

**FACTORS INFLUENCING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE WITHIN THE COURIER  
INDUSTRY IN KENYA**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study sought to establish factors influencing competitive advantage in Kenya's courier industry. Four key factors ranging from firm's strategy, firm's leadership, firm's resources and organizational culture on competitive advantage in Kenya's courier industry were considered. The study utilized a cross-sectional descriptive research design using questionnaires. The research site for this study was in Nairobi city in Kenya. The target population was the operations managers of courier companies in Kenya which are estimated at 66. Since the target population was small, a census survey was adopted. The study relied on primary data which was collected by using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was self-administered by the researcher using a drop and pick method to the respondents. Once collected the questionnaires were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 24.0). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics mainly entailed frequencies, means and standard deviation while regression analysis was the main inferential statistic. Key study findings revealed that there exists a very strong relationship between the four independent variables (firm's strategy, firm's leadership, firm's resources and organizational culture) and firm competitive advantage ( $r=0.824$ ). The findings further revealed that the four independent variables combined can explain 67.9% of firm's competitive advantage in the Kenyan courier industry. The study findings also revealed that the joint influence of firm's strategy, leadership, firm's resources and organizational culture is greater than the individual influence of the variables. However, firm's strategy and firm's resources had the greatest influence on a firm's competitive advantage as explained by beta values of 0.357 and 0.327 respectively. Leadership and organizational culture followed at 0.342 and 0.316 respectively. Key recommendations for the study include: Organizations within the courier industry in Kenya, should implement firm strategies and other organizational management process that systematically defines direction, focuses energy and resource, assesses and adjusts the organization's direction in response to a changing environment; They should provide a platform for increasing organizational customer base, asset quality, and quality of service as well as production and increase in market share; and firms should adopt effective leadership, use effective resources and positive organizational culture as critical components for enhanced competitive advantage.