Engineer | 5 to 9 | |
| | | A3 | Civil Engineer | 5 to 9 | |
| 2 | B | B1 | Architect | 5 to 9 | 3 |
| | | B2 | Civil Engineer | 10 to 14 | |
| | | B3 | Architect | 5 to 9 | |
| 3 | C | C1 | Civil Engineer | 10 to 14 | 3 |
| | | C2 | Quantity Surveyor | 15 to 19 | |
| | | C3 | Architect | 15 to 19 | |
| 4 | D | D1 | Architect Technologist | 1 to 4 | 3 |
| | | D2 | Architect | 5 to 9 | |
| | | D3 | Civil Engineer | 1 to 4 | |
| 5 | E | E1 | Architect | 1 to 4 | 3 |
| | | E2 | Economist | 5 to 9 | |
| | | E3 | Civil Engineer | 5 to 9 | |

Table 4.3: Reviewed Documents and Codes Used

| Sn | Codes for Organisation / Firms | Codes for Reviewed Document | Reviewed Documents | No. of Documents |
|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|------------------|
| 1 | A | A4 | A's Company Profile 2021 | 1 |
| 2 | B | B4 | B's Strategic Plan 2015/16-2024/25 | 1 |
| | | B5 | B's reports and financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2018 by CAG's office | 1 |
| 3 | C | C4 | C's Company profile 2020 | 1 |
| 4 | D | D4 | D's Company profile 2020 | 1 |
| 5 | E | E4 | E's Strategic Plan 2012-2017 | 1 |
| TOTAL | | | | 6 |

4.3 Identification of Practised Strategies in Public Construction Firms

During the analysis based on this objective, there were some themes and sub-themes emerged. Table 4.4 provides the summary of emergent themes and sub-themes based on the identification of competitive strategy in public construction firms.

Table 4.4: Emergent themes and sub-themes based on analysis of interviewees' responses and documents review.

| Theme category | Main themes and sub-themes |
|----------------|---|
| Main theme 1 | Competitive practices in public construction firms |
| Sub-Theme 1a | Competing at the corporate level |
| | a. Expanding the organisation across the country (Growing strategies) |
| | b. Imaging and branding strategies |
| | c. Create a partnership with other organisations (Joint venture strategy) |
| Sub-Theme 1b | Competitiveness as a business strategy |
| | a. Lowering the cost of products & services (Low-cost strategy) |
| | b. Differentiating the product and services (Differentiation strategy based on quality) |
| | c. Timing in delivering products and services (Time-based strategy) |
| Sub-Theme 1c | Performing at functional and operational levels |
| | a. Team and capacity building for staff |
| | b. Improve marketing strategies (Awareness, technology policy and procedures, and focus) |
| | c. Increase and maintain a relationship with stakeholders |
| | d. Conducting research based on core function and providing training to young professionals |
| Main theme 2 | Strategies formulation and implementation methods and procedures |
| Sub-Theme 2a | Applying technology and using policies and operational manuals |
| Sub-Theme 2b | a. Basing on organisational structures, goals, objectives, and values |
| | b. Using organisational resources like human, machinery, and equipment |
| Sub-Theme 2c | Strategy monitoring and evaluation |
| | a. Using an action plan and schedules |

| Theme category | Main themes and sub-themes |
|----------------|--|
| | b. As the function of the monitoring and evaluation unit |
| | c. Through meetings and supervision |
| Sub-Theme 2d | Assessing the organisational environments |
| | a. Possessing various tools, equipment, and plants |
| | b. Containing multidisciplinary professionals |
| | c. Levels of contractor class registration |
| | d. Robust working capital |
| | e. Partial implementation of strategies |
| | f. Insufficient technology, research, and technology |
| | g. Inappropriate coordination and communication system. |
| | a. Competitors assessment |
| | b. The impact of political issues |
| | c. Complying with legal and regulatory procedures |

4.4 Competitive Practices in Public Construction firms (The main theme 1)

The sub-themes that emerged from this main theme are; Competing at the corporate level, Competitiveness as a business strategy, and Performing at functional and operational levels.

4.4.1 Competing at the corporate level (Sub-theme 1a)

The numbers in the brackets in Table 4.5 before the word “Example” represent numbers of quoted texts (data) that were coded in different themes and concepts regarding corporate strategies practices. Quoted texts came from both participants (Interviewees) and reviewed documents as indicated using codes at the end of each quoted text. The examples provided represent common responses across one organisation.

4.4.1.1 Brands and Images of Company

There is evidence from both interviews and documentary reviews that brand and image are vital for the organization at the corporate level. However, this view is not shared across all cases. It is evident from the data that brand and image are crucial at B and E. For instance, a study participant said: *“First is the image of the corporation, which means; how the corporation is perceived and expected by various stakeholders in its performance.”*(B1: Architect). What does the response mean? It shows the company is very sensitive to ensure that they have a good image in the public and to their shareholders. Implicitly, a good brand

name means more customers for the company and hence more profits than it's rivals. The results also indicate that no data from other case studies about brands or images as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. Competing at the corporate level

| Public Firms | Brand and Image of Company | Growth and Diversification | Joint ventures |
|---------------------|---|--|---|
| A | (0) | (2) Example: "At corporate level after growth and having branches. I can see the operations have increased..."(A1) | (0) |
| B | (8) Example: "When we are doing constructions, we are looking at... First is the image of the corporation....., (A1) | (5) Example: "B achieved notable growth in both its operations and investments." (B4). | (6) Example: "Joint ventures with key players on the supply chain that may help to lower the cost of funds.... (B4). |
| Public Firms | Brand and Image of Company | Growth and Diversification | Joint ventures |
| C | (0) | (2) Example: "But among of the goals of the corporation is to conduct its activities economically in order to be self-relied." (C1) | (1) Example: "We collaborate with government in various projects for the aim of providing services to individuals, the community at large." (C1) |
| D | (0) | (4) Example: " , increasing of services together with existing resources have contributed to the firm's performance and to be trusted by clients."(D1) | (0) |
| E | (3) Example: "Improve the image of E." (E4) | (8) Example: "To guide this next stage of growth, we are soliciting input from a broad range of interested parties including TBA's staff, key stakeholders..... (E4). | (9) Example: "We are performing a joint venture with foreign institutions. For instance we are jointly working with specialists from Cairo-Egypt."(D2) |

4.4.1.2 Growth and Diversification Strategy

The strategies assisted organisations to expand and diversify their services and products. Also, were associated with other organisational operations as described in the document "To guide this next stage of growth, we conducted a major planning process by soliciting input from a broad range of interested parties including E's staff, key stakeholders within the Government, our customers and business partner." (E4: E's Strategic Plan 2012-2017).

What does this mean? For a firm to adopt and practise a growth strategy must consider key stakeholders including staff in its planning process.

4.4.1.3 Joint Ventures or Partnership Strategy

A joint venture means the organisations are collaborating and joining their resources and become capable to perform certain assignments efficiently. But also increases the capability and outperform other competitors. For example, one participant stated that: *“We are conducting joint ventures with foreign institutions. For instance here we don’t have specialists of silos, but we are jointly working with specialists from Cairo-Egypt.”* (E1: Architect). This implies that by doing joint ventures these organisations mutually performed the specialised task hence capacity building and outperform other firms.

4.4.2 Competitiveness as a business strategy (Sub-theme 2)

Table 4.6 on the next page shows some data concerning business strategies found in case studies. The numbers in the brackets in Table 4.6 before the word “Example” represent numbers of quoted texts (data) that were coded in different themes and concepts regarding competitive practices as a business strategy. The practices regarding business strategies were categorized into three types, such as cost leadership (low cost), differentiation, and time-based strategies. The results and discussion of these practices are described in the sections below.

4.4.2.1 Cost Leadership (Low Cost) Strategy (Sub-theme 1b)

The results show that all selected case studies were practising the business strategies as shown in table 4.6 but the considerations varied from one firm to another. The data show that cost leadership was more practised than other strategies. But these should be strategically considered as demonstrated in the documentary review that *“B will strive to provide its customers with competitive prices and this will be attained by effectively managing construction and operations costs, and by providing differentiated products.”* (B4: B’s Strategic Plan 2015/16-2024/25). What does this mean? To adopt or achieve competitive prices (least cost), then the organisation should deliberately improve the performance on construction management and operations costs.

Table 4.6: Business-Level Strategies

| Public Firms | Cost Leadership (Low Cost) Strategy | Differentiation Strategy | Time-Based Strategy |
|--------------|--|--|--|
| A | (8) Example: “Our cost is not high; it reflects the reality so it is cost-effective. The government institutions have the least cost and the profit is not high.”(A1) | (3) Example: “We provide high-quality services and products compared to other construction firms.” (A1) | (2) Example: “Time control: Must complete the work according to the contract period.” (A2) |
| B | (21) Example: “B will strive to provide its customers with competitive prices and this will be attained by effectively managing construction and operations costs, and by providing differentiated products.” (B4). | (5) Example: “The said competitiveness will be attained through the deployment of unique skills and resources to evolve appealing designs, operations costs, and by providing differentiated products.” (B4). | (12) Example: “For those projects which we procure through competition we are trying to perform in better quality and within time.” (B2) |
| C | (2) Example: “Also the preparation is done at the early stage to reduce cost and wastage of time.” (C2) | (10) Example: “The company strategy is to produce quality products and services and outperform our competitors.”(C1) | (2) Example: “Sometimes you may find that we are blamed for delaying, but when come to workmanship were are good.” (C1) |
| Public Firms | Cost Leadership (Low Cost) Strategy | Differentiation Strategy | Time-Based Strategy |
| D | (4) Example: “Through company’s class registration, professionals, and resources helping us to resolve the issue of competition and also to lower cost and minimize profit simply because most of the expenses are covered by the central government.” (D1) | (2) Example: “At the corporate level, there is a section of material quality assurance which oversees the quality of each project.” (D2) | (3) Example: “But also the resources which we possess assist us to meet project goals, objectives such as budget, time and quality.” (D1) |
| E | (39) Example: “When comes to cost, it is among of very important parameters to be considered. When going to another stage of management, they call it cost leadership.” (E3:) | (10) Example: “Increase emphasis on differentiated services and services innovation to offer customers high value and therefore fetch higher fees.” (E4) | (17) Example: “Procure the Tunnel Form Technology which will enable TBA to build good quality houses within a short time.” (E4) |

4.4.2.2 Differentiation Strategy

The results indicate that the participated organisations practised this strategy through the quality of products and services. The document described that “*Increase emphasis on differentiated services and services innovation to offer customers high value and therefore*

fetch higher fees.” (E4: E’s Strategic Plan 2012-2017). This implies that for the firm to increase loyalty to its customer must provide differentiated services and products as the result can earn more income through fees compared to its rivals.

4.4.2.3 Time-Based Strategy

This strategy was practised with all participated organisations and has been attributed to the nature of construction projects. Thus the contracts require the projects to be completed within time. As stated by the study participant that, *“Time control: Must complete the work according to the contract period.”* (A2: Civil Engineer). This implies that strategy is very important because assisted the firms to perform their contractual obligations.

4.4.3 Functional or Operational Level Strategies (Sub-theme 1c)

Figure 4.1 shows the general trends of functional or operational strategies across case studies. The number on Y-axis represents the number of data entered at a particular strategy. The explanations below provide the results found in participated organisations.

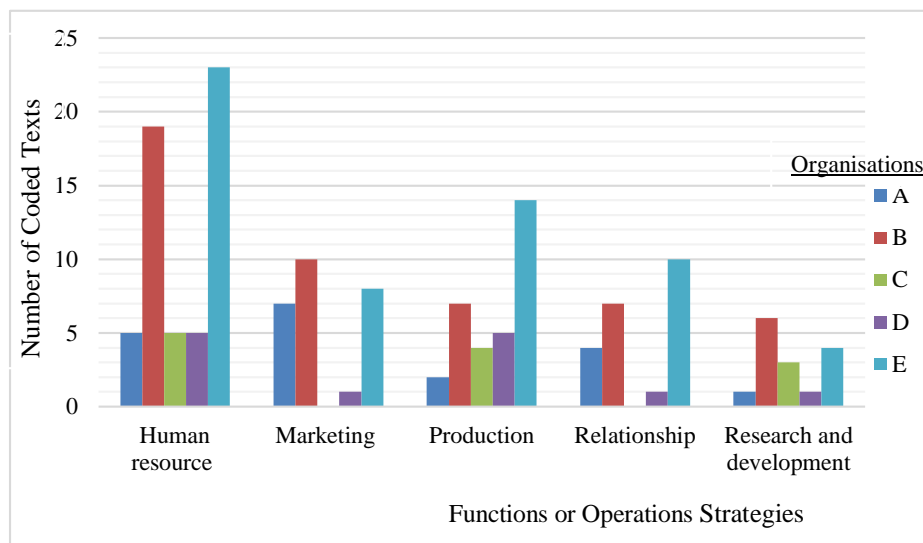


Figure 4.1: Functions or Operations Level Strategies

The results in figure 4.1 indicate that the human resource strategy was more considered across all organisations, but B and E led in this strategy. This was evidenced through interviews and documentary reviews from these organisations. For instance, one participant said, *“The large strategy in our department is the capacity building to staff, which means*

professionalism is very important. This includes technology, education, effective communication, and teamwork.” (B3: Architect).

Moreover, the results show that functional and operational such as production strategies are rooted in the resources of a firm and this was demonstrated from selected case studies. This was supported by the study participant that, *“When there is a good motivation to staff they will increase production. And you may tell them, each one in his/ her sections should have a good performance”* (A1: Civil Engineer). Other functional and operational strategies across cases such as marketing, relationship, research, and development were practised in participated organisations.

4.4.4 Discussion of Findings on Identification of Practised Strategies

The previous study by Asman (2013) found that diversification is among the strategies which have improved performance in state-owned corporations. And also Wang (2016) found that a state-owned corporation that has a high growth ratio is expected to be well-developed and have more opportunities for earning projects.

The findings of this study indicate that the practices of growth and diversification strategies were attributed by extending firms’ operations and providing the services closer to clients. But competition appeared after the previous factors. Another reason, especially for diversification strategies was resources possessed by case study organisations, such as human resources (Having multidisciplinary working under one umbrella). Other strategies such as images of organisation, brands for products and services, and joint ventures contribute to organisational performance. The findings of this study are consistent with the previous ones that, growth and diversifications were among the competitive strategies which can improve performance in public organisations.

At business level strategies Popa et al. (2011) stated that public sectors were attracted to adopt differentiation as their competitive strategy. And Nurisra et al. (2018) found that in the management of construction projects the balance of three parameters which are time, cost, and quality were significant in improving the competitiveness of enterprises. Contrasting with Popa et al. (2011) but in agreement with Nurisra et al. (2018), this study shows that all three parameters representing cost leadership, differentiation, and time-based strategies are supposed to be balanced in public construction firms. After balancing them or

reach the optimal stage, then an organisation can adopt or practised the appropriate business-level competitive strategies.

At functions or operational level strategies Popa et al. (2011) found that public sectors are like private sectors, human capital plays important roles through their characteristic of ability and experiences in the competitive environment. They also indicated that the parameters used in public organisations for productions must be better than their competitors. Similar to the previous ones the findings of this study show that at the operational level the human resource strategies were mostly discussed and explained. Though all strategies at the operational level depend on each other the human resource strategies were appeared to be the basic ones. Furthermore, the relationship between the firm and its stakeholders was an emerged theme or strategy which was not considered initially by the researcher of this study. Through a good relationship, the firm can negotiate with suppliers and get discounts that assist them to adopt or practise a cost leadership strategy.

Therefore this study and previous ones suggest that: identified competitive strategies at all levels influenced organisational performance. Most of the identified competitive strategies were not formally adopted by the majority of participated case study organisations. Hence the management of public construction firms were recommended to conduct comprehensive appraisal and analysis before adopt and implement the competitive strategies in their organisations.

4.5 Strategies Formulation and Implementation Methods and Procedures

(Main theme 2)

The sub-themes that emerged from this main theme were; Applying technology, using policies and operational manuals, Strategy monitoring, and evaluation, and assessing the organisational internal and external environments. Table 4.7 shows the data in the strategies formulation and implementation methods and procedures. The numbers in the brackets in table 4.7 indicate coded texts in a particular area. With reference from previous studies, the researcher of this study found that the identification of strategies goes in hand with their formulation methods and procedures.

4.5.1 Applying technology, using policies and operational manuals (Sub-theme 2a)

4.5.1.1 Tools, Methods and Techniques

The results in Table 4.7 indicate the common tools, methods, and techniques, computer software, operation manuals, briefing, meetings, Directives, training, communication in general. Others are documented action plans, various approval forms, various reports, and firms' resources in general. But some organisations faced challenges as testified by study participant that: *"In fact in the government institutions to have the direct tools and techniques for formulation and implementation of competitive strategies become a challenge."* (A1: Civil Engineer). This shows that some public organisations are facing challenges in the formulation and implementation of strategies.

4.5.2 Basing on organisational structures, goals, objectives, and values (Sub-theme 2b)

4.5.2.1 Organization Structures

The results as shown in Table 4.7 indicate that some of the organisational structures supported the formulation and implementation of strategies but others were not. The findings show the common organisation structure in public organisation is centralised one, whereby there is a centre of decision-making and approvals. Although some the organisations in their operations applied principles of other forms of organisational structures such as decentralise and matrix ones. This was demonstrated by a study participant: *"Therefore we run in that way to smooth the operations. We call it matrix organisation simply because the Corporation has various departments."* (B3: Architect). What does it mean? In other organisations, some strategies can be formulated and implemented at the directorate, department, or section levels but have to be approved by management and are known as mid-level strategies.

4.5.3 Monitoring and Evaluation (Sub-theme 2d)

Some organisations had sections or departments which were established purposely for strategies monitoring and evaluation. While most of the organisations had no documented competitive strategies instead they applied experiences of other strategies during practice. And some applied monitoring and evaluation from experiences of other activities apart from construction activities. This was evidenced by the study participant, *"Monitoring and evaluation are done according to the ranks. The one with higher rank has to evaluate the lower one."* (C2: Quantity Surveyor). What does it mean? The directives of the one with higher rank whether fall in construction professionals or not should prevail. But if this

technique will be taken positively can assist organisations to monitor and evaluate their strategies successfully.

Table 4.7: Strategies Formulation and Implementations

| Public Firms | Tools, Methods and Techniques | Organisation Structures | Monitoring and Evaluation |
|--------------|---|---|--|
| A | (5) Example: “In fact in the government institutions to have direct tools and techniques for formulation and implementation of competitive strategies become a challenge.”(A1) | (5) Example: “When comes to operation, our organisational structure is a bit different simply because each branch is working as an independent unit” (A2) | (4) Example: “Currently we don’t have strategic plan thus why monitoring and evaluation become a challenge to us.” (A1) |
| B | (6) Example: “In directorate of innovation I told you the issue of software, training methods, about communication, briefing and meeting.” (B1) | (9) Example: “..... Therefore we run in that way so as to smooth the operations. We call it a matrix organisation simply because the Corporation has various departments.” (B3) | (9) Example: “The overall performance of B will be evaluated semi-annual by using inputs obtained through monitoring and evaluation activities at Directorate/ Regional level.” (B4) |
| C | (3) Example: “There are normal tools such as various manuals, computers. Techniques are directives from our leaders.” (C1) | (6) Example: “In our side, it is a challenge due to nature of our organisational structure, there are no procedures to be followed for preparation and implementation of competitive strategies.” (C1) | (4) Example: “Monitoring and evaluation is done according to the ranks. The one with higher rank has to evaluate the lower one...” (C2) |
| D | (5) Example: “Tools used are various firm’s resources starting from human resources, tools, equipment and plants. Methods and techniques are meeting from top management to operation level.” (D2) | (5) Example: “There are some areas whereby the coordination among departments may take a long time because of official procedures.” (D1) | (2) Example: “Monitoring and evaluation is done in all levels. At projects as section of project management we are supervising as a team.....” (D2) |
| E | (19) Example: “Develop and effectively implement the following E-specific policies/guidelines/manuals by 2014” (E4) | (11) Example: “Therefore there is line For instance from CEO to directors then to managers until the last person who has to get the vision and mission of the corporation. of authority.” (E1) | (13) Example: “.....ensure that management meetings are also focused on strategic discussions – encouraging interactive communication and maintain leadership’s commitment to the strategy.” (E4) |

4.5.4 Discussion of Findings on the Formulation and Implementation of Competitive Strategies

The study by Baroto et al. (2014) and Mohamed (2015) as cited by Kabeyi (2019) found the reasons for the failure of strategy implementation and concluded that 60% of organisations did not consider budgeting in the process, 75% did not include incentives for employees, 86% of owners and management spend insufficient time for strategy discussions and 95% workers did not understand organisational strategy

The findings of this study indicate that majority of case studies had no documented or formal competitive strategies though they practised them. And for those which had documented their strategies (In strategic plans) majority of their employees appeared to have little knowledge about competitive strategies. This was evidenced through discussion with study participants.

Therefore findings of this study agree with the findings of previous studies that the human resource to understand their strategies is very crucial for strategies implementations. But also the results from this study and previous ones suggest that there other issues to be considered for the employees; such as promotions, motivations, and commitments of management. And the study done by Bogomyagkov and Machulskyi (2012) found that a firm that attempted to apply a non-bureaucratic with the aim of quick response can influence the market demand. This suggested that fast in decision making and approvals. And the results of the study conducted by Rajasekar (2014) reported that the adaption of organisational structure for the aim of implementing strategy had positive effects on organizational performance.

This study's results from both interview and documentary review show that the organisational structures of case studies played important roles in strategy implementations though there were some bureaucratic challenges as indicated in Table 4.7 the column of organisation structure. These results follow the previous ones that the organisational structures influenced the strategy implementations and organisational performance. The bureaucratic characteristics of public organisations were aimed at checking and balance for sake of public interest. But have challenges to the organisations that run their activities commercially. So measures should be taken to balance these two conflicting issues to enable the organisations to achieve their competitive advantage and improve their performance. Therefore, this study and previous ones revealed that, for successful formulations and implementations of competitive strategies, tools, methods, techniques, organisational structures, monitoring, and evaluations are very significant. Thus management of public construction firms must consider them if they want to improve their organisational performance.

4.5.5 Assessing the Organisational Environments (Sub-Theme 2c)

The issues that emerged in this sub-theme are; Possessing various tools, equipment and plants, containing multidisciplinary professionals, Levels of contractor class registration, robust working capital, partial implementation of strategies, insufficient technology, research, and technology, and inappropriate coordination and communication system. Figure 4.2 shows the trends of the internal environments for selected cases basing their strengths and weaknesses.

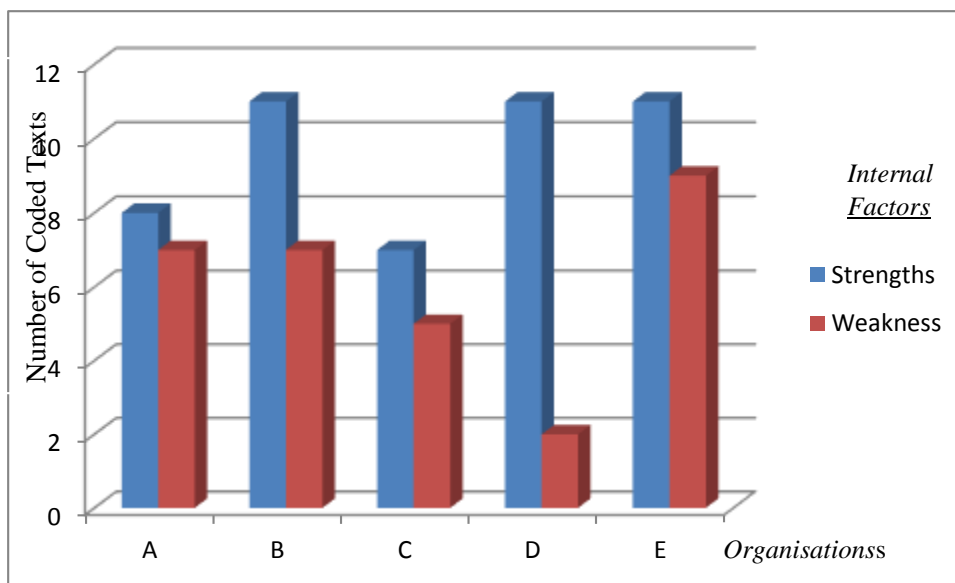


Figure 4.2: Internal Factors or Environments

4.5.5.1 Strengths

The results indicate that B, D, and E were considered equally the organisational strengths. This happened because these organisations have rooted their strengths in their resources (Human resources, financial resources, tools, equipment, and plants or machinery). For instance, the participant from the first organisation stated that. *“We are a government institution which has a large number of machinery. We have three batch plants, trans-mixers, two tower cranes, more than eighty vehicles, etc.”* (E1: Architect).

Documentary review from the second organisation described that, *“Robust working capital management ensures that B has cash in order to meet its short-term obligations and operating expenses.”* (B: B’s Strategic Plan 2015/16-2024/25). And a document from another organisation explained that: *“The Corporation has the largest number of qualified engineers working under one company, than any other construction company in the region.”*

(D4: D's Company profile 2020). These statements mean that the strengths of organisations relied on their resources, starting from financial muscles to human capital and others.

4.5.5.2 Weaknesses

The emerged common weaknesses were the partial implementation of organisational strategies, insufficient technology, research, development training, and inappropriate communication system within and outside public organisations. Another one was a shortage of manpower compared to works done. The following were examples of participants' voices regarding weaknesses of selected case studies;

The first participant reported that *“Among of the weaknesses in our organisation is a partial implementation of management tools for performance”* (A1: Civil Engineer). The second participant from another organisation stated that *“In the side of weaknesses are lack of technology, lack of development training and bureaucracy is the challenge.....”* (C3: Architect). What do these statements point out? Partial implementation of management tools might hinder performance improvement. Lack of technology, and development training might affect performance within the competitive environment.

The external analysis of a firm is an important issue to be considered by any organisation that wants to achieve its competitive advantage and outperforms its competitors. This study examines some of the external parameters or factors to be considered in the formulation and implementation of competitive strategies in public construction firms. Figure 4.3 shows the results from case studies.

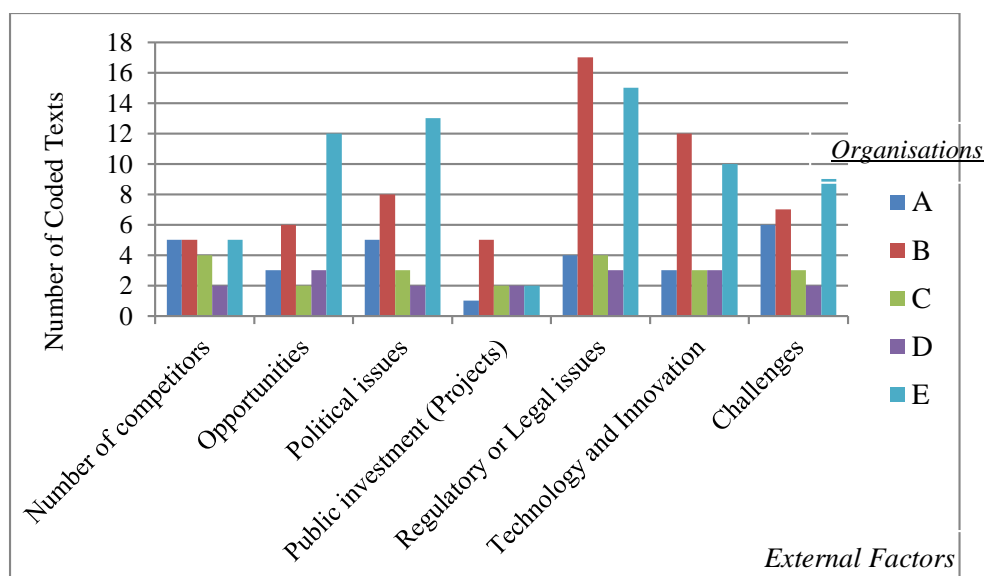


Figure 4.3: External Factors or Environments

4.5.5.3 Number and Kind of Competitors

Though currently the number of competitors is not very large but seems to increase as time goes. For instance, one among the study participants said, “*Our competitors are other government construction firms and even private firms, some are good performers in the construction market*”. (C2: Quantity Surveyor). And the reviewed document from another organisation described that “*Understanding the competitive environment is critical to determining how best B. can position itself to outperform competitors. In doing so, it is important to understand who the competitors are and the intensity of competition in the chosen market.*” (B4: B’s Strategic Plan 2015/16-2024/25). Therefore to understand the kind of competitors and competitive environment may help the firm to adopt or formulate and implement the appropriate competitive strategies hence outperform their rivals.

4.5.5.4 Opportunities

Through available opportunities, firms may choose the appropriate strategies to gain a competitive advantage. Below are examples of discussion for the available opportunities from participants of selected firms. One participant said, “*To be the government institution is an opportunity, we had secured some of the construction projects simply because we are a government institution*” (C1: Civil Engineer).

Another participant from another organisation said “*As you know the government of this term has decided to shift from Dar es salaam to Dodoma as capital city. Therefore there is*

a large number of undergoing construction projects and some are expected to come.” (D1: Architect-Technologist). What does this imply? Government construction firms have more chances or advantages within a competitive environment, especially for government construction projects. However, the question comes; will these opportunities be sustainable? If not then, what measures should be taken by public construction firms?

4.5.5.5 Political Issues

The results show both positive and negative effects of political issues within a competitive environment and general performance. It depends on the situations as testified by participants of this study. The first participant reported that “*....Politics is the one that leads each and everything. In our country, we are guided by ruling party manifesto.....For instance if manifesto plans for certain construction projects to be implemented, then the strategic plans of implementers should be changed to reflect it.*” (B1: Architect).

The second participant from another organisation said, “*For political issue regarding our organisation, what I can say; there is the conflict between political desires or interests and professional or technical requirement*” (E2: Economist). Moreover, the third participant from the same organisation as the previous one said “*There are some construction projects which come with political directives. If these kinds of projects will be performed successfully may act as steps or chances for getting more projects.*” (E3: Civil Engineer). So these statements indicate that politics can control public construction firms and influence competitive strategies and firms’ performance in general. They show that political issues might influence competitiveness during the formulation and implementation of competitive strategies in public organisations.

4.5.5.6 Regulatory or Legal Issues

The results show that the cases of this study tried their level best to comply with all legal and regulatory issues. Some organisations have improved the ways of dealing with the legal issues, by incorporating legal sections or units in their operations including construction projects at early stages. If adopted or formulated strategies will not consider this factor might become inefficient or will not be implemented.

The following are testimonies from participants and a documentary review regarding this issue. “*We are considering the procedures and regulations. This is our priority because is among of the things which can cause inconveniences, wastage of time and even get loss*”

(A3: Civil Engineer). The reviewed document explained that, *“Encourage a stronger working relationship between Legal Unit and other units and departments, and encourage each department to understand the other department’s business.”* (B4: B’s Strategic Plan 2015/16-2024/25).

4.5.5.7 Technology and Innovation

The results show that technology and innovations are very significant parameters and they have been used in these case studies but still at a lower level. The first participant said *“We are using normal technology but we are still improving. For example; previously for construction projects we were using props (Mirunda) but from last year we started using these metal poles scaffolding.”*(B2: Civil Engineer). Another participant stated *“Here at D in Construction company we are using the internal research section. This helps us to acquire new technology and innovations then we implement them.”* (D3: Civil Engineer) What are these statements talking about? There are various methods, tools used by these organisations to demonstrate the application of technology and innovations, but this varies from one organisation to another.

4.5.5.8 Discussion of Findings on Factors for Formulations and Implementations of Competitive Strategies

A study by Onditi (2018) showed that a firm’s resources and capability influence the choice of strategy simply because are the base of competitive advantage and competitive strategies. The study results by Genc and Sengul (2015) suggested that the studies analysing strategic management practice and performance in public organisations should consider the contextual parameters. The findings by Gershman and Thurner (2016) indicated that the state-owned companies restructured their organisations by appointed innovation managers and established the department to improve performance. But also they found that the sources of improving innovation are the employees.

And the study by Baroto et al. (2014) and Mohamed (2015) as cited by Kabeyi (2019) indicated that among the challenges of strategy implementation is political interference, limited resources, and global economic conditions. Robinett (2006) as cited by Kim and Ali (2017) found that State-owned enterprises in most of the developing countries have board members from the ruling political parties or government who are hard to substitute. Kim and

Ali (2017) (Ibid) reported that the lack of political commitment to State-owned enterprises poses critical challenges for improving the performances.

The results from this study indicate that the examined factors such as; number and kind of competitors, political issues, regulatory and legal issues, technology, and innovations influenced the strategy formulations and implementations. But the level of influences depends on the existing situations or environments of participated organisations. The results also suggest that some factors were observed to be critical compared to others. The participated organisations of this study put much consideration on tangible resources instead of both tangible and intangible ones as the base of their strengths. For the political issues were critically discussed by participants and appeared to have both positive and negative effects.

The findings of this study agree with the previous ones that the resources of organisations are the base for their strengths within the competitive environment, though the participated organisations concentrated on one part of resources. Also, the results agree with the previous ones that political issues have influenced strategy formulation and implementations in public organisations. However, the results of this study contrast the previous one that, political issues have both positive and negative effects on strategy formulation, implementation, and firms' performance.

Therefore, the previous studies and this study concluded that external and internal analysis or contextual considerations in public construction firms are very important. This study revealed that the management and general staff in public construction firms must be committed to conduct an effective and comprehensive appraisal, analysis, and identify critical factors.

4.6 To assess the performance improvement measures of public construction firms through competitive strategies.

During the analysis based on this objective, there were some themes and sub-themes emerged. Table 4.8 provides the summary of emergent themes and sub-themes based on assessing the measures for improving the performance of public construction firms through competitive strategies.

Table 4.8: Assessing the Performance Improvement Measures

| Theme category | Main themes and sub-themes |
|----------------|--|
| Main theme 3 | Methods of improving financial performance in organisation |
| | a. Allocating dividends |
| | b. Managing financial issues |
| | c. Challenges of profit identification |
| Main themes 4 | Methods of improving non-financial performance in organisation |
| | a. Managing construction projects |
| | b. Methods of satisfying customers |
| | c. Managing the available resources |
| | d. Dealing with technology and innovations |
| Main themes 5 | Performance improvement through competitive strategy |
| Main them 6 | Strategy implementation factors |

4.6.1 Methods of Improving Performance in Organisations (Main theme 3)

4.6.1.1 Firms' Financial Performance

Generally, financial performance was considered in the participated public construction firms as shown in Table 4.8. The issue of financial performance is more considered than before because of some directives from the central government. For instance, all government's or state-owned corporations conducting business were directed to contribute to the government some amount as dividends.

4.6.1.2 Dividends to Shareholders

As shown in Table 4.9, the trends of the financial performance of case studies were demonstrated through given performance indicators. The number in the brackets before the word example indicates the coded texts in particular indicators. For instance, the column of dividends to shareholders as indicated in table 4.9, across all organisations provided dividends to their shareholders. Though one organisation did not contribute to the government any dividend by then, as stated by a study participant, "*There was no dividend paid to the government, but it was supposed to be paid*" (A1: Civil Engineer). This means there were no sufficient funds or profit for this organisation to provide dividends to its shareholders. Also implies that there is a challenge to profit or surplus generation as one of the financial components.

4.6.1.3 Financial Management

This study assessed some of the financial management components such as revenues and expenditures, financial audits and reports, and Profit maximization. But examples in Table 4.9 at the column of financial management came from financial audits and reports. As demonstrated in Table 4.9 all organisations managed their financial issues by auditing and reporting. This study did not go far to accounts calculations (Figures) or financial reports because the majority of organisations did not disclose their reports due to confidentiality.

The findings show that some organisations used technology to manage their financial issues, for example, one documentary review described that: *“Reporting are automated through Vote Book Financial Management Information System”*. (B4: B’s Strategic Plan 2015/16-2024/25). This means that for the firm to manage its finances accurately with minimum errors but also reduce a lot of queries and time wastage has to apply technology.

Table 4.9: Financial Performance

| Public Firms | Dividends to Shareholders | Financial Management | Return on Capital Employed (RoCE) |
|--------------|---|--|---|
| A | (2) Example: “There was no dividend to the government, but it was supposed to be paid.” (A1). | (11) Example: “Here at head office, we are accessing the general account of the corporation and we are controlling the financial issues.” (A1). | (2) Example: “Return on capital is a challenge because most of the time we fall in debt.” (A1) |
| B | (3) Example: “The Corporation did not pay any dividend to its shareholders but contributed to the Government Consolidated fund as dividends (B5) | (12) Example: “Reporting are automated through Vote Book Financial Management Information System.” (B4). | (2) Example: “Return on capital is not performed... But we are doing the annual return.” (B1) |
| C | (1) Example: “There is dividend at the corporate level. Therefore we as a construction company, we are contributing a certain percentage.” (C2) | (3) Example: “There are financial audits and reports to see if we are on the right track. And the recommendations for improvement are provided.” (C1) | (1) Example: “Though we are not doing such evaluation but return on capital employed is there, thus why there is a profit.”(C1) |
| D | (1) Example: “Dividend is provided to the government through our mother company of SUMAJKT.” (D1) | (5) Example: “Auditing and Reporting are done through Controller and Auditor General for the entire corporation.” (D1) | (1) Example: “There is a return on capital and profit. But this is done at the corporate level. For this construction company there is an annual return.” (D1) |

| Public Firms | Dividends to Shareholders | Financial Management | Return on Capital Employed (RoCE) |
|--------------|--|---|---|
| E | (2) Example: We provide a dividend to our shareholders including the government. For instance in the financial year 2017/2018 we contributed to the government TSZ. 1.7 Billion as a dividend. (E2) | (12) Example: Ensure key skills such as are project management, financial management, and reporting, and customer service are continuously developed/ enhanced. (E4) | (1) Example: “There is a profit, therefore, there is the return on investment.” (E2) |

4.6.1.4 Return on Capital Employed (ROCE)

According to study participants, the majority of the public construction firms did not consider the return on capital employed. The reason was that construction firms are parts and parcels of corporations, so all departments or sections of corporations were supposed to channel the revenues to their corporations. And some firms reallocated some amount of one project to another project and at the end of the time, they fall into debt. This was evidenced by the study participant that “*For return is a challenge because most of the time we fall into debts.*” (A1: Civil Engineer). What does this mean? If capital structures will not be considered then a firm may fall into debt and finally declare bankruptcy.

4.6.1.5 Discussion of Findings on Firm’s Financial Performance

The study findings by Murekefu and Ouma (2012) indicated that there is a strong positive relationship between dividend payout and firm performance. So they concluded that the dividend is a very important factor that positively affects the firm's performance. And the results of a study conducted by Maurihungirire (2016) found that though profit maximization was identified as a measure of economic objectives most of the enterprises achieved accounting measures such as return on capital employed (ROCE). The study by Bhatti and Sarwet (2012) found that the major causes of loss in state-owned enterprises were bad financial management practices, deficient management information systems, and political interference.

The findings of this study show that some organisations used technology in managing their financial issues though it was just normal technology. The study’s findings indicate that most of the participated organisations paid the dividend to the government however some did not pay dividends to the government and other shareholders. There were internal and

external audits in those organisations. The external auditing and reporting were done by Controller and Auditor General (CAG), this makes those organisations more serious in managing their financial issues. And observed that all organisations did not consider the return on capital employed in their operations and reports.

Some results of this study supported the previous ones and some contrasted them. The findings of this study show that organisations that pay dividends to their shareholders have demonstrated their financial performance or strengths. This agrees with the previous study by Murekefu and Ouma (2012) that the dividends payout has a strong positive relationship with the firm's performance. But also the dividend payout implies profit maximization hence the growth of an organisation. The results also supported the results by Bhatti and Sarwet (2012) that good financial management indicates good financial performance. But this has been attributed by other factors such as technology and innovation in managing financial issues. When an organisation uses technology in managing its financial issues becomes accurate and reduces time wastage compared with rivals.

The findings of this study contrast the previous one by Maurihungirire (2016) that most of the state-owned enterprises achieved accounting measures such as return on capital employed (ROCE). The results of this study indicate that majority of case studies, especially construction firms did not perform return on capital employed. So this makes them blind about their profit maximization, but also puts them at risk of getting at a loss or bankrupt.

4.6.2 Methods of Improving Non-Financial Performance in Organisation (Theme 4)

4.6.3 Firm's Non-Financial Performance

This demonstrated the real situation of these organisations, but also non-financial performance indicators can influence financial performance indicators. This means through the operations of activities related to non-financial will results in financial ones. Figure 4.4 shows the non-financial performance indicators for case studies.

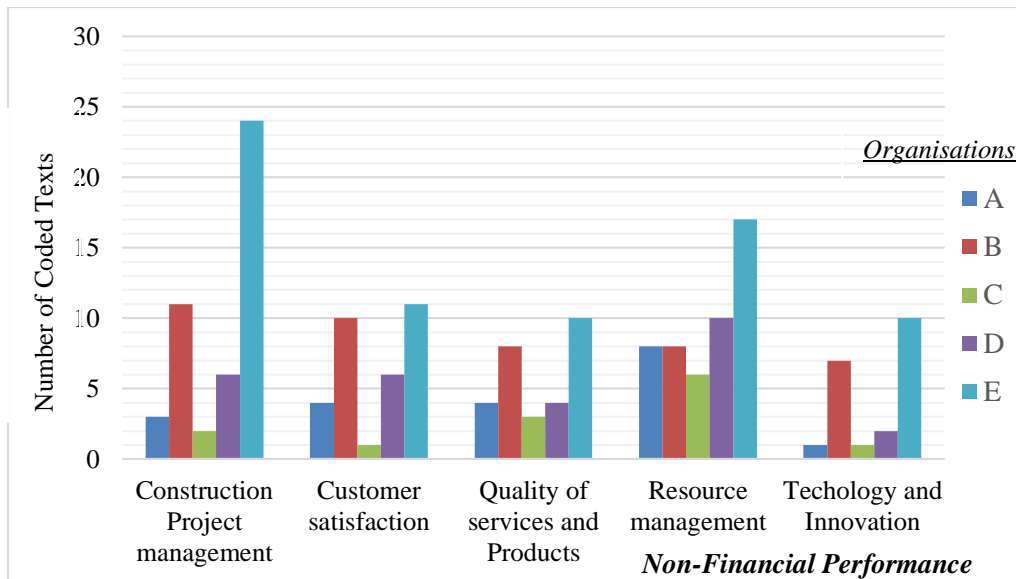


Figure 4.4: Non-Financial Performance

4.6.3.1 Construction Project Management

The results indicate that some of the case studies were very good in project management while others were just normal. Both participants and documentary reviews explained how these case studies managed their construction projects. For instance participant from one organisation said, *“In the management of construction projects we make a follow-up of materials specifications. This is very important because when you mess-up at this area you may find that the cost becomes higher.”* (E3: Civil Engineer). This means that the mismanagement of construction projects may result in negative impacts on financial issues. Therefore the firm that has good management of its construction projects will result in positive impacts and hence outperform its rivals.

4.6.3.2 Customers’ Satisfaction

When customers are satisfied with the services or products of a firm will increase their loyalty to it. Due to the time limit, this study is based on one side (firms’ side instead of both customers and firm sides) for examining customers’ satisfaction. The results show that somehow customers are satisfied with the services and products provided by these organisations. Other organisations used tools and various techniques to assess their customer satisfaction and documented them. This was evidenced by a reviewed document from one organisation which described *“Develop a customer satisfaction index to measure the level of customer satisfaction.”* (B4: B’s Strategic Plan 2015/16-2024/25). And the study participant from another organisation reported that *“Other tools are operating manuals,*

policies on how to work and others show the ways of dealing with clients.” (E1: Architect). What are these statements mean? Customers are supposed to be valued by any organisation that wants to outperform its competitors. Through customers satisfactions, an organisation can attract more customers and get more construction projects than rival companies.

4.6.3.3 Quality of Services and Products

The results indicate that when quality management starts at the early stage of the construction projects the quality of products and services is improved. For instance, the study participant said *“Here when we are talking about the quality we have to consider both pre-contract and post-contract for construction projects. At pre-contract, we have to consider the quality of the design if it considers all unforeseen to avoid variations and change of scope.”* (E: Civil Engineer). And the reviewed document from another organisation explained that *“To deliver quality products and services to the government departments and the general public by undertaking a wide range of activities in a sustainable manner.”* (D4: D’s Company profile 2020). This means that the improvement of the quality of services and products is an ongoing process, so the organisations should consider it in their daily operations.

4.6.3.4 Resource Management

The results show that selected organisations differ in their resource management thus why their performance also differs. Some organisations have strategies for resource management such as have directorates, departments, and sections for property and human resource management, training, and development for staff. These are the views of participants and documents.

The first participant reported that *“Here we make sure that all the resources are properly recorded in schedules..... Therefore becomes easy for each to be allocated to a specific task, no resource should stay idle unless it has a problem.”* (D2: Architect). The reviewed document described *“Determining whether available resources are being utilized efficiently to achieve the objectives of the plan.”* (E4: E’s Strategic Plan 2012-2017). What does this mean? The identifications, documentations, and allocations of resources are a good start in resource management. This shows that no resources will not be utilised or underutilised.

4.6.3.5 Technology and Innovations

The results indicate that the public construction firms tried to apply technology and innovation in their practices but still at a lower level. Technology and innovation helped some firms to achieve their competitive advantage and hence outperform their competitors. The reviewed document from another organisation explained that “*B must begin to prepare for a stiffer competitive environment by continuing to strengthen the corporate brand – through main service, product quality, differentiation, and innovation.*” (B4: B’s Strategic Plan 2015/16-2024/25). This means that an organisation should be prepared for stiffer competition by various strategies including innovation strategy.

4.6.3.6 Discussion of Findings on Firm’s Non-Financial Performance

The study by Lee et al. (2014) found that in the management of construction projects there were a lot of issues to be considered. Some are the commitment of all who are involved in the project and another one is the implementation plan which includes tools, methods, and experiences. And the study by Omonori and Lawal (2014) indicated that customers’ satisfaction had a strong influence on the contractor’s patronage. Also, they discovered that customers’ satisfaction had effects on the company’s cash flow and profit.

The findings by Szymaniec-Mlicka (2014) showed that resources act as a mediator between companies and their competitive advantage. The author argued that public organisations should choose the resource base view as the strategy in the dynamic environment. And the findings by Bossink (2004) as cited by Xue et al. (2014) reported that the corporate which considers the green innovation has a chance of improving the quality of construction project and establishes a strong and sustainable market position for the firms.

The findings of this study show that the organisations which has a good performance in construction projects are the ones that used various tools, methods, and techniques. The results also show that firms which considered the quality of projects at early stages have more chances to improve the quality of their services and products. Moreover, the results indicate that the organisations which have measures for managing their resources had more chances to outperform their rivals. In the part of technology and innovations, the study revealed that the organisations which applied technology and innovations have a more competitive advantage and outperform their rivals.

The findings of this study support the previous ones in these areas; in the management of construction projects firms are supposed to apply various tools, techniques, and methods. For instance, to make a follow-up of materials specifications and testing them. The results also support the previous ones that customer satisfaction has effects on firms' cash flow and profit. So public construction firms are supposed to use various methods and techniques such as establishing measures for checking customers' satisfaction such as develop a customer satisfaction index, operating manuals, etc.

Additionally, these study findings agree with the previous ones that, firms' resources have mediating roles within the competitive environment. Therefore public construction firms are recommended to manage their resources effectively by using various methods such as planning, scheduling, maintaining, etc. The study results indicate that technology and innovations are significant for any construction firm within a competitive environment but their applications in participated organisations were unsatisfactory.

Therefore they are facing challenges in their performance within a competitive environment. Both studies (Previous and this one) suggested that for construction firms to demonstrate their performance should effectively consider the identified non-financial performance indicators and others. Also, should balance between financial and non-financial issues.

4.6.4 Performance Improvement Through Competitive Strategy (Main theme 5)

4.6.5 Firm's Performance and Competitive Strategies

Table 4.10 shows the data regarding the links between competitive strategies and the firms' performance. This study found the influences of competitive strategies at corporates or firms, construction projects, and functional or operational levels. These sections explain those influences.

4.6.5.1 Corporate or Firm's Level

The numbers in the brackets are the coded texts in particular area. The results as shown in Table 4.10 indicate that the growth strategy was shared across all case studies. This means all organisations have extended their operations and services by operating at different locations in Tanzania's mainland. Some have branches across all regions and some have zonal branches. The results also show that the growth strategy makes these firms increase their operations have improved their performance on their activities. For example, for

growth strategy, one participant said that *“At corporate level after growth and having branches. I can see the operations have increased; even the number of projects has increased.”* (a1: Civil Engineer). This means that the firm earned more projects by using a growth strategy, but the performance in those earned projects must be improved.

Other organizations have diversified their services and products such as; construction works execute building and civil works, electrical, mechanical, and other specialised works. Some provide consultancy services of the same professions. Others supply construction materials while others are real estate corporations. Through this strategy have improved their performance by building up their internal capacity because they work as one team (Multidisciplinary).

4.6.5.2 Construction Project Level

The results show the challenge of competition or competitive environments can be taken as an opportunity for enhancing the performance in construction projects. Also, the results indicate the critical areas which should be improved such as contracts management and administration for construction projects. This was evidenced by the study participant *“The observed challenge in which our fellows take advantage and win in competition is the area of contract management and administration. The most successful companies are also good in contract management and administration.”* (E3: Civil Engineer). What does this mean? Successful firms have a competitive advantage over their rival firms. Good contract management and administrations also involve appropriate competitive strategies.

4.6.5.3 Functional or Operational Level

The results indicate at the operations level, the resources of the firm are very important for performance within a competitive environment. For example, one participant said *“Usually in order to perform within competitiveness you must be good in operational performance. Which means you will be evaluated by your performance. Thus why in tender evaluation they look at financial and technical performance.”* (D2: Architect). This means the firm's general performance depends on its operational performance within the competitive environment and gains competitive advantage.

Table 4.10: Financial Performance and Competitive Strategies

| Public Firms | Corporate or Firm's Level | Construction project level | Functional or Operational Level |
|---------------------|---|--|---|
| A | (2) Example: "At corporate level after growth and having branches. I can see the operations have increased; even the number of projects has increased." (A1) | (2) Example: "To have sustainable performance and continue to acquire more construction projects. We are using our few resources, we make sure that we execute the works successively." (A2) | (2) Example: "At operational level each branch conducts its functions..... Each manager arranges and supervises the staff. So branch manager should plan on how to get customers and run the branch....." (A1) |
| B | (6) Example: "To get more projects and attract more clients at corporate level we have set margin profit for each project." (B2) | (4) Example: "Experience shows that for the construction projects that we acquire through competition we become more serious. even the performance is improved.." (B2) | (2) Example: "Procure the services of construction firms so as to execute such projects in a timely and cost-effective manner." (B4) |
| C | (2) Example: "In fact competition has influenced us in performing. For instance we are trying to perform in order to get more projects. (C1) | (2) Example: "In one way or another the competitiveness has brought to us a challenge. We have to think commercially to become economically strong for executing projects." (C1) | (2) Example: "To get more projects the capability in performance must be good. This means you should achieve the objectives of construction projects. To execute the works with high quality, deliver on time and within budget." (C2) |
| D | (2) Example: "But the increase of services and the company growth together with existing resources have contributed to the firm's performance." (D1) | (2) Example: "public construction firms should have techniques and strategies like private ones. (D1) | (5) Example: "Usually to perform within competitiveness you must be good in operational performance. This means you will be evaluated by your performanc....." (D2) |
| E | (3) Example: "...these are among the things which bring bad images to the company hence failure in securing the construction projects. They said this company is not good in the execution of contract it has a lot of variations etc." (E3) | (6) Example: "Our fellows take advantage and win in competition is the area of contract management and administration. The most successful companies are also good in contract management and administration." (E3) | (8) Example: "Review and analyse the existing base of suppliers to reveal opportunities for reducing costs by consolidating purchases for additional buying power and reduction of administrative expenses" (E4) |

4.6.5.4 Discussions of Findings on Firm's Performance and Competitive Strategies

The previous study by Dugguh et al. (2018) found that companies in Nigeria earned greater profits after effectively implement a growth strategy. Also, they found that for a business to

grow and compete, then managers and owners must plan for comprehensive growth strategies that will positively affect the performance. (Ibid) concludes that growth strategies have both positive and negative impacts on firms' profit so it depends on how organisations deal with it. The study results by Kim and Reinschmidt (2011) showed that the firm's performance differs depending on the adopted diversification strategy. But they argued that the diversification strategy should be considered carefully to reduce other risks.

The previous study's finding by Andi and Minato (2003) as cited by Lee et al. (2014) showed that the management of construction projects has been attributed to client demand, competition, and regulatory issues. Also, the results suggested that the successful completion of a construction project depends on the selection of a contractor. Therefore the procurement of an appropriate contractor provides more chances of meeting customers' goals and objectives. The previous study by Lidelöw and Simu (2015) found that an operational strategy in the construction industry should consider organisation, quality, human resources, and planning. But also should focus on capacity, technology, product development, and performance measurement.

The findings of this study indicate the growth strategy influenced the performance of participated organisations through their operations and hence secured more construction projects. In association with growth strategy also these organisations practised diversification strategy. This strategy was attributed to organisational resources hence improved their operations. However, there were challenges in contract management and administrations for construction projects. And at operations, the results show that the operational strategies were used to improve the daily performance of organisations. The findings of this study support the findings by Dugguh et al. (2018) that once growth and diversification strategies were effectively implemented in organisations within a competitive environment then performance can be improved. The results agree with the study by Andi and Minato (2003) as cited by Lee et al. (2014) that improvement of management for construction projects was attributed by client demand, competition, and regulatory issues. However, contract management and administration were critical in case study organisations.

At the operational level, the findings of this study indicate that though all operational strategies depend on each other the human resource strategies were most important. These results contradict the study by Lidelöw and Simu (2015) which listed the most important is

organisation followed by quality thereafter human resource strategies. Therefore, this study and previous studies concluded that competitive strategies at all levels (Corporate, Business, Functional and Operational) influenced organisational performance. The management of public (State-owned) construction firms are recommended to apply this part of strategic management so that can achieve their competitive advantage and enhance their performance.

4.6.6 To recommend the Implementation Guidelines for Competitive Strategies in Public Construction Firms

During the analysis based on this objective, the emerged theme was based on strategy implementation factors.

4.6.7 Strategy Implementation Factors (Main theme 6)

Table 4.11: shows examples of data regarding the measures for developing competitive strategies to improve organisational performance. This study focused on three factors for the formulation and implementation of competitive strategies such as *adaptability*, *efficiency*, and *the focus* of the strategies. Generally, the participated public construction organisations practised some of the competitive strategies. But most were not formally adopted competitive strategies though they practised some of those strategies. Therefore the results described in these sections were obtained from data based on experiences from other strategies and interpretations of study participants.

4.6.7.1 The adaptability of Competitive Strategies

The results indicate that the implementation of competitive strategies depends on adaptability in firms' environments. But also should consider the organisational structure of a particular firm. The discussions with participants were conducted regarding this measure and the first participant said that "*.....Company environment is very important for any strategy implementation. It also involves company's organisational structures, from top to lower level.*" (B2: Civil Engineer). This statement shows that for the competitive strategies to be adopted in a firm, its environment and organisational structure measures are significant.

Table 4.11: Implementation Measures of Competitive Strategies

| Public Firms | Adaptability of competitive strategies | Efficiency of competitive strategies | Focus of competitive strategies |
|--------------|--|---|---|
| A | (2) Example: “The efficient of the strategies depend on the strengths and challenges.” (A2) | (2) Example: “We are making sure that our strategy of high quality continues. But to execute the work with high quality, there is a lot of work to do. This includes close supervision and manpower.”(A2) | (1) Example: “Our strategy is to provide quality services and products. This focuses directly on performance. But the strategies should focus on the goals, vision, and mission of the company.”(A3) |
| B | (1) Example: “.....Company situation is very important for any strategy implementation. It also involves the company’s organisational structures.” (B2) | (1) Example: “.....As we have discussed that we don’t have straight competitive strategies. For the efficiency of competitive strategies in order to demonstrate the performance, starting from capability. This includes the company’s resources.” (B3) | (1) Example: “A strategy should focus on areas that can provide a good performance..... Because without performance the company can be regarded as the dead one.” (B2) |
| C | (2) Example: “The efficient and productive strategy should consider firm’s environment.” (C3) | (2) Example: “Through experience, the efficiency of strategies starts with strategies themselves, that’s how have been formulated.” (C2) | (2) Example: “The strategies which focus on performance are the ones which enable sections or company in general to achieve its goals and objectives. (C2) |
| D | (4) Example: “Most of the time our strategies consider the existing situations. Which means our resources and challenges. (D3) | (4) Example: “In our section, we are trying to achieve good performance. And practised strategies are management and good utilisation of resources.” (D2) | (2) Example: “The goal of the company is continuing to provide services but running commercially. Therefore to grow in business a company must focus on performance.....” (D2) |
| E | (3) Example: “There are some issues we are doing not because we sat down and plan for our competitive strategy. No, but we practice them.” E1) | (2) Example: “It is not easy to find a standing strategy. But we make sure that the objectives of the company are included in the strategies.” (E1) | (3) Example: “We have not put those strategies academically that’s to be formal. But we are doing things so that at the end of the day we get our output.” (E1) |

4.6.7.2 The efficiency of Competitive Strategies

The results indicate that the efficiency of strategies starts with the strategies themselves and if they consider all important issues. Such as the firm's situations, communications, and coordinations. This was evidenced by study participants that *“Through experience, the efficiency of strategies starting from strategies themselves, that’s how have been formulated. This means that for the strategy to be efficient must consider the real situation of the department or company.....”* (C2: Quantity Surveyor). What does it mean? During the formulation of strategies, the real situation of the company must be considered for the strategy to win in the implementation stage.

4.6.7.3 The Focus of Competitive Strategies

The results show that the focus of any strategy should consider organisational goals, objectives, visions, and missions. And also should consider the areas which can enhance organisational performance. This was discussed during the interviews with study participants; one participant stated that *“The strategies which focus on performance are the ones which enable sections or company to achieve its goals and objectives. For instance, if the strategy of a company is to provide high-quality services and products, therefore, should be reflected in its goals and objectives.”* (C2: Quantity Surveyor). This means, the focus of the strategies should be on firms’ performance, goals, and objectives, which also are vital issues for the firm’s survival.

4.6.7.4 Discussions of Findings on Implementation Measures of Competitive Strategies

The study findings by Jofre (2011) suggested that the adaption of the strategy depends on the search of information at appraisal and during the implementation stage. And the search in an organisation is attributed to various factors such as high competitive advantage, which means competitive resources and capabilities. Search for resources that are based on organisational performance.

Bandić and Orešković (2016) showed that for a strategy to be efficient (Successful formulated and implemented) has to consider four perspectives presented in the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) model. These perspectives are; financial perspective, investors/ clients, internal processes, and development of employee knowledge. Other tools and methods should be considered such as context analysis and Porter’s five competitive forces. *Five competitive forces*: 1. Barriers to entry – at the access of competing companies to a new

market, 2. The challenge of substitution, 3. Buyer's power, 4. Supplier's power, and 5. Competitive rivalry – challenge exerted by existing competition. The study by Jofre (2011) found that the strategy process focused on resources and capabilities within a competitive environment.

For operational or functional levels the strategy should focus on the operational efficiency of each section or unit of organisations. The results of this study show that the adaptability of strategies depends on the internal environment, external environment, and organisational structures of case studies. The results also indicate that the efficiency of strategies starts with strategies themselves. Such as firms' situations, communications, and co-ordinations. And for the focus, the results suggest that the strategies are should be focused on organisational goals, objectives, visions, and missions. And also reflect on the areas which can enhance organisational performance.

Somehow the findings of this study agree with the previous ones. The results support the results suggested by Jofre (2011) that the adaption of strategy should consider resources and capabilities which also can be regarded as an internal environment. But this study adds other factors to be considered such as the external environment and organisational structures. This study's findings follow study findings by Bandić and Orešković (2016) which showed that the efficiency of strategies was measured with four perspectives stipulated in the Balanced Scorecard model. And among of perspectives are internal processes and the development of employee knowledge. So these can be regarded as firms' situations, communications, and co-ordinations. The results of this study support the study by Jofre (2011) which found that the strategy process focused on resources and capabilities within the competitive environment. These relate to some extent with organisational goals, objectives, visions, and missions. And also reflect on the areas that can enhance organisational performance.

Therefore the previous studies and this one revealed that there are various measures to be considered by construction firms' management and staff during strategy formulation and implementations. The strategies are long term plans aimed at achieving organisational goals, that is good performance. So the studies concluded that the three parameters (Adaptability, Efficiency, and Focus) are significant measures for any strategy.

4.7 Implementation Guidelines of Competitive Strategies in Public Construction Firms for Improving their Performance

Figure 4.5 represents the conceptual diagram for the recommended guidelines to be followed in public construction firms. The diagram comprises three main parts, the first part is the guidelines for developing competitive strategies (A). the second part is the guidelines for competitive strategies levels (B) and the third one is the guidelines for organizational performance (C).

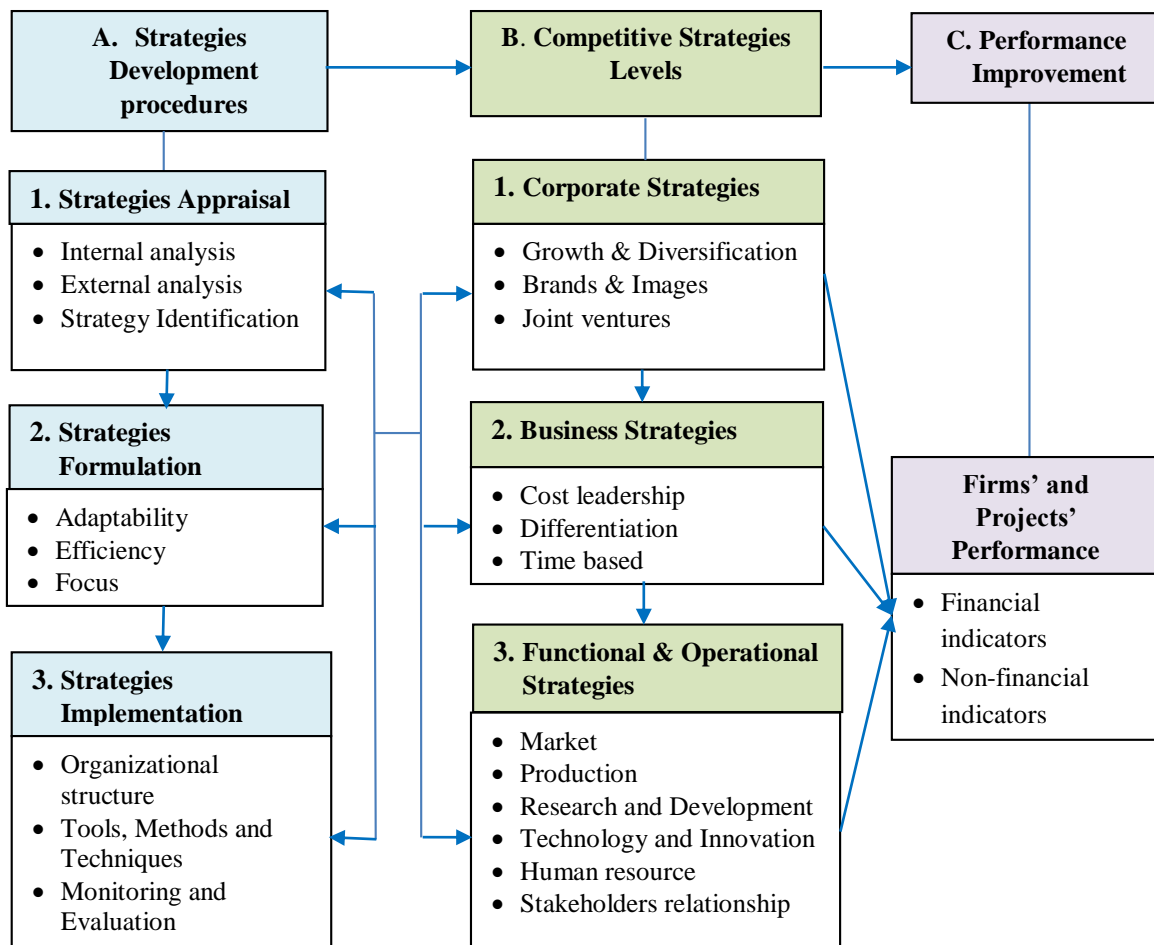


Figure 4.5: Conceptual Diagram for Implementation Guidelines

Table 4.13 summarizes recommended implementation guidelines to be applied in public construction firms. These guidelines can be applied to public construction firms and may be modified or rephrased depending on the firms' sizes and environment. The recommended guidelines are more applicable in class I-III public construction firms where this study was conducted. These sections describe how the proposed guidelines outlined in Table 4.10 should be applied in public construction firms.

Table 4.12: Implementation Guidelines for Competitive Strategies

| Sn | Proposed Implementation Guidelines | Activities to be Performed | Actors | Anticipated Results |
|-------|--|---|---|---|
| 4.5.1 | Public construction firms or organisations must conduct the appraisal or analysis of the firms' environments before the adoption or practice of competitive strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform internal analysis • Perform external analysis • Identify appropriate competitive strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies Development Units (SDU) or • Formulated teams and • Business Units (BU) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firm's strengths and weaknesses • Decisions on business ventures • Adopted competitive strategies |
| 4.5.2 | Public construction firms or organizations must formulate appropriate (Winning) competitive strategies or strategies that consider organisational environments (Internal and external) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align the strategies with the firm's mission, vision, goals, objectives, and Organizational structure • Involve all stakeholders • Use appropriate strategies' development tools, methods, and techniques | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDU or Formulated team & BU • Ministries, Boards of directors, management & all staff • Other stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptable, Efficient and Focused (Winning) strategies) |
| 4.5.3 | Public construction firms or organizations must utilize the allocated firm's resources (Tangible and Intangible) and use various tools, techniques, and methods to implement competitive strategies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructuring the organizations to facilitate the implementation of competitive strategies • Use appropriate strategies implementation tools, methods, and techniques | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministries, Boards of directors & management • SDU or Formulated teams & BU • Ministries, Boards of directors, management & all staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational and projects performance |

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform planned monitoring and evaluation tasks • Align the strategies with the changes in the firm's situations (Flexibilities) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies monitoring & evaluating units or teams | |
|--|--|---|---|--|

| Sn | Proposed Implementation Guidelines | Activities to be Performed | Actors | Anticipated Results |
|-------|---|---|---|--|
| 4.5.4 | The public construction firms or organizations must link or coordinate the strategic levels (corporate, business, functional, or operational strategies) and organisational performance | Depending on the firm's size and environment, the public construction firm may adopt and practise:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A corporate strategies the growth • The business strategies • At the functional or operational strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All directorate, sections, departments, and units | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational and projects performance |
| 4.5.5 | Public construction firms or organizations should have measures for improving performance within the competitive environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set performance objectives, goals, or targets • Identify and implement financial and non-financial indicators at firms and project levels • Use appropriate tools, methods, and techniques to achieve performance objective and goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All directorate, sections, departments, and units | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outperform the rivals and gain sustainable performance |

4.7.1 Public Construction Firms or Organisations Must Conduct the Appraisals or Analysis of the Firms' Environments

This should be done before adopting any competitive strategy. To be comprehensive the firms may use tools, methods, techniques, and resources such as PEST, SWOC, and five competitive forces. The study's findings show that some organisations conducted analysis but not comprehensive ones.

4.7.1.1 Internal Analysis

For internal analysis, the firms should identify and utilise their resources (Tangible and Intangible) such as human capital, tools, equipment, plants, research, development, technology, patents, etc. Also, the firms should consider their weaknesses and establish measures to deal with them. The emerged common weaknesses from participated organisations were the partial implementation of organisational strategies, insufficient technology, and lack of research, development training, and inappropriate communication system due to bureaucratic challenges.

4.7.1.2 External Analysis

The external factors are the number and kind of competitors, political issues, regulatory and legal issues, technology, and innovations. The firms should consider both the positive and negative sides of these factors and then establish measures for them. The findings indicate that public construction firms have more chances of earning public construction projects compared to private ones so measures must be established so that projects earning to sustainable.

4.7.1.3 Strategy Identification and Adoption

The identification should depend on the size of a firm but usually three levels of competitive strategies which are; *Corporate-level strategies*, *Business-level strategies*, and *Functional or operational-level strategies*. The adoption should come after internal and external analysis and establish firms' capability that can help them to gain a competitive advantage.

4.7.2 Public Construction Firms or Organisations must Formulate Appropriate Competitive Strategies

These criteria are the recommended measures to be applied in the development and establishment of competitive strategies. The findings of this study and the previous ones show that for competitive strategies to be implemented successively and provide the required results, must be *adaptable*, *efficient*, and *focused*. These sections describe these criteria in the development and implementation of competitive strategies.

4.7.2.1 Adaptable Strategies

The public construction firms must focus on three identified areas during developing competitive strategies. The first one is the internal environment, after recognizing the

strengths and weaknesses and identified the competitive strategies the actors of the strategies should establish measures on how the strategies should be adapted. The second one is the external analysis. The third part is organizational structures.

4.7.2.2 Efficiency Strategies

The efficiency of strategies starts with strategies themselves and if they consider all important issues. Those issues are firms' situations, communications, co-ordinations, and integrating firms' resources such as human capitals. Using tools such as stipulated in section 4.5.1 above.

4.7.2.3 Focused Strategies

Public construction firms must formulate and implement competitive strategies that focus on the organizational mission, vision, objectives, and goals. And also should consider the areas that can enhance organizational performance. The focused strategies should make the best utilization of firms' resources.

4.7.3 Public Construction Firms or Organisations must Utilise the Allocated Firm's Resources and use Various Tools, Techniques, and Methods to Implement Competitive Strategies.

The winning strategies are proved at the implementation stage. This study and the previous ones indicated various factors that can lead to success or failure in implementing competitive strategies. This study focused on the three parts for the formulation and implementation of competitive strategies. These parameters were used to explain the formulation and implementation of competitive strategies.

4.7.3.1 Organisational Structure

To reduce the effects of bureaucracy in public firms, other forms of organisational structures such as decentralized and matrix may be applied. This technique can be used to formulate and implement business and functional or operational strategies at the directorate, sections, departments, and units' levels. But this should not jeopardise the goals and objectives of organisations.

4.7.3.2 Tools, Methods, and Techniques

After internal and external analysis public firms should apply tools, methods, and techniques for the formulation and implementation of competitive strategies. This study recommends modern or technological tools, methods, and techniques such as models like Balanced Scorecards, Building Information Modelling, Construction Projects Management Systems, Enterprise Integrated System, and other competitive strategies modelling.

4.7.3.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

The management and staff of public construction firms must be committed to monitor and evaluate competitive strategies. The commitment should start with the firm's resources (Tangible and intangible). The establishment of sections or units for monitoring and evaluations of strategies is significant to public construction organizations.

4.7.4 The Public Construction Firms or Organisations must Link or Coordinate the Strategic Levels and Organisational Performance

Corporate-level strategies are broad decisions at organisational levels. Business level strategies must support corporate-level strategies, also are the centre of competitiveness. Functional or operational-levels must support both corporate and business strategies. These sections elaborate more about the links in competitive strategies.

4.7.4.1 Corporate-Level Strategies

Through growth or grand and diversification strategies, public construction firms must improve performance at organisational and construction projects. Through branding and firms' images, public firms must increase their reputation and customer loyalty. Through joint ventures, the public firms should join their resources and become stronger.

4.7.4.2 Business-Level Strategies

The adoption of *cost leadership strategy* should consider resource management in public firms, starting with financial management, by effectively reduce operational costs or expenses. Public firms may take advantage of central government back-up such as payment of salaries, accommodation, etc. Through *differentiation strategy*, customer loyalty should be attained. Through *time-based strategy*, public construction firms must align with the provision of infrastructures that accommodate social services such as hospitals, schools, roads, bridges, etc

4.7.4.3 Functional or Operational-Level Strategies

First, the public firms must have strong and comprehensive strategies for human resources or human capital management. Those strategies are capacity building through training, development, seminars, workshops, and succession plans. The second ones are contract management and administration, especially for construction projects. The third one is the use of technology, innovation, research, and development strategies. The fourth one is the relationship between public firms and other stakeholders such as clients, suppliers, public entities, regulatory bodies, ministries, etc.

4.7.5 Public Construction Firms or Organisations Should Have Measures for Improving Performance within the Competitive Environment

Public construction organisations must have measures for improving and sustaining their performance at organisational and construction project levels. This study identified some of the financial and non-financial indicators that public construction firms must consider to improve their performance. These sections elaborate on those indicators.

4.7.5.1 Set Performance Objectives, Goals, or Targets

Public construction firms must establish and set financial performance indicators' objectives, goals, or targets such as annual income, annual expenditures, sources of capital, return on capital, dividend to shareholders, etc. Also, must establish the same on non-financial performance indicators such as management of construction projects, customers' satisfaction, quality of services, and products, resource management, etc.

4.7.5.2 Identification and Implementation of Financial Indicators

Public construction firms must balance between the provision of services and profit or surplus maximization. The public construction firms must have competent personnel specialized in the construction industry's financial management so that can cope with both firms' and construction projects' environments. Technology may be applied for improvement and efficiency during preparing financial and auditing reports.

4.7.5.3 Identification and Implementation of Non-Financial Indicators

To achieve the management of construction projects the public construction firms must manage their resources effectively by using various methods and techniques. Also, public

construction firms must conduct feedback activities or stages after the closures of construction projects and prepare reports to comprise the success and failures or challenges of the projects.

4.8 Summary of Key Findings

In alignment with the objectives of this study, the following are the key findings. The study found that three levels of competitive strategy practices (Corporate, Business, and Functional or Operational strategies) were practised in public construction firms. But the study revealed that the practised strategies were not targeted for competitiveness rather than normal business practices. The majority of participated organisations did not have formal or adopted competitive strategies.

The study found that the examined factors (Internal and external) have both positive and negative effects on the strategies formulation and implementation. Some factors were found to have critical effects, such factors are political issues, regulatory and legal issues, technology and innovations, research, development, and bureaucracy. Most of the participated organisations managed their finances and some applied technology to deal with financial issues. The assessment of financial indicators revealed that the majority of organisations paid a dividend to shareholders that demonstrate their financial performance. The majority of the participated organisations did no conduct ROCE to check their Working Capital Structures. The study found that the firms that utilised various tools, methods, techniques, and resource management have good performance compared to others. Also, the study revealed that there is a great link between competitive strategy and firms' performance at corporate, business, functional or operational, and construction project levels. These links are attributed to firms' resources such as human resources, financial resources, tools, equipment, and plants.

This study's findings show that effective implementations of the strategies in public construction firms have been attributed to these conditions. The adaptability of strategies must consider firms' internal and external environments. The efficient strategies should start from formulation and must consider different tools, techniques, and methods such as PEST, SWOC, communication systems, staff training, organisational structures, etc. Also, the strategies should focus on the firms' mission, vision, objectives, goals, and areas for enhancing performance. Last, this chapter concludes on implementation guidelines of

competitive strategies in public construction firms for improving their performance. The guidelines were developed from three main parts. First is the strategies development, second are competitive strategies levels, and lastly is firms or organisational performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the conclusions, recommendations of this study, and areas for further studies. The study aimed to evaluate the competitive strategies for enhancing the performance of construction firms in Tanzania. The conclusions part provides a summary of the issues found in this study with their final remarks. The recommendations section provides the pieces of advice basing on the findings obtained in this study.

5.2 Conclusions

The main objective of this study was to evaluate the competitive strategies adopted or practised in public construction firms for the aim of enhancing firms' performance (Financial and Non-Financial) at Construction projects and firms levels. The first specific objective was to evaluate the competitive strategies. The second objective was to assess the measures for performance improvement through competitive strategies. The third objective was to suggest the implementation guidelines of competitive strategies in public construction firms.

The study found the majority of public construction firms had no formal adopted competitive strategies. But in their activities or businesses, they practised them just as the business' norms or principles. For the firms that had no formal adopted competitive strategies, the study evaluated those strategies through firms' practices within the competitive environment. The strategies were categorised into three levels (corporate, business, and functional or operational strategies). At this part, the study concludes that the public construction firms are recommended to follow the guidelines proposed in this study to adopt the formal competitive strategies, and the outcome is enhanced performance.

Since the majority of participated organisations had no formal adopted competitive strategies, the study assessed the measures for improving performance through practices related to competitive strategies or the environment. The study found that competitive practices in public construction firms have a great influence on firms' performance. At the corporate level, growth and diversification were most practised and influenced financial performance through profit or surplus maximization. At the business level, three components of this strategy (Cost, differentiation or quality, and time-based) were reflected

in both construction projects and firms' performance. At business strategy, the study revealed that cost leadership (Low cost) strategy was more practised than others. For the functional or operational level, were found to influence the daily firms' performance, and human strategy was found to be significant. At this part, the study concludes that public firms should consider the challenges posed by competitiveness as the opportunities for improving their performance. Public construction firms should have appropriate measures (Strategies) for improving their performance within a competitive environment.

The proposed guidelines in this study can be applied to public construction organisations for the aim of improving their performance. These guidelines can be used as guides and have been considered as pieces of advice and not established principles that must be followed by public construction organisations. Therefore can be changed or rephrased to fit in or aligned with the environment of the particular public construction firm.

Conclusively, the study recommends public construction firms' management and other construction industry stakeholders to read, understand, and apply those important issues stipulated in this report in their organisations. And the challenges posed by competitiveness or competitive environment can be turned into opportunities for improving their performance hence the research problem was addressed and solved.

5.3 Recommendations

In line with the findings of this study regarding competitive strategies for enhancing the performance of construction firms in Tanzania, the case study of public construction firms. The following were the established recommendations.

i. Public construction firms should adopt or develop formal competitive strategies at all levels of organisations.

Depending on the size, environment (Context), and salient features of public construction firms. The management of public construction firms are recommended to establish adopt or develop competitive strategies that may assist them in mitigating the challenges s or challenges posed to them b competitiveness and globalization.

ii. Public construction firms should assess their financial and non-financial performance

The findings revealed that the assessment of financial and non-financial performance is significant in public construction firms. The public construction firms are recommended to use various tools such as Balanced Scorecards, Building Information Modelling, Construction Projects Management Systems, Enterprise Integrated System, and other competitive strategies modelling.

iii. The public construction firms should identify and establish the links between competitive strategies and organisational performance

The study revealed that competitive strategies at all levels influenced organisational performance. After internal and external analysis public construction firms should establish the links that can assist them to improve their performance. The identified links are; through growth and diversification, the financial performance such as profits or surplus can be maximised. The operations may increase and outperform other competitors. At the business level, three components of business strategy (Cost, Quality, and Time) are the indicators for construction project performance. At the functional or operational level, the strategies can be linked with performance if the resources (Tangible and intangible) of public construction firms will be effectively utilised.

iv. Public construction firms should restructure their organisation to facilitate the development and implementation of competitive strategies.

The major organisational structure in public organisations is the centralise one due to bureaucratic characteristics of government entities. According to contingency theory that the organisational structures should be flexible to smoothen the implementation of the strategies. Therefore, the public construction firms should restructure their organisations or adopt other forms of organisational structures such as decentralise and matrix ones. This should be at mid-levels such as directorate, sections, departments, and units.

v. Public construction firms should be aligned with regulatory and legal frameworks concerning the implementation of competitive strategies

Regulatory boards such as the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA), Contractors Registration Board (CRB) should identify the salient features of public construction firms. These boards should consider those features in their Acts, regulations, and guidelines. For instance guidelines on how public construction firms are required to apply force account regulations within a competitive environment.

vi. There should be a strong link between research institutes or academic institutions and construction industry stakeholders

The findings revealed that lack of research and development is among the major challenges facing public construction firms. The research problem or issue may be initiated at the practice, which means the construction firms might initiate the research by exposing their problems or issues they are facing to the research or academic institutions. Then these institutions may organise or collaborate with a particular organisation and conduct the research concerning such issue(s).

vii. Harmonizations between Political Desires and Professional or Technical Requirements

This study found that political issues pose both positive and negative effects on the formulations and implantations of competitive strategies. There should be comprehensive debate among politicians, Technical personnel (Construction industry experts or professionals), and other stakeholders concerning this issue, especially on the negative side, and come up with concrete resolutions and recommend accordingly.

5.4 Areas for Further Studies

1. Modelling for Implementing and Monitoring Competitive Strategies in State-owned Construction Corporation in Tanzania

Strategic management seems to be significant to public construction firms, especially in developing countries. Further study may be conducted on modelling that will be used in Public or State-owned construction firms or corporations for implementing and monitoring the competitive strategies.

2. Risks Associated with the Adoption of Competitive Strategies in State-owned Construction Companies in Tanzania

The competitive strategies may have both positive and negative sides in public or state-owned construction firms which this study did not cover. Therefore the study can be conducted on risks associated with competitive strategies in state-owned construction firms and proposed their management.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTERVIEWS WITH FIRMS' DIRECTORS AND MANAGERS (MAHOJIANO NA WAKURUGENZI NA MENEJA WA KAMPUNI)

PART A: INTRODUCTION

(SEHEMU A: UTANGULIZI)

1. Name of a firm or organisation:
(Jina la kampuni au shirika).....
2. The intention, significance of the interview, and a brief explanation of terminologies to be used in the interview:
(Kusudi, umuhimu wa mahojiano na maelezo mafupi ya maneno yatakayotumika kwenye mahojiano).....
3. Brief information of Interviewee (Informant).....
(Taarifa fupi ya mhojiwa).....
 - i. Position held in a firm or organisation:
(Nafasi au cheo katika kampuni au shirika).....
 - ii. Profession:
(Weledi/ Taaluma).....
 - iii. Years of experience in a firm or organisation:
(Miaka ya uzoefu katika kampuni au shirika).....

4. General Objective

(Dhumuni la Jumla)

The general objective of this study is to evaluate the competitive strategies adopted and practised in public construction firms for the aim of enhancing firms' performance (Financial and Non-Financial) at Construction projects and firms levels.

(Dhumuni kuu la utafiti huu ni kutathmini mikakati ya ushindani inayotumiwa na kampuni za ujenzi za umma kwa lengo la kuboresha utendaji (Wa kifedha na usiyo wa kifedha) katika ngazi ya miradi ya ujenzi na ngazi ya kampuni)

PART B: INTERVIEWS WITH PARTICIPANTS

(SEHEMU A: MAHOJIANO NA WAHUSIKA)

I. QUESTIONS (Please briefly explain the following questions)

MASWALI (Tafadhali elezea kwa ufupi maswali yafuatayo)

1. Please can you briefly provide an overview of this construction firm?
(*Tafadhali unaweza kuelezea kwa ufupi kuhusu kampuni hii ya ujenzi?*)=-
2. **A.** How do you consider the issue of competitiveness in this construction firm?
(*Ni kwa jinsi gani mnalizingatia suala la ushindani katika kampuni hii ya ujenzi?*)
B. What are the strategies (Formal and Informal) adopted in this firm within a competitive environment?
(*Ni mikakati gani (Rasmi na isiyo rasmi) inayotumika katika kampuni hii ndani ya mazingira ya ushindani?*)
3. By considering the firm's internal and external situations. How do you deal with the following issues in this firm?
(*Kwa kuzingatia hali ya ndani na nje ya kampuni. Ni kwa jinsi gani mnazingatia masuala yafuatayo?*)
 - i. Strengths and Weakness (*Uwezo na Udhaifu*)
 - ii. Opportunities (Current and Expected) (*Fursa zilizopo na zinazotarajiwa*)
 - iii. Challenges(Current and Expected)(*Changamoto la ushindani lililopo na linalotarajiwa*)
 - iv. Political (*Masuala ya kisiasa*)
 - v. Number or kind of competitors (*Idadi na aina ya washindani*)
 - vi. Public investment (*Uwekezaji katika mambo ya umma*)
 - vii. Technology and Innovation (*Masuala ya Teknolojia na Uvumbuzi*)
 - viii. Regulatory and Legal issues (*Taratibu/ Kanuni na masuala ya kisheria*)
4. Basing on your management practise, firms resources, and capability, Please briefly explain how strategies for competitiveness are formulated at:-
(*Kwa kuzingatia utendajia wa uongozi, uwezo na rasilimali za kampuni, Tafadhali fafania kwa ufupi ni jinsi gani mikakati kwa ajili ya ushindani inaandaliwa / kuundwa katika?*)

- i. Corporate level (Eg. Growth or Expansion of a firm)
(*Ngazi ya shirika (Mfano kukua na kupanuka kwa kampuni)*)
 - ii. Business level (Eg. Focus on areas in which you are capable than your competitors)
(*Ngazi ya kibiashara (Mfano kulenga kwenye maeneo ambayo mna uwezo nayo ukilinganisha na washindani wenu)*)
 - iii. Function or operational level (Eg. Production strategies, Technology strategies etc)
(*Ngazi ya utendaji au uendeshaji (mikakati ya uzalishaji, mikakati ya teknolojia nk)*)
5. What are the success and challenges faced when formulating and implementing strategies for competitiveness? Please base on the following:-
(*Ni mafanikio na changamoto gani mmekabiliiana nazo wakati wa kuunda na kutekeleza mikakati kwa ajili ya ushindani. Tafadhali lenga katika mambo yafuatayo*)
- i. How are the strategies aligned with organisational structure
(*Ni kwa jinsi gani hiyo mikakati imeendana na muundo wa taasisi au shirika*)
 - ii. Tools, methods, and techniques used for implementing those strategies
(*Zana, njia na mbinu zinazotumika kutekeleza mikakati ya ushindani*)
 - iii. Strategies monitoring and evaluation
(*Usimamizi na tathmini ya mikakati ya ushindani*)
6. Please can you provide a brief overview of the following concerning this construction firm
(*Tafadhali unaweza kutoa mtazamo mfupi kuhusiana na yafuatayo katika kampuni hii ya ujenzi?*)
- i. Revenues and expenditures
(*Mapato na matumizi*)
 - ii. Financial Audits and Reports
(*Ukaguzi na taarifa za fedha*)
 - iii. Profit maximization
(*Uongezaji wa faida*)
 - iv. Return on capital employed
(*Mrejesho wa mtaji uliotumika*)

- v. Dividends to the government and other shareholders
(*Gawio kwa Serikali na wanahisa wengine*)
7. Please briefly explain how do you manage the following issue in your construction firm
(*Tafadhali elezea kwa ufupi ni kwa jinsi gani mnasimamia masuala yafuatayo katika kampuni ya ujenzi?*)
- i. Quality of services and products (*Ubora wa huduma na bidhaa*)
 - ii. Construction Projects (*Miradi ya ujenzi*)
 - iii. Resources (*Rasilimali*)
8. How strategies for competitiveness influenced a firm's performance at?
(*Ni kwa jinsi gani mikakati ya ushindani imepelekea utendaji bora wa kampuni katika?*)
- i. Corporate level (Eg: How firm's growth or expansion maximizes profit)
(*Ngazi ya shirika (Mfano: Ni jinsi gani kukua au kupanuka kwa kampuni kumeongeza faida?)*)
 - ii. Business level (Eg; Provide services faster by effective utilization of resources)
(*Ngazi ya kibiashara (Mfano: Kufikia gharama ya chini kwa kupunguza matumizi au , Kutoa huduma haraka kwa kutumia rasilimali vizuri)*)
 - iii. Function or operational level (Eg: How production strategies improved operational performance)
(*Ngazi ya utendaji au uendeshaji (Mfano: Ni jinsi gani mikakati ya uzalishaji imeboresha utendaji)*)
9. How do you improve a firm's performance through strategies within competitive environment? Please focus on:-
(*Ni kwa jinsi gani mmefanikiwa kufikia utendaji bora wa kampuni kwa kupitia mikakati katika mazingira ya ushindani? Tafadhali lenga katika:-*)
- iv. The efficiency of strategies (*Ufanisi wa mikakati*)
 - v. The adaptability of strategies in a firm (*Mikakati inayoendana na mazingira ya kampuni*)
 - vi. Focus of strategies on performance (*Mikakati inayolenga katika utendaji bora*)
10. Basing on your own experience. What can you suggest or recommend concerning the issue of competitiveness and competitive strategies in public construction firms in Tanzania? Please consider their influences on performance?

(Ukizingatia uzoefu wako. Ni nini unachoweza kushauri au kupendekeza kuhusiana na suala la ushindani na mikakati ya ushindani katika kampuni za ujenzi za umma hapa Tanzania? Tafadhali zingatia athari zake katika utendaji bora wa kampuni)

II. CLOSING REMARKS AND APPRECIATION

1. A summary of the interview

(Ufupisho wa mahojiano)

2. I really appreciate the time you took for this interview

(Kwa kweli ninakushukuru sana kwa kutumia muda wako kwa ajili ya mahojiano haya)

3. Would it be alright to call you if I have more questions?

(Je itakuwa ni sawa kukupigia simu endapo nitakuwa na maswali ya ziada?)

4. My contact is: 0756 205 360

(Namba yangu ya simu ni: 0756 205 360)

5. Thank you once again our Mighty God bless you abundantly

(Ninakushukuru tena na Mwenyezi Mungu akubariki mno)

**APPENDIX 2: REQUESTING LETTER FOR DATA COLLECTION
PERMISSION**

ARDHI UNIVERSITY

Tel: (+255) 738 357 310
(+255) 738 357 311
(+255) 738 357 312
Fax: (255-022) - 277 5391



P. O. Box 35176
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
e-mail: aru@aru.ac.tz
Website: <http://www.aru.ac.tz>

Ref.No. ARU/CD,68/184/01/

24th June, 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/ Madam,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENT

Refer to the subject above.

The Student above is pursuing Masters of Science in Construction Economics and Management (MSc. CEM) in our University. As a Student he is required to do dissertation work as part of the requirements for the award of the Masters of Science in Construction Economics and Management (MSc. CEM). For the accomplishment of this exercise, students are required to carry out literature review, extensive search for field data and subsequently analyse the same for conclusive scientific results.

We are therefore requesting you to assist the bearer of this letter **Mr. IBRAHIM CHARLES**, with Reg. No. **HD/T.1222/2018**, who will need information from your organisation. The title of his Dissertation is *Appropriateness of Competitive Strategies for enhancing the Performance of Construction firms in Tanzania (The case study of Public Construction Firms – Building and Civil)*

Thank you for your cooperation and contribution.

Yours Sincerely,


 Dr. Shubira Kalungu
 For: Deputy Vice Chancellor
 Academic Affairs



APPENDIX 3: ACCEPTANCE LETTER FOR DATA COLLECTION

Ref: NHC/PF//KLC

30th July, 2020

Dr. Shubira Kalugila,
Ardhi University,
P.O. Box 35176,
DAR ES SALAAM.

Dear Dr. Shubira Kalugila,

RE: DATA COLLECTION AT NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION (NHC) – IBRAHIM CHARLES

We make reference to the above subject.

We are in receipt of your letter dated 24th June, 2020 in which you introduce Ibrahim Charles as a student of Ardhi University with Registration No. HD/T.1222/2018 who would like to collect academic research data for his MSc. in Construction Economics and Management (MSc. CEM) thesis from National Housing Corporation (NHC).

We are pleased to inform you that Mr. Ibrahim Charles has been granted permission to collect academic research data from the NHC but under the supervision of Architect Robert Kintu who is one of our staff in the Directorate of Innovation (DI) here at Head Office. Kindly let Mr. Ibrahim Charles make personal arrangements to meet with our staff for further directions.

We trust you that all the data collected from NHC will be used for academic purposes only.

Yours sincerely,
NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION

K.T. Chipeta
Kettie Chipeta

FOR: DIRECTOR GENERAL

Cc: ✓ Ibrahim Charles,
Ardhi University,
P.O. Box 35176,
DAR ES SALAAM.

Architect Robert Kintu,
National Housing Corporation,
P.O. Box 2977,
DAR ES SALAAM.

APPENDIX 4: DOCUMENTS REVIEW'S PROTOCOL CHECKLIST

| Sn | Research Objective | Information Coverage | Reviewed Documents | Mark (√) | Remark |
|-----------|--|----------------------------------|---|-----------------|---------------|
| 1 | To examine the competitive strategies practised in public construction firms. | Corporate strategies | Strategic plans | | |
| | | Business strategies | Strategic plans | | |
| | | Function/Operation strategies | Strategic plans | | |
| | | Internal environment (SOWT) | Strategic plans & Non-financial report | | |
| | | External environment | Strategic plans | | |
| | | Number or kind of competitors | Non-financial report | | |
| | | Political issues | Non-financial report | | |
| | | Public investment (Projects) | Strategic plans & Non-financial report | | |
| | | Technology and Innovation | Strategic plans & Non-financial report | | |
| | | Regulatory or Legal issues | Non-financial report | | |
| | | Organisation structures | Non-financial report | | |
| | | Tools, methods, and techniques | Strategic plans & Non-financial report | | |
| | | Monitoring and evaluation | Strategic plans, financial & Non-financial report | | |
| 2 | To establish measures for improving the performance of public construction firms through competitive strategies. | Financial management | Strategic plans & Financial report | | |
| | | Return on capital employed | Strategic plans & Financial report | | |
| | | Dividends to the government | Strategic plans & Financial report | | |
| | | Project management | Strategic plans & Non-financial report | | |
| | | Quality of services and products | Strategic plans & Non-financial report | | |
| | | Clients satisfaction | Strategic plans & Non-financial report | | |
| | | Resources management | Strategic plans & Non-financial report | | |

APPENDIX 5: A SNAPSHOT OF INVivo 12 PLUS FOR DIFFERENT NODES (THEMANTIC ANALYSIS)

MSc-CEM - Dissertation.nvp - NVivo 12 Plus

File Home Import Create Explore Share

Paste Copy Merge Clipboard Properties Open Memo Link Item Add To Set Create As Code Create As Cases Query Visualize Code Auto Code Range Code Uncode Case Classification File Classification Detail View Sort By Undock Navigation View List View Find Workspace

Quick Access Files Memos Nodes

Data Files Documentary review Interviews File Classifications Externals

Codes Nodes Sentiment Relationships Relationship Types

Cases Cases Case Classifications Name

Notes Search

Nodes

Search Project

| Name | Files | References | Created On | Created By | Modified On | Modified By |
|---|-------|------------|------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Firm's Performance | | 15 | 239 | 8/16/2020 10:53 PM | IM | 9/27/2020 5:49 PM |
| Competitive strategies | | 15 | 361 | 8/16/2020 8:16 PM | IM | 10/5/2020 3:28 PM |
| Organisation Structures | | 13 | 36 | 8/16/2020 10:39 PM | IM | 11/2/2020 12:04 AM |
| Technology and Innovation | | 6 | 16 | 8/16/2020 11:54 PM | IM | 10/13/2020 4:56 PM |
| Competitive Strategies and Firm Performance | | 14 | 60 | 8/16/2020 11:04 PM | IM | 11/2/2020 12:04 AM |
| Corporate Level | | 9 | 16 | 8/16/2020 11:10 PM | IM | 11/2/2020 12:04 AM |
| Function or Operational Level | | 10 | 19 | 8/16/2020 11:15 PM | IM | 10/8/2020 11:25 PM |
| Construction project level | | 11 | 15 | 8/17/2020 7:58 AM | IM | 10/8/2020 11:25 PM |
| External Environment | | 14 | 193 | 8/16/2020 10:35 PM | IM | 8/20/2020 11:13 PM |
| Opportunities | | 12 | 26 | 8/16/2020 11:52 PM | IM | 11/2/2020 12:04 AM |
| Number or kind of competitors | | 12 | 21 | 8/16/2020 11:52 PM | IM | 11/2/2020 12:04 AM |
| Political issues | | 14 | 31 | 8/16/2020 11:53 PM | IM | 11/2/2020 12:04 AM |
| Public investment (Projects) | | 9 | 12 | 8/16/2020 11:53 PM | IM | 11/2/2020 12:04 AM |
| Regulatory or Legal issues | | 13 | 43 | 8/16/2020 11:54 PM | IM | 11/2/2020 12:04 AM |
| Technology and Innovation | | 13 | 31 | 8/17/2020 8:21 AM | IM | 11/2/2020 12:04 AM |
| Threats | | 11 | 27 | 8/20/2020 11:20 PM | IM | 11/2/2020 12:04 AM |
| Tools, Methods and Techniques | | 12 | 38 | 8/16/2020 10:40 PM | IM | 11/2/2020 12:04 AM |
| Monitoring and Evaluation | | 13 | 32 | 8/16/2020 10:42 PM | IM | 11/2/2020 12:04 AM |
| Internal Environment | | 14 | 81 | 8/16/2020 10:24 PM | IM | 9/20/2020 12:59 PM |
| Measures for Improving Performance | | 9 | 33 | 8/16/2020 11:18 PM | IM | 8/24/2020 8:28 PM |

APPENDIX 6: SNAPSHOT OF INVivo 12 PLUS FOR BUSINESS STRATEGIES (QUERIES MATRIX TOOL)

The screenshot displays the NVivo 12 Plus Matrix Tools interface. The top menu bar includes File, Home, Import, Create, Explore, Share, and Matrix. The Matrix Tools ribbon contains options for Cell Shading, Cell Content, and View. The main workspace shows a query matrix for 'Business Strategies' with the following data:

| | A : Cost leadership | B : Differentiation | C : Time based |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| 1 : CSWS | 8 | 3 | 2 |
| 2 : NHC | 21 | 5 | 12 |
| 3 : SHIMA | 2 | 10 | 2 |
| 4 : SUMAJKT | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| 5 : TBA | 39 | 10 | 17 |

The interface also shows a list of queries on the left, including Business Strategies, Competitive Strategies and Firm's Performance, Corporate Strategies, External Environment, Financial Performance, Formulation and Implementation, Function and Operation Strategies, Internal Environment, Measure for Improving Performance, and Non - Financial Performance. The status bar at the bottom indicates 10 items and cell content: Coding references count, Unfiltered.