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MARKETING RELATED FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE OF SMALL-SCALE TRADING ENTERPRISES IN NAKURU, NYANDARUA AND KITUI COUNTIES IN KENYA

In Kenya, 78% of the population depends directly or indirectly on small trading enterprises. However, their underperformance is of key concern to stakeholders. From a marketing perspective. The main objective was to investigate how marketing related factors can affect performance of small-scale trading enterprises in Nakuru, Nyandarua and Kitui Counties in Kenya. The study sought to establish the roles played by customer and competitor analyses as well as logistical systems and integrated marketing communication in the performance of small-scale trading enterprises in the counties. The study was guided by the Customer Behaviour Theories, Resource-Advantage (R-A) Theory, the Fugate Logistic Performance Model and Lavidge and Steiners Hierarchy-of-effects model. The study adopted an exploratory design and on combined population of 63,708 small scale trading enterprises. From these, a sample size of 397 clustered trading businesses was selected randomly using the proportionate sampling technique. Data was collected using structured and semi-structured questionnaires and was analyzed using both. Frequencies, percentages and Chi-square used for analyzing descriptive data while Pearson's product moment correlation (r) and multiple regression were used for inferential statistic. The study established that customer analysis, logistical systems and integrated marketing communications had statistically significant effect on performance of small-scale trading enterprises in Nakuru, Nyandarua and Kitui Counties in Kenya. Competitor behavior had no statistically significant effect. Instead, a strong cartel like bond known as coopetition exists among traders. The findings recommend that the businesses need to focus on customer database. Coopetition can assist in bargaining powers as groups. Logistical systems that can improve last mile delivery at affordable costs. Finally the businesses take advantage of digital marketing for a wider market.

Keywords:

Enterprise Performance, Customer analysis, Competitor analysis, Integrated marketing communication, Logistical systems.

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