

## **AN EVALUATION OF PROMOTIONAL ELEMENTS INFLUENCING SALES OF AN ORGANIZATION: A CASE STUDY OF SALES OF AGRICULTURAL AND NON-AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AMONG WOMEN GROUPS, HOMA BAY DISTRICT, KENYA.**

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### **Abstract**

*As firms increase in number, modern marketing calls for more than just producing the products, pricing them attractively and making them accessible to the target market, in addition, they must also communicate to present and potential stakeholders and the general public. The marketing communication mix consists of five major modes of communication: advertising, sales promotion, public and publicity, personal selling and direct marketing. The objective of this study was to evaluate the influence of promotional mix elements on sales. The population of the study included two hundred and four women groups in Homa- Bay District, which is in the south of Kisumu City. These groups produce agricultural and non-agricultural products. A sample of sixty-six were selected from these women groups by use of simple random sampling technique. Primary data was collected using structured and unstructured questionnaires and the questionnaires were administered personally. Data was presented by use of tables and graphs then analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques such as frequencies and mean. Summated scale (Likert-Type scale) was used to aggregate the evaluation of promotional factors on sales. There was also the use of chi square test. The study found out that most women groups mainly use sales promotion but face the problem of cost due to lack of finance for carrying out promotion. From the study recommendations was made that in order to help improve sales by the women groups so as to improve their life standards, there is need for women groups to get financial support. There should be rural electrification and the government need to organize seminars and workshops for members. The study shall be useful to women groups, Non-Governmental organizations and learning institutions*

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background information**

Promotional elements usually are used by various organizations. Marketers use numerous tools to elicit responses from target markets. These tools are known as the marketing mix that is defined as the set of tools that a firm uses to pursue its marketing objectives in the target market (Kotler, 2000).

Promotion is one of the elements of marketing mix (Mc Carthy, 1996) among other elements like Product, Price, and Place, which are the 4ps of marketing. Marketing mix decision must be made with the objective of influencing the trade channels as well as the final consumer and in return the sales.

Promotion brings an interactive dialogue between an organization and its customers and it takes place during the pre- selling, selling, consuming and post- consuming stage. Such promotional elements include: sales promotion, advertising, sales force, public relation and direct selling.

Globally, there has been a cry to uplift the standard of women in any society. Hence, women do come together to combine their efforts through the formation of women groups. Likewise, in Homa Bay District, which is in Nyanza Province situated South of Kisumu city in Kenya, women have made this same effort.

To improve literacy, they try to ensure that all women know how to read and write. They are also involved in various production activities, which include agricultural activities, such as livestock keeping, horticultural production, poultry farming, crop production, production of handcrafts and interior decorations. The products are sold and the income distributed among members in an effort to improve their living standards.

Since they have limited funds, they do receive additional donated funds from the government and non-governmental organizations like CARE Kenya, PLAN Kenya, AEP, NEMA, among others to facilitate their operations or activities.

However, most of the farm products are perishable goods and the groups don't have preservation devices like refrigerators; hence, there is need to sell their products competitively faster. To enhance sale, the groups need to carry out promotions in order to create awareness of their existence and their products among the prospective buyers. They need to persuade customers to buy their products and maintain such customers. In selecting appropriate promotional mix, the groups must consider the target audience, the stage of the products, life cycle, characteristics of the products, decision stages of the products and the channel of distribution (Kotler, 2000).

And so there is a need to evaluate the effects of promotional mix elements among these women groups in Homa Bay District.

### **1.2 Statement of the problem.**

Women groups in HomaBay District produces several products. Other than just producing quality products, pricing it attractively and making it accessible to potential consumers, they need to market them competitively. Most women groups use price as a tool for sales, this may apply only if the target population are aware of the existence of these products. Others use quality products and accessibility of these products, however, the potential need to be informed of these products and their uniqueness so that they when making decision to buy they may choose those products. This calls for the study of promotional elements that influence and create awareness among the prospective buyers.

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study were to:

- i. determine the target population of by women groups when designing and carrying out promotion of their products
- ii. find out the promotional factors used by women groups;
- iii. evaluate promotional factors influencing sales of agricultural and non-agricultural products
- iv. find out the obstacles the women groups encounter when implementing the use of promotional mix; and
- v. evaluate the preference of sales of agricultural and non-agricultural products.

### **1.4 Hypotheses of the study**

- i. There is no significant relationship between promotional factors and sales.
- ii. Preference of sales of agricultural and non-agricultural products is independent
- iii. There is no relationship between the promotional elements used by women groups and sales of their products.
- iv. There is no relationship between the obstacles which women groups face when designing and carrying out promotion and the choice of promotional elements by the women groups.

### **1.5 Justification of the study**

This study would be useful to women groups, as it made make them understand the effects of promotional mix in the sale of their product. It would also help the non-governmental institutions, which support women groups, as they will know how much to allocate for promotion of the products and help them in their plans. It would the learning institutions so as to lay the foundation for further research on the concept of promotional factors.

### **1.6 Scope of the study**

The study mainly focused on the use of promotional factors in women groups and its effect on sales. Thus the findings were generalized to all women groups in Homa- Bay District to reflect on the relationship between promotional factors and sales.

### **1.7 Limitations of the study**

Research on the use of promotional elements in women groups has not been exhaustively done therefore there was not much literature by the researchers on the same. The women groups were situated in very remote areas hence there was problem of accessibility to the areas. This led to the problem of time and finance, which was required to cover the wider areas in Homa- Bay District.

### **1.8 Definition of terms**

**“Marketing mix”** - the set of marketing tools that the firm uses to pursue its marketing objectives in the target market.

**“Non- governmental organization”**- non-profit making organization that primarily exist and solve community’ and environmental problems. They operate on donor funding.

**“Perishable goods”**- products, which do not last long before they go bad.

**“Products”**- a good, service or an idea consisting of bundle of tangible and intangible attributes that satisfy consumers and are received in exchange of money or some other units of value.

**“Place”**- means of getting products into consumers’ hands.

**“Price”**- it is what is exchanged for the product.

**“Promotional elements”**- various ways used to create awareness of the existence of products and services, persuading customers to buy and maintaining the customers.

**“Market share”**- a ratio of the firms’ sale revenue or unit sales to those of the industry (competitors plus the firm itself).

**“Sustainability”**- meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their needs.

**“Women groups”**- an organization formed by two or more people whose members mainly consist of females

**“Target audience”**- it is the population which a marketer wants to sell its produce to.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Marketing mix

Drucker (1999) noted that marketers use numerous tools to elicit response from the target markets. These tools include: Place, Price, Products and Promotions also referred to as 4Ps of marketing (McCarthy, 1996). Marketing mix decisions must be made for influencing the trade channels as well as the final consumers and in return sales. Typically a firm can change any of the marketing mix to achieve the desired response from the potential buyers. For instance, a firm can change its price, sales force size and advertising expenditures in the short run. It can develop new products and modify its distribution channel only in the long run.

Kotler (2000) indicated that the 4Ps represent the sellers’ view of the marketing tools available for influencing buyers. From the buyers’ point of view, each marketing tool is designed to deliver a customers’ benefit. Lauter (1990) suggested that the seller’s 4Ps correspond to the customer’s four Cs that include: customer solution, cost, convenience and communication as shown in the Table below.

**Table 1: Customers’ Cs corresponding to sellers’ Ps**

Four Ps	Four Cs
Product	Customer solution
Price	Customer cost
Place	Convenience
Promotion	Communication

Winning companies will be those who can meet customer needs economically and conveniently and with effective communication. Marketing mix is a controllable factor that the marketing manager can take to solve a marketing problem (Bekowitz (et 91), 1997).

### 2.2 Promotional elements

Berkowitz (et al.)(1997) defined promotion as a means of communication between the seller and buyer. To communicate with consumers, a company can use one or more of the promotional alternatives that is personal selling, advertising, sales promotion and public relation.

Fische (1996) noted that three of these elements, which include advertising, sales promotion and public relation, are often said to use mass selling because they are used with groups of prospective buyers. In contrast, personal selling uses person-to-person interaction between a seller and a prospective buyer. Personal selling activities include face-to-face, telephone and interactive electronic communication.

#### 2.2.1 Advertising

Benette (1995) defined advertising as any paid form of non-personal communication about an organization, a good, service or an idea by an identified sponsor.

The paid aspect of this definition is important because the space for the advertising message normally must be bought. The non personal component of advertising is also important as it involves mass media such as (TV, Radios and Magazines) which are non personal and do not have an immediate feed back loop as does personal selling (McCarthy, 1996)

There are several advantages to a firm using advertising as its promotional mix. It can be attention getting. A company can control what it wants to say and to whom the message is sent. It also allows the company to decide when to send its message to all receivers in a market segment. Most firms concentrate on product advertisement and institutional advertisement as explained below.

#### **i. Product advertisement**

This is focused on selling a good or service. It is used in the introductory stage of the product life cycle. Pioneering advertisement tell people what a product is, what it can do and where it can be found. Basically, it informs the target market about the product.

Comparative advertising shows one brand's strength relative to those of competitors. It also attracts more attention and increases the perceived quality of the advertiser's brand.

Reminder advertising is used to reinforce a previous knowledge of product. It is good for products that have achieved a well-recognized position and are in a mature phase of their product life cycle. It also ensures current users that they made the right choice.

#### **Institutional advertisements**

This builds goodwill or an image for an organization rather than promoting a specific good or service. Four alternative forms of institutional advertisements often used, which, include advocacy advertisements, which states the position of a company on an issue, secondly, is pioneering institutional advertisement, which are used for announcement about what a company is, what it can do, or where it is located, third is competitive institutional advertisement, which promotes the advantages of one product class over another and are used in markets where different product classes compete for the same buyers and lastly reminder institutional advertisement, which brings the company's name to the attention of the target market again.

The advertisement decision process is divided into developing, executing and evaluating the advertisement program.

In developing the advertising program, a firm identifies the target audience, that is, group of prospective buyers toward which advertising program is directed. It also needs to specify the advertising objective. The objectives should be designed for a well defined target audience, be measurable and cover a specified time period (Magid and Loorsh, 1990).

Kotler (1995) stresses that the firms also need to set budget though, there is no precise way to measure the exact results of spending advertising dollars. In setting the advertising budget, the firm may use percentage of sales, competitive parity, all you can afford, objective and task whereby the company determine its advertising objectives and the tasks to accomplish, then determine the cost of performing the tasks.

Magid and Loorsh (1990) support that when the company has developed the advertising objective, it then designs the advertisement. This consists of advertising copy and artwork that the audience is intended to see or hear. The message usually focuses on the key benefits of the product that are important to a prospective buyer in trial and adoption.

The firm then needs to select the right media, that is, the means by which the message is communicated to the target audience.

Examples are newspapers, magazines, radio and television. The media selection decision is related to the target audience, type of product, nature of the message, campaign objectives, available budget and the cost of alternative media.

Rotfeld (1990) indicates that the company needs to schedule advertising. There is no correct schedule to advertise a product but the firm should consider the buyer turn over which is how often new buyers enter the market to buy the product, purchase frequently.

This means that, the more frequently the product is purchased the less repetition is required. Finally, the company must consider the forgetting rate, that is, the speed with which buyers forget the brand if advertising is not seen.

Kotler (2000) in executing the advertising program, the marketers can try to ensure that their advertising expenditure are not wasted by evaluating the program before and after the advertisements are run in the actual campaign. The evaluations also need post- testing to determine whether it accomplish their intended purpose. The tests include inquiry tests and sales tests.

### **2.2.2 Personal selling**

Kotler (2000) noted that personal selling is a useful vehicle for communicating with present and potential buyers. Personal selling involves the two way flow of communication between a buyer and seller often in face to face encounter designed to influence a person's or group's purchase decision. However, with advances in technology, personal selling also takes place over the telephone, through video conferencing and interactive computer links between buyer and selling though personal selling remains a highly human intensive activity despite the use of technology.

Kotler and Levy (1969) also noted that personal selling serves three major roles in a firm's overall marketing effort. Salespeople are the critical link between the firm and its customers; salespeople are the company in a customer's eyes. They represent what a company is or attempts to be and are often the only personal contact a customer has with the company; and lastly, personal selling may play a dominant role in a firm's marketing program.

Salespeople can create customer value in many ways. For instance, by being close to the customer, salespeople can identify creative solutions to customer problems. Personal selling assumes many forms based on the amount of selling done and the amount of creativity required to perform the sales task (Foskett, 1999). The company uses sales force to carry out personal selling. It can use agents or the firm's sales force. The selling must be managed if it is to contribute to a firm's overall objectives.

### **2.2.3 Public relation**

Fiske (1980) defined public relations as a form of communication management that seeks to influence the image of an organization and its products and services. Public relations usually focus on communicating positive aspect of the business.

This involves a company to use publicity tools like news release whereby the company informs a newspaper, radio station or other media of an idea for a story.

The firm can also use news conference in which the representatives of the media are all invited to an information meeting and advance materials regarding the content are sent.

Kotler (2000) noted that non-profit organizations rely heavily on Public Service Announcements (PSAs), which are free space or time donated by the media. Non-profit organizations also use high visibility individuals as publicity tools to create visibility for their companies, their products and themselves.

The publicity efforts are coordinated with news releases, conferences, advertising, donations to charities, volunteer activities endorsements and any other activities that may have impact on public perceptions.

### **2.2.4 Sales promotion**

Hardie (1991) explains that sales promotion gives a short-term inducement of value offered to arouse interest in buying a good or service. It is offered to intermediaries as well as consumers inform of coupons, rebates samples and sweepstakes'.

Foskett (1999) argues that sales promotions cannot be the sole basis for campaign because gains are often temporary and sales drop off when the deal ends so that advertisement is often used to convert the customer who tried the product because of sales promotion into a long-term buyer.

Kotler (1994) noted that if sales promotion is conducted continuously, they lose their effect. Customers begin to delay until a coupon is offered or they question the product's value.

When organizing sales promotion firms' can direct sales promotion to ultimate consumers, that is, Consumer-oriented sales promotion to support a company's advertising and personal selling.

On the other hand firms' can also direct their sales promotion to traders like the wholesalers, retailers or distributors. This can be done by giving the traders allowances and discounts. They can also carry out cooperative advertising whereby manufacturer pays a percentage of the retailers local advertising expenses for advertising the manufacturer's products and lastly, firms can train distributor sales forces to increase their performance (Hardie, 1991).

### **2.2.5 Direct marketing**

Kotler (2000) defined direct marketing as an interactive, marketing system that uses one or more advertising media to effect a measurable response and/or a transaction at any location. Hardie (1991) emphasized that sales produced through direct marketing are growing rapidly. Today many direct marketers see direct marketing as playing a major role that of building a long-term relationship with the customers.

## **2.3 Major channels for direct marketing**

Direct marketers can use a number of channels for reaching prospects and customers. These include face-to-face selling, direct mail, catalog, telemarketing, TV and other direct-response media, kiosk marketing and online channels (Kotler, 2000).

### **i. Direct mail**

Direct mail involves an organization sending an offer, announcement, reminder or other item to a person at a particular address (Hardie, 1991). Women groups deal directly with their customers and so giving an offer or making an announcement to the prospects become easier.

### **ii. Catalog marketing**

Catalog marketing occurs when companies mail one or more product catalog to select addresses. They may send full time merchandise catalog, specialty consumer catalog, and business catalog usually in print form but sometimes in CDs, videos or online (Kotler, 2000).

### **iii. Kiosk marketing**

Some companies have designed customer order placing machine called kiosk in contrast to vending machine, which dispense actual products. This can be important to companies, which produce perishable commodities like women groups as the customer without the need to travel the prospects ((Hardie, 2000).

### **iv. On-line marketing**

In on-line marketing, the consumer, not the marketer gives permission and controls the interaction as they decide what marketing information they receive about which product and services under what condition (Kotler, 2000). Foskett (1999) emphasized that on-line marketing will enable women groups to adjust to market conditions by quickly add product to their offering change prices and descriptions, it will also enable them to dialogue with consumers and learn from them hence build strong relationship.

### **v. Public and ethical issues in direct marketing**

Marketers using direct marketing as a their promotional tool experience various ethical issues. For instance, many people find the increasing number of hard sell direct marketing solicitation to be a nuisance (Kotler 2000). They dislike direct response TV commercials that are too loud or too long and too insistent. Customers also complain about unfairness, invasion of privacy. Women groups and other marketers should address these issues as left untended may lead to increased negative consumer attitudes, consumer response rate and calls for greater state and federal regulation (Hardie 2000).

## **2.4 Increasing the value of promotional elements**

Foskett (1999) stresses that today's customers seek value from companies that provide leading-edge products, hassle-free transactions at competitive prices and customer intimacy. Promotion practices have changed dramatically to improve transactions and increase customer intimacy by emphasizing long-term relationships and increasing self-regulation.

## **2.5 Factors to consider when choosing promotional elements**

A firm's promotional mix is the combination of one or more of the promotional elements it chooses to use (Kotler, 2000).

### **2.5.1 Target Audience**

Gaunt, 1991) noted that promotional programs are directed to the ultimate consumer, to an intermediary (retailer, wholesaler or industrial distributor) or to both. Promotional programs directed to buyers or consumers' products use mass media. Kotler and Armstrong (2004) supported that advertising directed to industrial buyers is used selectively in trade publications, however, as industrial buyers have specialized needs or technical questions. Personal selling is particularly important as the sales person can provide information and the necessary support after sales.

### **2.5.2 Product life cycle**

All products have a product life cycle and the composition of the promotional mix changes over the four life cycle stages.

#### **i. Introductory stage**

The promotional objective is to inform consumers in an effort to increase their level of awareness. At this stage, all promotional mix elements are used but advertising is particularly important as a means of reaching as many people as possible to build up awareness and interest (Pierce and Robinson, 2000).

#### **ii. Growth stage**

Kotler and Armstrong (2004) noted that primary objective of promotional elements is to persuade the consumers to buy the product. Advertising is the primary promotional element used which stresses brand differences. Personal selling is used to solidify the channel of distribution.

#### **iii. Maturity stage**

The need for promotion is to maintain existing buyers and advertising's role is to remind buyers of the product's existence. The company also uses sales promotion like discounts and coupons to maintain loyal buyers (Palmer, 2002). This enables women groups to maintain their customers because if that is not done the consumers can switch to other companies' products.

#### **iv. Decline stage**

At this stage little money is spent in the promotional mix as the product is phased out (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004). Although Evans (1999) disagrees and says that women group's products is not fashion oriented and so they do not have decline stage, which may affect their choice of promotional elements.

### **2.5.3 Production characteristics**

According to Evans (1995) the proper blend of elements also depends on the type of products. The characteristics include complexity, risks and ancillary services.

#### **i. Complexity**

It refers to the technical sophistication of the product and hence the amount of understanding required using it. In this case greater emphasis is on personal selling. This arouses the need to use promotional mix elements so that the potential consumers may not fear trying the product. (Kotler, 2000).

#### **ii. Risk**

Risk for the buyer can be assessed in terms of financial risk, social risk and physical risk. Advertising may be used but the greater the risk, the greater the need for personal selling. For instance, women groups produce some "jikos" termed as "upesi jiko" which are very delicate hence use of promotional elements will encourage the consumers to try the product (Barnes, 1993 and Evans, 1995).

#### **iii. Ancillary Services**

James and Philips (1995) explain that the ancillary services pertains to the degree of services or support required after sales. Advertising is used to establish the seller's reputation. However, personal selling is essential to build buyer confidence and provide evidence of consumer service.

### **2.5.4 Stages of the buying decision**

Kotler (2000) noted that knowing the customer's stage of decision-making also affects the choice of promotional mix.

**i. Pre-purchase stage**

In pre-purchase stage, advertising is more helpful than personal selling because advertising informs the potential customer of the existence of the product and the seller. Sales promotion in the form of free samples also can play an important role to gain low risk trial (Kotler, 2000).

**ii. Purchase stage**

At this stage personal selling plays a greater role. Sales promotion in the form of coupon, deals, point of purchase displays and rebates are very helpful in encouraging demand (Ibid, 2000).

**iii. Post purchase stage**

In this stage the buyer needs personal contact hence salesperson is important. Advertising is also important to assure the buyer that the right purchase was made while sales promotion in the form of coupons can help encourage repeat purchase from satisfied first-time triers (Palmer, 2002).

**2.5.5 Channel strategies**

Kevin et al (2003) noted that promotional strategies assist in moving a product through the channel of distribution. The manufacturer has to decide whether to use push, pull or both in its channel of distribution.

**i. Push strategy**

In this approach, personal selling and sales promotion play a major role. Salespeople call on wholesalers to encourage orders and provide sales assistance and this increases purchase of products from women groups (James and Philip, 2001) as the wholesalers will give order to the women groups.

**ii. Pull strategy**

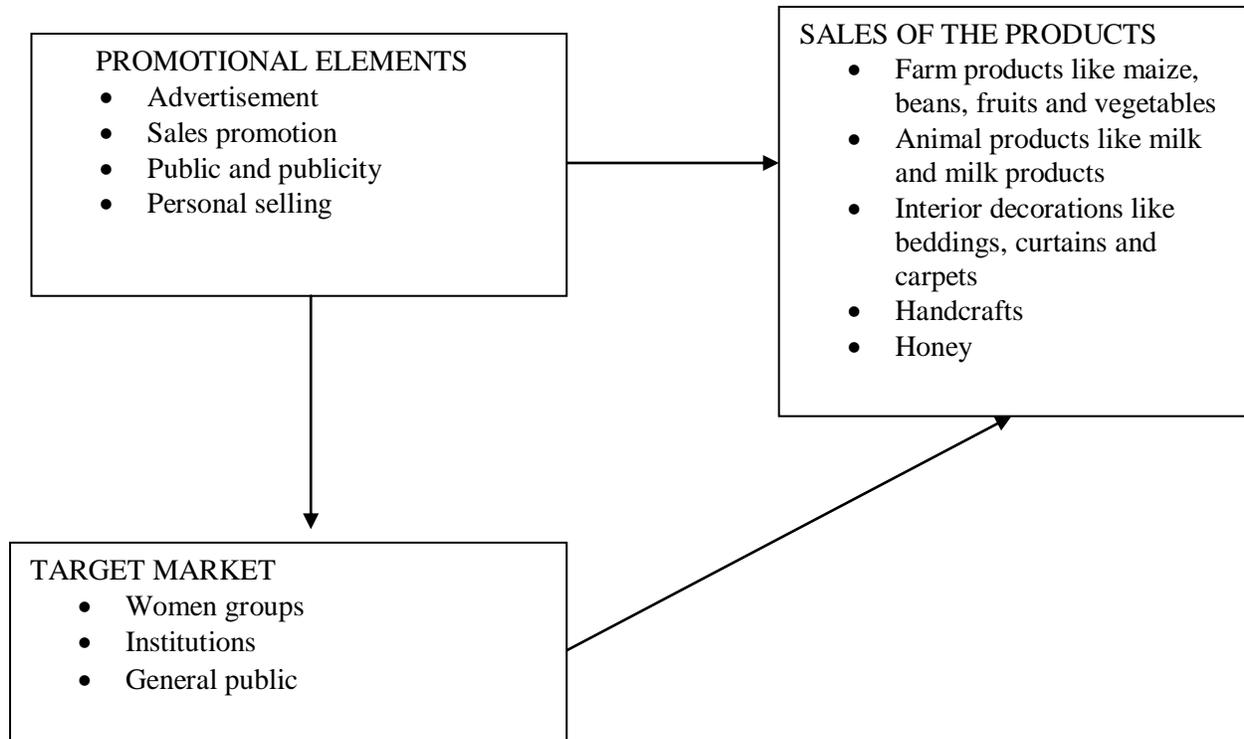
The manufacturer directs its promotional mix to customers to encourage them to ask retailers for the product. Seeing the demand from ultimate consumers, retailers order the product from wholesalers (Hardie, 1999).

**2.5.6 Integrated Marketing Communication**

Kotler (1995) noted that in the past, the promotional elements were regarded as separate functions handled by experts in separate departments. The sales force designed and managed its activities independently of the advertising departments and sales promotion and public relation were often the responsibility of outside agencies or specialists. Today the concept of designing market communications program co-ordinate all promotional activities to provide a consistent message across all audiences.

Many people have also carried out researches to find out if promotional elements have influence on sales. For instance, Ndambuki (2000) did a research and found out that indeed promotional elements have effect on sales which turned out to be different from the findings of Ondiri (1998) who found out that there is no significant difference effect on sales. However, the difference may have been caused by geographical difference as Ndamuki (2000) did his research in rural setting while Ondiri carried out research in town setting. Ndambuki's finding was also the same as (Kivuva, 2003) that, those products which are on promotion tend to have more demand than those which do not. Due to different findings which may have been caused by use of different organizations and geographical differences, the researcher needs to find out if promotional elements can have influence on sales among women group products.

## 2.6 Conceptual Framework



Source: Own (2011)

### 3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Design

A case study was adopted in the study. This was because it was the appropriate method of collecting both descriptive and explanatory data concerning the application of promotional mix elements in women groups. Again, the study adopted this design since it was economical in terms of time and lack of funds.

#### 3.2 Target Population

The target population consisted of all the women groups located in Homa Bay District which were two hundred and four women groups located in both rural and urban areas. As all the members of the group were hard to get, only the women group officials was used as the respondents. These included the treasurer, secretary and chairperson. These brought the number to six hundred and twelve.

#### 3.3 The Sampling Design and Procedure

A sample size of sixty-six women groups was selected using simple random sampling. The groups were given simple random numbers and every  $n^{\text{th}}$  number was used as a sample, that is, the total population was divided by three and then every third women group was included in the study. All the officials from the selected women groups were used as the respondents and this gave a sample size of one hundred and ninety eight respondents.

#### 3.4 Data collection

The necessary data required for this study was both primary and secondary data. Primary data was acquired through questionnaires administered to the women group members while secondary data was obtained from District Annual monitoring and Evaluation Reports (DAMER) and publications.

The necessary data required was on the effect of promotional mix elements on sales.

The instrument, which was used in this study, was questionnaire, which was designed to include both structured and unstructured type of questions.

The questionnaire was pre-tested in six women groups where eighteen officials constituted the sample size that were not included in the study. Appropriate modifications were made on the questionnaire after pre-testing for purposes of achieving the objective of the study. Data analysis was done to test the validity of the instrument. Primary data for this study was collected using self-administered questionnaires. The questionnaires were dropped in various women groups from where the chairperson distributed them to the other two dignitaries, that is, the treasure and the secretary.

### 3.7 Data analysis and presentation

The data collected were presented by use of tables and graphs and then analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques such as, frequencies and mean. Summated scale (Likert-type scale) was used to aggregate the evaluation of promotional factors influencing sales. Chi-square test was also used to test hypothesis.

## 4.0 DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the data from completed questionnaires were summarized and presented in form of frequencies, percentages. Summated Likert scale chi square tests were run on the on the data to test the hypotheses. The population consisted of 204 women groups located within Homa Bay District. A sample of sixty- six women groups was picked randomly then three officials from each women group were included in the study. Out of one hundred and ninety eight questionnaires, only one hundred and eighty three respondents returned the questionnaire in good times for data analysis, which represented an overall response rate of 92%.

### 4.2 Activities carried out by women groups

In finding out the activities carried out by women groups, a closed ended questionnaire was established and the results rated in form of percentages as shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Activities undertaken by women groups**

Activities	Frequencies	Percentages
Farming	74	40.4
Poultry-keeping	50	27.3
Bee-keeping	27	14.8
Handcraft	24	13.1
Home Based Care	02	1.09
Stigma reduction	03	1.63
Village Banking	02	1.09
Dress-making services	01	0.54
Total	183	100.00

From Table 2, it is evident that 40.4% of women groups are involved in farming practices, 27.3 carry out poultry keeping whereby they produce eggs and sell, they also keep broilers and chicks for sell. Another 14.8% do bee-keeping where they tap honey and sell to customers while 13.1% of the population produce handcraft which are made of woods, soil, soft stones and bones. However a small percentage of 4.4% are involved in provision of service to the community through Home Based Care which is 1.09% of the population, Stigma reduction, 2.63 %, Village banking services, 1.09% and dress making services, 0.54% of the population.

### 4.3 Frequency of usage of promotional elements women groups.

In determining the frequency of usage of promotional elements by women groups, five promotional elements were enumerated and a four point Likert Scale was used to assess the promotional element, which is used frequently.

**Table 3: Frequency of usage of promotional elements among women groups.**

Weights Promotional elements	Most Often 4	Often 3	Less Often 2	Least Often 1	$\Sigma f_i$	$\Sigma wf_i$	$\Sigma wf_i/\Sigma f_i$
Advertising	15	28	34	106	183	318	1.73
Sales promotion	42	65	48	28	183	487	2.66
Personal selling	71	65	21	26	183	547	2.98
Public relation	60	27	30	66	183	447	2.44

Advertising The promotional element that was used most often was personal selling which scored 2.98 that, rounds to 3 (often) in the rated scale. Sales promotion scored 2.66 in the rating scale and this rounds to 3 (often). Public relation scored 2.44, which showed that women groups use it less often. Advertisement was found to have least weight of 1.73, which fall on the rated scale of 2 showing that women groups also use it less often. The response showed that women groups strive to promote their products and making potential consumers aware of their existence, though it is not done extensively. Many women groups find promotion to be important to them as most of their products are perishable and without potential consumers knowing their existence and their products they may not get customers apart from the members of the group.

#### 4.4 Influence of promotional elements on the sales of agricultural and non-agricultural products.

In order to evaluate whether there is a relationship between promotional elements and sales, again the four promotional factors were enumerated and a four point Likert Scale was used to assess the influence of promotional elements on sales. The findings are shown on Table 4 below.

**Table 4: The extent to which promotion elements influence sales**

Weights Promotional elements	Most influential 4	Influential 3	Less influential 2	Least influential 1	$\Sigma f_i$	$\Sigma wf_i$	$\Sigma wf_i/\Sigma f_i$
Advertising	9	24	36	114	183	294	1.60
Sales promotion	46	70	42	24	183	502	2.74
Personal selling	72	66	29	16	183	580	3.16
Public relation	56	28	29	70	183	456	2.49

It was realized that personal selling had the highest weight of 3.16 which rounds to 4 (most influential) showing that it has the highest influence on sales.

Sales promotion had a weighted scale of 2.74 which rounds to 3 (influential). Advertising and public relation which scored 1.6 and 2.49 respectively were found not to have much influence on sales according to women groups, and the elements were hardly used to promote the products. Women groups who use advertising only used it to create awareness of their formation so that they may get donor funding and this was only applicable to those dealing with services like stigma reduction, village banking and Home Based Care.

#### 4.5 Obstacles considered when implementing the use of promotional elements among women groups.

In order to find out which obstacle women groups face frequently when implementing promotional elements, possible obstacles were listed and a four point Likert scale was used to rate the obstacles as shown in Table 5 on page 29.

**Table 5: Obstacles considered by women groups when carrying out promotion in terms of their frequency.**

Weights Obstacles	Most frequent 4	Frequent 3	Less frequent 2	Least frequent 1	$\Sigma f_i$	$\Sigma wf_i$	$\Sigma wf_i/\Sigma f_i$
Government restrictions	18	31	46	8	183	267	1.46
Management	28	46	58	51	183	417	2.28
Cost	68	65	29	21	183	546	2.98
Time	60	62	40	22	183	527	2.88
Media	32	29	38	84	183	375	2.05

From the Table 5, it was evident that cost is a major obstacle hindering them from promoting their products as it had a weighted scale of 2.98 which rounds to 4 (most frequent). This was because, most women groups depend on their products for funding and just a few had donors, hence, they could not raise fund to carry out promotion on a wider scope. Another obstacle noted was lack of time as it scored 2.88 this was evident in the nature of work women are involved in and as a result most groups meet once a week while other days were used to carry out family duties, hence, the day spared for group work is not enough to carry out promotion on a wider scope. Management was not a major obstacle as it scored 2.28, which rounds to 2 (less frequent) as most decision are made by the members who unanimously agree to carry out a given activity and their work was just to sign the agreement and withdraw money to effect a given decision or carry out an activity on behalf of the members. Media, which scored 2.05, that rounds to 2 (less frequent) was not a major obstacle as most women groups had no money to advertise on media and they could also not access the media as many of them are located in interior places, however, those women groups involved in the provision of services used media in the introductory stage to create awareness about services offered and to seek for donors.

Lastly was government restriction which scored 2.05 (less frequent) was least considered when making decision on the promotional element to be used as most groups had agricultural products, however, women groups which were involved in provision of services found government regulations a major obstacle as they were not allowed to offer service outside their District without the permission of the Commissioner, District Officer and the chief of the area because most of their work directly affected people’s life.

**4.6 Relationship between the preference of the sale of agricultural and non- agricultural products**

In order to establish whether there was any relationship between the preference of sales of agricultural and non-agricultural products, Chi-square test was run to test the null hypothesis which stated that there was no relationship between the preference of sales of agricultural and non agricultural products. The significance level of 5% was used with four degrees of freedom. First null hypothesis was stated that there were no statistical significant relationship between preference of sales of agricultural products and non-agricultural products as shown in Table 5 on page 31.

**Table 6: Relationship between the preference of the sales of agricultural and non-agricultural products**

Weights Type of products	Very high 5	High 4	Medium 3	Low 2	Very low 1	Total
Agricultural products	46	70	42	19	5	183
Non-agricultural products	9	24	36	61	53	183

From Table 6, it was evident that sales volume of agricultural products is higher than that of non-agricultural products. This was because most women groups were involved in agricultural products and did extensive promotion using personal selling

Chi-square test was run on the results to test the hypothesis that there is no statistical relationship between sales volume of agricultural and non-agricultural products as shown in Table 7 below.

**Table 7: Expected and observed values of sales volume of agricultural and non-agricultural products.**

Observed	Expected	O -E	(O -E) <sup>2</sup>	(O-E) <sup>2</sup> /E
54	41	13	169	4.12
63	53	10	100	1.88
19	32	-13	169	5.28
14	22	-8	64	2.90
33	54	-21	441	8.16
26	38	-12	144	3.78
28	48	-20	400	8.33
42	29	13	169	5.82
28	20	8	64	3.20
49	48	1	1	0.02
356	385		43.49	

SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL 5%

DEGREES OF FREEDOM (5 -1) X (2-1) =4 df

After calculations it was found that the chi-square value was  $43.496978 \approx 43.50$ . This was compared with the critical value, which was 9.49 at 5% significance level. The chi-square value calculated was greater than the critical value, hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and a conclusion was made that there was relationship between the sale volume of agricultural and non-agricultural products.

#### 4.7 Target population when designing and carrying out promotional elements.

In order to establish which target population women groups consider, a five point Likert scale was used as shown in table 5. It was found that most women groups consider women as their main target population as it had a weighted frequency of 3.90, which correspond to scale 5 (very high).

Most groups targeted women groups as it scored 4.57 which correspond to scale 5 (very high). This was because most of the products were meant to improve living standards of its members.

Other target population was institutions (hospitals, schools and churches), which scored 4.08. This was targeted by groups which produces vegetables, fruits, grains and artifacts. Children were the least targeted as most products were not meant for children and they also don't have money to spend on the products but depend on their parents who purchase the products.

Men were mainly targeted by the groups which produces artifacts and offering services hence they had a weighted frequencies of 2.65 corresponding to medium on the scale. Consequently from the findings, women groups need to target women mostly and not only their group members as this will increase their product coverage.

**Table 8: Target population**

Weights Target population	Very high 5	High 4	Medium 3	Low 2	Very low 1	$\Sigma f_i$	$\Sigma wf_i$	$\Sigma wf_i/\Sigma f_i$
Men	27	18	44	52	42	183	485	2.65
Women	67	58	36	18	04	183	715	3.90
Both men and women	35	51	52	22	23	183	602	3.29
Children	18	19	15	22	109	183	364	1.99
Women groups	13	31	03	04	15	183	837	4.57
Institutions (hospitals, schools and churches)	72	67	34	08	02	183	748	4.08

**Table 9: Observed and Expected values of target population**

OBSERVED	EXPECTED	O-E	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	(O-E) <sup>2</sup> /E
20	32.48	-12.48	155.75	4.80
12	31.75	-19.75	390.06	12.29
38	31.35	6.65	44.22	1.41
46	22.89	23.61	557.43	24.35
36	33.94	2.06	4.24	0.13
73	47.65	25.35	642.65	13.49
63	46.57	16.43	269.94	5.80
44	45.93	-1.93	3.72	0.08
29	33.48	-4.48	20.07	0.60
14	49.79	-35.79	1280.92	25.73
30	40.38	-10.38	107.74	2.67
48	39.4	8.6	73.96	1.88
47	31.90	9.10	82.81	2.18
18	28.38	-10.38	107.74	2.67
46	42.20	3.80	14.44	0.34
18	30.77	-12.77	163.07	5.30
19	30.08	-11.08	122.77	4.08
15	29.66	-14.66	214.92	7.25
22	21.62	0.38	0.14	0.01
70	32.15	37.85	1432.26	44.55
64	41.67	22.33	498.63	11.97
60	40.73	19.27	371.33	9.12
39	40.16	-1.16	1.35	0.03
20	29.28	-9.28	86.12	2.94
12	4.39	7.61	57.91	13.19
17	29.06	-12.06	145.44	5.00
16	28.40	-12.40	153.76	5.41
31	28.01	2.99	8.94	0.32
18	20.42	-2.42	5.86	0.29
54	30.76	23.24	540.09	17.56
<b>482</b>	<b>523.89</b>			<b>98.08</b>

Significance level at 0.05 =

Degrees of freedom (6-1) x (5-1) = 20

In order to test the hypothesis that women groups do not consider target population when designing and carrying out promotional elements, Chi-square was run whereby critical value and Chi-square value were compared. 5% significance level was used with 20 degree of freedom as shown in Table 9. Chi-square value was 98.08 and critical value was 31.4. Chi-square value was greater than the critical value hence null hypothesis was rejected and conclusion was made that women groups take into consideration target population before designing and carrying out promotion of their products.

## **5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 SUMMARY**

This study was designed to evaluate promotional elements influencing sales of agricultural and non-agricultural products in women groups. Hence this chapter summarizes the whole study by synthesizing the findings as presented by the respondents. This study sought to answer five objectives, first, to find out promotional factors used by women groups, second to evaluate the influence of promotional elements on sales, third, establish relationship between the preference of sales of agricultural and non agricultural products and lastly to identify the target population by women groups when designing and carrying out promotion of their products. In relation to first objective, it was found that most women groups were involved in farming. They had products like vegetables, grains and fruits.

Most of these products were sold to members and just a few were sold to outsiders, which included institutions like hospitals, churches and schools and non-members. As most products were perishable, some of them got spoiled before they are sold hence given to members and other people free. This is because of lack of preservation equipments like refrigerators and lack of market to sell these products.

In relation to second objective, it was found that most women groups use personal selling in promoting their products. This was due to the fact that other promotional elements require a lot of money and the groups do not have sufficient fund to carry out those other promotional elements. Advertising was only used once by the groups providing services just to create awareness of their existence so that they may get donors to fund their activities. Personal selling was also not done extensively as women groups do not have money to employ sales people and so it was only the members who did the promotion.

With regard to the third objective, it was found that personal selling had greatest influence on sales more than other promotional elements. This was because group members hawk these products from door to door and influence people to buy through persuasive talk. Sales promotion had influence on the sales of services as the number of client increased when samples were provided. To the groups who used advertising on the launching, there was great influence as people came from all over to get the services and to sponsor their services.

In relation to the fourth objective, four main obstacles were highlighted. Cost was the major obstacle as many groups fund their activities and had no sponsors hence there was no money to travel long distances or to advertise on media. The second obstacle was time, this was an obstacle as most of those women are the bread winners and some are widows, most of their time were spent in search of food hence, there was little time left to do promotion of their products. Government was not an obstacle to the groups which had farm products as there were no regulations put to them, however, groups which provided services had to adhere to the government regulation which stated that no member could carry out any activities outside their district, before getting permission from concerned authority like the District Commissioner, District Officer and the chief of the area. Management was not an obstacle as they provided the necessary support needed by the group members to carry out promotion. Media was the least obstacle as only a few groups used it and the only complain was lack of money to advertise on the media.

The fifth objective, that is, to identify the main target population, the study found out that women groups who produce mainly agricultural products generally target women as they are people who makes decision concerning the purchase of food in the households. However those who mainly offer services target both men and women, as their services were important to both, that is, Home based Care which is given to those suffering from Aids, Village Banking services among others are offered to both men and women. Institutions like schools, hospitals and churches, were targeted by women groups who had both agricultural and non- agricultural products, for instance, those who produce artifacts sell it to organizations which used them to convey a given message or to show the activities they were involved in. Institutions were also targeted by those who had agricultural products as they purchased these products like grains, fruits and vegetables to use in the institution.

With regard to the last objective, that is, to determine the relationship between the preference of sales of agricultural and non- agricultural products, the study established that when promotion was used on both products, the sale increased. However, agricultural products had higher preference as many people used it frequently. Non-agricultural products also had increase in preference of sales as those who purchase the artifacts and those who turned up for help increased significantly. Even those who did village banking had many people joining their group after learning about the group and the activities they were carrying out.

## **5.2 CONCLUSION**

The findings in this study have brought a number of issues with regard to the use of promotional elements in organizations especially women groups. First and foremost, it was established that women come together to help one another in the society. They do this by involving mainly in farming where they produce grains, fruits and vegetables, which they sale and the money realized shared among the group members in form of bonuses. Those who could not do farming join hands and do village banking where each member contribute a given amount which is then given to them as loans with which they use to start business.

Another very important finding is that these groups use promotional elements mainly to increase sales, that is, they carry out personal selling by walking from door to door, centers and market places telling people about their products and persuading them to buy and after this awareness they expect increase in sales volume. However the groups cannot go nationally or internationally as they lack funds to carry out advertising, public relation and sales promotion, hence, their products are purchased locally.

The study also established that women groups had target population when carrying out promotion of their products. It was realized that those who had agricultural products targeted women while those who had non-agricultural products and those who provided mainly services targeted both men and women. All the groups irrespective of their products targeted institutions.

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher has made the following recommendations with regard to the study.

- a. There is need for the women groups to get financial support from both government and non-governmental institutions as this will enable them to carry out promotional elements, which have a wider coverage and reaches many people. This will enable them sell their products nationally and even internationally and realize higher sales volume.
- b. The government should carry out rural electrification so that their will be power. This will enable the group to use preservation devices like refrigerators to store the perishable products to avoid losses incurred as a result of products getting spoilt before they are purchased.
- c. There should be a program whereby women group members attend seminars and workshops about marketing techniques so that they are able to compete well in the diverse market. These will enable them to expand their coverage and realize increase in sales of the products.
- d. There is need for further research especially on:
  - i. Location of women group and its effect on the sale of the products.
  - ii. Pricing the products and its effect on sales.
  - iii. Further research can be done on the same topic but widen the scope to include the quality of the products.

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**APPENDIX 1  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

**INSTRUCTION: FILL IN THE BLANK SPACES AND TICK/CIRCLE THE CORRECT STATEMENT WHERE APPROPRIATE.**

1. Tick which activities your women group is involved in.
  - i. Farming ( )
  - ii. Poultry keeping ( )
  - iii. Beekeeping ( )
  - iv. Hand craft ( )
  - v. Others (specify) ( )
2. Please rate the following to show your main target population when designing and carrying out promotion of your products?

Target population	Very High 5	High 4	Medium 3	Low 2	Very low 1
Men					
Women					
Both men and women					
Children					
Women groups					
Institutions (hospital, schools, churches etc)					

3. How often do you use promotional mix elements in your women group?

Promotional elements	Most often 4	Often 3	Less often 2	Least often 1
Advertising (TVs, radios etc)				
Sales promotion (coupons, rebates, samples etc)				
Personal selling (salespeople)				
Public relation (publicity)				

4. To what extent do the promotional elements influence sales in your women group?

Promotional elements	Most influential 4	Influential 3	Less influential 2	Least influential 1
Advertising (TVs, radios etc)				
Sales promotion (coupons, rebates, samples etc)				
Personal selling (salespeople)				
Public relation (publicity)				

4. Please tick to show how these factors are important to your organization in the choice of promotional elements.

Factors affecting the choice of promotional elements	Most important 4	Important 3	Less important 2	Less important 1
Product life cycle (introductory, growth, etc)				
Product characteristics (risk, complexity and ancillary services)				
Stage of the buying decision (pre-purchase, purchase, etc)				
Channel strategy (push and pull)				

6. Please rate the following promotional mix elements objectives as achieved by your organization.

Objectives of promotional mix elements.	Very high 5	High 4	Medium 3	Low 2	Very low 1
Increase sales					
Create awareness of the product					
Educate customers					
Communicate positive aspect of the organization					
Arouse interest					

7. Please tick to show how frequent these obstacles are considered to your organization in the choice and selection of promotional mix elements.

Obstacles faced when carrying out promotion	Most frequent 4	Frequent 3	Less frequent 2	Least frequent 1
Government restrictions				
Management				
Cost				
Time				
Media				

8. Please rate the level of sales for agricultural and non-agricultural products to show their demand among your customers.

Products	Very high	High	Medium	Low	Very low
Agricultural products (honey, farm produce, etc)					
Non agricultural products (artifacts, interior decorations)					