ABSTRACT

One of the most competitive industries in Kenya and the entire continent of Africa is the hotel industry, which contributes significantly to the country's economy. As a result, the sector is a significant source of foreign exchange, employment, and revenue for the nation. However, the emergence of the Covid-19 global pandemic has had a significant impact on the hotel industry in the country as elsewhere globally with travel restrictions, social distance requirements, and low visitor turnout affecting their operations. The researcher sought to examine the influence of technology enabled service differentiation strategy on reopening performance of the hotel industry in Kenya in the post-pandemic context. Marketing Mix Theory guided the study. The study adopted expressive cross sectional survey research design and targeted 47 star rated hotels, lodges, camps and as well as guest houses in the South Rift Circuit, that is, Nakuru and Narok counties using a census. Data was collected through questionnaires from the marketing managers of the hotels. Qualitative data was analyzed through thematic and content analysis using Nvivo while quantitative data was coded and analyzed through SPSS computer software version 24.0 using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The outcome revealed that technology enabled strategy affecting post-pandemic reopening performance of star-rated hotels in the South Rift Circuit, Kenya is significant. Therefore, the study recommends that the hotels should make provision for continuous training of staff on modern technologies. The hotels' management need to provide tailored services to individuals and group clients as need arises. The hotels need to diversify their markets to ensure that they are able to tap into more potential markets locally and internationally. Finally, the hotels need to emphasize on market growth strategies.