Marketing adoption and performance of selected small and medium manufacturing enterprises in Busia County, Kenya

Kenneth Idewa Ochulo Omuse[1]
Moses Ngoze[2]
Willis Otuya[3]

[1]kennethomuse80@gmail.com

[1,2,3] Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Despite the enthusiasm among researchers and practitioners, effect of Marketing Adoption on Performance of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises has not been exhaustively investigated. Kenya as a developing economy requires favorable policies to spear head Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises for attainment of vision 2030.The study was anchored on theories; Schumpeterian Theory, Resource Based Theory, Dynamic Capability Theory. The objective of the study was to examine the effect of Marketing Adoption on Performance of selected Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in Busia County, Kenya. The study targeted 821 employees from registered selected Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in Busia County, Kenya. A sample size of 269 was drawn from a total population of 821 employees by use Taro Yamane formula to represent whole population.The study applied descriptive survey research design. The study used a questionnaire as an instrument of data collection. Pilot study was carried out on employees within the organizations of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in Busia County, Kenya, that were not part of the major study. The study employed Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyze descriptive and inferential statistical data. The study found that Marketing Adoption significantly and positively affected performance of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in Busia, Kenya (beta=0.664, standard error .054, $p < 0.05$). The study recommends that Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in Busia County should prioritize continuous innovation in Marketing Adoption. Policymakers and stakeholders must enhance and enable to have an environment that provides; access to innovation training, improving infrastructure, and facilitating research and development support, hence strengthening such policies would significantly boost the competitiveness, sustainability, and financial performance of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in the region.

Keyword: Intrapreneural Innovations, Marketing Adoption, Performance

I. INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in Africa have been praised as the initiators of growth in developing and emerging economies (Otika et al., 2019). Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises which have been legally registered are said to contribute up to forty five percent of total employment and up to thirty three percent of Gross Domestic Product [GDP] in developing economies, however, when Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises which are not legally registered are considered, proportion percentage increases. Eniola and Entebang (2015) embrace Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises are an essential part of the economic fabric of developing countries.

Contributions of small and medium Manufacturing enterprises in economic development have always been acknowledged (Aliyu & Rosli 2014). Olannye and Eromafuru (2016) emphasize change in competitiveness of marketing environment make competition tougher for small and medium-size enterprises, hence need for acceptable understanding of entrepreneurial marketing strategies and applicability on entrepreneurial firms has gradually become an issue of pivotal concern for many stakeholders, hence lack of adequate attention to entrepreneurial marketing practices such as pro-activeness, calculated risk taking, innovativeness, opportunity focus, resource leveraging, costumer intensity, value creation has reduced competitive edge of small and medium-sized enterprises. Further, researchers examine small and medium-size enterprise gain on competitive advantage through enhanced dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing, little has been linked on contributions of each of entrepreneurial marketing dimensions on competitive edge of small and medium-size enterprises in Enugu state.

Kimathi (2020) emphasize entrepreneurship firm performance is regarded as an important element used to indicate overall health of any enterprise. Performance being defined as outcomes of work and provides strongest linkage

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to strategic goals of organization, customer satisfaction and economic contributions, hence performance is classified as either financial or business performance. Further financial performance is core on organizational effectiveness domain and accounting based standards such as; return on assets, return on sales and return on equity. On other hand, business performance measures market-related items such as market share and customer base growth, number of employees, diversification, and product development.

Makkonen et al. (2014) assert intrapreneurial innovation being the process by which individuals within an existing organization engage in entrepreneurial behavior to develop new products, services, processes, or business models that improve performance and competitiveness. Sanchez-Gutierrez et.al,(2019) embrace marketing capabilities are integrated processes for applying skills/capabilities and company knowledge and resources to needs of market, enabling companies to add value to products or services by adapting to market's premises.

Eniola and Entebang (2015) emphasize Nigeria as an emerging economy has realized the critical role that Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises play for a country to develop. Otika et al. (2019) embrace Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises can only effectively deliver on fundamental roles when good number of strategies including formulation and application of appropriate entrepreneurial marketing practices are put in place for exertion of positive effect on performance, hence change in competitiveness of both marketing and operating environment has made competition tougher for Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises.

Kenya National Bureau of Statistics [KNBS] (2016) emphasize there exist constraints attributable to poor performance of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises, hence include but not limited to financial, regulatory, specific firm factors, market/industry factors, individual characteristics of entrepreneur as well as poor marketing strategies. Further, in Kenya, Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises lack or deploy ineffective marketing practices with previous data estimating that among the licensed firms, micro (58.3%), small (35.6%) and medium (33.5%) sized establishments do not market or advertise their products/services.

Kimathi (2020) stipulates entrepreneurial marketing merges two formally distinct disciplines used to describe marketing processes of firms pursuing opportunities in uncertain market circumstances often under constrained resources, term "entrepreneurial" refers to overall activities and behavior of entrepreneurs, which includes behavioral competition and drives marketing process. Two distinctive disciplines merged together provide entrepreneurs with surviving strategy in uncertain business environment. Concept of entrepreneurial marketing describe values, skills, and behaviors of entrepreneurs in addressing problems and finding business opportunities. It represents a different approach envisaging business itself, its relationship with market place and role of marketing function within firm or as strategic entrepreneurial posture in marketing which is represented by an individual/organization.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

KNBS (2016) emphasize contributions of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in any economic development of both developed and developing nations have always been acknowledged. However, irrespective of socio economic significance and numerous aged policy initiated by different governments globally for acceleration of growth and survival of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises, comparatively continues facing constraints that limit performance and survival. Kenya being a developing economy has encountered poor performance from Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises, hence estimation of a total 2.2 million Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises closes down every five years.

Kimathi (2020) embrace challenges facing Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises may partially be addressed by marketing adoption, hence associated challenges include; but not limited to financial, regulatory, specific firm factors, market/industry factors, individual characteristics of entrepreneur, as well as poor marketing strategies. Kenya being a developing economy, lack or deploy ineffective marketing practices with previous data estimating that among licensed firms, micro (58.3%), small (35.6%) and medium (33.5%) sized establishments do not market or advertise their products/services.

Need for understanding of marketing adoption and applicability to Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises for enhanced performance gradually becomes an issue for researchers and entrepreneurs. Prio, absence of adequate attention to marketing adoption strategy decreased competitive edge, hence performance of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises (Otika et al., 2019).

Consideration of empirical studies show research gaps emanating from various scholars who had individual perceptions with respect to study findings on marketing adoption and performance. Examples included; Kesinro et al. (2016) examined electronic marketing from an entrepreneurial orientation perspective and ignored forms of marketing adopted by small firms. More scholars among them; (Sije & Oloko 2013: Forkuoh et al., 2016) focused on specific industries. Likewise, Janet and Ngugi (2014) examined influence of electronic marketing on growth of Small Medium Enterprises in Kiambu CBD and concluded there was correlation. Research scholars raised gaps that necessitated this study 'marketing adoption and performance of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises" to be undertaken as reflected by contextual, methodological and conceptual perceptions from researchers.

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1.2 Research Objective

To establish the effects of Marketing Adoption on Performance of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in Busia County, Kenya.

II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1 Schumpeter's Theory

Considering process of creative destruction, Schumpeter (1934) was one of earliest scholars in highlighting importance of innovation in entrepreneurial activity. He argued that creative destruction was a process disrupting current market structures encouraging new goods or services, new markets, new production process, sources of supply and organization structures. Innovation refers to iterative process initiated by perception of new market and/or new service opportunity leading to development, production, and marketing tasks striving for commercial success. Schumpeter calls innovation specific tool of entrepreneurs, means by which entrepreneurs exploit change as opportunity for a different business or a different service. Schumpeter (1934) stressed role of entrepreneurs as primary agents effecting creative destruction and emphasized to entrepreneurs need to search purposefully for sources of innovation, changes and their symptoms indicating opportunities for successful innovation as well as need to know and to apply principles of successful innovation.

The Schumpeterian articulation of innovation has been carried forward by successive scholars and researchers. On his part, Drucker (1985) held out that entrepreneurs are always searching for change, responding to it, and exploiting it as an opportunity, and engaging in purposeful innovation. Furthermore, link between entrepreneurship and innovation is supported by results of Covin and Wales (2012) who found that innovation is among key motives to start business. Schumpeterian theory supposes firm's progress comes from innovations carry out motivated by pursuit of profit. That is, each innovation is aimed at creating some new process or product or service that gives creator competitive advantage over its business rivals by rendering obsolete some previous innovation (Mwangi & Ngugi, 2014). Entrepreneurship, innovation provides a holistic, vibrant and complementary base to entrepreneurial conduct resulting to an organization's sustainability and superior performance. Theory provided a deeper understanding of innovation and its elements in the entrepreneurship marketing process that significantly influences firms' competitiveness and hence performance.

2.2 Resource Based Theory

Resource based theory was discovered by Edith Penrose (1959) and proposes that resources and capabilities are fundamental within any organization with a vision to grow. Capabilities are skills used by a firm in organizing and placing resources into productive use. For example, the firm's structure, operations, which show how decisions are carried out. In the Resource based theory, growth or performance of any firm, resources have to be guided so that they can be altered into the strengths or weaknesses of a firm. The theory is mainly based on four assumptions and these include heterogeneous, immobile, inimitable and non-substitutable. Heterogeneous is concerned with how different organizations have different skills, capabilities and other resources. According to Barney (2014), there are various types of resources, such as organizational capital, intellectual capital, financial capital, physical capital, technological capital, and human capital that enable firms to create unique values for their customers. Barney (2014) suggested that resources are either tangible or intangible and tangible resources can be touched, for example, land, raw materials among others and they are the source of origin of intangible resources.

2.3 Dynamic Capabilities Theory

Dynamic capabilities theory was first articulated by Teece et al. (1997). Relates to how business organizations adapt and create heterogeneous resource positions in dynamic environments. Economies present more challenges than ever to efficient and effective management due to hypercompetitive environments characterized by major discrete environmental shifts in competitive, technological, social, and regulatory domains. Failure to address these major environmental changes can negatively affect firm's performance (Kiveu & Ofafa, 2013).

Teece et.al, (1997) proposed the dynamic capabilities approach as extension of resource based view.While RBV explain conditions under which firms achieve sustained competitive advantage based on bundles of resources and capabilities, it is however considered to be essentially static in nature and thus inadequate in explaining firms' competitive advantage in rapidly changing environments. Teece et al. (1997) proposed dynamic capabilities framework fills that gap. Specified desired end of special capability as being to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competences. More so focused on a particular type of external context, namely, rapidly changing environments. This was a natural consequence of their view of dynamic capabilities as an extension of the RBV toward regimes of rapid change, for which they undertook a more entrepreneurial perspective. Assumed dynamic capabilities are typically built rather than bought and that their creation and evolution are embedded in organizational processes, shaped by firms'

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asset positions and evolutionary paths they have adopted in past. Emphasized dynamic capabilities are heterogeneous across firms and finally, approach explicitly stated sustained competitive advantage as a direct outcome of dynamic capabilities (Galvin et.al., 2014).

According to Teece (2007), dynamic capabilities can be disaggregated into capacity to establish, develop and exploit three distinct capabilities necessary to maintaining a competitive advantage in high velocity business environments. These include the ability (a) to sense and shape opportunities and threats, (b) to seize 15 opportunities, and (c) to maintain competitiveness through enhancing, combining, protecting, and, when necessary, reconfiguring the business enterprise's intangible and tangible assets. The dynamic capabilities theory articulates the current business operating environment characterized by hyper-competition. Such an environment rarely provides an equilibrium. This demands for continuous customer engagement as co-creators and development of key capabilities that contribute to a continuous superior performance (Makkonen et al., 2014). Theory help providing a deeper understanding of entrepreneurial marketing concept as shaped by hyper competitive environments and technological shifts of digital based marketing. It also anchored digital based marketing as a resource that contributes to competitive advantage in the market.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Research design is a plan, structured examination conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions and to control variance; hence, research design stipulates arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that seek to put together relevance to research objectives with an economy in procedure (Sekeran & Bougie, 2010). This study adopted a descriptive survey research design since data involved was quantitative in nature and more so descriptive study focuses on explaining situations. This study tested different variables relationship with descriptive statistics in order to establish variables relationships.

3.2 Study Population

In this study the target population consisted of employees of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in Busia County. Only registered Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises were considered in Busia County. For purposes of this study the accessible population was 269 respondents who were drawn registered Small and Medium Enterprises in Busia County.

3.3 Sampling Frame and Technique

A sample size of 269 respondents was drawn from a total population of 821 employees to represent the whole population. From the target population of 821, Taro Yamane (1967), was used to select a sample size of 269 employees as shown below;

$n = N/(1 + Ne^2)$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Population size

e = the error of Sampling

This study allowed the error of sampling of 0.05. Thus, sample size was as follows:

n= 821/ 1+821*0.052 = 2 6 9 .

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

For the purpose of this study structured questionnaire was used as an instrument of data collection. The questionnaire allows for uniformity of responses to questions. The questionnaire is a fast way of obtaining data as compared to other instruments (Hirose & Creswell, 2023).

3.5 Data Processing and Analysis

The quantitative data collected was analyzed by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 27) where descriptive statistics was computed to help in describing and interpreting data in line with study objectives. Inferential statistics for variable relationships, correlation and regression analysis were examined. Analyzed data was presented by use of tables. The Analytical model for the study was ordinary least squares regression model that took form of as; $Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$

Where;

Y= Performance

α= Constant Term

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β= Beta Coefficient –This measured how many standard deviations a dependent variable changed, per standard deviation increase in the independent variable.
X_1= Marketing Adoption
ę = Error term

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Response rate

The study dispensed and administered 269 questionnaires successfully. Response rate was 263 that amounted to 97.32% and 2.68% never returned data collection instruments. Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003) recommends that; 50% response rate is adequate, 60% good and any other response rate above 70% very good. Based on these recommendations, the response rate of 97.32 % was rated very well.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics;

4.2.1 Marketing Adoption and Performance

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement by ticking each one of the given statements as they apply to marketing adoption: (1). Strongly Disagree (SD) (2) Disagree (D) (3) Undecided (UD) (4) Agree (A) (5) Strongly Agree (SA). The results are as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Marketing adoption

	Marketing adoption	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**Mean**	**SD**
1	The products are advertised through	27.4	28.5	37.3	4.6	2.3	3.74	0.985
	various media platforms							
2	Products are manufactured specifically targeting a group of Consumers	30.4	23.6	40.7	2.3	3	3.76	1.011
3	The organization has integrated	27.8	28.9	16	23.6	3.8	3.53	1.229
	ICT in its production process							
4	The organization is in a strategic place where it can easily access its	19.4	48.7	18.6	11	2.3	3.72	0.975
	Customers							
	Aggregate scores						**3.69**	**1.05**

As shown in Table 1, regarding the statement "The products are advertised through various media platforms," 27.4% of respondents strongly agreed and 28.5% agreed, yielding majority to the agreement; mean 3.74 and standard deviation 0.985, indicating that advertising through multiple platforms is relatively well adopted by most firms, although some variability exists, potentially due to differences in marketing budgets or technological access.

For the item "Products are manufactured specifically targeting a group of consumers," 30.4% strongly agreed and 23.6% agreed, the majority responded in support of the sentiments, raising mean 3.76 and standard deviation 1.011, reflecting a strong focus on market segmentation and customization in production, which aligns well with modern marketing strategies and enhances competitiveness by meeting diverse consumer needs. When assessing "The organization has integrated ICT in its production process," 27.8% strongly agreed and 28.9% agreed, the statement raised mean 3.53 and standard deviation 1.229 suggesting majority were in agreement to high level of ICT integration in production, though the relatively high standard deviation indicates differences in technological readiness and investment among firms.

Considering "The organization is in a strategic place where it can easily access its customers," 19.4% strongly agreed and 48.7% agreed majority raised mean 3.72 and standard deviation 0.975, indicating most SMEs consider their location favorable for customer accessibility, which is critical for effective marketing and distribution. Overall, aggregate mean score of 3.69 and standard deviation 1.05 suggests marketing adoption practices are well established among Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in Busia County, with high levels of agreement on advertising, market targeting, ICT integration, and strategic location. The results reveal that marketing adoption practices are fairly well-established among Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in Busia County, supporting the argument by Enolia and Entebang (2015) that marketing strategies such as advertising, segmentation, and ICT integration enhance business performance. The adoption of various advertising channels aligns with findings by Anyanga and Nyamita (2016), who highlighted the strategic role of advertising in boosting brand sales and customer reach. Similarly, Ebitu (2014) emphasizes the importance of targeted marketing for competitiveness, a point confirmed by the focus on customer segmentation evident here.

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Performance: Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement by ticking each one of the given statements as they apply to Performance: (1). Strongly Disagree (SD) (2) Disagree (D) (3) Undecided (UD) (4) Agree (A) (5) Strongly Agree (SA). The results are as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Performance

	Performance	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**Mean**	**SD**
1	Appropriate innovation practices increase profitability	14.8	27.8	36.9	13.5	7.2	3.30	1.10
2	More saving made by the organization if business environment is conducive	27.4	29.3	32.7	7.2	3.4	3.7	1.06
3	Through intrapreneurial innovation the level of output is increased	27.2	29.3	32.7	7.2	3.4	3.3	1.05
4	Through conducive business environment there has been high sales	16.7	30.4	37.3	9.1	6.5	3.42	1.07
	Aggregate scores						**3.43**	**1.07**

As shown in Table 2, For the statement "Appropriate innovations practices increase profitability," 14.8% respondents strongly agreed and 27.8% agreed, though 36.9% of the respondents were undecided, hence raised mean was 3.30 and standard deviation 1.1, indicating a moderate positive view that innovation practices contribute to profitability, though notable standard deviation suggests that some firms may still struggle to leverage innovation for financial gains. Regarding "More saving is made by organization if business environment is conducive," 27.4% strongly agreed and 29.3% agreed, however 32.7 % respondents were undecided, hence variability in perception existed yielding mean 3.70 and standard deviation 1.054 suggesting that a supportive business environment is perceived as strongly linked to cost savings critical for competitiveness and sustainability.

Regarding "Through intrapreneurial innovation, the level of output is increased," 27.2% strongly agreed and 29.3% agreed and 32.7% respondents were undecided yielding mean score was 3.3 and standard deviation = 1.05, reflecting moderate agreement on the role of innovation in enhancing production levels. However, the standard deviation points to diverse experiences among firms, possibly due to differences in innovation adoption or resource constraints.

Concerning "Through conducive business environment there has been high sales," 16.7% strongly agreed and 30.4% agreed, 37.3% respondents were undecided. The mean score was 3.42 and standard deviation indicated 1.07, indicating that while many firms associate a supportive environment with increased sales, experiences vary depending on market conditions and regulatory factors.

Overall, the aggregate mean score of 3.43 and standard deviation 1.053 indicating that SMME performance in Busia County is moderately positive, influenced by innovation practices and the business environment. Variability across items highlights the moderating role of contextual factors, such as regulatory support and market conditions, in determining how intrapreneurial innovations translate into performance outcomes.

Small firms become active in identifying and exploiting business opportunities only when they become pro-active, hence pro-active dimension make firms to adopt continuous environmental scanning and acts in advance towards change to better serve customers and markets, more so envisioning a future towards which one device strategic parameters for influencing and recreating environment within which to operate in line with that vision, further, Pro-activeness reflects entrepreneurial willingness to dominate innovation's impact on output (Olannye et.al, 2016).

4.3 Inferential Statistics

The study undertook inferential statistics which comprised of linear regression analysis and correlation. The purpose of regression analysis was to test the study null hypotheses and therefore achieve study specific objective. The hypothesis was tested at significance level of 0.05. Correlation Analysis as indicated in Table 3 shows that there was a significant linear relation between independent and dependent variables. The results indicated there was relationship between marketing adoption and performances in Busia County, Kenya, hence there was a positive and significant value (R=0.594, P=.0000). This implies that the marketing adoption influences performance of Busia County, Kenya.

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Table 3

Pearson Correlation Analysis

		Marketing Adoption	**Performance**	
Marketing Adoption	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		
	N	263		
Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.594	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	0.000	
	N	263	263	

4.4 Summary of the Findings

4.4.1 Marketing adoptions and Performance of Small and Medium manufacturing Enterprises

The objective of the study was to establish the effects of marketing adoption on performance of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in Busia County, Kenya. The study presented inferential statistics which include simple linear regression analysis to achieve the objective and therefore, test null hypothesis that shows as below;

H_{01}: There is no significant effect of marketing adoption on performance of selected SMMEs in Busia County, Kenya.

Table 4

Model Summary; Regression for Marketing adoptions and Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises

model	R	R^2	R^2 Adjusted	Standard error		
A	0.594a	.353	.350	0.74256		
ANOVA a						
Model a		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	78.385	1	78.385	142.58	0.001
	Residual	143.913	261	.551		
	Total	222.298	262			
Coefficients a						
Model		Un-standardized. Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
a		Beta	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
	(Constant)	.975	0.204		4.771	0.001
	Marketing Adoption	.644	0.054	.594	11.923	0.001

a. financial Performance

From the table 4, findings indicated that marketing adoptions had a value of R squared = 0.353 which translated to 35.3%. This was the percentage variation in performance of Small and Medium Enterprises as explained for by marketing adoptions, while 64.7 % was caused by other factors not explained because the model addressed marketing adoptions and performance of Small and Medium Enterprises. From ANOVA table the results showed that F (1, 261) = 142.158 and P value was 0.000 meaning that the model was feasible. Tests were done at 0.5 or 5% level of significance. The results indicated that marketing adoptions had a statistically significant effect on explaining variation in performance of selected Small and Medium Enterprises. The value of regression coefficient beta = 0.644 indicated that an increase in a unit of marketing adoptions was associated with an increase in 0.644 units of performance of Small and Medium Enterprises. Therefore, results led to the rejection of the first null hypothesis and concluded that, marketing adoptions had a statistically positive significant effect on performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Busia County.

Based on the regression coefficient results, simple linear regression model equation was written as; $Y = 0.975+0.644X_2$, Where Y is Performance of selected Small and Medium Enterprises X_1 is marketing adoptions. From the results, it is evident that marketing adoptions has positive influence on performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Busia County, Kenya. This means that if marketing adoptions increase by 1 unit performance of selected Small and Medium Enterprises will increase by 0.644 in the same direction. Moreover, Njau and Karugu (2014) emphasized marketing strategies increase performance. These findings align with the current study's demonstration that marketing adoption influences Small and Medium Enterprises performance in Busia County, Kenya. Sije and Oloko (2013) assert entrepreneurial marketing emphasizes on pursuing opportunities regardless of available resource, hence recognition and pursuit of opportunity are marketing activities critical to a firm success.

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V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The study concluded that product development positively influences the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Busia County, Kenya. Respondents acknowledged the role of Marketing Adoption in improving profitability, output, and innovation within their firms. The analysis consistently demonstrated that firms that prioritize Marketing Adoption tend to experience better overall performance. Therefore, the hypothesis (H_{01}) stating that there is no significant effect of Marketing Adoption on performance is rejected. This confirms that Marketing Adoption is a key intrapreneurial innovation driver in enhancing the competitiveness and growth Small and Medium Enterprises in Busia County, Kenya. Firms that invest in Marketing Adoption strategies are likely to experience substantial performance benefits.

5.2 Recommendations

Small and Medium Enterprises managers in Busia County, Kenya should allocate dedicated resources to develop and implement clear marketing adoption strategies that align with market needs. This includes training staff on marketing innovational strategies and involving customers in feedback loops to refine marketing adoption. The County Government of Busia, Kenya through its trade and Industrialization department, should establish innovation hubs that support Small and Medium Enterprises in developing and testing new marketing strategies. These hubs can provide access to shared R&D facilities, technical expertise, and mentorship. By supporting marketing adoption initiatives, both the managers and county officials can foster competitive and innovative Small and Medium Enterprises that thrive in the evolving market landscape, thereby enhancing performance.

Declaration of Interest

The authors declare that they do not have any known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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