Marketing Practices on Firm Performance among Insurance Firms in Juba Central Equatoria State, South Sudan.

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Abstract
This study investigated the effect of Marketing practices on firm performance in Juba town Central Equatoria State, guided by the study objectives: (i) to examine the effect of product quality on the firms' performance in Juba, (ii) to determine the effect of distribution on the firm's performance firms in juba, (iii) to investigate the effects of promotion on the performance of firms in juba, and (iv) to establish the effects of price on the performance of local firms in juba. The research adapted descriptive design, the target population of unity of analysis was 8 Insurance companies and 62 (units of inquiry) successfully participated in the study. The study revealed that: (i) product quality significantly affects firm performance by causing a variance of 49.8% (R^2 = 0.498, p =0.000); (ii) distribution significantly affects firm performance by causing a variance of 50.9% (R^2 = 0.509, p =.0.000); (iii) promotion insignificantly affects firm performance by causing a variance of 42.4% (R^2 = 0.424, p = 0.000); and (iv) price significantly affect firm performance by causing a variance of 26.0% R^2=0.260, p =0.000). The study concluded that marketing practices has a significant effect on firm performance. The recommendations were made that firms should: (i) improve product features, labels, attributes; (ii)distribution should be prioritized; (iii)embrace promotional advancement, and (iv) engage competitive pricing. This study therefore adds to the body of knowledge that product quality, distribution, promotion and price all have significant effect on firm performance in the financial industry of South Sudan.
Keywords: *Marketing Practices, Firm Performance, Marketing Mix, Insurance Firm, South-Sudan*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Marketing is the provision of goods or services to meet the needs of customers. In other words, marketing involves perceiving customer needs and adjusting products to meet those demands in a way that is profitable for a firm. According to Samaniam & Akram, (2016), successful marketing requires presenting right product, at the right time and at the right place, ensuring that the customers are aware of the release of a new product and thereby preparing the ground for future orders. They further stated that marketing is a set of strategies and techniques, which are postulated to be outside the realm of management science (Samaniam & Akram, 2016).

According to Ogohi, (2018), marketing strategy has become a relevant tool in the world for any organization regardless of the size to remain in the competitive market environment and become stronger. He defined marketing strategy as a plan by a firm to enable it differentiate itself positively from its competitors, using its relative strength to better satisfy customer needs in the market environment. He further argued that marketing strategy can be described as a set of marketing tools that firms utilize to pursue their marketing objectives in the target market (Ogohi, 2018). However, its widely agreed that marketing strategy provides the avenue for making good use of resources of an organization in the order to ascertain its set strategic goals and objectives. Fuciu and Dumitrescu (2018) defined marketing as an activity that represent the societal process by which individuals or groups get what they need or what they want, by creating, offering and free exchange of products and services that carry value. Or marketing refers to activity, set of institutions, and process for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offering that have value for customers, clients, partners and society at large (Fuciu & Dumitrescu, 2018).

The marketing mix has its origins in the 1960's. Jerone McCarthy (1964) organized his text along managerial lines using the 4 Ps framework that emphasized on the problems facing the marketing manager, rather than looking at the characteristics of marketing systems and their functions. The managerial approach viewed marketing as a management science. It used problem-solving to develop an optimum offering of products, prices, promotion, and place according to the handbook of marketing. The marketing mix was defined as set of controllable marketing models that a company uses to create a desired response in the targeted market (Isoraite, 2016). The theoretical value of the mix is underlined by the widely held view that the framework constitutes one of the pillars of the influential managerial school of marketing along with the concepts of marketing myopia such as "market segmentation", "product positioning" and "market concept".

Firm Performance is simply an imperative idea that identifies the ways in which all resources of the organization are accessible to an association are prudently used to accomplish the strategic directions of a firm to enable the association to remain in business and it continues to make more prominent prospect for years (Shahzad, Ahmed, Fareed, Zulfiqar, & Naeem, 2015). They further defined firm performance as a growth long-lasting on marketing performance in monetary and operational efficiency of an organization. According to Isoraite, (2016), trading firms that seek to meet the needs of customers should not rely on previous techniques because customers are becoming more choosers and the traditional marketing solutions are no longer sufficient. He further argued that firms are facing high competition and to run a successful business activity in the sector needs to expand the range of services, quality goods that will satisfy the desired buyers and reduce costs (Isoraite, 2016). However, it's important to align effectively marketing activities in order to achieve sustainable performance of firms. Therefore, any firm to survive in today's competitive market has to strategize in satisfying customers' needs more effectively and efficiently through marketing performances (Fuciu & Dumitrescu, 2018).

There have been unsuccessful firm performances in juba, South Sudan. Unsuccessful firm performances are attributed to the devastating economy caused by the prolonged war between North and the Southern region which got independence on the 9th July 2011 (Rakula, 2016). Firms' performance is considered engine for an economy that contributes to its growth through generation of revenue in the economy, creating new jobs, innovation, open up new markets and expand customer choices as result of the growing economic activities in the country (Mumford, 2000). According to World Bank, (2017) report, it indicates the significant contribution of marketing activities are key for improving performance of firms in conflict affected areas.

According to Garang & Abdurahman, (2017), the government and her partners have allocated significant budget for education training and development for firms as an effort aimed at improving firm's performances in the country and beyond. The World Bank, (2016) report also indicated that, 80 local firms have benefited from private sector development in juba alone. According to Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry, (2016) progressive report indicated that local firms have significantly benefited from the fund.

Despite the enormous efforts made by the concerned authorities in building the capacity of local firms to become more productive and competitive to achieve long lasting operational efficiency in performance in today's global markets, there is still growing unsuccessful performance by these firms as opposed to the efforts made in Juba alone (Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry, 2016). Therefore, this study aims at investigating whether firm's performance can be achieved through the effective marketing practices in Juba.

Firms' performances are an important aspect for its growth as well as the economic growth of a country and the well-being of society. The study will contribute to the huge body of knowledge relatively to academicians, researchers, investors, firms and students and other key stakeholders like government and societies. According to (Armstrong and Philip Kotler, 2013) firms must design broad competitive marketing strategies by which it can gain competitive edge through superior customer value.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Empirical Studies on the effect of marketing practices on the firm performance.

Purashraf & Vahid, (2012), studied the status of marketing mix in cooperatives and to provide proposals to improve the conditions of such cooperatives. The study adapted a descriptive and survey research. The study population consisted of all members of consumer cooperatives in Ilam province selected by a ranked sampling method proportionate to the volume of the population by which necessary sample was determined. The result on price, place, promotion, product, operation management and physical assets showed lower than average status of these elements were confirmed. The result rejected hypothesis related to the personal element. The finding showed the proper condition of the element of marketing mix.

Komodromos & Nicoli, (2014), examined the concepts that are so often used interchangeably in the broad field of corporate communication. The authors first thought to define the field of marketing and how it has adapted to the fast pace of commerce and technology. The study addressed one specific component of marketing in details which is advertizing. This area of activity is no doubt the most conspicuous and arguably creative element of corporate communication. Because of this, advertising is often the one sector that becomes entangled in just how areas of organization communicate. Indeed, there are cases where public relations professionals need to use the tools, tactics, know-how and accessibility of advertising in the same manner as advertisers often do when similar expertise is required from public relations (PR). Following, the study contributes to existing knowledge regarding the area of the marketing mix, which is used to communicate with customers within the public relations and corporate communications literature.

Cowden, (2014), conducted a study on the effect of social media marketing on traditional marketing campaign in Young Icelandic companies. The aim of the study was to determine the role of social media marketing in Young Icelandic company's marketing strategy and the use of traditional marketing. Through an in-depth analysis of the results, it was made clear that social media marketing was used mainly for retention. While traditional marketing was used for acquisition. Social media marketing appeared to have a significant effect on the company's traditional marketing campaign, as they mainly opted to utilize free traditional PR strategies to lobby for interviews and forgo other traditional marketing methods.

Isoraite, (2016), carried a study on marketing mix theoretical aspects. The study discussed the marketing mix as one of the main objectives of the marketing mix elements for setting objectives and marketing budget measures. The importance of each element depended not only on the company and its activities, but also on the competition and time. All marketing elements are interrelated and should be seen in the whole of their actions.Some items may had greater importance than others; it depends mainly on the company's strategy and its activities. Companies that provided services-the provision of services will be a key element. Research questions arose was marketing mix create added value for enterprises. They used scientific literature and analysis methods in article.An analysis of the scientific literature, meant that the marketing mix measures are the actions and measures necessary to achieve marketing goals. Marketing elements: product, price, place and promotion are used for marketing objectives. These instruments operate most efficiently when all the elements are combined and working together.

Fazli & Hoshino, (2013), investigated the sales growth, profitability and performance: empirical study of Japanese ICT Industries with three ASEAN Countries. The empirical research aimed at investigating the performance by analysing sales growth ratio and profitability ratio in ICT industry between Japan and three SEAN countries. Data from Orbis Database were analysed; 24 ICT companies in ASEAN region which consists of Thailand, Malaysia, and Philippines and 69 ICT companies in Japan by using test technique. The finding revealed that Japan and ASEAN had no significant difference with each other in their sales growth performance. Meanwhile, ASEAN showed better performance in profitability when comparing with Japan in ICT industry. The analysis also support The Global Information Technology Report publish by INSTEAD and World Economic Forum, OECD report and previous literature studies. It also has practical implications for business leaders and owner managers in ICT sector. The studied the impact of sustainability practices on the firms' performance.

Hashmi, (2014), studied the Marketing practices of Small and Medium Enterprises: A case study of SMEs in Multan District-Pakistan. The objectives of the research study was to analyse marketing practices of small and medium size enterprises running entrepreneurs in Multan. That study was qualitative in nature in which they had studied the major characteristics of selected small and medium size enterprises. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire by having interviewed the entrepreneurs. A field survey method was applied and face to faced interviews were recorded to analyse the marketing practices of SMEs'. The evidence showed that SMEs under study achieved success and established their names and brands through innovations. The result revealed that marketing activities and practices of SMEs in Multan integrated into all organizational functions. That SMEs' personnel engage in more marketing roles and undertook the marketing activities and practices as an integral part of their business such as key personnel in SMEs' entertained customers and thus capture more customers on the basis of their kind attitude and communication skills. Further findings indicated that SMEs in Multan are both customer focused and market focused in anticipating and identifying marketing activities and practices for maximizing efficiency, effectiveness and profitability in future.

Purashraf & Vahid, (2012), studied the status of marketing mix in cooperatives and to provide proposal to improve the conditions of such perspectives. That was a descriptive and surveyed research. Its population consisted of all members of consumer cooperatives in Ilan province selected by a ranked sampling method proportionate to the volume of the population by which necessary sample were determined. The aim of the researcher, seven hypotheses were provided and tested by one sample T-test. The result of hypotheses on price, location, promotion, product, operation management and physical assets showed lower than average status of these elements were confirmed. One hypothesis rejected was the hypothesis related to personnel element. That showed the proper condition of this element of marketing mix (Purashraf & Vahid, 2012).

Ogohi, (2018), studied the effect of marketing strategies on Organizational Performance. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of marketing strategies on Organizational performance: A study of Nigeria Bottling Company Kaduna, including production strategy, pricing strategy, promotion strategy, and place strategy that eventually influences marketing strategies on performance. Marketing had been a focus of Organizations and a tool for attaining overall firm performance. The study sought to contribute to the existing study of marketing strategy by supporting a relationship between marketing strategy factors and overall firm performance. Deduction from existing literature enabled a construction of a conceptual model that explains overall firm performance. Promotion, pricing, distribution, and product standardization and adaptation have an impact on sales, customer and financial performance of firms. The study suggests that the impact is mediated by marketing strategy implementation success (Ogohi, 2018).

2.1.1 The Product Quality and performance of firms

The product can be defined as the good and service combination that firm offers to the target market, including variety of product mix, features, branding, designs, packaging, sizes, services, maintenance contracts, warranties and return policies (Londre, 2020). In other words, a product or service is anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or need (Londre, 2020). According to Armstrong and Philip Kotler, (2013), also defined product as anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or need. They further defined consumer product as the product bought by the final consumer for personal consumption. Ogohi, (2018), said that a product is the physical appearance of the product, features, packaging, brand name and labelling information which can influence consumers to notice a product in-store, examine it, and purchase it. He further stressed that, the product quality is important component of the marketing mix. It determines whether the organization survives or dies (Ogohi, 2018). Under traditional approach, a product is seen as the entire bundle of utility that is offered by a marketer to the market place. Isoraite, (2016), said product can be defined as a physical product or service to the consumer for which he/she is willing to pay such as furniture, clothing and grocery items and intangible products such as services, which users buy. She further observed that in most cases the literature is dominated by narrow "product" concept of perception, there was need to better understand the nature of the product at a wider perception. See the figure below.

However, product can be viewed on its benefits they offer. Most markets are divided into segments and on the basis of benefits which reflects the needs and wants of each segment. These calls on marketers always to try and identify the primary and secondary benefits his/her product is likely to offer to the consumers and convert them into unique selling proposition. Thus, the product concept is very broad and includes not only natural products and services, but also the experience, people, places, property rights, businesses or organizations, information and ideas. Therefore, the products perceptions through the users' needs of the approach include levels; the real benefits, the main product, expected product, added to the product, the potential of the product.

$H0_1$: There is a significant positive relationship between product quality and the performance of firms in juba.

2.1.2 Distribution/Place and Performance of Firms'

This is an important element of marketing mix is place which sometimes can be called distribution, and it can be defined as the process and methods by which products or services reach customers. Isoraite, (2016), stated that "distribution" help customers and users to find and keep purchasing those products from those manufacturers/producers with them at the time of need. She further argued that distribution can become a functioning complex system where producers, brokers and independent trade and the interests of consumers wholly compatible with each other in a certain environment at a certain time (Isoraite, 2016). According to Londre, (2020), place/distribution is the firms' activities that make the product available, using distribution and trade channels, roles, coverage, assortments, locations, inventory and transportation characteristics and alternatives which includes, at the right place, offering the right product at the right price, with the right partners and presentation, at the right time (Londre, 2020). According to Purashraf & Vahid, (2012), place is the managerial decisions on where customers should be provided with services and that may include electronic/physical distribution channels. Firms' distribution channels that are well established can create the best relationships between consumers and manufacturers and play a vital role in mitigating the prices and preventing the growth of unnecessary dealers (Purashraf & Vahid, 2012).

Armstrong and Philip Kotler, (2013), to reach a target market, marketers uses three different kinds of marketing channels such as communication channel to deliver and receive messages from target buyers such as dialogue channels like email, toll free numbers, distribution channels to display and deliver the physical product or service to the buyer or users' which includes warehouses, transportation vehicles and various trade channels like distributors, wholesalers, retailers, and finally, the selling channels which includes not only the distributors and retailers but also the banks and insurance companies that facilitates transactions (Armstrong and Philip Kotler, 2013). Therefore, distribution channels are inefficient in juba due to poor infrastructure networks, non-existence of marketing boards to foster activities that will enable local firms to compete favourably in the country and more so in the EAC in which South Sudan is a member. Lack of the efficient distribution channels limits the competitiveness of local firms that are registered and operating in Juba which is the economic centre of the country.

$H0_2$: There is a significant positive relationship between distribution and the performance of firms in Juba.

2.1.3 Promotion and performance of firms'

Promotion is the function of information, persuading and influencing the consumers purchase decision. Londre, (2020), defined promotion as any type of marketing-related communication used to inform or persuade target markets/media audiences of the relative merits of product, service, brand or issue. He stated that the role of promotion is to increase awareness, create interest, generate sales or create brand royalty (Londre, 2020). Promotion mix therefore, includes advertising, sales promotion, public relation/publicity, personal selling, plus direct marketing and internet/interactive media. Direct marketing is direct mail, mail order catalogues, database marketing, direct selling, telemarketing, and direct response ads through direct mail, the internet, and various media (Londre, 2020). According to Temovsk, (2015), the digital and social media era, the world of traditional marketing communication included the placing of ads in print magazines in the selected industries, organizing customers' events, participating in large scale exhibition and sending out printing mailing hence it was only way customers were able to learn about product and service and events of the businesses. He said that the role of marketing communication is to support the personal selling functions in order to achieve the end goals of making sales. Therefore, the emergency of integrated marketing communications concept has indicated that the days of mass media marketing approach of one message fits are all over has changed since People do not want to be exposed to intrusion tactics and the one message fits all model is not providing effective results (Temovsk, 2015).

Ogohi, (2018), said promotion is the function of information, persuading and influencing the consumers' purchase decision. He further argued that promotion has become critical factor in the product marketing mix which consists of the specific blend of advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations and direct marketing tools that the company uses to pursue its advertising and marketing objectives (Ogohi, 2018). Therefore, promotion mostly provides target audiences with all the accurate information they need to help them take decision to visit specific site.

Isoraite, (2016), said promotion helps marketers to increase consumer awareness in terms of their product, that ultimately leads to higher sales and helps to build brand royalty. Therefore, the promotion of marketing mix is a tool that helps disseminate information, encourage the purchase and affects the purchase decision process, and has an impact on the decision to buy, and these supports complex elements such as advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations and direct marketing (Ogohi, 2018).

Temovsk, (2015), said the fragmentation and growth of media channels in addition to the increase of quantity of information and content online, presents the challenge for marketers in the digital edge. The digital has brought shift in the control of the marketing mix, where in the traditional marketing approach, the marketers could control the channels and the conversation, which is no longer the case (Temovsk, 2015). Now social media has changed the way in which customers and sellers interact, these enabled customers to co-create value and influence marketing strategies, by not only communicating with marketers but also with other customers and non-customers being able to influence each other's decision.

Local firms are operating mostly using traditional methods of advertising that requires dedicated and well-motivated sales persons to devote their times to sale directly to customers, use sales promotion to market their products, print advertising. Therefore, depending on the traditional methods hinder marketers to reach mass markets thus creating gap for marketers to efficiently and create new markets for their products to customers who are not currently served in the market.

$H0_3$: There is an insignificant positive relationship between promotion and the performance of firms in Juba

2.1.4 Pricing and the Performance of Firms'

Price refers to the exchange value of goods and services. It is what goods and services can be exchanged for in the market place. According to Londre, (2020), price the amount of money a consumer is willing to pay to obtain the product or service from wholesale/retail/promotional prices, discounts, trade-in allowances, quantity discounts, credit terms, sales and payment periods and credit terms. He stated that price is the key positioning factor and must be decided in relation to the target market, the product and service assortment mix, the competition and other factors (Londre, 2020). The major aims of pricing vary from organization to organization but they can all be classified as, Profitability objectives, Volume objectives, Meeting competition objectives, Prestige objectives. However, a marketer does not set a single price rather a pricing structure that covers different items in his/her product line (Ikechukwu, 2013). Market skinning pricing involve setting a high price at the inception of the marketing of a product. It could be used when consumers lack information on the product but accept the product for any price and also in very slim or no competition (Smith, 1956). (Ikechukwu, 2013) Market penetration pricing is when the price is low in order to penetrate the market segment quickly and deeply. It could be applied in a highly price sensitive market and competitive market. Thus, the production cost should be falling as volume increases. Local firms need to define general guideline or set of rules that is intended for use in specific product type or services arrived at during decision making (Ikechukwu, 2013). Therefore, pricing is an important ingredient in the marketer's total image (Jones & Tedlow, 1993) and (Ikechukwu, 2013), (Temovsk, 2015). As such marketers always base their judgement mostly on rules that is, (a) Price flexibility that permits variable prices for goods and services. (b) Product line pricing refers to the practice of marketing goods at a limited number of prices. (c) Unique pricing is the competitive bidding and negotiated prices. This is a process in which the product buyers ask potential suppliers to give quotations on a proposed purchase or contract.

$H0_4$: There is a significant positive relationship between Price and the performance of firms in Juba.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The research adapted descriptive design with focus on quantitative data method. The unit of analysis of study were Insurance firms in Juba. The population of this study is eight (8) Insurance firms in Juba. The sample size of this study is determined by using Slovene's formula. The unit of inquiry is fifty-five (55) for the study includes, Division Heads (21) and Sales officers (34). However, due to the low response rate of studies of this nature, 75 questionnaires were distributed, 62 successfully participated in the study. This implied a retrieved rate of 112%; according to Kwizera, et al (2018), if the response rate is more than 70%, this is enough to carry on and continue with data analysis.

The main research instruments were questionnaires. The questions are confined to a given set of options and then respondents are asked to choose the option that they agree or disagree with. To achieve this, a five Likert scale is used, where 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree, 3=not sure, 4 = agree; and 5=strongly agree. The five Likert scale is preferred by the researcher because it captures all the ideas, views, and opinions of the respondents. Furthermore, the questionnaire was divided into three sections, namely section A, B and section C. A captured information about the profile of the respondents, that is, gender, age, education, and work experience. Section B captured information about Marketing practices which was measured using; product quality (4 items), distribution (4 items), promotion (4 items) and price (4 items). Section C captured information regarding firm performance and was measured using: profitability (4 items), market share (4 items) and sales volume (4 items). Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability whereby a co-efficient of above 0.7 imply that the instruments are sufficiently reliable for the measurement (Isoraite, 2016). The coefficients for Marketing Practices and Firms performance were 0.884 and 0.871 respectively. Content validity index (CVI) will be used; where CVI value greater than 0.70 will be considered valid otherwise not valid (Ferede, 2012). The CVI was 0.82.

Measure of the central tendency (mean) and measure of dispersion (standard deviations) of the variables. A five Likert Scale of 1-5 was used to provide a vivid interpretation of the results.

Table 3.1 Interpretation of Likert Scale

Scale	Mean	Response	Interpretation
1	1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree	Very unsatisfactory
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree	Unsatisfactory
3	2.61-3.40	Not sure	Fairly satisfactory
4	3.41-4.20	Agree	Satisfactory
5	4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree	Very satisfactory

The data was analysed using frequency and percentage tables, mean and standard deviations and regression analysis facilitated by SPSS software.

4.0 Findings

4.1 Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Most of the respondents (37) were male accounting for 59.7%; majority of the respondents are within the age range of 26-30 (32.1%), followed by 31-35 (27.4%), and then 41-45 (14.6%); 43.8% are diploma holder and 41.9% are degree holders; most of the respondents have work in their respective firms for 1-5 years (45.2%), the second biggest group were those who have worked for 6-10 years (33.1%)

4.2 Descriptive Statistics on Marketing Practices and Firm Performance

Table 4.2 The Descriptive Statistics for Marketing Practices

MARKETING PRACTICES	Mean	Std	Interpretations

1	Product	3.58	1.29	Satisfactory
2	Place	3.83	1.55	Satisfactory
3	Promotion	3.65	1.25	Satisfactory
4	Price	3.62	1.34	Satisfactory
	Mean	**3.67**	**1.35**	**Satisfactory**

Table 4.3 The Descriptive Statistics for firm Performance

FIRM PERRFORMANCE		Mean	Std	Interpretations
1	Profitability average Subtotal	4.01	1.63	Satisfactory
2	Market Share Growth Subtotal	3.77	1.58	Satisfactory
3	Sales Volumes Subtotal	3.97	1.56	Satisfactory
	Mean	**3.92**	**1.59**	**Satisfactory**

Both tables 4.2 and 4.3 confirm satisfactory levels of Marketing practices (Mean = 3.67) and Firm Performance (Mean = 3.92), respectively.

4.3 The test for Hypothesis on the effect of product quality on the performance of firms in Juba.

The first objective of this study was to examine the effects of product quality on the performance of firms in Juba.

H01: Product quality has not significant effect on the performance of firms in Juba.

Table 4.4: gives the summary of the findings for the effect of product quality of the performance of firms in Juba.

	Un-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
(Constant)	1.835	.279		6.587	.000
Product	.581	.075	.705	7.708	.000
R = .705					
R Square = .498					
Adjusted R Square = .489					
F = 59.420					
Sig = .000					

The results presented on table 4.4 revealed that product quality significantly affects firm performance by causing a variance of 49.8% (R^2=0.498, P=0.000). This rejects the null hypothesis that states that product quality has not significant effect on performance of firms. The alternate hypothesis therefore, accepted, thus, product quality has a significant effect on firm performance in Juba. This implies that when firms improve product quality, it will significantly influence, contribute to success and may significantly respond to performance.

Furthermore, the study revealed that the regression model was the best fit for predicting the effect of product quality on performance of firms (F=59.420, P=0.000). similarly, the study revealed that every unit change in product quality will significantly affect the variance in performance of firms by 58.1% (Beta = 0.705, P = 0.000).

4.4 The test for Hypothesis on the effect of distribution/place on the performance of firms in Juba.

The second objective of this study was to determine the effects of distribution on the performance of firms in Juba.

H02: Distribution has not significant effect on the performance of firms in juba.

Table 4.5: gives the summary of the findings for the effect of distribution and the performance of firms in Juba.

Model	Un-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
(Constant)	1.870	.268		6.971	.000
Place/Distribute	.540	.068	.713	7.886	.000
R = .713					
R Square = .509					
Adjusted R Square = .501					
F = 62.185					
Sig = .000					

The results presented on table 4.5 revealed that distribution significantly affects firm performance by causing a variance of 50.9% (R^2 = 0.509, P = 0.000). This rejects the null hypothesis that there is no significant effect of distribution on the performance of firms and upholds the alternative hypothesis. This implies that when firms in juba distribute products and services closure to their esteemed customers, they consider the channels which are more suitable and cheaper with the intent of meeting customer demands, and there is likelihood that firm performance will improve too. Furthermore, the study revealed that the regression model was the best fit for predicting the effect of distribution on the firm performance (F. 62.185, p=0.000). Similarly, the study revealed that every unit change in distribution will significantly affect the variance in performance of firms by 54.0% (Beta = 0.713, p = 0.000).

4.5 The test for Hypothesis on the effect of promotion on the performance of firms in Juba.

The third objective of this study was to investigate the effects of promotion on performance of firms in Juba.

H03: Promotion has not significant effect on the performance of firms in juba.

Table 4.6: gives the summary of the findings for the effect of promotion and the performance of firms in Juba.

Model	Un-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
(Constant)	2.009	.296		6.776	.000
Promotion	.522	.079	.651	6.642	.000
R = .651					
R Square = .424					
Adjusted R Square = .414					
F = 44.110					
Sig = .000					

The results presented on table 4.6 revealed that promotion significantly affects the performance of firms by causing a variance of 42.4% (R^2 = 0.414, P = 0.000). This rejects the null hypothesis that there is no significant effect of promotion on the performance of firms and supports the alternative hypothesis. This implies that when firms in juba promote products and services in which they target their esteemed customers, consider either traditional or online promotions that are more suitable and cheaper with the intent of creating awareness, interest, desire which meet customer demands, ultimately creating forcing customers to take actions for the said products and services thus, there is likelihood that firm performance will improve too. Furthermore, the study revealed that the regression model was the best fit for predicting the effect of promotion on the performance of firms (F. 44.110, p=0.000). Similarly, the study revealed that every unit change in distribution will significantly affect the variance in performance of firms by 52.2% (Beta = 0.651, p = 0.000).

4.6 The test for Hypothesis on the effect of price on the performance of firms in Juba.

The fourth objective of this study was to establish the effects of price on performance of firms in Juba.

H01: Price has not significant effect on the performance of firms in juba.

Table 4.7: gives the summary of the findings for the effect of price and the performance of firms in Juba.

	Un-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
(Constant)	1.658	.325		5.100	.000
Price	.622	.087	.677	7.117	.000
R = .677					
R Square = .458					
Adjusted R Square = .449					
F = 50.651					
Sig = .000					

The results presented on table 4.7 revealed that distribution significantly affects firm performance by causing a variance of 26.0% ($R^2 = 0.260$, p = 0.002). This rejects the null hypothesis that explains that price has not significant effect on performance of firms. The alternate hypothesis is therefore, accepted, thus, price has a significant effect on firm performance in Juba. This implies that when firms in juba price products and services to their esteemed customers, they determine the price which is more suitable and affordable with the intent of meeting customer demands, and there is likelihood that performance of firms will improve too. Furthermore, the study revealed that the regression model was the best fit for predicting the effect of distribution on the firm performance (F. 4.996, p=0.002). Similarly, the study revealed that every unit change in distribution will significantly affect the variance in performance of firms by 69.5% (Beta = 0.813, p = 1.322).

4.7 Marketing Practices on the performance of Firms in Juba

Table 4.8 Multiple Regression Analysis of the Effect of Marketing Practices on the performance of Firms in Juba.

	Un-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
(Constant)	.834	.272		3.061	.003
Product	.215	.097	.261	2.209	.031
Place/Distribute	.304	.069	.402	4.403	.000
Promotion	.043	.093	.054	.468	.641
Price	.276	.086	.300	3.219	.002
R = .842					
R Square = .709					
Adjusted R Square = .689					

F = 34.759
Sig = 0.000

The results in table 4.8 revealed that marketing practice factors affects the changes in firm performance by a variance of 70.9% (R2=0.709, p=0.000). This implies that a combination of product quality, distribution, and price contribute significantly to the success of firm performance. Furthermore, the study revealed that every change in marketing practice factors would significantly cause a variance of 84.2% on firm performance (Beta = 0.842, p=0.000). Further, the results revealed that distribution is the highest predictor of firm performance, causing a variance of 40.2% (Beta =0.402, p=0.000), followed by price which causes a variance of 30.0% on firm performance (Beta = 0.300, p=0.002), while the result also revealed that product quality causes a variance of 26.1% on firm performance (Beta= 0.261, p= 0.003) finally, promotion is not statistically significant contributors (p=0.64) that is greater than (0.05). This implies that for a single unit change in distribution, there will be a significant variance of 40.2% in firm performance. Also, it states that a single unit change in price, there will be a significant variance of 30.0% in firm performance. Likewise, for a single unit change in product quality, there will be a significant variance of 26.1% in firm performance. Therefore, a single unit change in promotion there will be insignificant variance of 5.4% in firm performance.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that product quality significantly affects firm performance. This is because product quality such as ease access to quality products in the market, online access by users to quality products in the market, the importance of product quality in the market, and having free access to product quality by users are significant can subsequently contribute to improvement of firm performance through product quality.

The study concluded that distribution scored the highest and significantly affects firm performance. This is attributed to the fact that distribution in terms of spatial position in the market, attractiveness of the place in the market, using modern infrastructure, and continuous channel innovation vividly causes improvement in firm performance when they deliver products and services timely in the market to customers as demanded.

Similarly, the study concluded that promotion insignificantly affects firm performance. This implies that implementation of promotion activities such as media advertising for promoting goods and services in the market, or organizations considers promotion important, adaption of various means of promotion in the market, and strategically use promotion as a tool would improve firm performance successful.

Lastly, the study revealed price scored the second highest and significantly affects firm performance. This is due to the fact that price in terms of related product price, consideration of price as important factor, price of substitute goods and service in the market, and setting competitive pricing causes significant improvement in firm performance.

The study concluded that there is a strong relationship between firm performance and marketing practices. Generally, the study further concludes that marketing practices significantly affects firm performance. In other words, marketing practices in terms of product quality, distribution, promotion, and price have deep effect on firm performance and therefore much emphasis should be made to make sure that they are put into effective use to achieve successful growth.

This study revealed that product quality significantly affects firm performance among the firms surveyed in Juba. The study therefore recommends that the management of firms specially Insurance companies should periodically improve product features, labels, attributes, the packaging and the way they conduct business should be dedicated towards product quality improvement that suits customers demand to take action. This study revealed that distribution being the highest and significantly affects firm performance among the firms in Juba. The study therefore recommends that the management of firms should prioritize appropriate distribution channels that will enable them to offer goods and services that meet the expectations of different groups of customers in the market timely. This can be achieved by adapting various channels such as online distribution, door to door delivery, setting up national and regional distribution centres and retails shops closure to customers. Furthermore, management should periodically train their chain employees so that they are knowledgeable and remain competent in the event that an interruption may occur in the dynamic environment in which the distribution takes place. This kind of training should include periodic seminars, workshops, symposiums, or in-service studies. This study revealed that promotion insignificantly affects firm performance among the firms in Juba. The study therefore recommends that the management of firms specially Insurance companies should embrace promotional advancement in enhancing their business operations. This will enable them to explain in details what they are offering, persuade esteemed buyers to taste their brand product quality, ultimately the quality product/service must meet customer needs and preferences and fast. Promotion activities in an institution should be implemented by adapting the use of both traditional and online promotion to inform the wider populations about the offerings. Furthermore, employees must be rightfully trained and facilitated in order to effectively use their ability to communicate with esteemed customers effectively and efficiently. The study revealed that price significantly affects firm performance among the firms surveyed in Juba. The study therefore recommends that the management of Insurance companies should embrace competitive pricing, realign prices to that of substitute goods/services in the market, provide price list available to customers on brochures, on newspapers as well as online to enable customers to decide.

Several studies including the those of Awan & Sundus, (2014), Cornell & Nwoka, (2015), Isoraite, (2016), Ogohi, (2018), and Oloko, et al, (2014) have been conducted in the area of marketing practices, marketing mix on firm performance in other countries but for firms in juba more specially the Insurance companies in south Sudan none have taken time to look at marketing practices in terms of product quality, distribution, promotion and price or firm performance in terms of profitability, market share growth and sales volume and their results have been mixed. This study therefore adds to the body of knowledge that product quality, distribution, and price have significant effect on firm performance while promotion had insignificant effect on firm performance.

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