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**INFLUENCE OF PROMOTION STRATEGIES ON MARKETING PERFORMANCE  
AMONG INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING IN MACHAKOS COUNTY**

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**ABSTRACT**

The main objective of this study was to determine the influence of promotional strategies on marketing performance among institutions of higher learning. The study was conducted using descriptive research methodology to generate detailed data. Stratified sampling technique was adopted, the total study population was 20 colleges and universities in Machakos county Kenya. A total sample of 90 respondents was targeted. The selected samples was a representative for generalization of research findings. To undertake the collection of data a questionnaire was used as a guiding instrument in data collection. Descriptive data was analyzed using Statistical program for social sciences (SPSS). The study concluded that on advertising institutions consider cost and frequency and timing of adverts and level of technology of media used when marketing their products ,on public relations the study concludes that competitors should not define the institution's choice and mode of publicity, on personal selling the study concludes that company personal selling activities builds customer relationship through sales contests hence affecting marketing performance and lastly on direct marketing the study concludes that institutions customer service activities should be continued since they lead to customer relations and retention, all this can be achieved through use of technology which enhances and simplifies use of promotional tools mix.

**Keywords:** *Certificate, Marketing Communication, Promotional Tools, Institutions of higher learning*

## **Background of the Study**

Modern marketing in today's world calls for more than just developing a good product or service, pricing it attractively and making it readily accessible to customers. A company must innovatively design and disseminate information about the product or service existence, features, terms and how this will benefit the target market or the society at large. Thus, every company; and Institutions of higher learning, is inevitably cast into the role of a communicator and promoter, (Kotler Turner, 2010). Marketing communication operates as a link between a seller or producer and a consumer. The seller uses diverse promotional techniques to acquire the target market, depending on the features of the product or service, psychological opinion and viewpoint of the target audience (Lin & Chang, 2010).

Proper promotional strategies in institutions of higher learning is very key, this is because many colleges and universities in Machakos county are experiencing numerous challenges ranging from; which communication model to choose from the overall communication mix to suit their objectives and on the same time to fit on their budgets (Odhiambo, 2014). Students are regarded as primary customers and one of key revenue generating sources for universities and colleges. Research suggests that it is much more productive to invest in students' retention more than seeking new enrollments (Tinto & Boulding 2013). However, administrators of colleges and universities tends to focus disproportionately on programs for attracting and admitting new students than on properly managing the existing enrolment (Zemke, 2010). Arguably there is no need for new enrollment if the colleges and universities are not satisfying the students they have. Students' enrollment in colleges and universities has brought a very acute competitive environment, this competition has necessitated some universities and colleges spending huge sums of money to market and employ strategies to attract and retain high school students who have cleared their form four KCSE (Kenya certificate of secondary education) exams.

Achumba (2012) defined promotional strategies as those marketing activities, such as personal selling, advertising and publicity that stimulate consumer purchasing and dealer effectiveness, such displays, shows, exposition, and demonstration. Sales promotion is one of the ways used by firms to communicate with intended target audience. Sales promotion is unique in that it offers an extra incentive for action (Adrian, 2014). It also includes a combination of all marketing devices or techniques, special reductions, trade gift, premium offers, contests, and other such short-lived promotional activities directed towards consumers and retailers, aimed at motivating sales. According to (Davenport, 2013) promotional

strategies are instruments and mechanisms used by organizations to inform, educate, persuade and retain customers in order to increase sales, usage or trial of goods or services. Promotional strategies are some of the marketing mechanisms that are aimed to improve performance of organizations if well structured, and, implemented (Rummel & Brache, 2012).

Promotion is the direct way an organization attempts to reach its publics and is performed through the five elements of promotion mix including advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations, and direct marketing (Czinkota & Ronkainen, 2014). They are aimed at creating awareness and entice customers towards the goods and services on offer by the organization (Pour, 2013). Marketing tools such as advertising, sales promotion, public relations and personal selling coupled with service improvements can also help build long-term customer relationships, which act as an organizations' strength leading to higher performance. Sales promotion has been defined as the provision of incentives to customers or to the distribution channel to stimulate demand for a product. It is an important component of an organization's overall marketing strategy along with advertising, public relations (PR) and personal selling (Rummel & Brache, 2012).

According to Fill (2015), marketing promotional strategies should be an audience-centered activity. In this sense, it is important that messages be based on a firm's understanding of both the needs and the environment of the audience. Marketers have access to several forms of communication, referred to collectively as the marketing communication mix.

Odieng (2011) defines marketing performance as marketing results or output compared against the set objectives. Organizations measure the effectiveness of its promotion strategies in order to be able to ascertain the activities that are successful through performance evaluations, product or service market performance, market share and sales turnover accomplishment of a given task, optimal goals of the organization (Bell, 2010), contribution to goals and objectives specifically through marketing performance, return on equities and return on investments (Bonomo, 2019)

Promotional strategy is linked to a firm's game plan for competition and survival in a turbulent environment. Marketing promotional strategy is a process that can allow an organization to concentrate its limited resources on the greatest opportunities to increase sales. Marketing performance on the other hand is the sum of all efforts that it takes to deliver a product or a service, therefore it is measured in terms of items produced and services

performed within a given period of time (Mohamed, 2014). The need to manage college and universities enrollments from the point of initial student contact to the point of graduation has become increasingly important (Seymour, 2013). Satisfaction influences students' intention to stay or to leave the institution. It is known that satisfaction level is determined by the difference between service performance as perceived by the customer and the customers' expectations (Parasuraman, 2016). Thus, satisfaction will influence the students' intention to stay or leave the institution (Baker, 2015). This also determines and influences the number of new students, especially with the ones who interact with the continuing students directly. In summary marketing performance in institutions of higher learning is directly or indirectly influenced by Number of new students and the ability of the institution maintain continuing students' retention.

### **Problem Statement**

In a developing economy like Kenya, it is not enough for a company to just produce and expect the consumer to come and buy their product or services without considering what they will benefit or deprive from it hence promotion strategies become inevitable. Higher education has become an increasingly competitive market because students are expected to sponsor themselves (Angell, 2014). As levels of local, continental and international competition as well as customer awareness demands have increased, educational institutions have been forced to search for ways to gain competitive advantage. The position of marketing promotional principles in explaining an organizational performance has received prominence throughout the history of marketing field. The need to derive marketing with organizational performance has become more urgent as marketing departments are mandated to account and defend the contribution of the marketing efforts and activities, the corporate budgets and how it contributes to shareholders' value, profitability and return on investments (Ngure, 2018).

In a highly competitive environment such as the higher education sector, attracting enough students to enroll in universities and colleges is not a simple task. This leads to use of huge sums in promotion strategies such as advertising, publicity, public relations and personal selling of courses offered. An effective communication strategy which collects, processes and disseminates information is critical to success of colleges and universities (Nguyen, 2017). In recent years, most of universities and colleges in Machakos County are faced with shortage of students who are enrolling for different courses due to ineffective communication strategies which collects, process and disseminates information (Mutula, 2015). This study will shed more light on the gap that exists regarding the effect of promotion strategies on

organizational marketing performance among institution of higher learning in Machakos County.

### **Research Objectives**

#### **General Objective**

The main objective of the study was to determine the influence of promotional strategies on marketing performance among institutions of higher learning in Machakos County.

#### **Specific Objectives**

The study has been guided by the following objectives;

- i. To examine the influence of advertising strategy on marketing performance in Institutions of higher learning in Machakos county.
- ii. To determine the influence of Public relations on marketing performance in Institutions of higher learning in Machakos County.
- iii. To assess the influence of direct marketing on marketing performance in Institutions of higher learning in Machakos county.
- iv. To establish the influence of personal selling on marketing performance in Institutions of higher learning in Machakos county.

#### **Research Questions**

The study was answering the following questions;

- i. What is the influence of advertising on marketing performance in institutions of higher learning in Machakos County?
- ii. How does public relations impact the marketing performance in institutions of higher learning in Machakos County?
- iii. What is the influence of direct marketing on the marketing performance in institutions of higher learning in Machakos County?
- iv. How does personal selling influence the marketing performance in institutions of higher learning in Machakos County?

### **Literature review**

#### **The Response Hierarchy Theory**

The response hierarchy theory was advanced by Lavidge and Steiner (1961), this marketing communication theory proposes six steps from broad casting a product advertisement to

product acquisition. The advertiser persuades the consumer to go throughout the six steps and procure the product. The six steps are Awareness, Knowledge, Liking, Preference, Conviction and Final Purchase. As stated by Lavidge and Steiner (1961), it is a hierarchy of effects because the quantity of customers decrease from one phase to another which implies that businesses corporations should struggle to attain a lot of customers to the final phase of buying through innovative marketing communication messages that transmit distinctive value or service intentions to the target audience. The response hierarchy model presumes that the customer goes through three stages: cognitive, affective, and behavioral stages

### **AIDA Effects Model (Awareness, Interest, Desire and Action Model)**

This theory was developed by Elias Lewis in (1925), who was an advertising and sales pioneer and believed in advertisement effectiveness. Second is the Public Relations strategy which is very effective on creating the interest and the desire towards a product or service and lastly, is the Personal selling strategy which somewhat converts attention bad effectively bring about interest, desire and actions to purchase a particular product or service. AIDA is an acronym for; Awareness, Interest, Desire and Action. According to AIDA model marketers should begin by winning attention or gaining awareness, creating interest and inspiriting desire and precipitating the action or purchase (Kimmel, 2005).

### **Behavioral Learning Theory**

The Behavioral Learning Theory involve behavior modification. This is according to Kolb (2014), who argues that behavioral learning is when a response behavior precipitates the appearance of a stimulus. This paradigm is not new to the promoters and marketers; the marketing concept uses its principles in that a transaction occurs when purchase behavior (response) takes place and a product (stimulus) is received by the consumer. If the [product or service satisfies a crucial need, the probability of repeat behavior will increase.

Also, one can improve the pleasantness of the product or service through appropriate manipulation of prices, distribution and promotional variables. Since the key to successful marketing is closely tied to repeat purchase behavior, the notion of providing positive reinforcement for desired behavior is crucial; therefore, positive reinforcement must be the ultimate goal of the marketer.

### **Empirical literature Review**

#### **Marketing Promotion Strategy Mix**

According to Callen (2010) in marketing communication the message is the encrypted to create an advertisement, or displaying sales presentation of the product then transmitted

through a selected media or any other vehicle which can convey the message; when the recipient receives the message, the message is decoded whereby the receiver compares the message to the frame of reference and then knowledge, belief and feelings of the receiver is changed according to the message received.

Kasiso (2017) conducted a study on marketing communication strategies to find out if they are a form revolutionized concept which corrupts the consumers' minds with different things. Posters, and sponsoring events all aim at increasing consumption of manufactured products therefore the study examined the power of marketing communication mix leading to the appearance and explosion of promotion activities. These activities are aimed at the overwhelming public in turn to exercise a persuasive influence.

According to a study done by Maina (2016) to examine the effect of marketing mix strategies on organizational performance of Kenol Kobil Limited. This study employed case study as its research design and focused on marketing mix strategies of Kenol Kobil Ltd. The study utilized primary data which was collected through interview with an interview guide. Since the data was qualitative in nature, the response was analyzed through content analysis to draw conclusions and to derive recommendations.

### **Advertising and Marketing Performance**

Onyango (2016) conducted a study on the influence of Digital Marketing as one of the key promotional communication tools on performance of cut flowers exporting firms in Kenya. Both qualitative and quantitate research was conducted through semi-structured interviews with a target of 30 cut flowers exporting firms in Kenya. In conclusion of the study, it was noted that Digital marketing has incredible and positive impact across all key point indicators of firm's performance.

Ngure (2018) states that advertising demands to endorse the sellers' products by ways of making them public through various kinds of media like printed and electronic. This is validated on the grounds that messages can reach enormous numbers of people and make them alert, convince and remind them about the organization's offerings. From a marketing organization perspective, advertising is an essential strategic tool for preserving a competitive advantage in the market place.

Lin et al, (2012) in Australia with a convenience a sample of 1,096 students attending colleges and universities. Conducted a more holistic problem identification approach to the study of marketing promotional strategies, focuses primarily on branding, investigated the

media that students used to gain information about foreign and local learning institutions and using one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-tests concluded that the World Wide Web (www) and print media were perceived to be the most important sources of higher education sources in Australia

Kotler (2010) claimed that advertisement deals with guidelines and proceedings associated amount to utilize for example the delay to be placed on advertising and copy platform to assume product image preferred and corporate desired and finally mix of advertising to the business through the exchange to consumers.

### **Public Relation and Marketing Performance**

According to Odero (2012) in his study on linking student satisfaction and service quality perceptions: the case of college and university education, suggests that, despite hundreds of publications of customer satisfaction and service quality, little work has been done to clarify the conceptual basis of these constructs; Theories in the area of service quality argue that the

A study conducted in Israel by Rawal (2013) using a problem identification approach explored the message middle-level colleges used to increase their organizational image and status to attract prospective students. The author urged the middle –level college should refrain from adoption of an image of high end University, because it contributed to a contradiction between the image they tried to convey and their reputation in the market .

Kotler (2010) argues and insists that education institutions of higher learning needs effective communication with their markets and publics. Universities and colleges may assume that if the only had enough students their problems would go away. Yet they may also need to attract the goodwill and financial support of alumni, foundations and other donors, a task that cannot be accomplished by other promotional tools alone.

### **Personal Selling and Marketing**

In a study carried out in USA by George,(2009) to try to answer the question “What is Marketing” 300 education administrators whose institution where facing declining students’ enrolment, increasing tuition fees and experiencing day to day increase in cost were asked the above question. The results indicated that sixty-one percent viewed marketing as combination of selling, advertising and public relations.

A study by Bakewell and Gibson, (2013) suggested that universities might need to re-position themselves in order to attract successive generation of students which may involve carrying out a situation analysis to ensure that market positioning is established and strategies are put

in place to effectively present the institutional image and develop their position in minds of the public.

Onditi's (2012) study on the assessment of promotional elements inducing sales of an organization; a case study of agricultural and non-agricultural products. The population of the survey included two hundred and four women groups by use of simple random sampling technique. The study concluded that sales promotion and personal selling are the most influential promotion factors in increasing sales of products than other promotional elements

### **Direct Marketing and Marketing Performance**

Van de Merwe, (2010) suggests that it is unfortunate that the potential benefits are not always recognized and the image of direct marketing has suffered consequently. Reasons being: poor targeting, incorrect personality and misuse of sensitive information. Direct marketing, if well designed and implemented successfully has the prospective to be more cost efficient than other promotional tools since the system allows precise targets.

Aagaard and Hauler (2013) studied the impact of marketing strategy on business performance, a study of selected Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Ibadan local government in Nigeria. The survey research designed method used in the study involved a self –administered questionnaire in collecting data from one hundred and three (103) respondents. The instrument used in this study is a close-ended questionnaire.

Gomes and Murphy (2009) studied the internet's role in communication educational opportunities from two perspectives; for students' internet was used to facilitate information search and decision making and for Educational institution internet was used for e-business adoption and implementation.

### **Summary of Research gaps**

Onyango (2016) study on the influence of Digital marketing as one key promotional communication tools on performance of cut flowers exporting firms in Kenya, depict the gap in this study, this is because Onyango as well as other researchers concentrate on effect of only one of promotional tools variables on performance, this study indents to conduct a research with all promotional tools as independent variables in-order to ensure all marketing promotional tools are fully explored.

Although other researchers have done studies on promotional and communication strategies on organizational performance ;( Callen, 2010), (Kasiso 2017), (Maina, 2016), (Onyango, 2016) researchers have not conclusively looked at Marketing performance which has different KPIs from organizational performance.

## 2.5 Conceptual Framework

The relationship between the dependent variable and independent variable in the study is diagrammatically represented below.

### Independent Variables

#### Promotional Strategies

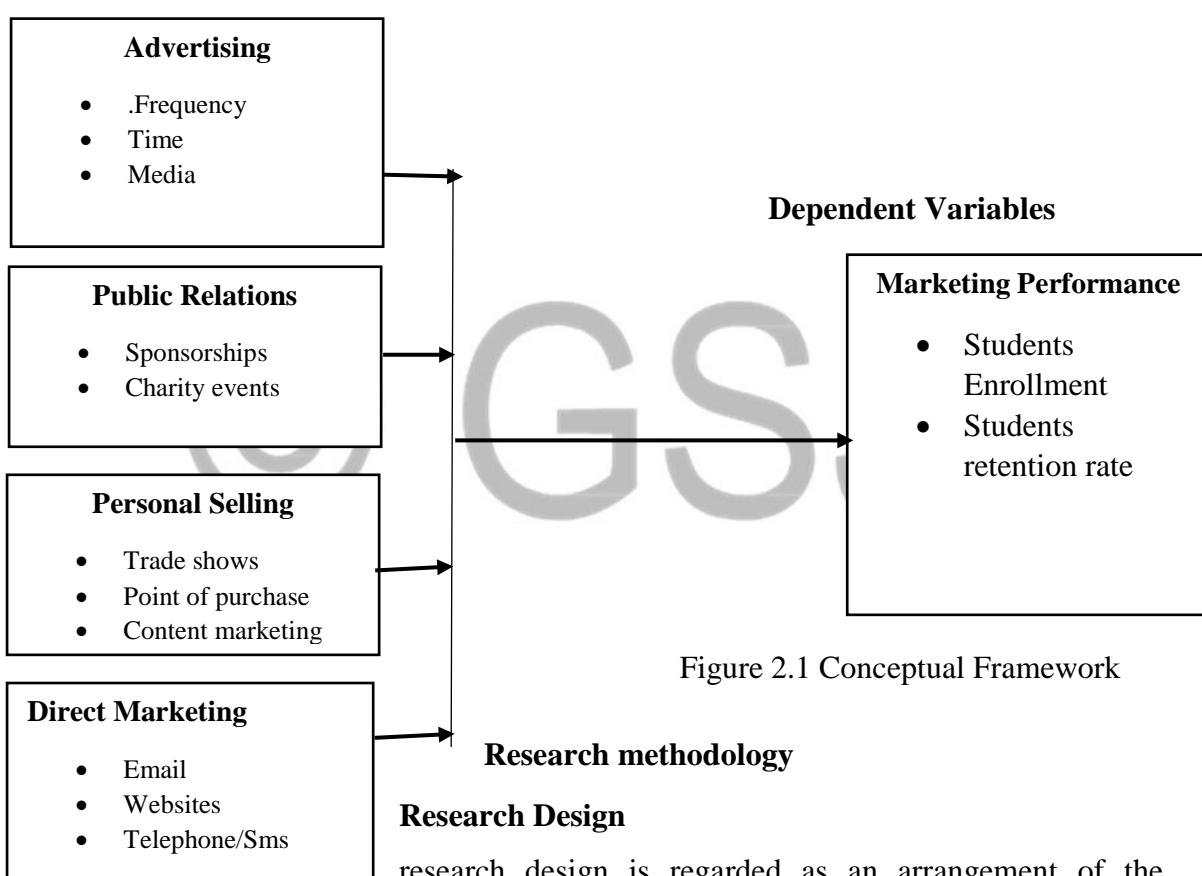


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

A research design is regarded as an arrangement of the conditions for collection of data in a manner that aims at combining relevance with the research purpose (Kombo and Trompo, 2006). According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2009), research design provides the glue that holds the research project together. This is because the study seeks to establish a relationship between variables. This study will adopt descriptive research design that aims at gathering information which determine the promotional strategies on organizational marketing performance among institutions of higher learning in Machakos County. Descriptive designs result in a description of the data, either in words,

pictures, charts, or tables, and indicate whether the data analysis shows statistical relationships or is merely descriptive.

### **Target Population**

The target population have been all the institutions of higher learning in Machakos County. Sometimes the population is too large or too scattered that a sample cannot logically be drawn from the whole of it. The researcher used all 65 institutions of higher learning present in Machakos County as target population whereby stratified random sampling was adopted to arrive at 20 institutions from which 90 respondents were adopted.

### **Regression Model**

The regression model has been stated below;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon \dots \dots \dots \text{equation}$$

Where,

$Y$  = Marketing Performance

$X_1$  = Advertising

$X_2$  = Public Relation

$X_3$  = Personal Selling

$X_4$  = Direct Marketing

$\beta_0 - \beta_4$  = Regression Coefficients

$\varepsilon$  = Error Term



### **What form of advertising does your institution prefer the most**

The study sought to reveal what form of advertising institutions prefer the most. Results of the findings are shown in table 4.6

#### ***What form of advertising institutions prefer the most***

	Frequency	Percent
Radio	14	23.3
Television	14	23.3
Newspaper	18	30.0
Journals	5	8.3
Magazines	5	8.3
Others	4	6.7
Total	60	100.0

From the results, 30% of the respondents agreed that institutions prefer newspaper advertisements, 23% prefer to advertise through radio and television, 8.3% prefer journals and magazines while only 6.7% prefer other means of advertisements.

This reveals that newspaper advertisements are most preferred by institutions of higher learning in Machakos County.

#### **The kind of publicity institution performance**

The study sought to find out what kind of publicity institution performance by institutions of higher learning in Machakos County. The results are revealed in Table 4.7.

#### ***The kind of publicity institution perform***

	Frequency	Percent
Sponsorship of events	20	33.3
Media sponsorship	25	41.7
Others	15	25.0
Total	60	100.0

Table 4.7, reveal that 41.7% of the respondents indicated that media sponsorship was performed by institutions, 33.3 % was performed through sponsorship of events whereas, 25% of publicity was performed through other kinds of publicity. This implies that media sponsorship kind of publicity was most popular by institutions of higher learning in Machakos County.

**Form of direct marketing methods institutions employ for communication with target audience.**

The study sought to find out what form of direct marketing methods were employed for communication by institutions of higher learning in Machakos County.

**Form of direct marketing methods employed for communication by institutions of higher learning.**

	Frequency	Percent
Mail	6	10.0
Website	10	16.7
E-mail	29	48.3
Telephone	7	11.7
Others	8	13.3
Total	60	100.0

Table 4.8 shows that 48.3% of institutions employ direct marketing methods of communication with target audience through e-mail, 16.7% through website, 11.7% by telephone, 10% by mail while 13.3% of institutions employ other direct marketing methods for communicating with audience. This indicates that majority of institutions in Machakos County employ direct marketing methods of communication with target audience through e-mail.

**Influence of Promotion Strategies on Organizational Marketing Performance among Institutions of Higher Learning in Machakos County.**

The researcher sought to determine the influence of promotional strategies on marketing performance among institutions of higher learning in Machakos County, in Kenya. The respondents were expected to respond as to what extent they agree or disagree with the likert

scale statements of 1 – 5 where: 1= Not at all, 2= marginally low Extent, 3= Moderate Extent,

4= Great extent and 5= Very high extent while LM= Likert Mean descriptively.

### **Effect of Advertising on Marketing Performance**

The first objective of the study was to determine the effect of advertising on marketing performance. Table 4.6 below gives the findings of the study.

#### ***Effect of Advertising on Marketing Performance***

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	LM
	%	%	%	%	%	
My institution considers cost of frequency of advertisement when marketing our products	13.3	3.3	20	35	28.3	3.62
My institution considers target market when scheduling the timing for advertisement	3.3	6.7	23.3	35	31.7	3.85
My institution considers level of technology of media used when advertising our products and services	8.3	6.7	21.7	35	28.3	3.68
Presence of alternative media for advertisement has resulted to boost in the marketing effort of our institution	5	5	23.3	38.3	28.3	3.80
Media type used, method and time of broadcasting advertisement of our company product enhance reach of our target audience	13.3	3.3	20	35	28.3	3.62

Table 4.6 gives an average likert mean of 3.62 indicating that institutions consider cost of frequency of advertisement when marketing their products which respondents agreed to a great extent as per the results in the likert scale measurement. This implies that institutions consider cost of frequency of advertisement when marketing their products.

Findings in Table 4.6 show an average likert mean of 3.85 that institutions consider target market when scheduling the timing for advertisement, which respondents agreed to a great extent as per the results in the likert scale. This implies that institution considers target

### **Effect of Public relations on Marketing Performance**

The second objective of the study sought to find out the effect of public relations on marketing performance in Machakos County. The findings were as shown in table below.

### **Effect of Public relations on Marketing Performance**

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	LM
	%	%	%	%	%	
Our well-known brand name has initiated our institutions publicity activities through sponsorship and charity event	22.6	38.7	6.5	12.9	19.4	3.68
Effective use of our institutions trade name and slogans for our services improved our institutions publicity activity	16.1	16.1	6.5	22.6	38.7	3.40
Our competitors define our choice of mode of publicity on our company products and services	48.4	35.5	3.2	6.5	6.5	3.68
The cost of using publicity method on our institution has influenced the manner of communicating of our institutions services	12.9	6.5	6.5	41.9	32.3	3.57
Our publicity activities improve our institutions services profitability	19.4	6.5	9.7	29	35.5	3.60
Our preferred mode of publicity has resulted to positive branding of our services	25.8	29	19.4	9.7	16.1	3.43

From the above table 4.7 the research results show a likert mean of 3.68 indicating that well-known brand name had initiated their institutions publicity activities through sponsorship and charity event, which respondents agreed to a great extent as per the results in the likert scale. This implies that well-known brand name had initiated their institutions publicity activities through sponsorship and charity event.

From table 4.7 the research results show an average mean of 3.60 that the publicity activities improve the institutions services profitability, which respondents agreed to a very high extent as per the results in the likert scale. This implies that publicity activities improve the institutions services profitability.

### **Effect of personal selling on marketing performance**

The researcher sought to find out the **effect of personal selling on marketing performance** of universities and colleges. The response from respondents are shown in the table 4.8.

#### *Effect of personal selling on marketing performance*

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	M
	%	%	%	%	%	
Our personal selling activities places emphasis on building customer relationship through sales contests	8.3	6.7	25	33.3	26.7	3.63
The benefits from personal selling outweigh the cost incurred in trade shows and exhibitions activities of our products	11.7	5	20	35	28.3	3.63
Our company sales activities reach our target audience	5	6.7	16.7	43.3	28.3	3.83
Personal selling assist in creation of customers awareness activities	5	1.7	18.3	35	40	4.03
Personal selling of our institution influence sales 26. promotion activities positively	6.7	8.3	28.3	33.3	23.3	3.58

Table 4.8 show a likert mean of 3.63 indicating that personal selling activities places emphasis on building customer relationship through sales contests, which respondents agreed to a great extent as per the results in the likert scale. This implies that personal selling activities places emphasis on building customer relationship through sales contests.

Table 4.8 show a likert mean of 3.63 indicating that the benefits from personal selling outweigh the cost incurred in trade shows and exhibitions activities of our products, which respondents agreed to a great extent as per the results in the likert scale. This implies the

benefits from personal selling outweigh the cost incurred in trade shows and exhibitions activities of our products.

The findings in table 4.8 show an average mean of 3.83 that the company sales activities reach our target audience, which respondents agreed to a great extent as per the results in the likert scale. This implies that company sales activities reach our target audience.

#### **Effect of Direct Marketing on Marketing Performance**

The respondents were asked to indicate the effect of direct marketing on marketing performance in the institutions of high learning. The results are shown on table 4.9 below.

**Table 4.9 Effect of Direct Marketing on Marketing Performance**

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	M
	%	%	%	%	%	
Our institutions customer service activities has led to customer relations and retention	10	11.7	16.7	33.3	28.3	3.58
Improved customer loyalty of our institution is the result of effective direct marketing activities	6.7	11.7	30	25	26.7	3.53
Our direct response marketing activities are more efficient in improving students retention	16.7	20	10	26.7	26.7	3.27
Our direct marketing activities creates customer awareness and remind our students through mail and emails	11.7	5	16.7	31.7	35	3.73
Advancement of technology has make possible to improve our institutions direct marketing activities	5	8.3	11.7	45	30	3.87

The results presented in table 4.9 show an average mean of 3.58 that the institutions customer service activities had led to customer relations and retention, which respondents agreed to a very great extent as per the results in the likert scale. This implies that our institutions customer service activities has led to customer relations and retention.

### **Feedback from target audience**

The study sought to find out how institutions get feedback from their target audience. Table 4.10 illustrates that 20% of the respondents get feedback from their target audience through internet events, 16.7% from face to face, 15% from social media and newspapers, while they also get 13.3% from Print media, 8.3% from television, 6.7% from radio and 5% from others.

The findings imply that majority of institutions get feedback from their target audience from internet events.

### ***Feedback from target audience***

	Frequency	Percent
Social media	9	15.0
Radio	4	6.7
Television	5	8.3
Face-to-face	10	16.7
Print media	8	13.3
Newspapers	9	15.0
Internet Events	12	20.0
Others	3	5.0
Total	60	100.0

### **Views on the exposure the institutions receive from promotion strategies**

The study sought to find out views on the exposure the institutions receive from promotion strategies. Table 4.10 shows that 18.3% of the respondents agreed that views on the exposure

the institutions receive from promotion strategies, 15% from attention getting, 10% from dynamic, excellent, ingenious, and original, while they also get 6.7% from amusing, brand is clearly presented, efficient and not sure

***Views on the exposure the institutions receive from promotion strategies***

	Frequency	Percent
Aggressive	11	18.3
Amusing	4	6.7
Attention getting	9	15.0
Brand is clearly presented	4	6.7
Dynamic	6	10.0
Efficient	4	6.7
Excellent	6	10.0
Ingenious	6	10.0
Original	6	10.0
Not sure	4	6.7
Total	60	100.0

**The Achievement of the Planned Promotion Objectives this Year**

The study sought to rate the achievement of the planned promotion objectives this year. Table 4.12 revealed that 48.3% the respondents agreed that planned promotion objectives this year was not satisfactory, 28.3% was moderately satisfactory, while 10.0% was highly satisfactory. The findings imply that planned promotion objectives of institutions this year are not satisfactory.

***The Achievement of the Planned Promotion Objectives this Year***

	Frequency	Percent
Highly satisfactory	6	10.0
Moderately	17	28.3
Satisfactory	8	13.3
Not satisfactory	29	48.3
Total	60	100.0

### **Evidence on Achievement of Promotional Objectives**

The study sought to find out what evidence was given for the achievement of the planned promotion objectives this year. Table 4.13 showed that 48.3% the respondents agreed that the Increase in students' enrollment was an evidence of the achievement of planned promotional objectives this year, 33.3% was due to high student retention rate, while 18.3% was due to achievement of the college/university positive brand status. The findings reveal that achievement of planned promotion objectives of institutions this year was due to Increase in students' enrollment.

#### ***Evidence on Achievement of promotional Objectives***

	Frequency	Percent
Increase in students' enrollment	29	48.3
High student retention rate	11	18.3
Achievement of the college/university positive brand status	20	33.3
Total	60	100.0

### Regression Analysis

The researcher sought to determine the influence of promotional strategies on marketing performance among institutions of higher learning in Machakos County. Variables that were considered for the study were advertising, public relation, personal selling, direct marketing. These factors were regressed on the marketing performance among institutions of higher learning in Machakos county and were analyzed using SPSS as below.

#### *Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.871 <sup>a</sup>	.758	.740	.594

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Direct Marketing, Personal Selling, Advertising, Public Relations

The study findings in table 4.14 show that R square is .758 showing that 75.8% of the variations in marketing performance are caused by the independent variables while 24.2% are caused by other factors not accounted for in the study. R is the coefficient of determination showing the relationship between the study variables. From the findings, the study showed that there was a strong positive relationship between the study variables as shown by .871. The adjusted R squared 0.740 indicate that if population was used rather than a sample then the variation in marketing performance would be 74%.

#### *ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	60.775	4	15.194	43.057	.000 <sup>b</sup>
<sup>1</sup> Residual	19.408	55	.353		
Total	80.183	59			

- a. Dependent Variable: Marketing Performance

- b. Predictors: (Constant), Direct Marketing, Personal Selling, Advertising, Public Relations

The findings in table 4.15 above shows that the regression model generated is statistically significant in predicting the relationship between dependent (marketing performance) and

independent variables (direct marketing, personal selling, advertising, and public relations). The significance value in testing the reliability of the model for the relationship was obtained as 0.000 which is less than 0.05, the critical value at 95% significance level as indicated by the anova table above. This shows that sample data used was ideal for making conclusions about the population under study.

### ***Regression Coefficients***

The findings in regression coefficients table 4.16 reveal the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable as shown by the regression equation which established that:  $Y = 1.129 + .680 + .047 + .006 + .286$ . Holding at 95% confidence level to a constant zero, marketing performance would stand at 1.129 and a unit increase in advertising would lead to an increase in the marketing performance by a factor of .680 while a unit increase in public relations would lead to a unit decrease in marketing performance by a factor of .047. A unit increase personal selling would lead to a decrease in marketing performance by a factor of .006 while a unit increase in Direct Marketing would lead to an increase in marketing performance by a factor of .286.



**Table 4.16 Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-1.129	.267	-4.225	.000
	Advertising	.680	.123	.692	.000
	Public Relations	-.047	.218	-.047	.828
	Personal Selling	-.006	.085	-.007	.944
	Direct Marketing	.286	.167	.290	.093

a. Dependent Variable: Marketing Performance

The above research findings show that marketing performance would be highly impacted by advertising as well as direct marketing.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

## Conclusion

### Effect of Advertising on Marketing Performance

The study revealed that advertising had a significant effect on marketing performance among institutions of higher learning in Machakos County, in Kenya. The study therefore concluded that Institutions consider cost of frequency of advertisement when marketing their products. The study also concludes that institutions consider target market when scheduling the timing for advertisement, the level of technology of media used and should the presence of alternative media for advertisement. The study also concludes that media type used, method and time of broadcasting advertisement should be considered to reach to their target audience.

### Effect of Public relations on Marketing Performance

From the second objective the study revealed that the effect of public relations on marketing performance in Machakos County is significant.

The research therefore concludes that public relations through sponsorship and charity event and use of the institutions' trade names and slogans should be encouraged. The study also concludes that cost of using publicity method should not prevent public relations on activities since they improve the institutions services profitability and hence marketing performance.

However, the study concludes that competitors should not define the institutions' choice of mode of publicity nor preferred mode of publicity result to positive branding of the institutions' services at all.

### Effect of personal selling on marketing performance

The researcher sought to find out the effect of personal selling on marketing performance of universities and colleges. From the findings the study concludes that personal selling activities builds customer relationship through sales contests and hence affect marketing performance of universities and colleges. The study also concludes that company sales activities reach to target audience, and assist in creating customers' awareness as well as influencing institution sales.

### **Effect of Direct Marketing on Marketing Performance**

The research findings revealed that direct marketing has an effect on marketing performance in the institutions of high learning in Machakos County.

The study therefore concludes that institutions customer service activities should be continued since they lead to customer relations and retention. The study concludes that direct marketing should be upscaled in the institutions since it improves customer loyalty, makes direct response to marketing activities to be more efficient in improving students' retention and creates customer awareness. The study also concludes that use of advanced technology be encouraged. This will make it possible to improve the institutions direct marketing activities and hence improve marketing performance.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Effect Advertising on Marketing Performance**

This study recommends that institutions of higher learning in Machakos County, consider cost and frequency of advertisement when marketing their products. This will impact positively on their marketing performance. The study recommends that institutions of higher learning consider the level of technology of media used and the media type used, method and time of broadcasting the advertisement. This will enhance the coverage and reach to their target audience.

#### **Effect of Public relations on Marketing Performance**

This study recommends that institutions of higher learning in Machakos County use sponsorship and charity event as a medium for promoting their institutions. The study also recommends that cost of using publicity method be ignored so as not to prevent public relations activities. This will allow institutions to improve their services profitability and hence marketing performance.

#### **Effect of personal selling on marketing performance**

This study recommends that personal selling activities should be used as a promotional strategy. This will help universities and colleges to build customer relationship and hence positively influence marketing performance. The study also recommends that company sales activities be used. This will assist universities and colleges reach out to target audience, and assist in creating customers' awareness as well as influencing institution sales.

#### **5.4.4 Effect of Direct Marketing on Marketing Performance**

The study therefore recommends that institutions continue to carry out customer service activities, this will lead to good customer relations and retention. The study also recommends that direct marketing should be encouraged in universities and colleges since it improves customer loyalty and is more efficient in improving students' retention and creating customer awareness. The study also recommends that universities and colleges use advanced technology in promoting their services. This will make it possible to improve the institutions direct marketing activities and hence improve marketing performance.

#### **Recommendations for Further Research**

This study recommends a further research to be carried out to find the effect of digital marketing strategies in institutions of higher learning. Further, research should also be done on the effect of promotional strategies on other sectors of the economy.

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