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Relationship between Marketing Advancement and Performance of Manufacturing Enterprises in Kenya

John Muchira Mwaniki

Ph.D. Student, Department of Business Administration, School of Business and Entrepreneurship,
Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya

Dr. Daniel M. Wanyoike

Senior Lecturer, School of Business Administration and Entrepreneurship,
Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya

Dr. Frida Simba

Senior Lecturer, School of Business Administration and Entrepreneurship,
Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya

Abstract:

In the last ten years, researchers have pointed out the development of new ideas of innovation in manufacturing enterprises. Among the most explored approaches to innovation is constant interaction with customers. The study was anchored on the General Theory of Innovation (GTI). The target population was senior managers of all the 710 manufacturing companies in Nairobi and the surrounding areas. To determine the sample size, the statistical formula suggested by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) and Saunders et al. (2009) was used to arrive at a sample size of 274. The researcher employed a stratified simple random sampling technique based on the sub-sector of manufacturing enterprises. Data were collected through a structured open and closed-ended questionnaire. Before embarking on data collection, the instruments were piloted to ensure they were valid and reliable. The study established a positive relationship between marketing advancement and performance ($\beta = 0.712$, $p\text{-value} = 0.00 < 0.05$). The study recommended that managers of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya ought to endeavor to enhance their online presence, specifically on social network platforms, to improve better customer responsiveness towards complaints and compliments of their products. Policymakers such as the government of Kenya should provide a better trading environment, especially on dumping cheap substandard products in the market to enhance the performance of local manufacturing enterprises.

Keywords: *Marketing advancement, performance of manufacturing enterprises, computerized inventory management, online social networking*

1. Introduction

Within the last decade, researchers have attributed the emergence of fresh, innovative ideas in manufacturing enterprises (Ogotu & Samuel, 2011). One of the most explored approaches to achieving innovations is through constant interaction with customers (Abayo, 2014). According to Abdullah, Shamsudin, Wahab, and Hamid (2012), the demand placed on clients, close business contact with customers, and continuous analysis of competitor operations is key drivers of innovation in manufacturing enterprises. Irrespective of the size of a business, innovation is paramount to the sustainable growth and survival of an enterprise. However, it is particularly important for manufacturing enterprises because of their greater growth potential. New production ideas have changed the way manufacturing enterprises conduct business and how customers acquire goods and services (Becheikh, Landry & Amara, 2012).

Techniques of the manufacturing industry in terms of information technology and the telecommunication sector reveals that managers of leading brands can thrive in foreign markets on the basis of their brand leadership, including brand correlation in the local market. In addition, studies such as from Gupta and Malhotra (2013) have reported and revealed that brands that contribute to the competition of a reseller have the ability to strive at the local level using inventive marketing implementation. Observations from such researchers show that the correlation between an international brand and its resellers in a foreign marketplace is very vital for a brand that is heavily competitive (Gupta et al. 2016).

In the 21st century, dynamic market environments and business transactions have literally shifted from traditional market approaches to electronic commerce. Thus, all forms of strategic market initiatives must revolve around understanding consumer demands and availing them in good time through e-commerce. In the wake of online social networking platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and many others, as well as e-commerce sites such as Amazon and eBay, consumers are shifting from acquiring goods and services from local physical stores to online sites. Thus,

marketing advancement needs to revolve around online marketing, computerized inventory management, and online social networking (Sattari, 2013)

Gupta *et al.* (2016) used a complex theory to determine the relationship between competitiveness and advancement in marketing practices of large manufacturing enterprises by arguing that enterprises that provided their branded products in international markets by using local small and medium enterprises as resellers of the brands need to create a competitive edge that assists them to show their superiority. However, fearing the unknown prevents managers from moving to international markets since there is a tendency for the growth of markets to be complicated as they offer competition (Thai & Chong, 2013).

While the creation of push and pull in a competitive market benefits both brand and reseller firms, it requires them to innovatively cooperate with each other (Gupta & Malhotra, 2013). Based on the literature, when resellers benefit from the promotional activities performed by a brand, the indigenous knowledge and home-grown relationships of resellers play an essential role in building the competency and capability of brand managers to innovatively juggle with the different barriers and shortcomings of the growth markets (Cavusgil & Cavusgil, 2012; Gupta & Malhotra, 2013). Brand and reseller firms commit to an inventive marketing idea after they have identified the contribution it makes to their competitiveness as an incentive to become inventive in their marketing practices. In view of the above, this study seeks to investigate the influence of marketing advancement in all manufacturing enterprises regardless of their size. The study hypothesis is H_0 : Marketing advancement has no significant influence on the performance of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theory Informing the Study

This study utilized the theory developed by Greg Yezersky in 1988, whose work targeted creating a model that could help managers understand what triggers and enables mechanisms of emergence, success (survival), and fall of human-made systems. The initial theory developed in 1988 was later modified by Dr. Noel Leon Rovira in 2005 and renamed General Theory of Innovation. General Theory of Innovation states that innovation in the area of strategic management (identification of a change required for repositioning an organization with the purpose of obtaining competitive advantage) is immeasurably more important than innovation in any other area of corporate activities such as product or process innovation. The reasoning behind this very firm position is simple: the history of business definitely shows that companies with inferior products but superior strategies beat their technically superior competitors. Examples include: Microsoft vs. Apple, Dell vs. IBM, and Compaq, Big 3 vs. Tucker Corporation. If an organization can precisely forecast the future of its own products and processes as well as foresee where the market will go, this company can use this knowledge at any moment to create new powerful strategies, find new markets for products and services, find new sources of revenue, generating and controlling growth. This company will have a substantial advantage compared to its uninformed rivals, which is the solid foundation for continuous advantage and success.

General Theory of Innovation (GTI) is based on the following principles and facts: First, regardless of the specific nature and complexities of all artificial systems, such as processes, products, services, and organizations, among others, they evolve with time. Thus, innovation is a single step towards a greater continuous progression. Second, even though the evolution process has a perceived randomness, it is logical and has a predominant direction. Third, enterprises that deviate from the propositions of the theory open their operations to troubles for upcoming innovations. Fourth, instead, it is prudent to obey the General Theory of Innovation logic of the evolutionary process because it creates room for the reversal of the odds and development of successful innovation. Fifth, understanding evolutionary logic is imperative because it enables efficient and effective problem solving, accurate prediction of expected evolutionary changes, and judging the proposed innovation on an objective basis, and it is essential for daily business success functions. Sixth, the emergence of the science of innovation creates room for drastic room and cost reduction while enhancing the outcome. Seventh, all scientific theories are taught and learned, which necessitates the creation of on-demand innovations in corporations. These GTI principles have been effective in the development of successful business applications that are tested rigorously to address the real project's needs. So far, the principles have proven their effectiveness. Although GTI encompasses all types of revolution, this study intended to use the theory to examine how marketing advancement influences the performance of MEs in Kenya.

2.2. Empirical Review

Sandvik and Sandvik (2003) noted that market advancement has an immediate positive impact on the performance of an organization. The study by Otero-Neira, Lindman & Fernández (2009) uncovered strong evidence that created a positive relationship between marketing advancement and business performance. In addition, Varis and Littunen (2010) supported this proposition using an estimated model that created a significant relationship between firm performance and market innovation activities.

Karabulut (2015) believes that a marketing advancement consists of new sales and marketing techniques. Günay (2007) adds that marketing advancement is comprised of marketing product performance, production system, and services (Günay, 2007). Polder *et al.* (2010) believe that a marketing advancement is a non-technological innovation. The authors add that firms make advancements in marketing methods to increase efficiency. Chen (2006) states that a marketing advancement is developing new methods and techniques for marketing. He argues that developing new methods, techniques, and tools for marketing has a significant role in organizational success. The researcher further explains that marketing innovation is 'changed ways for collecting customer's information' (Hassan *et al.*, 2013).

2.3. Conceptual Framework

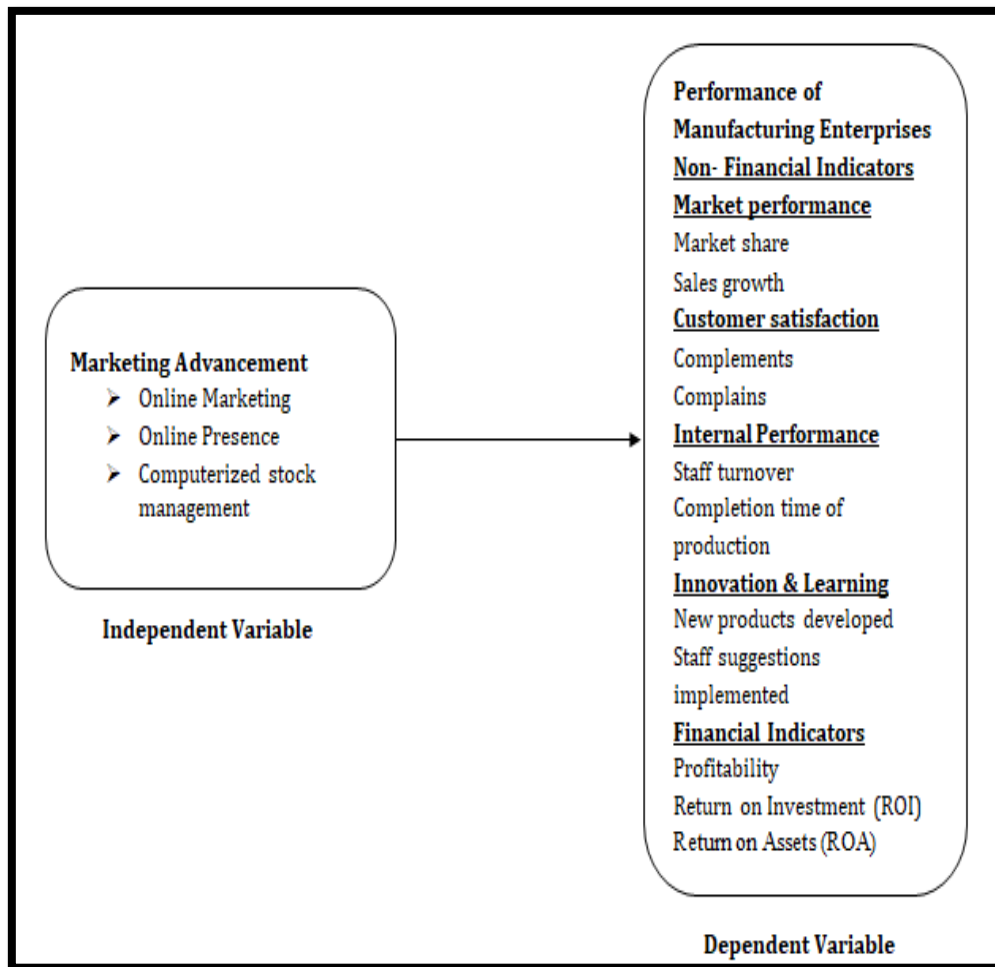


Figure 1: Influence of Marketing Advancement on Performance of Manufacturing Enterprises
Source: Author (2022)

Figure 1 shows that the performance of enterprises is the dependent variable, while the independent variable is marketing advancement. The components of marketing advancement were online marketing, online presence, and computerized stock management. The study hypothesized that when manufacturing enterprises employ online marketing, have an online presence, and adopt computerized stock management, and then performance could improve in terms of non-financial and financial indicators, as shown in figure 1.

3. Research Methodology

The researcher adopted a cross-sectional research design. This is because the objective was to collect data at one given time to determine the influences of the stated hypotheses on the chosen organization's performance parameters. Additionally, a cross-sectional research design was preferable since the manufacturing enterprises are divided into different sectors based on what they manufacture.

The target population included all the 710 manufacturing companies in Nairobi and the surrounding areas (including Thika, Kiambu, Athi River, Ruiru, Mlolongo, and Kikuyu) as listed by Kenya Association of Manufacturers and Exporters (KAM) 2017 directory. The researcher established that KAM maintains the most updated coverage of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya. The KAM (2017) directory classifies enterprises into 13 sub-sectors of manufacturing based on the products they manufacture. The sub-sectors are:

- Building, Mining, and Construction,
- Chemical & Allied,
- Energy, Electrical, and Electronics,
- Food & Beverages,
- Fresh Produce,
- Leather and Footwear,
- Metal and Allied,
- Motor Vehicle Assemblers and Accessories,
- Paper & Board,
- Pharmaceutical & Medical Equipment,

- Plastic & Rubber,
- Textile & Apparels, and
- Timber, Wood & Furniture sector

The researcher employed a stratified simple random sampling technique based on each sub-sector.

To determine the sample size, the statistical formula suggested by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) and Saunders *et al.* (2009) was used. They observe that sample size depends on how confident the researcher wants to be that the estimate is accurate (the level of confidence in the estimate), how accurate the estimate needs to be (the margin of error), and the proportion of responses expected to have some particular characteristic.

Hence, the sample size (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003; Saunders *et al.*, 2009) was computed as follows:

$$n = (z^2 \cdot p \cdot q) / e^2$$

Where:

- n is the minimum sample size required
- z the standard normal deviation that is 1.96 for 95% confidence level
- p is the proportion in the target population estimated to have the characteristic, recommended to be 50% if there is no estimate available of the proportion in the target population assumed to have the characteristic of interest.
- q is the proportion not having the characteristic (that is, $1-p$)
- e is the level of significance or margin of error (set at 5% in this study).

Substituting the data in the formula gave a sample size of 384.

Saunders *et al.* (2009) suggest that where the population is less than 10,000, as was the case in this study, a smaller sample size called an adjusted minimum sample size can be used without affecting the accuracy of the study. This is calculated using the following formula (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003; Saunders *et al.*, 2009):

$$n' = n / (1 + n/N)$$

Where:

- n' is the adjusted minimum sample size
- n is the minimum sample size, as calculated above, that is, 384
- N is the total population, that is, 710

Substituting these figures into the formula gave a minimum sample size of 249. Bryman and Bell (2007) advise that in sample size determination, the problem of non-responses should be borne in mind. In this study, it was expected that there could be a 10 percent rate of non-response. Thus, an additional 10 percent of the desired sample, that is, 25 enterprises, were included in the study. Hence, the target sample size was 274 enterprises.

4. Findings

4.1. Response Rate

The unit of analysis in this study was the enterprise, as each enterprise has unique sets of marketing advancement and different performance levels. Questionnaires were distributed to 274 enterprises in Nairobi and surrounding areas. After follow-ups, questionnaires from 193 enterprises were completed and returned in a form usable for analysis, constituting a response rate of 70.44 percent. This response rate was considered good, as suggested by Bryman and Bell (2015), who postulated that 60% is a sufficient sample size. Table 1, shown below, represents the response rate after stratification of each sub-sector and later simple random sampling.

Manufacturing Sub-Sector	No. of Questionnaires Given out	Questionnaires Returned	Percentage Response (%)
Building, Mining, and Construction	8	6	75.00
Chemical & Allied	30	21	70.00
Energy, Electrical, and Electronics	18	13	72.22
Food & Beverages	55	40	72.73
Fresh Produce	3	2	66.67
Leather and Footwear	3	2	66.67
Metal and Allied	38	27	71.05
Motor Vehicle Assemblers and Accessories	22	15	68.18
Paper & Board	29	20	68.97
Pharmaceutical & Medical Equipment	10	7	70.00
Plastics & Rubber	29	20	68.97
Textile & Apparels	20	14	70.00
Timber, Wood & Furniture	9	6	66.67
Total	274	193	70.44

Table 1: Questionnaire Response Rate

4.2. Results of Descriptive Statistics

This section presents the findings of the descriptive statistics on marketing advancement. This was done by utilizing statements using the 4Ps of marketing, including promotion, products, pricing, and place. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed on the items of the statements relating to the marketing advancement of their enterprises. Each item had a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' (1) to 'strongly agree' (5). The responses were analysed using mean scores, standard deviations, and coefficient of variation. Higher mean scores indicated strong agreement on an item, whereas lower mean scores indicated strong disagreement with the statements.

Marketing Advancement Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	CV (%)
The enterprise uses online marketing and distribution platforms	193	3.45	1.02	29.57
The enterprise implements new marketing strategies on a regular basis	193	3.85	0.946	24.57
The enterprise has a budgetary allocation for marketing initiatives	193	3.95	0.961	24.33
The enterprise encourages customer responsiveness to our products by encouraging them to comment on our products	193	4.12	0.842	20.44
The reputation of the enterprise is very important to its competitive advantage	193	4.54	2.177	47.95
Customer satisfaction is essential for the enterprise's competitive advantage	193	4.39	0.714	16.26
The enterprise's product(s) satisfies customer needs	193	4.27	0.764	17.89
The enterprise's product(s) has specific features that meet customer needs	193	4.27	0.784	18.36
The customers know the enterprise's products names and are well-positioned in the market	193	4.09	0.863	21.10
The customers are aware of the enterprise's competitors, and by comparison, our product(s) fair better in the marketplace	193	4.02	0.878	21.84
The enterprise's product(s) adds value to the customer	193	4.34	0.754	17.37
The enterprise uses pre-defined pricing policies to attract more customers	193	4.01	0.851	21.22
The enterprise offers discounts on its product(s)	193	4.16	0.876	21.06
The enterprise uses effective distribution channels for its products	193	4.26	0.794	18.64
The enterprise has a dedicated sales team to market its product(s)	193	4.10	0.930	22.68
Overall Mean		4.15	0.94	22.89

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Marketing Advancement

As indicated in table 2, the item with the highest mean score was "The reputation of the enterprise is very important to its competitive advantage" ($M= 4.54, SD= 2.177, CV= 47.95\%$), while the item with the lowest mean score was "The enterprise uses online marketing and distribution platforms" ($M= 3.45, SD= 1.02, CV= 29.57\%$). Interestingly, the item with the highest mean score also had the highest variability of 47.95%. This meant that the item "The reputation of the enterprise is very important to its competitive advantage" had the greatest dispersion from the mean compared with the other items. The CV revealed that the variability is likely to disperse at 23% from the mean. This is interpreted to imply that the mean will not be likely to deviate from the current results ($CV=22.89\%$).

The overall mean score on marketing advancement was 4.15, which was interpreted to imply that manufacturing enterprises practice marketing advancement to a great extent. According to Sattari (2013), marketing advancement needs to revolve around online marketing and online social networking. Therefore, manufacturing enterprises have embraced the need for an online presence, especially in popular social networks, to interact with their customers.

4.3. Relationship between Marketing Advancement and Performance

The study sought to assess the effect of marketing advancement on the performance of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya. To assess the effect, the hypothesis was formulated as follows:

H_0 : Marketing advancement has no significant influence on the performance of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya.

The analysis was done using simple regression. Marketing advancement was entered as the independent variable in the regression model, while the performance parameter was entered as the dependent variable.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.395 ^a	.156	.151	1.022

a. Predictors: (Constant), marketing advancement

Table 3: Model Summary for Goodness of Fit of the Effect of Marketing Advancement on Performance

Table 3 revealed that marketing advancement explained 15.6% of the variation in the performance of enterprises ($R^2 = 0.156$). This meant that 84% of the variance in performance was explained by other factors.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	36.806	1	36.806	35.215	.000 ^b
	Residual	199.629	191	1.045		
	Total	236.435	192			

a. Dependent Variable: performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), marketing advancement

Table 4: ANOVA for the Significance of the Effect of Marketing Advancement on Performance

The ANOVA results in table 4 indicated that the dimension of marketing advancement on performance was statistically significant in predicting performance under the model ($F=35.215$ $p=0.00 < 0.05$)

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.712	.504		1.412	.159
	marketing advancement	.705	.119	.395	5.934	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

Table 5: Regression Results for the Effect of Marketing Advancement on Performance

The result in the model table 5 revealed a statistically significant regression coefficient for marketing advancement ($\beta = 0.712$, $p\text{-value} = 0.00 < 0.05$), indicating that there is linear dependence of Performance of enterprises on marketing advancement hence a one-unit increase of marketing advancement, performance would increase by 0.705 implying a positive correlation between marketing advancement and Performance of enterprises. The implication is that marketing advancement has a positive effect on enterprises in Kenya. Hence we reject the null hypothesis that; H_0 : Marketing advancement has no significant influence on the performance of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya.

These results are consistent with the study of Hadhri *et al.* (2017), who uncovered strong evidence that created a positive relationship between marketing innovation and business performance. Sandvik and Sandvik (2003) noted that market advancement has an immediate positive impact on the performance of an organization. The study by Otero-Neira, Lindman & Fernández (2009) uncovered strong evidence that created a positive relationship between marketing advancement and business performance. Karabulut (2015) believes that a marketing advancement consists of new sales and marketing techniques. Günay (2007) adds that marketing advancement is comprised of marketing product performance, production system, and services (Günay, 2007).

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusions

To support the empirical findings of this study, the study sought to examine the effect of marketing advancement on the performance of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya. Primary data were used in the study of 193 managers of the 274 different manufacturing enterprises that were sampled.

The objective of the study was to analyze the relationship between marketing advancement and the performance of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya. In order to answer this objective, the null hypothesis formulated was: H_0 : Marketing advancement has no significant influence on the performance of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya. According to the results of the study, there was a positive statistically significant relationship between marketing advancement and performance ($\beta = 0.712$, $p\text{-value} = 0.00 < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. The researcher hence concluded that there exists strong evidence to suggest that marketing advancement positively impacts the performance of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the results of the current findings and the conclusions, the researcher made the following recommendations:

- Managers of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya should improve their online presence, especially in the social networks in this current digital era, to enhance better customer responsiveness to complaints and compliments of their products. By doing this, they will be able to understand customer needs and strive to improve their products, thus enhancing performance.
- The government of Kenya should endeavor to implement better policies, especially on taxation and liberation of trade. In addition, the government should provide a better trading environment, especially on dumping cheap substandard products in the market, to enhance the performance of local manufacturing enterprises. This can be done by employing strict measures and policies on imported goods.

6. Areas for Further Research

The current study sought to determine the relationship between marketing advancement and the performance of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya. This research utilized a specific dimension of strategic management, and as such, there is a need to focus on other dimensions of strategic management. In addition, the current research concentrated on determining the relationship between marketing advancement and the performance of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya. A comparative study should be done in other sectors to ensure whether they will achieve similar or contrary results.

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