

Influence of Concentric Diversification on the Organizational Growth of Elephant Dental Franchise in Kenya

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Abstract

Private healthcare franchises increasingly depend on technological innovation and related service expansion to improve service delivery, strengthen competitiveness, and sustain organizational growth. However, the contribution of concentric diversification to organizational growth remains underexplored in specialized dental healthcare franchises in Kenya. This study examined the influence of concentric diversification on the organizational growth of Elephant Dental Franchise in Kenya. The study was anchored on the Resource-Based View Theory. The study adopted a quantitative approach using descriptive and correlational research designs. The target population comprised 237 employees drawn from senior management, administrative and support, clinical, marketing, and front-office functions. The study used proportionate stratified and simple random sampling techniques to select 149 respondents. Of the questionnaires administered, 111 were complete and usable, representing a response rate of 74.5%. The study collected primary data using a structured questionnaire. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and simple linear regression. Concentric diversification recorded an aggregate mean of 3.63 (SD = .745). It showed a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship with organizational growth ($r = .700$, $p < .001$) and explained 49.0% of its variation ($R^2 = .490$). The regression coefficient was positive and statistically significant ($B = .697$, $\beta = .700$, $t = 10.234$, $p < .001$), resulting in rejection of the null hypothesis. The study concluded that adoption of related technologies and services significantly strengthened organizational growth. Management should prioritize structured investment in digital dentistry, dental imaging, electronic patient records, preventive oral healthcare, and appropriate tele-dentistry applications.

Keywords: *Concentric diversification, organizational growth, digital dentistry, healthcare franchise, dental technology, Kenya.*

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1. Introduction

Organizational growth reflects an enterprise's capacity to increase revenue, expand its market presence, strengthen operational capacity, attract and retain customers and sustain its competitiveness. In healthcare enterprises, organizational growth is particularly important because service providers operate in environments shaped by changing technologies, rising patient expectations, regulatory requirements, and rising operating costs. Sustainable growth therefore requires healthcare organizations to expand their capabilities while maintaining service quality and operational efficiency (Liu, 2025; Arango Herrera et al., 2024).

Diversification offers one strategic approach for organizations to pursue growth. Concentric diversification involves introducing products, services, or technologies related to an organization's existing operations and using established resources, competencies, and customer relationships. Unlike unrelated diversification, concentric diversification enables an organization to build on its existing professional expertise, infrastructure, technologies, brand reputation, and operational systems. This can reduce the strategic distance between existing and new activities while facilitating more effective utilization of internal capabilities (Rijamampianina et al., 2003; Ristyawan et al., 2023).

Within healthcare, technological change has expanded opportunities for concentric diversification. Digital records, diagnostic technologies, telemedicine systems, and related treatment services allow healthcare organizations to improve service quality while creating additional service and revenue opportunities. Shojaei (2024) established that technological diversification strengthened firm capabilities and financial performance by allowing organizations to deploy related technologies more effectively. Similarly, Liu (2025) linked diversification to broader market participation, improved resource utilization, and stronger organizational sustainability.

The relevance of concentric diversification is particularly evident in dental healthcare. Dental enterprises increasingly utilize digital dentistry, imaging technologies, electronic patient records, preventive oral health programmes, tele-dentistry, and other related technologies to improve diagnosis, treatment planning, patient management, and service accessibility. In Kenya, digital health systems are increasingly associated with improved service coordination, information management, and clinical decision-making (Ngugi et al., 2023). However, these technologies require significant financial investment, staff capability, reliable digital infrastructure and effective protection of patient information.

Elephant Dental Franchise operates in this changing healthcare environment through a multi-branch model that offers dental consultations, diagnostic services, treatment, and preventive oral healthcare. The franchise has increasingly adopted technologies and services closely related to its existing dental capabilities. These include digital dental technologies, imaging services, electronic patient records, and preventive oral healthcare. The present study therefore isolated concentric diversification as a strategic growth approach and examined its influence on the organizational growth of Elephant Dental Franchise in Kenya.

1.1 Problem Statement

A growing dental healthcare franchise is expected to increase revenue, expand its branch network, attract more patients, widen its market coverage, strengthen operational capacity, and improve customer retention. This expectation matters because oral diseases affect a substantial proportion of the global population and continue to drive demand for accessible preventive and specialized dental healthcare services (World Health Organization, 2022). Healthcare franchises should therefore use their existing clinical expertise and technological resources to expand related services and improve organizational outcomes.

However, Elephant Dental Franchise had not achieved the desired level of organizational growth. The organization operated 62 active branches against a long-term strategic target of more than 200 branches, representing approximately 31% of the intended branch network. Furthermore, expansion in branch numbers did not consistently translate into proportional improvements in patient numbers, customer retention, revenue, service utilization, or operational capacity. These challenges occurred within an environment characterized by high

operating costs, competition, changing patient demand, technological requirements, and the need for continuous investment in specialized dental services.

Previous research established that technological and related diversification can contribute to organizational performance (Shojaei, 2024; Liu, 2025). However, much existing research has focused on insurance, infrastructure, manufacturing, and general service enterprises rather than dental healthcare franchises. Studies in Kenya have also examined digital healthcare coordination but have not adequately isolated concentric diversification as a predictor of organizational growth within a private dental franchise. The study addressed this contextual and conceptual gap by examining how digital dentistry, dental imaging, preventive care, tele-dentistry, electronic patient records, and dental technology influenced the organizational growth of Elephant Dental Franchise in Kenya.

1.2 Research Objective

To examine the influence of concentric diversification on the organizational growth of Elephant Dental Franchise in Kenya.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: Concentric diversification does not have a statistically significant effect on the organizational growth of Elephant Dental Franchise in Kenya.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

The study was anchored on the Resource-Based View Theory, commonly associated with Barney (1991). The theory explains differences in organizational performance by focusing on the resources and capabilities available to firms. According to the theory, organizations may achieve sustained competitive advantage when they possess resources that are valuable, rare, difficult to imitate, and non-substitutable, and when they effectively organize and deploy those resources.

Resources within an organization extend beyond physical assets. They include professional expertise, technology, organizational knowledge, operating systems, managerial capability, brand reputation, and customer relationships. Ristyawan et al. (2023) observed that resource-based decision-making supports organizational growth when firms identify their internal capabilities and deploy them strategically to exploit emerging opportunities.

Resource-Based View Theory is particularly relevant to concentric diversification because it involves expanding into activities closely related to the existing business. Such expansion allows organizations to use their current capabilities instead of developing entirely new competencies. For a dental healthcare franchise, clinical expertise, branch infrastructure, patient relationships, brand reputation, and existing technologies can provide a foundation for introducing digital dentistry, imaging services, preventive oral healthcare, tele-dentistry, and electronic patient-management systems.

The theory suggests that growth does not arise solely from favourable external markets. Firms must possess and effectively utilize internal resources that allow them to respond to opportunities. Shojaei (2024) demonstrated that technological diversification contributes to performance by strengthening firm capabilities and competitiveness. In a dental healthcare franchise, technological resources can similarly improve treatment quality, patient management, service efficiency, and organizational responsiveness.

Resource-Based View Theory nevertheless has limitations. It focuses heavily on internal resources and may pay insufficient attention to external conditions such as competition, regulation, financing, technological change, and market demand. Effective concentric diversification may also require substantial capital expenditure and employee training, meaning existing resources do not automatically guarantee successful implementation. Despite these limitations, the theory was appropriate because it provided a basis for explaining how Elephant Dental Franchise could use existing clinical, technological, and organizational capabilities to develop related services and enhance organizational growth.

2.2 Empirical Review

Concentric diversification enables firms to expand into services and technologies that remain closely connected to existing competencies. This diversification can help enterprises gain more value from existing infrastructure, professional expertise, technologies, and customer relationships. Within healthcare franchises, relevant forms of concentric diversification include digital healthcare systems, diagnostic technologies, preventive services, electronic records, and telehealth applications.

At the global level, Shojaei (2024) examined technological diversification and financial performance among insurance firms in Iran. The study established that technological diversification strengthened organizational performance by improving capabilities and competitiveness. Although the research was undertaken outside healthcare, it demonstrated the potential of related technological investments to create additional value from existing organizational resources.

Liu (2025) examined diversification and sustainable growth among highway enterprises in China. The findings showed that diversified enterprises achieved stronger growth through wider market participation, better resource utilization, and improved resilience. The study emphasized that diversification was more effective where strategic expansion was aligned with existing organizational capabilities and viable market opportunities.

Arango Herrera et al. (2024) examined diversification and operational performance among Mexican companies and found that diversification improved performance through greater adaptability, broader business activities, and enhanced competitiveness. The findings also suggested that organizational capabilities and governance mechanisms were necessary to manage diversified operations effectively.

Ristyan et al. (2023) emphasized the role of internal capabilities in strategic growth through a resource-based perspective. Their analysis indicated that organizations were more likely to realize benefits from expansion where strategic decisions utilized existing resources, knowledge and competencies. These observations are relevant to concentric diversification because related expansion requires organizations to identify capabilities they can redeploy into adjacent activities.

Within healthcare, technological development has become increasingly important for service coordination and organizational performance. Ngugi et al. (2023) established that digital health systems improved healthcare service coordination, patient-record management, appointment scheduling, and decision-making in Kenya. Such capabilities may support organizational growth by increasing operational efficiency and enhancing patient experience.

The dental healthcare sector presents particular opportunities for related diversification through imaging, electronic patient-management systems, digital diagnostic technologies, preventive programmes and tele-dentistry. These technologies may improve diagnosis, treatment planning, patient follow-up, service quality and continuity of care. However, implementation may be constrained by technology costs, employee skills, internet connectivity, data-security requirements and patient awareness.

Consequently, contextual and empirical gaps remained. Previous studies primarily examined technological diversification in general corporate environments or digital healthcare systems without directly linking concentric diversification to organizational growth within specialized dental franchises. The present study addressed these gaps by empirically testing the influence of digital dentistry, dental imaging, preventive care, tele-dentistry, electronic patient records, and dental technology on the organizational growth of Elephant Dental Franchise in Kenya.

3. Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative research approach incorporating descriptive and correlational research designs to examine the influence of concentric diversification on the organizational growth of Elephant Dental Franchise in Kenya. The descriptive design facilitated assessment of the prevailing level of concentric diversification and organizational growth, while the correlational design determined the direction and strength of the relationship between the variables without manipulating the organizational environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The target population comprised 237 employees of Elephant Dental Franchise. The employees were categorized into senior management, administrative and support staff, clinical staff, and marketing and front-office staff. These groups were included because they represented strategic, administrative, clinical, operational, and customer-facing functions and therefore possessed relevant information concerning organizational technologies, services, and growth.

The required sample size was determined using Yamane's formula at a 5% margin of error, resulting in a sample of 149 respondents. The study used proportionate stratified random sampling to allocate respondents among the four employee categories, then applied simple random sampling to select respondents within each category.

The study collected primary data using a structured questionnaire. Concentric diversification was measured using six five-point Likert-scale statements covering digital dentistry, dental imaging, preventive oral healthcare, tele-dentistry, electronic patient records, and dental technology adoption. Organizational growth was measured using revenue growth, branch network expansion, patient numbers, market reach, operational capacity, and customer retention.

A pilot study involving 15 respondents was conducted before the main survey. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha against the minimum acceptable threshold of .70. Concentric diversification recorded $\alpha = .774$, while organizational growth recorded $\alpha = .789$. The overall research instrument recorded $\alpha = .813$. Construct validity was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The KMO value was .782, while Bartlett's Test was statistically significant, $\chi^2(435) = 356.418$, $p < .001$.

The completed questionnaires were coded, cleaned and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical procedures. Means and standard deviations summarized concentric diversification and organizational growth. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation established the direction and strength of association between the variables, while simple linear regression

determined the predictive effect of concentric diversification on organizational growth. Statistical significance was evaluated at the 5% level.

Diagnostic assessment was undertaken before inferential analysis. Concentric diversification recorded skewness of $-.731$ and kurtosis of $.864$, while organizational growth recorded skewness of $-.568$ and kurtosis of $.629$. The values were within acceptable limits, indicating that the normality assumption was satisfied. Scatterplot assessment also indicated an approximately positive linear relationship between concentric diversification and organizational growth, supporting the application of Pearson correlation and simple linear regression.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Response Rate

The study administered questionnaires to the 149 respondents selected from the different staff categories. Of these, 111 questionnaires were completed, returned, and found suitable for analysis, representing a response rate of 74.5%. The remaining 38 questionnaires were not returned, representing 25.5% of those administered. The achieved response provided adequate observations for descriptive, correlation, and regression analyses.

Table 1: Response Rate

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Returned and usable questionnaires	111	74.5
Unreturned questionnaires	38	25.5
Total questionnaires administered	149	100.0

4.2 Descriptive Analysis of Concentric Diversification

The study assessed the extent to which Elephant Dental Franchise had adopted technologies and related services that utilized its existing capabilities. As presented in Table 2, concentric diversification recorded an aggregate mean of 3.63 and an average standard deviation of .745. The results indicated that respondents generally agreed that the franchise had implemented related technological and service diversification.

Adoption of digital dental technologies received the highest rating ($M = 3.86$, $SD = .589$), indicating comparatively strong adoption of digital technologies within the franchise. Electronic patient records recorded the second-highest rating ($M = 3.80$, $SD = .631$), demonstrating that digital patient-information systems were perceived to improve patient management.

Dental imaging services recorded a mean of 3.74 ($SD = .676$), indicating that imaging technologies had improved diagnosis and treatment planning. Dental technology adoption as a means of strengthening service quality recorded a mean of 3.62 ($SD = .742$). Preventive oral healthcare services recorded a comparatively lower mean of 3.49 ($SD = .841$).

Tele-dentistry received the lowest rating ($M = 3.25$, $SD = .989$). The comparatively high standard deviation indicated substantial differences in tele-dentistry availability and utilization across branches. Open-ended responses identified technology costs, inadequate employee training, unreliable internet connectivity, information-security concerns, and limited patient awareness as important challenges affecting implementation.

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis of Concentric Diversification

Statement	Mean	SD
The franchise had adopted digital dental technologies.	3.86	.589
Dental imaging services had improved diagnosis and treatment planning.	3.74	.676
Preventive oral health services had expanded within the franchise.	3.49	.841
Tele-dentistry had improved patient consultation access.	3.25	.989
Electronic patient records had improved patient management.	3.80	.631
Dental technology adoption had strengthened service quality.	3.62	.742
Composite mean/SD	3.63	.745

The findings corroborate Shojaei (2024), who established that technological diversification strengthened organizational capabilities and performance. They also align with Liu (2025), who linked investment in related technologies to broader market participation and sustainable organizational growth. Ngugi et al. (2023) similarly observed that digital health systems strengthened coordination and service delivery within Kenyan healthcare organizations.

4.3 Descriptive Analysis of Organizational Growth

The study assessed organizational growth using revenue growth, branch network expansion, patient numbers, market reach, operational capacity, and customer retention. As presented in Table 3, organizational growth recorded an aggregate mean of 3.56 and an average standard deviation of .788. Respondents therefore generally agreed that Elephant Dental Franchise had experienced organizational growth.

Growth in the number of branches recorded the highest mean ($M = 3.86$, $SD = .598$), showing that physical expansion was one of the most visible dimensions of organizational growth. Wider market coverage recorded the second-highest rating ($M = 3.74$, $SD = .681$), while increased revenue recorded a mean of 3.62 ($SD = .742$).

Improvement in operational capacity recorded a mean of 3.50 ($SD = .817$), indicating moderate improvement in the franchise’s ability to support service delivery. Patient-number growth recorded a lower mean of 3.37 ($SD = .902$).

Customer retention recorded the lowest rating ($M = 3.25$, $SD = .987$). The comparatively high variation in patient numbers and customer retention indicated that growth outcomes were not uniform across the franchise network. The findings therefore indicated that branch expansion and wider market coverage had been more evident than improvements in patient numbers and customer retention.

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of Organizational Growth (N = 111)

Statement	Mean	SD
The franchise had recorded increased revenue over time.	3.62	.742
The number of branches had increased over time.	3.86	.598
Patient numbers had increased over time.	3.37	.902
The franchise had served a wider market than before.	3.74	.681
Operational capacity had improved service delivery.	3.50	.817
Customer retention had supported stable growth.	3.25	.987
Composite mean/SD	3.56	.788

The findings suggest that organizational growth extended beyond branch expansion. Growth also depended on the franchise's ability to convert wider geographical presence into revenue, patient acquisition, stronger operational capacity, and sustained customer relationships. Related technological investments could therefore contribute to growth by enhancing service quality, patient experience, and effective utilization of the expanded branch network.

4.4 Pearson Correlation Analysis

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis was conducted to determine the direction, strength and statistical significance of the relationship between concentric diversification and organizational growth. As shown in Table 4, concentric diversification had a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship with organizational growth ($r = .700$, $p < .001$).

The positive coefficient indicated that increased adoption of related technologies and services was associated with stronger organizational growth. Greater adoption of digital dentistry, imaging services, preventive care, electronic patient records, and related dental technologies was therefore associated with improvements in revenue, branch performance, market reach, operational capacity, and customer retention.

The relationship was substantial but did not indicate that concentric diversification constituted the only determinant of organizational growth. Growth could also be influenced by market competition, access to finance, leadership capability, staff capacity, service quality, government regulation and other strategic factors.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Analysis

Variable/Statistic	Concentric Diversification	Organizational Growth
Concentric Diversification		
Pearson correlation	1	.700**
Sig. (2-tailed)	—	.001
N	111	111
Organizational Growth		
Pearson correlation	.700**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	—
N	111	111

Note. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed).

The finding supports Resource-Based View Theory because it demonstrates that utilizing related internal resources and capabilities is associated with stronger organizational outcomes. The results are consistent with Shojaei (2024), who associated technological diversification with improved firm performance, and Ristyawati et al. (2023), who emphasized that strategic use of internal capabilities can support organizational growth.

4.5 Bivariate Linear Regression Analysis

Simple linear regression analysis was conducted to establish the effect of concentric diversification on the organizational growth of Elephant Dental Franchise. As presented in Table 5, the regression model produced a correlation coefficient of $R = .700$, confirming a strong positive relationship between the variables.

The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = .490$) indicated that concentric diversification independently explained 49.0% of the variation in organizational growth. The remaining 51.0% was associated with factors outside the bivariate model. The adjusted R^2 of .485 was close to the unadjusted value, indicating that the model maintained stable explanatory capacity after adjustment.

Table 5: Regression Model Summary for Concentric Diversification

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.700	.490	.485	.553

Dependent variable: Organizational growth.

Predictor: Concentric diversification.

The ANOVA results presented in Table 6 show that the regression model was statistically significant, $F(1,109) = 104.730$, $p < .001$. Concentric diversification therefore significantly predicted organizational growth, and the model's explanatory power was unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Table 6: ANOVA Results for Concentric Diversification

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	32.051	1	32.051	104.730	< .001
Residual	33.359	109	.306		
Total	65.410	110			

Dependent variable: Organizational growth.

Predictor: Concentric diversification.

The regression coefficients presented in Table 7 indicate that concentric diversification had a positive and statistically significant effect on organizational growth ($B = .697$, $SE = .068$, $\beta = .700$, $t = 10.234$, $p < .001$). The unstandardized coefficient indicated that a one-unit improvement in concentric diversification was associated with a .697-unit improvement in organizational growth.

Table 7: Regression Coefficients for Concentric Diversification

Predictor	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	1.172	.283	—	4.141	.001
Concentric diversification	.697	.068	.700	10.234	.001

Dependent variable: Organizational growth.

The results indicate that adopting related technologies and services contributed substantially to organizational growth. Digital dental technologies, imaging services, preventive care, electronic patient records, and other related technologies enabled the franchise to leverage its existing expertise, infrastructure, and patient relationships more effectively.

The findings corroborate Shojaei (2024), who established that technological diversification strengthened organizational capabilities and firm performance. They are also consistent with Liu (2025), who found that related technological investments contributed to sustainable organizational growth, and Ngugi et al. (2023), who reported that digital health systems improved coordination and service delivery within Kenyan healthcare organizations.

The findings therefore suggest that concentric diversification should not be interpreted merely as technology adoption. Its strategic value arises from an organization's ability to integrate related technologies and services with existing clinical competencies, operational infrastructure, and customer relationships. Within a dental franchise, this integration may enhance service quality, improve patient management, strengthen market competitiveness and support sustained growth.

Because the probability value associated with concentric diversification was below the 5% significance level ($p < .001$), the study rejected the null hypothesis that concentric diversification did not have a statistically significant effect on organizational growth. The study therefore established that concentric diversification had a positive and statistically significant effect on the organizational growth of Elephant Dental Franchise in Kenya.

5. Conclusion

The study established that concentric diversification positively and significantly influenced the organizational growth of Elephant Dental Franchise in Kenya. Respondents generally indicated that digital dental technologies, electronic patient records, and dental imaging had become established within the franchise, although preventive oral healthcare and, particularly, tele-dentistry remained comparatively less developed.

Concentric diversification independently explained 49.0% of the variation in organizational growth. The study therefore concluded that organizations achieved stronger growth where they effectively utilized existing clinical expertise, technologies, infrastructure, brand reputation and patient relationships to develop related services and technological capabilities.

The findings support Resource-Based View Theory by showing that organizational resources can drive superior outcomes when effectively organized and deployed into related growth opportunities. Digital dental technologies, imaging systems, and electronic patient records enabled the franchise to strengthen diagnosis, treatment planning, patient management, service quality, and operational efficiency.

The study should nevertheless be interpreted within its scope. It employed a cross-sectional design, focused on a single dental healthcare franchise and partly relied on respondents' perceptions. Organizational growth may also be influenced by market demand, access to finance, competition, regulation, leadership, employee capability, service quality, and other factors outside the bivariate model.

6. Recommendations

Elephant Dental Franchise management should establish a structured technology-investment programme covering digital dentistry, dental imaging, electronic patient records, preventive oral healthcare and appropriate tele-dentistry applications. Proposed investments should be assessed against service quality, patient experience, operational efficiency, revenue potential, and data-protection requirements.

Electronic patient-record systems should be securely integrated across branches to improve continuity of care, patient-information management and organizational coordination. The franchise should establish appropriate interoperability and information-security controls to protect sensitive patient information.

The franchise should strengthen staff training in digital dental technologies. Technology acquisition should be paired with systematic employee training to ensure the equipment and systems are used effectively across branches.

Tele-dentistry should initially expand in areas where remote delivery is operationally appropriate, including preliminary consultations, patient education, follow-up services, post-treatment reviews, and referral support. Patient awareness should also be strengthened to improve utilization.

Management should periodically evaluate technological investments using indicators such as revenue contribution, patient uptake, service utilization, operational efficiency, treatment

quality, and customer retention. Technologies or related services that do not provide adequate strategic or financial value should be redesigned or reconsidered.

Further studies should examine concentric diversification among other dental clinics and private healthcare organizations to determine whether similar findings apply across different institutional contexts. Longitudinal studies should also assess the long-term effects of technological and related service diversification on organizational growth using objective information on revenue, patient volumes, customer retention, service utilization, and operating performance.

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