

Influence of Marketing Mix Strategies on the Sales Performance of Small Scale *Bixa Ollerana* Farmers in Kwale County, Kenya

David KISA CHERUIYOTI, Peter MWAURA, John KIPKORIR TANUI

^{1, 2, 3} School of Business and Economics, Kabarak University

¹ davidkisa@kabarak.ac.ke

² pmn70@yahoo.com

³ jktanui@kabarak.ac.ke

Submitted 6th July, 2020, Accepted 10th June, 2021, Published 14th July, 2021

ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study was to assess the influence of marketing mix strategies on the sales performance of Small Scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County, Kenya. The specific objectives were; to examine the influence of product, pricing, placement and promotion on sales performance of Small Scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County, Kenya. The study was based on the following theories; Consumer Utility Theory, Theory of pricing, AIDA model and Distribution Channel Theory. The study adopted descriptive research targeting 2,419 *Bixa* farmers registered by the Ministry of Agriculture in Kwale County. A sample size of 106 farmers was drawn using simple random sampling technique. The study used structured questionnaire to collect the required data from the respondents. The study used descriptive statistics such as means, standard deviation and percentages and inferential statistics using Regression Analysis. The study established that individually, apart from placement strategy, product, price and promotion strategies influenced the sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County. Overall, when the four marketing mix strategies were combined in multivariate-regression, only promotion strategy influenced the sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County, Kenya. The interaction of the moderating effect of Government policy on *Bixa Ollerana* value chain did not change the relationship between marketing mix strategies and sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers. Promotion mix strategy remained the only marketing mix strategy ($r = -0.286$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) that influenced the sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County, Kenya. The findings from the study will be of importance to practice, marketing scholarship and Ministries of Industry, Trade and Cooperatives and Agriculture on Policy formulation for local and international marketing of *Bixa Ollerana* products. The study recommends that the Government of Kenya puts in place a policy framework now that *Bixa Ollerana* is a scheduled crop, to regulate and promote its production, processing and marketing.

Key words: *Marketing Strategy, Marketing Mix Strategy, Tangible Marketing Mix Strategy, and Sales Performance.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Marketing is very critical in the performance and growth of a business and also innovation playing a significant role. According to Marjanova and Stojanovski (2012), good marketing efforts contains sales and expansion, it also contributes immensely to the growth of market share in a competitive environment. Studies have shown links between marketing strategies and growth of business hence improving the performance of the business. Marketing mix strategy has become an important competitive tool to survive the competitive market environment.

According to Aremu and Lawal (2012) a good marketing mix strategy should analyze the market and its environment, customer buying behavior, competitive activities and the need and capabilities of marketing intermediaries. According to Mohamed et al. (2014) a marketing strategy is a process that can allow an organization to concentrate its limited resources on the greatest opportunities to increase sales. According to Palmer (2011), organizations use marketing mix as part of their marketing strategy. Saguti (2015) asserts that the marketing mix is a model used by organizations to create and improve their marketing efforts. It is used to blend different factors in such a way that the organization is able to achieve its objectives and meet customers need. Marketing mix refers to 4P's that organizations use in their marketing process to achieve organizational goals and meet customers' needs and wants. It is a set of tactical marketing tools that includes product, price, place, and promotion that marketing managers are able to control to achieve the required objective (Shankar & Chin, 2011).

Sales performance is a direct inducement that offers an extra value or incentive for the product to the sales force distributors or consumers with the primary objective of creating an immediate sale (Zhang & Tang, 2010). Sales performance alludes to the volume of offers accomplished inside a predefined period contrasted with predetermined sales levels (Rotich, 2016). Accomplishing more noteworthy sale execution is the most essential part of sales pioneers as it specifically impacts on their key execution pointers. Sales performance has been conceptualized to incorporate both the result and behavioral measurements (Silva, 2006). Performance is achievement of organizations in relation with its set objectives or goals. Performance can be measured in terms of turnover, return on investment, profitability, sales volume, market share, customer satisfaction and even number of customers served. Performance can be defined as the extent of actual work performed by an individual or to what extent the actual work is shown by an individual (Cooper & Kleinschmidt, 2015). The key to sales success is creating value the buyer is not currently considering in their decision making. The study analyzed the following measures of sales performance; sales volumes of *Bixa*, market share and profitability by small scale farmers.

Bixa (annatto) colors are natural food colors which fall under a product type called Carotenoids. Other product types include Caramel, Anthocyanins, Paprika extract, spirulina, Chlorophyll, Betalains and Carmines (Biego *et al.*, 2013). In Kenya, *Bixa orellana* is grown by smallholders, particularly in the coastal counties of Kwale, Kilifi, and Lamu. Brazil is the largest producer of Annatto but most of it is consumed internally (Farmbiz Africa, 2019). *Bixa Ollerana* was introduced in Kenyan Coast counties in the 1970s as a cash crop for natural food colors but its uptake by the farmers and consumers has not grown as expected and has not been taken up by farmers in the other parts of the country. This is despite the existence of suitable climatic conditions, its income-generating potential and increasing international demand for natural food colors (Muhindi, 2006).

Muhindi (2006) also noted that Kenya Bixa Ltd, the only Annatto processor in the country at present, purchases bixa seeds and does value addition to produce Norbixin natural food color for export.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The demand for natural food colours is increasing both in local and international markets; in 2000 the demand was 2400 MT which increased to 3000 MT by the year 2005 and further increased to 8000 MT by the year 2010 and also increased to 15000 MT in 2015, due to growing consumer awareness of clean label products, health hazards associated with synthetic colours compared to health benefits of using natural food colours. *Bixa Ollerana* is a cash crop grown in the Kenyan Coast counties of Kwale, Lamu and Kilifi since the 1970s. The Bixa (Annatto) seeds are processed to produce Bixa (annatto) natural food colors. Despite its potential contribution to Kenya's economy and recent scheduling of *Bixa Ollerana* (GoK, 2020), the crop has not received adequate government attention in terms of policy that guides its production, processing and marketing. Further, the marketing of *Bixa Ollerana* in local and international market remains unclear with the major responsibility remaining with small scale farmers. There is need for appropriate marketing mix strategies to enhance sales performance of *Bixa* crop.

Previous studies have proved that an effective marketing mix can create and improve sales (Saguti, 2015) and the right marketing mix strategies influence achievements of organizational objectives (Bintu, 2017; Muchoki, 2013; Lovelock, 2011). Various studies have analyzed relationship between marketing mix and sales performance; Kiprotich (2012) effects of 4ps marketing mix on sales performance of automotive fuels; Muthengi (2015) the effects of marketing strategies on sales performance of commercial banks in Kenya; Muthengi (2015) conducted a research on the effects of marketing strategies on sales of Commercial Banks in Kenya; Muchiri (2016) the effectiveness of marketing mix strategies on performance of Kenol Kobil Limited; Muchohi (2015) conducted a study on marketing mix strategies adopted by tennis affiliated organizations and Obonyo (2013) marketing mix strategies adopted for competitiveness by supermarkets in Kisii Town. None of the studies carried out on marketing mix and sales performance have been carried out in natural food colour industry in Kenya, this being the research gap was the motivation of this study. Hence the study investigated the influence of marketing mix strategies on the sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County, Kenya to address this research gap.

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study was to analyze the influence of marketing mix strategies (product, price, place, promotion mix strategies) on the sales performance of Small Scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County, Kenya.

A. Hypothesis of the study

The study hypothesized that the marketing mix strategies (product, price, place, promotion mix strategies) have no statistical significant influence on sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale, County, Kenya.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Mwangi (2013) study on marketing mix strategies and competitive advantage: a case study of Family Bank in Kenya. It mentions that marketing is the management process through which goods and services move from concept to the customer. It includes the coordination of four elements called the marketing mix.

This includes identification, selection and development of a product, determination of its price, selection of a distribution channel to reach the customer's place, development and implementation of a promotional strategy, the process which is the element that considers the knowledge and skills of your staff; their motivation and investment in supporting your brand, physical evidence which is the facilities and infrastructure, and employees, management, organization culture and customer service orientation which constitutes the people. The marketing mix is therefore the combination of marketing activities that an organization engages in so as to best meet the needs of its targeted market. Competitive advantage on the other hand, gives a company an edge over its rivals and an ability to generate greater value for the firm and its shareholders. The study concludes that happy customers are excellent advocates for your business.

Ayedun et al. (2014) carried a study on effect of marketing strategies on corporate performance of estate surveying and valuation firms in Kaduna metropolis of Nigeria. The study revealed that there is a positive relationship between marketing strategies adopted and corporate performance of the firms. The current study analyzed the influence 4Ps marketing strategies on sales performance which is the literature gap that Ayedun et al. (2014) did not specifically analyze but generally assessed marketing strategy. Keramati et al. (2012) investigated the relationship between marketing mix and sales performance in the context of the Iranian Steel private firms. The study revealed that there was a link between marketing mix and sales performance. Bintu (2017) researched on effects of marketing mix strategy on performance of small-scale businesses in Maiduguri metropolitan, Borno State Nigeria. Oktaviyanti et al. (2015) researched on analysis of marketing mix and sales performance of "industrihilirtehwalini" product. Saguti (2015) researched on the effect of marketing mix (4Ps) on sales performance of Tigo Telecommunication Company. Findings revealed that marketing mix affects sales promotion.

A. Empirical review

1) Influence of product strategy on sales performance

Muhammad (2014) researched on impact of product packaging on consumer's buying behavior. Findings revealed that product packaging influences consumer purchase decision. It was concluded that packaging elements such as color, design of wrapper, packaging material are factors consumers consider before purchasing a product. Saeed et al. (2013), conducted a research on impact of labeling on customer buying behavior in Sahiwal, Pakistan. Quantitative research was used. Data was collected through survey. The study sampled 100 customers. It was established that product labeling influences consumer buying behavior. Nirusa (2017) conducted a research on the mediating role of perceived product quality. Survey was used to 105 firms. It was revealed that there was a relationship between organizational capability and perceived product quality. Edward (2013) conducted a research on the influence of visual packaging design on perceived food product quality, value, and brand preference. It was established that attitudes toward visual packaging directly influence consumer-perceived food product quality and brand preference. Owomoyela et al. (2013) conducted a research on the impact of marketing mix elements on consumer loyalty: An empirical study of Nigeria Breweries Plc. They recommended that Nigeria Breweries should produce superior products, charge competitive price, position appropriately, promote widely and provide other distinctive functional benefits to consumers.

2) *Influence of pricing strategy on sales performance*

Howard and James (2013) found out that there was strong positive correlation between penetration pricing strategy and market performance of a company. The business will tend to have a larger market share, loyal customers and some technological edge, thus the case currently with Coke; it was first the follower but through effective management has now become the leader of the market and is working towards achieving the marketing objectives of the Coca Cola (Zhang & Hnatko, 2014). Cravens and Lane (2010), findings indicated that value-based pricing is the most profitable pricing strategy According to Deonir et al. (2017), corporate profitability conducted research on pricing strategies and levels and their impact on corporate profitability. It was revealed that value-based pricing has a positive effect on the profitability of an organization.

Nagle and Singleton (2011) surveyed 200 corporations on the impact of pricing strategies on the corporations' profitability. They found that companies, which implemented sophisticated value-based pricing strategies, earn 31% higher operating income than competitors basing pricing strategies on market share goals or target margins. Vikas (2011), states that penetration pricing is the process of setting a price at a lower price for new products or service hence breaking even. The technique can also be used by organizations to look for a new market for an existing product. Jim (2012) noted that penetration pricing is used to support the launch of a new product, and when a product enters a market with relatively little product differentiation and where demand is price elastic. Paul and Ivo (2013) used the survey method and hypothesis testing on 95 respondents to demonstrate the relationship between price strategies and price setting practices. The survey demonstrated that there is a connection between price strategies and price setting because price setting practices are used to implement price strategies.

3) *Influence of placement strategy on sales performance*

Schoviah (2012) conducted a research on the effect of marketing distribution channel strategies on a firm's performance among Commercial Banks in Kenya. Descriptive survey research design was used. Target population was 43 commercial banks operating in Kenya. Findings revealed that marketing distribution strategies increased sales, market share and profits. Laswai (2013) conducted research on the assessment of the effectiveness of channels of distribution models in the sales performance of an organization. The study sampled 90 respondents. Interviews, questionnaires, and documentary reviews were used to collect data. Findings revealed that the distribution channel has a positive influence on sales performance.

Chege et al. (2014) conducted a research on the effect of marketing capabilities and distribution strategy on performance of Mobile Service Providers (MSP) intermediary organizations' in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study used descriptor-explanatory cross-sectional survey research design. The target population was of 397. Stratified and simple random sampling was used to select 219 respondents. A semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data. It was established that marketing capabilities and choice of distribution strategy have a significant influence on performance. Oladun (2012) conducted research on innovative distribution strategies and performance of selected multinational corporations (MNCs) and domestic manufacturing firms In Nigeria. Findings revealed that distribution strategies had a positive influence on performance. A cross-sectional survey was used. Simple random sampling was used to select 175 respondents. Findings revealed that innovative distribution strategies have a significant effect on performance. Eze et al. (2015) conducted research on the correlation between business location and consumers patronage.

The study used a survey design. 100 respondents were sampled. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. Findings revealed business location has a significant effect on business performance. The study concluded that the proximity of the business to customers influences repeat purchase. Barnard et al. (2011) conducted a research on location decision strategies for improving business performance. The study targeted SMEs in the Nelson Mandela Metropole. Convenience sampling was used to select 175 SMEs. Questionnaires were used to collect primary data. Findings revealed that there was a positive relationship between location and business performance.

4) Influence of promotion strategy on sales performance

Hamed and Farideddin (2016) conducted research on the effects of promotion on perceived quality and repurchase intention. The study conducted a descriptive survey approach in terms of performance. Simple random sampling was done to select a sample of 230 customers of coffee shops in 5 districts of Isfahan. It was established that price promotion had a significant impact on perceived product and service quality. Bingqun et al. (2016) conducted research on analyzing the impact of price promotion strategies on manufacturer sales performance. Findings revealed that price promotion strategies affect sales performance.

According to research done by Tandoh and Sarpong (2015), on the impact of sales promotion on the performance of Auto-Mobile Industries in Ghana, it was established that sales promotion has a positive effect on organizational performance. Dangaiso (2014) conducted a research on the effects of sales promotion strategies on company performance of Auto-Mobile Industries in Ghana, it was revealed that Findings revealed that use of sales promotional activities such; as bonuses, price and contest sweepstakes has a positive influence on company performance. Dauda (2015) conducted research on the effect of advertising on the sales revenue and profitability of selected food and beverages firms in Nigeria. It was revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between advertising and firm profitability. However, that study also revealed that there was no positive significant relationship between advertising expenses and sales revenue of the companies. It was recommended that the organization should not only concentrate on advertising to increase sales revenue and firm profitability they should also use sales promotion, personal selling, publicity.

Jebungei (2014) researched the influence of advertising on organizational performance of cosmetic manufacturing firms in Kenya. The finding revealed that the use of advertising enables an organization to create awareness and appeal. In addition, the advertisement also has an influence on the performance of products. It enables an organization to increase sales volume and profit. Liban (2015) researched the impact of advertisement on sales in telecommunication companies in Somalia it was established that advertising had a significant impact on the sales volume. The empirical results on placement strategy and sales performance were not conclusive and therefore the current study conclusively examined the extent to which promotion mix strategy influences the sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale, County, Kenya and results presented in chapter four.

The study was based on the following theories; Consumer utility theory used to analyze the influence of marketing mix strategies on sales performance of small scale *bixa ollerana* farmers in Kwale County, Kenya. Theory of Pricing used to analyze the influence of price strategy on sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County, Kenya which was the second objective of the study. AIDA Model was used to analyze the influence of promotion strategy on sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale,

County, Kenya which was the third objective of the study. Distribution Channel theory used to analyze the influence of placement strategy on sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale, County, Kenya which was the third objective of the study.

B. Conceptual framework and operationalization of the variables

1) Conceptual framework

The independent variables of the conceptualization are marketing mix strategies which comprise product, pricing, placement and promotion. The dependent variable is Sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County Kenya, measured in terms of sales volume, customer loyalty, revenue and profitability from *Bixa*. When effective marketing mix strategies which include product, pricing, placement and promotion strategies are used in the production and marketing of *Bixa Ollerana*, sales performance is expected to improve and vice versa.

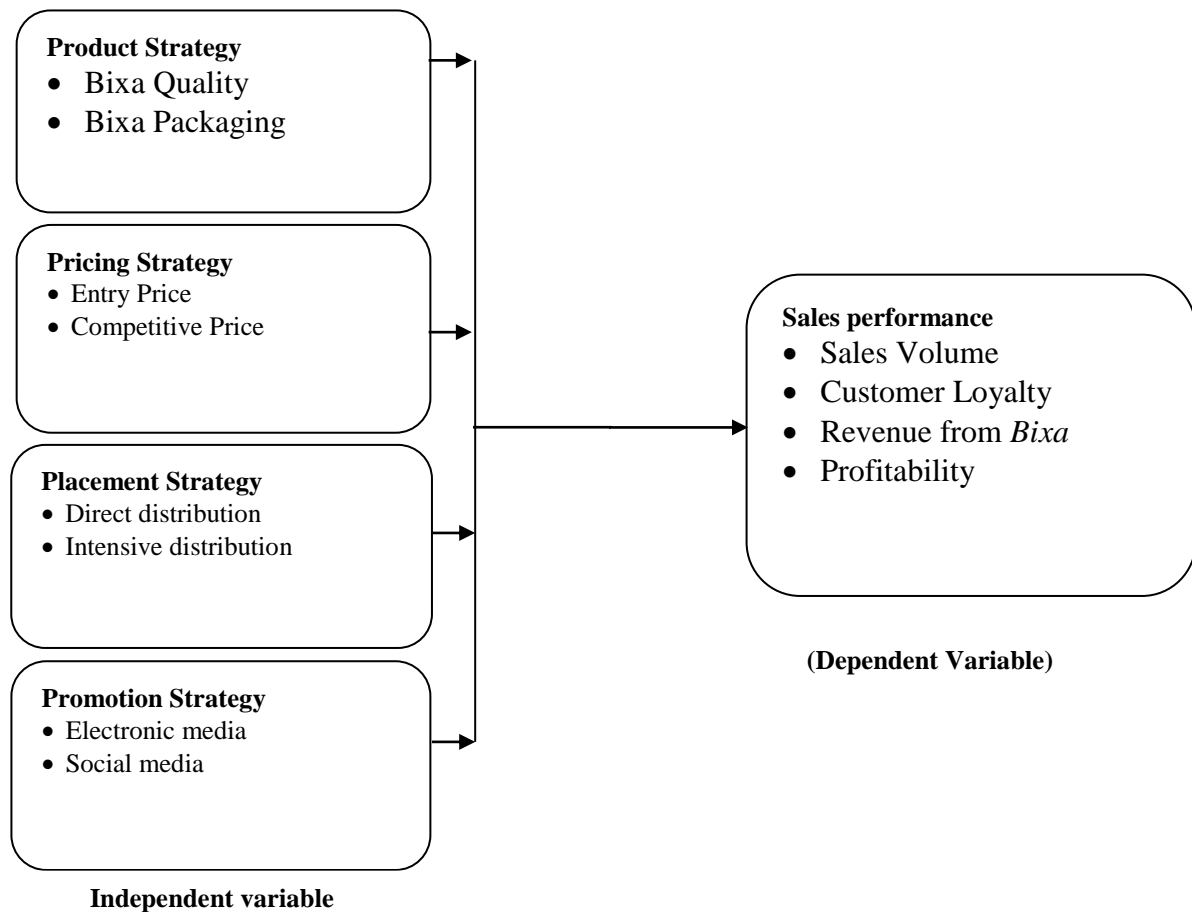


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Source: Author

2) Operationalization of the variables

Product strategy

Kotler (2005) defines product strategy as all physical products or services that can be offered for acquisition or consumption to satisfy a customer's wants or needs. The product is therefore more than a branded packaged good offered for sale. It includes services and benefits that can be achieved from the product. It can be enhanced by adding features and making other options available. Product strategy is the way a firm competes in the market and improves its total performance (Day and Wensley 2010). According to Samiee (2010) product strategy is the single most important component of marketing strategy product and is regarded as a blueprint for marketing resources allocation toward realizing the objectives of the firm, which is sales, financial and customer performance

Price strategy

Price strategy is a systematic decision-making process relating to all aspects of pricing by a company or business. Price balances demand and supply. Price makes the buyer and the seller agree on a certain value for goods and services (Peter & Olson 2005). Price is a positioning tool that is implemented in relation to target market, product mix, services and competition (Kotler & Armstrong, 2003). Price should involve the total cost so that companies do not incur losses. Managers should understand how to set prices bearing in mind factors such as demand, competition, distribution channels, internal environment and public authorities (Wagle, 2003). Pricing strategy is said to be successful when a company sets goods or service prices and seeks to maintain them for a period (Wagle, 2003).

Placement strategy

Place strategy involves delivering products or services to the final user. The channel of distribution is very important depending on the size of the company, cost of distribution and the nature of the product (Wagle, 2003). Placement strategy is a plan to make the product or service available to the end user. There are three major distribution strategies: Exclusive distribution, selective distribution and intensive distribution. Exclusive distribution allows only few retailers to stock a given product. Selective distribution entails selling products at selected outlets only. By contrast intensive distribution entails selling a product to as many outlets as possible.

Promotion strategy

Promotion strategy provides the means through which consumers are informed about the new products and their attributes to influence demand for them. Promotion acts as a way to persuade and inform end users on the product features and hence entice them to like the product. Promotional strategy to get a product into the market can take two broad categories; the push strategy and the pull strategy. The push strategy involves taking the product to the customer. The strategies include: point of sale displays, packaging design, face to face sales, trade shows and efficient retail supply chains (Gibson, 2017). The pull strategy involves motivating the customer to come to you for the product. The strategies include: word-of-mouth, advertising, sales promotion, brand management, product placement and public relations tools. This is aimed at increasing sales revenue (Gibson, 2017).

Sales performance

Sales performance is the evaluation sales quantity generated by the activities of business primarily about that of individual sales representatives as described by O'Sullivan, and Abela (2007). Meanwhile, performance is the process of executing a task that can be used for evaluation in marketing (Bonoma, 2012; Franco-Santos et al, 2007). Multiple organizations use Key Performance Indicators to assess their targeted goal and objectives. Key Performance Indicators are essential indicators used to measure and quantify sales performance to aid in more predictable and repeatable revenue generation process (Bonoma, 2012). Sales performance is measured by several KPI's including sales volume, the rate of contact, lead response time, follow-up contact and also through opportunity-to-win ratio.

V. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopted descriptive research design to assess the influence of marketing mix strategies on sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County, Kenya. This design is useful when a researcher wants to collect data on phenomena that cannot be observed directly. Its advantage is that it allows collection of large amounts of data from a sizeable population in a highly effective, easily and in an economical way, often using questionnaires.

The study targeted 2,419 *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County registered by the Ministry of Agriculture (GoK, 2018), Kwale County. According to Mugenda (2003), a target population is defined as that population to which a researcher wants to generalize the results of the study. *Bixa* farmers in Kwale was ideal because they are already in the industry, which means they have an interest and are well versed on the factors influencing the production and marketing of *bixa Ollerana*. The sample size of 106 *Bixa Ollerana* farmers was obtained using the coefficient of variation. Nassiuma (2000) asserts that in most surveys or experiments, a coefficient of variation in the range of 21% to 30% and a standard error in the range of 2% to 5% is usually acceptable.

$$S = \frac{N(Cv)^2}{(Cv)^2 + (N - 1)e^2}$$

Where S = the sample size

N = the population size

Cv = the Coefficient of Variation

e = standard error

Therefore, the sample size was:

$$S = \frac{2,419 (0.21)^2}{(0.21)^2 + (2,419-1) 0.02^2} = 105.486 \approx 106 \text{ farmers}$$

A simple random sample is one in which each and every member of the population has an equal and independent chance of being selected (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000). It is the most desirable kind for almost every survey and is extremely important to the reliability and validity of the data. It is the best because it is most representative of the entire population. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 106 *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County who formed the sampling frame for the study. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyze quantitative data after appropriate data coding. The relationship between the level of the independent and dependent variables was measured using regression analysis. This informed whether the independent variables significantly influence sales performance of small scale *Bixa Olleran* farmers and thereby test the research hypotheses. In order to combine the sub-variables into the main variable for analysis, the researcher using statistical formula aggregated the sub-variables.

VI. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Multivariate regression analysis results

This section presents the results of multivariate regression analysis of influence of product, price, place and promotion mix strategies on sales performance. The researcher combined each of the sub-variables under each of the four marketing mix strategies; product, price, place and promotion at a multivariate level and analyzed their combined effect on sales performance of small scale Bixa Ollerana farmers. (See table 1 in appendices).

Results from Table 1 revealed that the R value was 0.478 whereas R Square was 0.228, which indicated an average degree of correlation. The R^2 value indicates how much of the dependent variable, "sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers", was explained by the independent variables, "product, price, place and promotion marketing mix strategies". In this case, 22.8% was the R Squared, which was average indicating an average degree of correlation. (See table 2 in appendices).

The Predictors: "product, price, place and promotion marketing mix strategies". The Dependable variable: "sale performance by of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers". Table 2 indicated that the regression model predicted the outcome variable significantly with $p=0.000$, which was less than 0.05, and indicated that although the R Square was not large; overall, the model statistically and significantly predicted the outcome variable. (See table 3 in appendices).

When product, price, place and promotion marketing mix strategies were combined in multivariate regression, the study established (Table 3) an insignificant relationship between product strategy and sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers $r = 0.05$, $p=0.366>0.05$. Further analysis also established insignificant relationship between price strategy and sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers $r = 0.127$, $p = 0.273>0.05$. On placement strategy, the study established insignificant relationship between place marketing strategy and sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers $r = -0.083$, $p= 0.173>0.05$. Concerning promotion strategy, the study established significant relationship between promotion strategy and sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers $r = -0.286$, $p = 0.000<0.05$. The finding was an indication that increases in promotional strategy by 1 unit lead to an increase in sales performance by 0.286 multiple units. The general objective of the study is to assess the influence of marketing mix strategies on the sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County, Kenya. The study established that marketing mix strategies influenced the sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County, Kenya. This was because apart from product, price and place marketing mix strategies, promotion strategy influenced the sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County, Kenya. This finding is supported by Nashwan (2015) conducted research on how does marketing strategy influence firm performance. Findings revealed that distribution, promotion, pricing, and product standardization and adaptation have an impact on sales, customer and financial performance of firms. According to Louter et al. (1991) distribution strategies have a positive impact on firm performance. Revino et al. (2015) conducted research on the effect of distribution channel sales volume in Pt. Varia Indah Paramitha Manado. Findings revealed that distribution channels had a positive and significant impact on sales volume. The finding is further supported by Kurtz and Boone (2011), the effectiveness of marketing mix strategies affects the level of the application of strategies that influence the performance of firms.

The study argued that challenges which marketers face are in terms of their inability to showing the level of effectiveness of their marketing mix strategies. This makes it difficult on anticipation of the changes which take place in the marketing situation of a firm and evaluation of the whole of the market.

When individual marketing strategies were regressed with sales performance, only placement strategy did not have significant relationship with sales performance of small scale *Bixa* farmers in Kwale County. At a multivariate regression, when aggregation of individual variables of the marketing mix strategies is done and then the 4Ps are regressed with sales performance of small scale *Bixa* farmers, the scenario changed with only promotion strategies exhibiting significant relationship with sales performance.

This finding was possible because the population under the study, that is small scale *Bixa* farmers in Kwale County who either used the 4Ps marketing strategies knowingly or unknowingly due to constraints in marketing management knowledge and resources to execute these strategies compared to a population of marketing managers in a commercial setup, say the commercial banks. This is supported by Muthengi (2015) study on effects of marketing strategies on sales performance of commercial banks in Kenya which established an overall significance of the marketing strategies adopted. Further, when small scale *Bixa* farmers are asked to compare the 4Ps when they are combined at multivariate level, they are likely to have a reduced perception on the number of Ps in relationship to sales performance. The finding is further supported by Festus (2016); Tandoh and Sarpong (2015); Dangaiso (2014); Ibojo and Ogunsiyi (2011); Syeda, Zehra and Sadia (2011); Adeniran, Egwuonwu, and Egwuonwu (2016); Amusat and Ajiboye (2013); who established in their findings that sales promotion had positive influence on sales performance of the various industries where they carried out their studies.

The hypothesis HO that the combined marketing mix strategies have no statistical significant influence on sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale, County, Kenya was rejected. This is because the study statistically established a significant influence of sales promotion on sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale, County, Kenya. The results shown in Tables 2 and 3 indicated that the beta value was significant (for promotion strategy $\beta = -0.286$, $p = 0.000$). The hierarchical regression model therefore, which can be used to predict sales performance of *Bixa Ollerana* is given by;

$$Y = 4.887 + 0.050x_1 + 0.127x_2 - 0.083x_3 - 0.286x_4 + \epsilon$$

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusions

The study also sought to establish the combined influence of the marketing mix strategies on sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale, County, Kenya. At a multivariate regression, when aggregation of individual variables of the marketing mix strategies is done and then the 4Ps were regressed with sales performance of small scale *Bixa* farmers, only promotion strategies had significant relationship with sales performance. The hypothesis HO that the combined marketing mix strategies have no statistical significant influence on sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale, County, Kenya was rejected. This is because the study statistically established a significant influence of sales promotion on sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale, County, Kenya.

The main objective of the study was to analyze the influence of the marketing mix strategies (product, price, place, promotion mix strategies) on sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale, County, Kenya. The study established that marketing mix strategies influenced the sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers in Kwale County, Kenya. This was because promotion strategy was the only marketing mix strategy that had an influence on sales performance of small scale *Bixa Ollerana* farmers whereas product, price and place marketing mix strategies, did not have any influence on sales performance.

B. Recommendations

This section presents recommendation on the findings of the influence of marketing mix strategies on the sales performance of *Bixa Ollerana* by small scale farmers in Kwale County, Kenya. Recommendations presented are; policy recommendations, recommendations on practice and recommendations for further research.

1) Policy recommendations

In view of the findings and the conclusions of this study the following recommendations are made: First, it is important to note that agriculture still remain the backbone of the Kenya Economy and also leading in export and foreign exchange earnings. Several cash crops like coffee, tea, pyrethrum, sugar cane all have existing policies regulating their production, processing and marketing. The study recommends that the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries develop policy that promotes *Bixa Ollerana* production, processing and marketing now that the crop was recently schedule (GoK, 2019).

Second, the study recommends that the Department of Cooperatives in the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives should capacity built *Bixa Ollerana* farmers on importance of cooperative movement as a control marketing channels for the crop. The department should go ahead to group the small-scale farmers into buying centre groups and cooperatives where the individual buying centre groups and/or cooperatives can utilize the skills, experiences of individual members and economy of scale to design and implement effective marketing mix strategies that can be used to market *Bixa* crop in different forms and increase sales performance. Third, *Bixa Ollerana* being an export crop and foreign exchange earner should be supported by the Government in terms of; introduce favorable tax incentives for inputs, developing trade policies to protect the small-scale farmers. The government should promote preferential trading agreements and conditions for *Bixa* products with world trading partners to make the Kenya *Bixa Ollerana* competitive which in turn will increase and stabilize market demand and stakeholders' confidence. Such achieved confidence will lead to production and marketing of *Bixa* to achieve improvement in the small-scale farmers' socio-economic status.

2) Recommendation for practice

The County Government of Kwale, and other County Governments in *bixa* growing zones in Kenya, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Irrigation and that of Trade should support the production of *Bixa Ollerana* by small scale farmers by incorporating the crop in the training and extension services which would advise farmers on how to increase production volumes and quality which is an important value chain stage towards marketing strategies. This is important because the County Government need to take advantage of comparative advantage of the weather and the type of the soil that supports the growth of the crop and the available market for the crop.

VIII. REFERENCES

- Adeniran, A., James, Egwuonwu, K. Thomas & Egwuonwu, Clara O. K. (2016). The Impact of Sales Promotions on Sales Turnover in Airlines Industry in Nigeria. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 8(3), pp. 99-110
- Aremu M.A & Lawal A.T, (2012). Exploring marketing strategy as a catalyst for performance in Nigerian telecommunication industry. *IJMBS* 2 (4), pp. 65 – 71.
- Ayedun, C. A., Oloyede, S. A., Oluwunmi, A. O., & Oyedele, M. O. (2014). The Effect of Marketing Strategies on Corporate Performance of Estate Surveying and Valuation Firms in Kaduna Metropolis of Nigeria. *American International Journal of Social Science*, 3(4), pp. 202-209.
- Biego, G. H. M., Yao, K. D., Koffi, K. M., Ezoua, P. and Kouadio, L. P. (2013). Influence of the storage conditions on moisture and bixin levels in the seeds of Bixa Orellana L. *African Journal of Agricultural Research*. 8(43), pp. 5342- 5347.
- Bintu, M., (2017). Effects of Marketing Mix Strategy on Performance of Small-Scale Businesses in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State Nigeria. *Journal of Marketing and Consumer Research*.31.
- Bonoma, T. V. (2012). *Marketing performance assessment*. Harvard Business School Press.
- Chege, S., K., Muathe S., M., A, & Thuo. J., K. (2014). The effect of marketing capabilities and distribution strategy on performance of MSP intermediary organizations' in Nairobi County, Kenya. *Business Management and Strategy*. 5(1) pp. 197-211. <https://ir-library.ku.ac.ke/handle/123456789/12218>
- Cooper, R. G., & Kleinschmidt, E. J. (2015). The impact of export strategy on export sales performance. *Journal of international business studies*, pp. 37-55.
- Czinkota, M.R., & Ronkainen, I.A (200). *International Marketing*, 7th Edition, Ohio: Harcourt. Inc.
- Dangaiso, P., T. (2014). *The effects of sales promotion strategies on company performance: a case of Telone Zimbabwe*. Unpublished Thesis Submitted to Midland State University.
- Dauda, A. (2015). *Effect of advertising on the sales revenue and profitability of selected food and beverages firms in Nigeria*. Unpublished Thesis Submitted to Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
- Day, G. and R. Wensley, (2010). Assessing Advantage: A Framework for Diagnosing Competitive Superiority. *Journal of Marketing*, 52: pp. 1-20.
- Edward, S., T., W. (2013). "The influence of visual packaging design on perceived food product quality, value, and brand preference", *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 41 (10), pp. 805-816.
- FarmBiz Africa (2019). *Facts Sheet on Bixa Farming*. Accessed 2nd February, 2019: <http://farmbizafrika.com/advertise/10-profit-boosters/838-factsheet-on-bixa-farming>.
- Franco-Santos, M., Kennerley, M., Micheli, P., Martinez, V., Mason, S., Marr, B., Gray, D., & Neely, A. (2007). Towards a definition of a business performance measurement system. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 27, pp. 784-801.
- Fraenkel, J.R. and Wallen, N.E. (2000). *How to design and evaluate research in education*. London, McGraw Hill.
- Government of Kenya (2018). *Ministry of Agriculture Annual Report*.
- Government of Kenya (2019). *Kenya Gazette Supplement, No. 42 (National Assembly Bill, No 25)*, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Government of Kenya (2020). *Kenya Gazette Supplement, No. 2164 (National Assembly Vol, No CXXII-No. 49)*, Nairobi, Kenya.

- Hamed, M., & Farideddin, A., H. (2016). Effects of Promotion on Perceived Quality and Repurchase Intention. *International Journal of Scientific Management and Development*, 4 (12), pp. 457-461.
- Howard, F., & James, M. (2013). The Effect of Decision Context on Perceived Risk in Pricing Strategies: How Managers View Uncontrollable Environmental Forces. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*.
- Ibojo., B., O., & Ogunsiji, A., (2011). Effect of Sales Promotion as a Tool on Organizational Performance: A case Study of Sunshine Plastic Company. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Economics and Management Sciences*, 2(1), pp. 9-13.
- Jebungei, Y., J., (2014). *Influence of Advertising on Organizational Performance of Cosmetic Manufacturing Firms in Kenya*. Unpunished thesis Submitted to University of Nairobi.
- Kiprotich. L., K. (2012). Effects of 4ps Marketing Mix on Sales Performance of Automotive Fuels of Selected Service Stations in Nakuru Town. <https://ir-library.ku.ac.ke/bitstream/handle/123456789/7196/Kiprotich%20Leonard%20Koske.pdf?isAllowed=y&sequence=1>
- Kotler P., Ang, S. H., Leong, S. M. and Jan, C. T. (2005). *Marketing Management*, Asia, Prentice-Hall, 9th Edition.
- Kurt, D., & Hulland, J. (2013). Aggressive marketing strategy following equity offerings and firm value: the role of relative strategic flexibility. *Journal of Marketing*, 77(September), pp. 57–74.
- Laswai, M., E. (2013). *Assessment of the effectiveness of channels of distribution models in the sales performance of an organization: The Case of Coca-Cola Morogoro Region*. Unpublished Thesis Submitted to Mzumbe University.
- Liban. O., S. (2015). The Impact of Advertisement on Sales: Case Study in Some Selected Telecommunication Companies in Somalia. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 7, (36), pp. 49-55.
- Marjanova, C., & Stojanovski, T. (2012). Successful export practice: The UK experience. *International Marketing Review*, 11(6), pp. 23-47.
- Mohammed A. (2012). Market Orientation and Business Performance among SMEs in Ghana, *International Business Research* Vol. 4, No. 1; January 2011.
- Mugenda, O.N & Mugenda, A.G. (2003). *Research Methods: A Quantitative and Qualitative Approach*. Nairobi: ACTS press.
- Muhindi, Felix M, (2006). *Baseline Study to Establish the Gaps in Bixa Production and Marketing,* Mimeo, Mombasa, Paper Presented at Bixa Stakeholders' Workshop at YWCA, Likoni, June 2006.
- Muthengi, W. K. (2015). *The effects of marketing strategies on sales performance of commercial banks in Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).
- Mwangi, E. (2015). *The effect of corporate diversification on the financial performance of listed manufacturing firms in Kenya*. Unpublished MBA project.
- Mwangi, E. W. (2013). *Marketing mix strategies and competitive advantage: a case study of Family Bank in Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).
- Nagle, T., & Holden, R. (2012). *The Strategy and Tactics of Pricing*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Nana. Y., Dufie O., Gloria K., Q, Kwamena, M., N. (2011). The Effect of Marketing Communications on the Sales Performance of Ghana Telecom (Vodafone, Ghana). *International Journal of Marketing Studies* 3 (4).
- Nirusa, S. (2017). The mediating role of perceived product quality: The analysis of relationship between organizational capability and customer value. *International Journal of Management and Applied Science*, 3(1), pp. 131-134.

- Obonyo, G., O. (2013). Evaluating marketing strategies adopted by supermarkets for competitive edge: A case of Kisii town supermarkets. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, 4 (12), pp. 15-40.
- Oladun, M., M. (2012). *Innovative distribution strategies and performance of selected multinational corporations (MNCs) and domestic manufacturing firms In Nigeria*. Unpublished Thesis Submitted to Covenant University, Ota, and Ogun State, Nigeria.
- Owomoyela S. K., Oyeniyi K. O. and Ola O.S., (2013). Investigating the impact of marketing mix elements on consumer loyalty: An empirical study on Nigerian Breweries Plc. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*. 4 (11), pp. 485–496.
- Palmer, A. (2011). *Principles of Services Marketing* (3rd ed.). UK: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company.
- Peter, P.J. & Olson, J.C. (2005). *Consumer behavior and marketing strategy* (7th.Ed.), Burr Ridge, IL: Irwin/McGraw-Hill.
- Rotich, E. (2016). *Effects of Marketing Intelligence on Sales Performance of Bancassurance Among Financial Institutions in Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).
- Saeed, R., Lodhi, R., N., Rauf, A., Rana, M., I., Mahmood, Z., & Ahmed, N., (2013). Impact of Labeling on Customer Buying Behavior in Sahiwal, Pakistan. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 24 (9), pp. 1250-1254.
- Saguti. J., F. (2015). *The effects of marketing mix on sales performance of Tigo Telecommunication Company in Tanzania*. Unpublished Thesis Submitted to Muzumbe University Dar-es-salaam.
- Shankar, C., & Chin, K., K. (2011). A study of the relationship between marketing mix and customer retention for herbal coffee in *Malaysia 2nd International Conference on Business and Economic Research (2011) Proceeding*.
- Tandoh. I., & Sarpong, L. (2015). The Impact of Sales Promotions on the Performance of Auto-Mobile Industries in Ghana: A Case Study of PHC Motors (Accra, Ghana). *European Journal of Business and Management*, 7, (11), pp.170-194.
- Wagle, Y. (2003). *Industry profile: The industry that suits everyone*. Standard and poor industry surveys. (3rd May 2020, Online).
- Whetton, D. (2011). *Organizational Effectiveness: A Comparison of Multiple Models* (261–77). New York: Academic Press.
- Zhang H., Maloney L. T. (2012). Ubiquitous log odds: a common representation of probability and frequency distortion in perception, action, and cognition. *Front. Neurosci.* 6:1
- Zhao, Y. L., Libaers, D., & Song, M. (2015). First product success: A mediated moderating model of resources, founding team startup experience, and product positioning strategy. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 32(3), pp. 441–458.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Tables

Table 1. R Square Results

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.478 ^a	.228	.198	.30108

Table 2. ANOVA of Marketing Mix Strategies and Sales Performance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2.708	4	.677	7.470	.000 ^b
Residual	9.156	101	.091		
Total	11.864	105			

Table 3. Marketing Mix Strategies and Sales Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4.887	.418		11.703	.000
Product strategy	.050	.055	.087	.909	.366
Price strategy	.127	.115	.101	1.102	.273
Placement strategy	-.083	.061	-.124	-1.373	.173
Promotion strategy	-.286	.072	-.382	-3.980	.000