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Corporate Rebranding and Its Effect on Performance of Technical and Vocational Training Institutions In Kenya

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Abstract: *Strategic management is the foundation of institutional transformation that enables institutions to practice educational innovations. Despite the expansion of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) sector in Kenya, the institutions in this sector are faced with major managerial and operational challenges. These challenges pose a serious threat in the achievement of government's objectives of expanding the sector as well as inability to respond to the needs of the labour market. The objective of this study was to evaluate the effect of corporate rebranding on performance of TVET institutions. The study used a descriptive survey design. The target population of this study was all principals and finance officers in 28 technical and vocational training institutions in Mount Kenya region from whom a target population of 56 was derived. The study employed census method of sampling. The study used a structured questionnaire with close ended questions to collect data from the respondents. Reliability of the questionnaire was tested and confirmed through a pilot study. Construct and content validity of the instrument was also confirmed before data collection through expert opinion. The questionnaire was administered using drop and pick method. Data was analysed at two levels; descriptive and inferential data analysis. Descriptive statistics applied likert means. The average likert mean was 2.36 that indicated that majority of the respondents were in agreement that corporate rebrand has an effect on performance of TVET institutions in Kenya. Inferential data analysis involved regression and ANOVA analysis. The study findings revealed that corporate rebranding had a significant effect on performance of technical and vocational training institutions in Kenya. The R square was 40.2%. Based on the above results, the study concluded that corporate rebranding is important in explaining performance of TVET institutions and therefore the study recommends that corporate rebranding should be emphasised in the TVET institutions. The study findings will add to the body of knowledge on strategic management. The management of TVET institutions may use the findings of this study to enhance the performance of TVET institutions. The ministry of education will use the findings of this study to amend government policy to enable technical and vocational institutions entrench strategic management. Finally, researchers and academia will get valuable ideas from the study results.*

(Key Words: Brand Mergers, Corporate Rebranding, Performance and TVET Institutions)

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Introduction

Education systems have been undergoing a long process of restructuring from a model of educational administration that was profoundly embedded in the past to a strategic management model that is engrossed on the future (Latorre-Medina & Blanco-Encomienda, 2013). According to (Amoli & Aghashahi, 2016) strategic management of educational system is innovative and provides management of the strategic risks including the risks connected with various political events, unexpected government laws and resolutions, a divergence between social requirements to educational system and its tangible resources. A well-planned strategic initiative always helps the organization to improve its performance in multifold ways. It will not only allow the educational institutes to perform better but will also help them to build a strong image of their own self (Mondkar, 2015). The current study focuses on corporate rebranding which is an aspect of strategic management in vocational education and training (VET) institutions. Vocational education and training (VET) centers on particular trades and conveys the applied skills which permit personalities to participate in a detailed industrial activity. VET is not only important in providing employment opportunities to individuals but also helps in enhancing the productivity of firms (Agrawal, 2014). Technical, vocational education and training institutions (TVET) are defined as institutions offering technical education and training at diploma level. According to (Kibacio, 2017) technical and training institutions are responsible for producing trained students and trained techno-preneurs.

Throughout the world, governments are renewing efforts to promote technical, industrial, vocational and entrepreneurship training institutions (TIVET) with the belief that skill formation enhances productivity and sustains competitiveness in the global economy (Waihura, Kagema, & Kimiti, 2016). In the United States, vocational training contrasts from state to state. The majority of post-secondary technical and vocational training is initiated by proprietary (privately owned) career vocational schools. Approximately 30 percent of all credentials in career vocations are provided by two-year community colleges, which similarly provide courses transferable to four-year universities; other programs are offered through military technical training government-operated adult education centers (Hanni, 2019). In the EU, 3.3 % of students in lower secondary education followed vocational programmes in 2016, with this share reaching 49.3 % for upper secondary education and 91.5 % for post-secondary non-tertiary education (EU, 2019).

Globally, governments are renewing efforts to promote TIVET for example; China now has the world's largest vocational education system. The ministry of education (China) (2019) reports that there were a total of 11,700 vocational training institutions in the country, comprising of 10,300 secondary vocational schools and 1,418 vocational colleges, inclusive of 9.2824 million newly-enrolled students and also 26.8554 million registered students. In India, vocational training is received by only 10% of persons aged between 15-29 years. Largely as of the 10%, only 2% get formal training, while non-formal training is the remainder, that is, 8%. Out of the formal training obtained by that specific age group only 3% are employed (Kumar, Mandava, & Gopanapali, 2018).

In Africa, TVET has not been a top priority for several African countries. As of 2012, technical and vocational training programs only amounted to 6 percent of the total secondary enrollment in the continent, a considerable drop from 7 percent in 1999 (Africa-America Institute, 2015). Besides being small, the TVET sector in most Sub-Saharan countries is characterized by a significant lack of practical relevance and responsiveness to labour market needs, insufficient infrastructure and equipment and extremely low throughputs. A major challenge is posed by the quality in teaching (Eicker, Haseloff, & Lennartz, 2017). In order for governments to promote technical education, they have strategy. Strategy is basically the resolve of the basic long-term objectives of an enterprise, and the implementation of courses of action and the provision of resources essential for carrying out these objectives (Wambugu & Waiganjo, 2015). It is also defined as the pattern of major objectives, purposes or goals and essential policies or plans for attaining those objectives, specified in such a manner as to state what business the company is in or is to be in and the kind of company it is or is to be. According to (Mayilvaganan & Raviselvam, 2016) strategic management involves formulation and implementation of the major goals and initiatives taken by a company's topmost board executives on behalf of titleholders, based on thoughtfulness of resources and an examination of the internal and external environs in which the business competes.

Strategic management incorporates several interlinked activities including strategic thinking, strategic learning, strategic planning, and strategy implementation, review and adaptation (Lilungu, Marangu, & Masungo, 2015). It involves identifying the organization’s current mission, objectives, and strategies, analysing the environment, identifying the opportunities and threats, analysing the organization’s resources, identifying the strengths and weaknesses, formulating and implementing strategies and evaluating the results (Robbins & Coulter, 2007). The strategic management practices require managers of all levels of the firm to interact in planning, implementation and evaluation. The process involves business, functional level planners, corporate, and support personnel. At each functional hierarchy the strategic undertakings are more contracted, specific, action oriented, short spanned and with lesser risk but few prospects (Mcharo, 2016). Strategic planning is diagnostic in nature and denotes to formalize procedures to produce the statistics and analysis used as inputs for strategic thinking, which synthesizes the data resulting in the strategy (Muriuki, Komen, & Cheruiyot, 2017). Strategic planning is also referred to as a control mechanism that is subjected to implementation of the strategy once determined. It is often the first step in strategy formulation and it involves analysing the internal and external environment in which the organization operates. While the external analysis aids managers in identifying organizations’ opportunities and threats, the internal analysis is for identifying the distinctive competencies (Kraja & Osmani, 2013). Strategy implementing design is developing of long-term plans for the efficient management of environmental opportunities and threats, in light of corporate strengths and weaknesses (Letting & Machuki, 2012). It includes describing the corporate mission, identifying attainable objectives, emergent strategies and putting in place policy guidelines. Formulation of strategy includes adopting the environment in which the business operates, then formulating eventful strategic decisions on how the business will compete. Formulation ends with a series of goals or objectives and measures for the organization to pursue.

After organizations carry out strategy formulation, they get to the next step which is strategy implementation. Strategy implementation is the entity’s adaption of projects through which continued entities astronomical excellence is achieved (Murgor, 2014). It is an important aspect of the strategic management procedures. It is adoption focuses on who, where, when and how of the ways to deliver the anticipated goals and purposes. According to (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012) it is the sum total of the activities and selections needed for the implementation of a strategic design in order to achieve the aims of the business. Koech and Were (2016) expound that this procedure includes the practical-function, business and corporate levels of any entity. Strategic control is apprehensive with pursuing the strategy as it is being effected, detecting problems or changes when deemed necessary and making the necessary adjustments (Pearce & Robinson, 2010). Executives instantly have to have the knowledge of specifically when strategies are not in action as specified and strategy evaluation is the crucial way of achieving this factual statistic. This is why, as inputted in (Muriuki et al., 2017) the application and control procedures carried out are the important aspects of actual strategic management aspects for corporations. The evaluation of monthly, quarterly and annual reports is one of the ways management delivers on their evaluation and control of a strategy. Strategic management has been flaunted as one of the effective management tools in consolidating organizational performance through effective decision making and systematic strategic formulation and implementation (Zaei, Yarahmadzehi, & Abtin, 2013). The implementation of a strong strategic outlook in entities is one of the aspects that touch on the performance of these entities (Henry, 2004). Having a brilliant strategy is also one of the crucial factors that provides the entities to survive and go forward. This applies to all institutions such as businesses and institutions in the education sector which is the focus of this study.

Kenya has been experiencing a growing demand for higher education that has led to establishment of several public and private institutions of higher learning. The technical training colleges have as well come up to cater for the segment of the secondary school graduates who miss to meet university cutoff points (Mburugu, 2010). The main objective of TVET is to cultivate an efficiently coordinated and synchronized TVET system that is proficient of producing quality skilled human resource with the right attitudes and values required for growth and prosperity of the various sectors of the economy (TVET, 2018). The technical and vocational education and training act (TVET) established a technical and vocational education and training authority which has a mandate to enable provision of equity, quality and significance in technical and vocational education and training by regulating, inspecting, recording, recognizing and licensing institutions and programmes. The social pillar of Kenya's vision 2030 envisages a knowledgeable society in the country. TVET is a key focus of vision 2030 as the government plans to establish a TVET institute in every county (ROK, 2012). Among the big four Government of Kenya agenda items is manufacturing with a focus on job creation in the Country. The government has focused on revamping the TVET sector in order to provide the technical training opportunities to school leavers for them to be self -supporting (TVET, 2018). Again, the Kenya government has dedicated to provide relevant and adequate skills in strategic disciplines by 2020. It has supported the growth of technical training institutions through increasing resource allocation and providing incentives for investment and participation in skill training in the country (Kibacio, 2017). Currently, there are 186 TVET institutions in the country. Despite the increase in government resource allocation in support of the TVET institutions in Kenya, it remains unclear whether they are fulfilling their mandate of providing relevant technical skills and knowledge for self- employment or for filling the existing gap in the manufacturing industry. According to (Kinara, 2014) the sector is still facing poor perception among applicants who brand the sector as a choice of last resort after failing to qualify for university education. Anindo (2016) found out that there is inadequate provision of training equipment and that TVET institutions do not have modern equipment that are relevant to those used in the industries. In addition, there are other challenges that continue to affect this sector for instance (Andai, 2012) concluded that one of the challenges facing TVET institutions is the provision of adequate and relevant technical skills that are responsive to the labour market. Further (Kibacio, 2017) also reported that technical institutions are burdened with financial management risks at various levels of decision making, resource allocation, and utilization which create corruption opportunities and in turn compromise the quality of education.

To mitigate against the above-mentioned challenges, TVET management have employed corporate rebranding as a strategic factor to ensure enhanced performance in the institutions. Corporate rebranding as defined by (Miller, Merrilees, & Yakimova, 2014) is a methodically planned and instigated process of crafting and sustaining a positive image and therefore a favorable status for an entity as a whole by guiding indications to all shareholders and by controlling behavior, communication, and symbolism. According to (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2005) corporate rebranding is intended on building, achieving, transferring and/or inputting corporate brand equality and both entity structure and cultural influence imagery and reputation. The other factors, that is, location, outsourcing and human resource, which is the process by which an organization acquires and manages the financial, human and logistical resources it needs to fulfill its mission. It has been seen as a management process of identifying people who share the values of your organization and take steps to manage this relationship (IDRC, 2010). It is alongside this context that this strategy was pursued to assess the effect of corporate rebranding on the performance at TVET as a factor which is commonly used by most of the TVET institutions to address their performance issues.

Statement of the Problem

Kenya has been experiencing a growing demand for higher education. To address this demand, the government through Vision 2030 social pillar, planned to create TVET institutions in each of the 47 counties in Kenya. This has been emphasized by the government through the Big 4 Agenda. As a result, the government has committed a substantial budget for the establishment of TVET institutions in Kenya. However, this sector has stagnated due to challenges of poor student enrollment and management and operational challenges. Poor performance by these institutions has continued to cost the government and if not addressed public funds will continue to be lost. It is alongside this context that the study sought to assess the effect of the corporate rebranding on the performance in terms of students' completion and enrolment rates of these TVET institutions.

Literature Review

Corporate rebranding is essential since it enhances altering the competition in the entities environment and thus market growth. This is entirely done by re-positioning entities business schemes and core principles as a manner of generating an aspect of brand nourishment or brand distinction in the market (Bamfo, Dogbe, & Osei-Wusu, 2018). Due to the progressively competitive landscape in the global higher education marketplace, colleges and universities have much to achieve from the aids of effective branding. The aspect of rebranding institutions of higher education has fascinated little thoughtfulness in scholarly publications. However, intense competition in the higher education market has enforced institutions to alter elements of their brands (Makgosa & Molefhi, 2012). It seems that internal branding has a valued role in relation to higher education brand management strategy (Clark, Chapleo, & Suomi, 2019).

Hassan and Balogun (2018) put forward the aspects of corporate rebranding on brand image in Lagos State university from a social constructionist point of view. With the aid of taxonomy of brand perspectives and the theory of Social construction, the authors were able to analyze labor relations, management policies and brand image to conclude that continuous communication of information to stakeholders via formal and informal signals is very vital in creating formidable corporate brand image. Also, improved service quality and good public relations are very important for the development and management of university brand image.

A study by (Lamboy, 2011) study examined the ascribed importance and perceived impact of branding initiatives in higher education in California. The study precisely examines the insights of features in 4-year college and university branding wits in California. Through positively interconnected statistical findings, the data shows that branding has many positive bearings on colleges and universities performance. Generally, trademark programs have had a considerable and positive influence on colleges and universities, ranging from campus individuality and increased registration, to increasing college acknowledgement.

Nunchasiri and Udorn (2015) studied corporate rebranding in service context and its effects on the customer responses likelihood. The empirically study examined the effects of core elements of corporate rebranding in service context (telecommunication and finance); including perceived similarity between old brand and new brand, perceived change in employees' boldness and behavioral traits, and perceived alteration in the service arrangement; on concerns, that is, change in relationship asset and future share of wallet, through modification in brand relationship superiority. The findings show that all paths but one path between perceived similarity between old brand and new brand, and change in brand relationship quality have statistically significant effects.

Chen (2016) targeted to discover how the brand image and gratification of universities impact on university students' word-of-mouth behavior, which includes the sharing of nourishing familiarities and recommendations to others. According to the findings, brand image significantly and positively impacts loyalty; gratification suggestively and positively influences loyalty; loyalty suggestively and positively influences haring of nourishing experience; and loyalty meaningfully and positively influences recommendations to others. Brand image and satisfaction can influence the sharing of satisfying experience and recommendations to others by the moderating effect of loyalty.

Hayford (2016) examined the effect of internal branding on the performance of private universities when brand loyalty levels are high among students. The result of the study indicated that the dimensions of brand equity and private universities' performance are positively related. The regression analyses indicate that there is a positively related predictive power of private universities performance by brand association and brand loyalty. Nonetheless, the study did not discover brand awareness and perceived quality to be absolutely related. The assumption of the study is that the enactment of private universities' and brand equity is depended on the high loyalty among students.

Masheti (2016) scrutinized the result of corporate rebranding on the enactment of higher learning institutions in Kenya with a particular focus on the United States International University Africa (USIU-A). The study established a positive significant factors between economic effect of rebranding and the performance of high learning institutions. The findings on the effect of corporate rebranding on product quality established that: there is a better understanding of brand strategy in education branding; rebranding management as a whole, contain a significant component known as brand equity; and corporate rebranding has a range of growth strategies that give a central role to innovation as a driver of growth were the highly significant factors. Finally, the findings on the effects of rebranding on the image of the organization established that: environmental scanning is the monitoring, assessing, and distributing of information from the external and internal environment; the university still needs to promote its brand by leveraging on specific areas such as research and development; and there has been resistance from employees to the new brand logo were the highly significant factors. The study concludes that economic effect of rebranding is crucial to the performance of high learning institutions. The study also concludes that corporate rebranding have a positive significant effect on the quality of products. This showed that corporate rebranding in high learning institutions has a positive significant impact on the quality of education programs provided by the institution.

Methodology

Descriptive research design was adopted in this study where primary data was collected using a questionnaire with five point likert scale. The sample size was 56 respondents from 28 TVET institutions who comprised of principals and finance officers from the 28 TVET institutions. A pilot study was carried out in three TVET institutions which were outside the study region. The purpose of the pilot testing was to determine the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Census sampling technique was used because the target population was small. SPSS computer program was used to analysis the data. Both descriptive and inferential data analysis tools were used. In inferential data analysis; correlation, regression and ANOVA analysis were used.

Results and Discussion

The objective was to evaluate the effect of corporate rebranding on performance of TVET institutions in Kenya and from the responses in table 1, the average mean was 2.36. Majority of the respondents (83.4%) indicated that there has been a continuous communication of improvement of institutes brand with their stakeholders aimed at enhancing the corporate image of the institution and only 2.1% of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

On perceived change by the institutes' stakeholders and community on employees' attitude and behaviour, Majority of the respondents (75%) agreed with the statement perceived change among the stakeholders about the imagine of the institutions and 4.2% disagreed with the statement. On the institutes repackaging themselves, majority of the respondents (83.4%) indicated that the institutes had repackaged themselves such that their brand image and satisfaction influenced the behaviour of the students. Only a handful of respondents (4.2%) disagreed with this statement.

The institutes had experienced enhanced student loyalty as a result of internal branding with 72.9% of the respondents supporting the statement and only 4.2% of the respondents were of the contrary opinion. There was no clear agreement among the respondents on the cost of rebranding vis a vis the benefits due to a large number of respondents who were uncertain. Fifty per cent (50%) of the respondents indicated that the cost of rebranding is small compared to the benefits that accrued due to rebranding and 33.3% of the respondents were uncertain. Finally, the study established that few TVET institutions were engaged in brand merger with other institutions as was shown by 37.5% of the respondents who were uncertain and 8.3% who disagreed with the statement. The descriptive are shown in table 1;

Table 1 Corporate Rebranding and Performance of TVET Institutions

Statement	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %	Likert Mean
There has been a continuous communication of improvement of institutes brand with its stakeholders	18.8	64.6	14.6	2.1	0	2.00
There has been perceived change by the institutes' stakeholders and community on employees' attitude and behaviour and perceived change in the institute's system	20.8	54.2	20.8	2.1	2.1	2.10
The institute has repackaged itself such that its brand image and satisfaction has influenced the behaviour of the students	9.2	54.2	12.5	4.2	0.0	1.92
The institution has experienced students' loyalty on its internal branding	10.4	62.5	22.9	4.2	0.0	2.21
The cost of rebranding is small as compared to benefits that accrue from rebranding	10.4	39.6	33.3	10.4	6.3	2.63
The institution has been involved in a brand merger with other institutions/organizations	25.0	29.5	37.5	8.3	0.0	3.29
Average Mean	**15.8**	**50.8**	**23.6**	**8.6**	**1.4**	**2.36**

In the second step inferential analysis was used. In the inferential analysis, the study looked at the inferential statistics. Correlation, regression and ANOVA analysis were done. In the correlation analysis, the strength of the relationship between corporate rebranding and performance. The results are presented in Table 2. The results indicate a moderate positive correlation of 0.643 between the two variables. On regression analysis, R square was found to be 0.402 indicating that corporate rebranding can explain 40.2% of variation in the performance of individual TVET institutions. The rest 59.2% can be explain by other factors not in the model. The results of both the correlation and regression are as indicated in table 2 below;

Table 2 Linear Estimation of Corporate Rebranding and Performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.634[a]	.402	0.389	0.732

a. Predictors: (Constant), Corporate Rebranding

The study further sought to find out whether the corporate rebranding could predict the performance of individual TVET institutions. ANOVA analysis yielded the results in Table 3. Table 3 provides the information needed to predict performance of individual TVET institutes corporate rebranding. Only corporate rebranding contributes significantly to the model. The p-value of the constant is 0.828 which is greater than 0.05. The regression equation is presented as follows; Y = 0.973X, where X is the corporate rebranding and Y is the performance. The results are as shown in table 3 below;

Table 3 Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Corporate Rebranding and Performance

Model 1	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.093	.426		1.825	0.828
Corporate Rebranding	.973	.175	.634	1.616	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of TVET Institutions

ANOVA results in Table 4 indicate that the regression model predicts the outcome variable significantly. This indicates the statistical significance of the regression model that was applied. An F statistic of 30.967 indicated that the model was significant. This was supported by a probability value of 0.000. This is below 0.05 indicating that on overall, the model applied can statistically significantly predict the outcome variable. Therefore, based on these findings, the null hypothesis; H_{01}:- corporate rebranding has no statistically significant effect on the performance of TVET institutions in Kenya, is rejected. The alternative hypothesis H_{11}: - that corporate rebranding has a significant effect on the performance of TVET institutions in Kenya is accepted. The ANOVA results are shown in table 4 below;

Table 4 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of Corporate Rebranding and Performance

Model 1	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	16.576	1	16.576	30.967	0.000
Residual	24.622	46	0.524		
Total	41.198	47			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of TVET Institutions
b. Predictors: (Constant), Corporate Rebranding

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

On objective one on evaluation of effect of corporate rebranding on performance of TVET institutions in Kenya, the study concludes that corporate rebranding affects performance of TVET institutions in Kenya. This means that an improvement in corporate rebranding is expected to increase performance of TVET institutions with respect to student enrolment and completion rate. The alternative corporate rebranding that can be pursued by TVET institutions to reach this end includes; brand refreshers, brand images and full rebranding.

Recommendations

The study recommends that for TVET institutions to achieve higher levels of performance and be competitive as institutions offering high quality education with high enrolments, high completion rates and financial performance, they should be dynamic and rebrand from time to time in line with changing environmental factors.

Areas for Further Study

This study focused on sampled TVET institutions. There is need to expand the study to other institutions of higher learning such as universities so as to establish the effect of corporate rebranding strategic factor on the performance.

Secondly, the study focused on only corporate rebranding and there may be other strategic factors which have a bearing on the performance of TVET institutions. There is need to carry out another study to focus on other strategic factors outside the purview of this study.

Thirdly, the study recommends for further studies on effect of strategic factors on other sectors of the economy such as manufacturing, and financial sectors so as to compare the effect of such factors on the performance across the sectors.

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