

Influence of Green Marketing Practices and Corporate image on Performance of ISO 9000 and 14000 Series Certified Firms in Kenya

Mary Wanjiru Kinoti
(*Mkinoti@yahoo.co.uk*)

Abstract

The study reported here investigated influence of green marketing practices and corporate image on performance of Kenyan firms that are ISO 9000 and 14000 series certified. Specific objectives were to determine the relationship between green marketing practices and performance of ISO certified organizations in Kenya; to establish influence of green marketing practices on corporate image; to assess the relationship between corporate image and firm performance; and to determine the mediating role of corporate image on the relationship between Green Marketing Practices and Performance. A census survey of 120 firms was conducted between January and February, 2012 with response rate of 67.5 percent. The pertinent data obtained from managers (internal customers) were analyzed using descriptive statistics as well as correlation and regression analyses. Survey results showed that green marketing practices had statistically significant effect on some performance indicators (innovativeness, effectiveness, and competitive advantage) and not on others (sales turnover, market share and gross profit). The latter set of results may be explained by the fact that there is usually a considerable time lag between expenditure of marketing effort and its impact on long-term measures of a firm's performance. In addition, sales turnover, market share and gross profit are a function of many other internal

as well as external business and non-business factors. The study results further revealed that corporate image had statistically significant direct effect of communication-related indicators and not on sales-oriented measures of the firm's performance. Finally, results showed that interaction effect of green marketing practices and corporate image was statistically not significant ($\beta = 0.062$). The study has made contributions to theory, policy and managerial practice in the discipline of green marketing. It has offered a more explicit clarification into the relationships that exist between green marketing practices, corporate image and firm's performance. The authors recommend replication of the study in other business contexts. In addition, since respondents of the current study were managers (internal customers) and thus, future research should collect pertinent data from external customer publics.

Keywords: *Green Marketing, Environmental Degradation, Corporate Image and Firm Performance*

1. Introduction

As the twenty first century progresses, environmentalism remains a critical social and business issue. The reason for this, among others, is that all the earth's ecosystems have been changed by human actions in the past fifty years. This position was reached after an assessment and audit of the World's natural resources in 2005 (Kallesoe, 2009; Murphy & Poist, 2003). As a result, environmental degradation has been cited among a few problems that are common to all countries across the globe, regardless of the economic system and development level. This degradation is, however, more expensive and devastating in the developing world

than the cost of high inflation, excessive foreign debts or economic stagnation (Panayotou, 1993). The principal causes of environmental degradation, among others, include poverty, high consumption of environmental goods such as fossil fuels, and paper. Political power and trade policy strategies of developed countries, the trade liberalization policies of the 1990s driven by the national economic interests of developed economies are also major causes of environmental degradation (Kasa, 2003).

The current state of the environment globally can be largely attributed to failure of development and management of human environment. In fact, there has been a growing realization in national governments and multilateral institutions that it is difficult to separate economic issues from environmental issues. Many forms of development erode environmental resources upon which they are based, while on the other side of the coin, environmental degradation can undermine economic development [World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) Report, 1987]. Industrialization is one of the principal contributors to economic development as well as environmental degradation. Therefore, it is critical for companies involved in economic development to take appropriate intervention measures to address the natural environmental challenges. The reason organizations should be concerned is that sustainable businesses can only function if the ecosystems and services they provide are healthy as well as balanced (Kallesoe, 2009). Hens and Nath (2003) further observed that environmental problems are fundamentally interdisciplinary and therefore, they require interdisciplinary solutions.

2. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework embraces three variables, namely, green marketing practices, corporate image and organizational performance. Relevant literature on these variables is critically reviewed and the emerging relationships are summarized in a conceptual model.

3. Green Marketing Practices

Marketing, like other business functions, has a strategic role to play toward providing solutions to sustainable management challenge in order to bring about sustainable development (Polonsky *et. al.*, 1997). Indeed, many concerns over environmental deterioration have made marketers recognize the value of green marketing. According to Pride and Ferrell (1993), green marketing is an organizational effort of designing, promoting, pricing and distributing products that do not harm the environment. On his part, Polonsky (1994) contended that green marketing consists of all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs such that satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment. Peattie (1995) viewed green marketing as the holistic management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying requirements of customers and society in a profitable as well as sustainable way.

Companies from a marketing point of view are demonstrating their commitment to the natural environment through adoption of green marketing practices and ISO certified organizations are not an exception. This is partly due to increasing stakeholders' demand

for companies to operate in a manner that exhibits an environmental commitment, both in their product offerings and in their operations (Rivera-Camino, 2007). Green marketing is the holistic process of marketing activities within the firm that are aimed at reducing the environmental impact of products and services including their manufacturing processes in a way that is profitable to the firm (Isaak, 2002; Peattie,1995). Walker and Hanson (1998) characterize green marketing as reducing the long-term impact on the natural environment from a combination of inputs (sources of supply, resource consumption, and production processes), outputs (finished products, product end-of life, and waste), and consumer preferences.

Several studies have been undertaken on green marketing, both internationally and locally. As far as green marketing and performance of an organization is concerned, Theyel (2000) conducted a study on management practices for environmental innovation and performance in the United States of America within two industrial chemical sectors, plastics and resins as well as ink manufacturing. The results showed that the most used environmental management practices in the chemical industry were waste audit, total quality management, pollution prevention plan, employee training program on pollution prevention, and total cost accounting, in that order.

DeCarlo and Barone (2006) investigated environmental positioning strategies as means for creating competitive advantages among agricultural producers in United Kingdom. The study concluded that in general, agricultural producers can

positively differentiate their offerings through company positioning. However, the study only focused on environmental positioning strategies.

In Europe, Rodri'guez (2009) conducted a study on environmental engagement, organizational capability and firm's performance among 195 Spanish manufacturing firms that adopted the international environmental management system ISO 14001. The study used a mail survey research design and concluded that there is a connection between ecological motivations, internal organizational activities and outcomes of implementation of green engagements.

Here in Africa, Smith and Perks (2010) conducted a study on perceptual impact of green practice implementation on business functions in Nelson Mandela Metropolitan, South Africa. A survey research design was used with a sample of 298 small and medium firms selected using convenience sampling procedure. The study revealed that manufacturing/operations, marketing/sales and distribution/logistics functions were the most impacted by green business practices.

Locally, several studies have been conducted in the area of green marketing. For instance, Mwirigi (2007) studied green supply chain management practices by manufacturing firms in Kenya. The study identified tree planting, cleaning of Nairobi River and city beautification as green initiatives practiced by the manufacturing firms in Kenya. On their part, Kalama (2007) and Kiongera (2003) researched on green marketing practices by

Kenya Petroleum Refineries Limited (KPRL) and Cement industry in Kenya, respectively. The principal limitations of these studies are that they focused on one variable (green marketing practice). Their studies were also narrow in scope in that they only covered one sector. In short, they did not simultaneously study green marketing practices, Corporate Image and Organizational Performance in a multi-sectoral context. The current study sought to bridge these knowledge gaps by integrating the three variables in both manufacturing and service sectors.

4. Corporate Image

Green marketing is a new strategy that corporations looking to project themselves as strong, progressive and possessing moral integrity can use to enhance corporate image as well as financial return amidst current challenges of corporate scandals, a slowing economy, and growing employee unrest. Adoption of green marketing given the current environmental imperatives can result in corporate reputation management. For instance, new products designed with the environment in mind can excite employees, suppliers and other stakeholders, creating a feeling that signals corporate responsibility, innovation and the potential to increase top line sales (Ottman, 2003). Furthermore, European Commission (2010) observed that organizations in electronics-related manufacturing that had stronger green marketing performed better in terms of corporate image improvements, environmental regulation, profit, market share, sales, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. This is a pointer to the importance of green marketing for electronics-related manufacturing firms, specifically and other sectors, in general.

Corporate image is an important organizational resource that enables an organization to create, strengthen and sustain competitive advantage (Šmaižien and Oržekauskas, 2006). Kazoleas and colleagues (2001) consider corporate image as any singular opinion held of an organization, which could be positive, negative or neutral. This view assumes that corporate image is a collection of “images” held by receivers and not a singular construct determined as well as controlled by the organization. It is a critical component of the corporate brand, and has an external focus as well as considers how external stakeholders view the organization (Abratt, 1989).

Corporate image can create competitive advantage particularly when there is an insignificant or no difference between competitors. It can specifically help an organization to improve sales, support new product development, strengthen financial relations, boost recruitment and manage crises (Smith, 1993). According to Chang and Fong (2010), green corporate image has positive effects on performance of an organization in terms of green customer satisfaction and green customer loyalty. Several studies suggest that customer satisfaction and customer loyalty can be achieved by corporate image, depending on development in the markets (Abdullah et. al., 2000; Chang & Tu, 2005; Hu & Wall, 2005).

Studies by Chun and Davies (2006) as well as Evans and colleagues (2006) found out that a strong corporate image enhances customer satisfaction in retail and leisure service settings, respectively. There is also, however, the possibility that a

positive corporate image may negatively influence on satisfaction. This may be the case where the image has created unrealistic expectations for customers. Where these expectations are not met, customers are likely to be very dissatisfied. Despite a possibility of the opposite, literature predominantly suggests a positive relationship between corporate image and satisfaction. Balmer (1998) further highlighted the importance of corporate image by asserting that *a priori* link exists between an individual's image of the organization and that person's behaviour towards it. Therefore, management can maximize their return on investment by ensuring that the image is communicated and reinforced with maximum efficiency among its various stakeholders, although according to Evans and colleagues (2011), corporate image building is a very costly exercise, which is typically considered to have primarily long-term strategic benefits.

5. Organizational Performance

A performance measure is the standard with which progress of the strategic objective can be measured and with which the organization's vision including objectives are made measurable. Furthermore, it indicates values that must be met. Traditionally, many organizations relied on financial measures of performance such as sales and profits, Return on Assets (ROA) and stock returns (Sullivan, Abela & Hutchinson, 2008). According to Kaplan and Norton (1998), these measures worked well for the industrial era. However, they are out of step with skills and competencies, which companies are trying to master today. After decades of being frustrated by inadequacies of traditional performance measurement systems, managers and academic researchers have devised a

balanced scorecard, which includes financial and operational measures. The balance scorecard allows managers to look at business from four perspectives: financial, customer, innovation as well as learning and internal process perspective. Rampersand (2009) proposes and supports use of detailed performance measures as per the scorecard perspective. Lusthaus and colleagues (2000) further have identified four key indicators of performance as effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and financial viability. Today, many organizations use a composite of performance measures as suggested by the balanced scorecard and other scholars as opposed to over relying on financial measures only. Therefore, financial and non-financial performance measures play a significant part in assessing the degree of organizational performance.

There have been many new innovations at management, institutional and other levels aimed at improving organizational performance. They include interventions such as total quality management, re-engineering, decentralization, and performance management. However, an organization's performance is a function of the environment within which the organization exists, its capabilities, and its motivation. Every organization sets goals, formulates plans, and develops strategies including tactics aimed at good performance of an organization. Nevertheless, what constitutes good performance of an organization varies from each group of stakeholders as well as one organization to another. For instance, an administrator in a donor dependent organization may define performance in terms of finance brought into an organization through donations, whereas the donor may define the

same performance in terms of the impact of the donation to the organization.

According to Ottman (2002), new products designed with the environment in mind can excite employees, suppliers and other stakeholders thereby creating a buzz that signals corporate responsibility, innovation and the potential to increase top line sales. Corporations looking to project themselves as strong, progressive companies possessing both moral integrity and the kind of innovation as well as flexibility that will propel them financially, therefore, should use eco-innovation and green marketing. This will, in turn, help firms to engage in corporate environmental management and hence, corporate reputation management given current environmental imperatives.

It is clear that green corporate image could be one of important sources of green customer satisfaction. In some industries or markets, where customers have limited abilities to evaluate product quality, corporate image may be an important criterion to judge the quality of an unfamiliar product. Therefore, managers should build and maintain their green corporate image anytime and anywhere. In addition, several studies have also revealed that environmental image of an organization not only satisfies the customer's environmental desires and green needs, but also can increase their sales as well as enhance their competitive advantage (Hu & Wall, 2005; Corrigan, 1996; Chen *et. al.*, 2006; Porter & Van der Linde, 1995; Chen, 2008, 2010). Furthermore, studies have shown that care for the environment and establishing a strong environmental image may help attract environmentally conscious

customers including suppliers (Psomas *et. al.*, 2010). Environmental marketing strategy may also have positive impacts on overall corporate image, which might translate into improved performance in terms of increased market share and profitability (Baker & Sinkula, 2005).

The literature-informed relationships among the three concepts described above (green marketing practices, corporate image and organizational performance) are depicted in the conceptual model (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Conceptual Model

The main objective of the study was to empirically investigate the relationships between green marketing practices, corporate image and performance of ISO 9000 and 14000 series certified firms in Kenya. Specific objectives included the following: to determine the relationship between green marketing practices and organizational performance; to establish influence of green marketing practices on corporate image; to assess the relationship between corporate image and performance; and to determine the mediating role of corporate image on the relationship between green marketing practices and organizational performance. The hypotheses, which were derived from these objectives include the following:

H₁: There is a significant relationship between green marketing practices and organizational performance.

H₂: There is a significant relationship between green marketing and corporate image.

H₃: There is a significant relationship between corporate image and organizational performance.

H₄: There is a significant relationship between green marketing practices and performance mediated by corporate image.

These hypotheses are diagrammatically depicted in Figure 1 above.

6. Methodology

A cross-sectional descriptive research design was adopted for the purpose of the study. The design was considered appropriate for this study because it allowed description of a phenomenon as well as collection of a large amount of data from a sizeable population in a highly economical way. It also made it possible to collect

quantitative data; suggest possible reasons for particular relationships and associations between variables; and to produce models of these relationships.

The population of study included all ISO 9000 and 14000 series certified organizations in Kenya. The researchers considered the population highly appropriate because the organizations were more likely to have adopted green marketing practices. There were 120 organizations in Kenya that were ISO 9000 and 14000 series certified at the time of the study according to Kenya Accreditation services (KENAS,2010). The researchers considered the population appropriate because the firms were more likely to have adapted green marketing practices.

Primary data were collected using a close-ended questionnaire. The questionnaire contained Likert type, semantic differential scale, multiple choices, dichotomous and open-ended questions developed in line with objectives of the study. The questionnaire was divided into four parts. Part one collected data on background of the organization, while the other parts collected data related to each objective of the study. The pertinent data were collected from marketing managers or any other officer specified by the Chief Executive Officer. The respondents were deemed appropriate because of their involvement in top and strategic marketing decisions. Therefore, they were knowledgeable about green marketing practices within their respective organizations. The questionnaire was administered by trained research assistants who administered the questionnaires through drop and pick-up later method. To increase the response rate, a letter of introduction explaining the purpose of the data and assuring respondents that

information would be kept confidential accompanied the questionnaire. To ensure that data were collected from specified respondents, the filled questionnaires were stamped with company seal and/or accompanied by the business card or telephone contact of the respondent.

For the current study, computed Cronbach Alpha coefficient of reliability was used to test whether or not variables were within the acceptable range of between 0 and 1. The closer the Cronbach Alpha coefficient is to 1.0, the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale. For this study, the cut-off point was set at a coefficient of 0.7 and above. The results for Cronbach's Coefficient alpha for various sections of the data collection instrument are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Cronbach Alpha Reliability coefficients for Data Collection Instrument

| Measurement scale | No items | N | | Cronbach Alpha coefficients |
|---------------------------|----------|----|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Green marketing practices | 54 | 66 | | 0.961 |
| Corporate Image | 37 | 60 | | 0.897 |
| | | | Organization Performance | |
| Innovativeness | 8 | 79 | | 0.887 |
| Efficiency | 9 | 72 | | 0.874 |
| Effectiveness | 6 | 74 | | 0.862 |
| Competitive Advantage | 10 | 71 | | 0.936 |

Source: Primary Data

According to the Cronbach alpha coefficient test results of the measurement scale contained in Table 1, green marketing practices scale with 54 items had a reliability coefficient of 0.961 and corporate image scale with 37 items had 0.897. All organizational performance measures had an alpha coefficient above 0.870. Therefore, reliability coefficients were very high, suggesting that the measurement scale had very high level of internal consistency.

According to Saunders and colleagues (2007), validity is the extent to which data collection method or methods accurately measure what they are intended to measure and the extent to which research findings are really about what they profess to be about. For the purpose of this study, the questionnaire, which was the major data collection instrument, was pre-tested at two levels. Initially, Senior lecturers in the field of marketing were asked to assess quality of the questionnaire and provide constructive feedback on wording, clarity and coverage of the instrument in light of the research hypotheses. The researchers then improved the study instrument based on the feedback. The second stage involved a formal pre-test with ten managers from the population of the study who were asked to respond to the questions in the research instrument. The purpose of pre-testing exercise was to improve the research instrument and validity of the data. The data collected during the pilot test were used to compute Cronbach coefficient alpha mentioned in this paper.

After data collection, the completed questionnaires were edited, coded and tabulated before further processing of the data. The questionnaires were scrutinized for accuracy and completeness of

recorded answers. Coding involved assigning numerical values to each question. The data were analysed initially using descriptive statistics, particularly mean scores to analyze Likert type questions, while proportions were used to analyse background information and multiple-choice questions. The Pearson correlation coefficient was computed and finally, simple and multiple regression analyses were used to assess the nature of relationships between various variables as hypothesised in the study. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 18 was used for data analysis.

7. Results and Discussions

The research findings were based on 81(67.5%) respondent organizations out of the original target population of 120. This is a higher response rate than those of similar studies conducted in Kenya by Kidombo (2007) 64 percent, Meru (2009) 62.3 percent, Gachunga (2010) 62 percent; and Munyoki (2007) 51 percent. It is worth noting that out of the 81 firms that responded, 79(97.5%) firms were ISO 9000 and only 2(2.5%) firms were ISO 14000 certified. This meant that the green marketing practices could not be compared between ISO 9000 and 14000 certified firms in Kenya.

a. Adoption of Green Marketing Practices in Kenya

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which their organizations had adopted green marketing practices using a scale ranging from 1= Not at all , 2 = To a small extent, 3 = To a moderate extent , 4 = To a large extent and 5 = To a very large extent . The relevant responses in terms of mean scores are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of adoption of green marketing practices

| Green Marketing Practices | N | Mean Score | SE |
|-----------------------------------|----|------------|------|
| Green product practices | 71 | 3.26 | .144 |
| Green price practices | 67 | 2.61 | .146 |
| Green place practices | 70 | 3.09 | .153 |
| Green promotion practices | 74 | 3.29 | .139 |
| Green people practices | 70 | 3.12 | .142 |
| Green process practices | 73 | 3.11 | .144 |
| Green physical evidence practices | 73 | 3.00 | .142 |
| Green probe practices | 73 | 2.78 | .151 |
| Overall mean score | 71 | 3.03 | .145 |

Source: Primary Data

Research results in Table 2 show that green promotion had the highest overall mean score of 3.29 followed by green products practices with an overall means score of 3.26. On the other side of the coin, green price practices had the lowest overall means score of 2.61 followed by green probe practices (mean score of 2.78). This suggests that green marketing has not lived up to hopes and dreams of many managers and activists despite the fact that consumers, shareholders and society stand to benefit if the organizations integrate environmental friendliness into their marketing strategies (Ginberg and Bloom, 2004).

Correlation between Green Marketing Practices and Organizational Performance

The results on the relationship that exists between green marketing practices and various measures of organizations' performance are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Green Marketing Practices and Various Measures of Organizational Performance

| | Pearson Correlation Coefficient |
|---|--|
| Green marketing practices and market share | .208 |
| Green marketing practices and sales turnover | -.094 |
| Green marketing practices and gross profit | .035 |
| Green marketing practices and innovativeness | .428** |
| Green marketing practices and efficiency | .294** |
| Green marketing practices and effectiveness | .018 |
| Green marketing practices and competitive advantage | .321** |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary Data

Results in Table 3 indicate that there is a significant relationship between green marketing practices and innovativeness, efficiency, and competitive advantage with r values. The relationships, though significant, were moderate for innovativeness and weak for efficiency, market share as well as competitive advantage. These findings are in line with empirical findings that associate green activities with competitiveness, innovativeness, market share and efficiency (Porter and Van der Linde, 1995; Maxwell *et. al.*, 1997; Ottman, 1999; Luo and Bhattacharcharya, 2006). On the other hand, findings that green marketing practices have no relationships with some measures of organizations' performance such as sales turnover ($r=-.094$), gross profit ($r=.035$) and effectiveness ($r=.018$) support those from a study by Rodri'guez (2009) who argues that excitements that often surround green actions are not always surrounded by remarkable changes in the market. However, do not support those from the European Commission (2010), which suggested that organizations that have stronger green orientation performed better in terms of profits, and sales.

b. Corporate Image

Given the role played by corporate image generally in enhancing firms' performance, the respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions of their organizations' corporate image using a seven point semantic differential scale where 7 meant an extremely favourable image and 1 an extremely unfavourable image. The overall mean score was 5.70, which suggests quite a favourable corporate image.

c. Organizational Performance

The respondent organizations were asked to rate individual performance measures. The relevant responses in terms of mean scores are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of Individual Measures of Performance

| Individual Measures of Organization Performance | Mean Score | SE |
|---|------------|------|
| Organizational innovativeness | 3.50 | .115 |
| Organizational efficiency | 2.50 | .173 |
| Organizational effectiveness | 2.23 | .134 |
| Competitive advantage | 3.77 | .123 |

Source: Primary Data

The pertinent results in Table 4 reveal that competitive advantage had the highest mean score of 3.77 followed by organization's innovativeness with a mean score of 3.50. On the other hand, findings showed that organization performance was not rated well in terms of effectiveness and efficiency with a mean score of 2.23 and 2.50, respectively. This implies that as organizations strive to improve their overall performance, they should be proactive in ensuring competitive advantage, innovativeness, efficiency and effectiveness amongst other performance indicators.

Tests of the Hypotheses

H₁ There is a relationship between green marketing practices and performance of ISO certified organizations in Kenya.

Relevant results for hypothesis test 1 are presented in Tables 5, 6, and 7.

Table 5: Regression Results of Green Marketing Practices on Individual Measures of Performance

| Model Summary | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|--|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Market share as a function of green marketing practices | .167 ^a | .028 | .014 | 1.933 |
| Sales turnover as a function of green marketing practices | .085 ^a | .007 | -.012 | 1.017 |
| Effectiveness as a function of green marketing practices | .311 ^a | .096 | .083 | .53220 |
| Efficiency as a function of green marketing practices | .255 ^a | .065 | .050 | .78503 |
| Competitive Advantage as a function of green marketing practices | .311 ^a | .096 | .083 | .53220 |
| Innovativeness as a function of green marketing practices | .585 ^a | .342 | .333 | .67310 |
| Gross profit as a function of green marketing practices | .234 ^a | .055 | .036 | 1.007 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Green marketing practices | | | | |

Source: Primary Data

The results in Table 5 indicate proportions of the dependent variable explained by the corresponding independent variables. Green marketing practices explained 34.2 percent of the variation in innovativeness. Sales turnover had the lowest R² value of 0.007, which indicates that green marketing practices explained less than 1 percent of the sales turn over. The relative contributions of each of the factors are depicted in Table 6.

Table 6: Regression Results of Green Marketing Practices on Individual Measures of Organizational Performance

| Model Coefficients | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. level |
|--|--|------------|---------------------------|--------|------------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| | Effectiveness as a function of green marketing practices | .242 | .091 | | |
| Innovativeness as a function of green marketing practices | .694 | .113 | .585 | 38.020 | .000** |
| Efficiency as a function of green marketing practices | .309 | .149 | .255 | 4.319 | .042* |
| Competitive Advantage as a function of green marketing practices | .242 | .091 | .311 | 7.151 | .009** |
| Gross profit as a function of green marketing practices | .376 | .219 | .234 | .663 | .419 |
| Market share as a function of green marketing practices | .514 | .367 | .167 | 1.962 | .166 |
| Sales turnover as a function of green marketing | .137 | .224 | .085 | .373 | .544 |

**Significant at $P \leq 0.01$, *Significant at $P \leq 0.05$

Source: Primary Data

Results in Table 6 show that green marketing practices had statistically significant effect on innovativeness ($\alpha=.001$), effectiveness ($\alpha=.009$), competitive advantage ($\alpha=.009$) and efficiency ($\alpha=.042$). Furthermore, beta values of all organizational performance measures have a positive relationship with innovativeness having the highest beta value of 0.585 and sales turnover with the lowest beta value of 0.085. These results imply that in general, green marketing practices positively influence on organizational performance. However, it should be noted that such positive relationship is only statistically significant for

innovativeness, effectiveness, competitive advantage and efficiency. The results appear to suggest that green marketing practices mainly have influence on the strategic performance indicators of organizational performance.

To unearth the overall effect of green marketing practices on organizational performance, a regression analysis was conducted. The relevant results are contained in Table 7.

Table 7: Model coefficients

| Model coefficients | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig |
|--|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 1.127 | .348 | | 3.238 | .002 |
| The Composite index of Green marketing practices | .420 | .113 | .386** | 3.698 | .000 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Performance | | | | | |

**Significant at $P \leq 0.01$

Source: Primary Data

As shown in Table 7, the beta value of the computed (composite index) scores of green marketing practices is 0.386 with a t-test value of 3.698 and significance level of $\alpha = .000$. The hypothesis that there is a relationship between green marketing practices and organizational performance is therefore, supported. This means that the level of green marketing effort positively enhances organizational performance.

Green Marketing Practices and Corporate Image

The hypothesis to be tested was:

H₂: There is a relationship between green marketing practices and corporate image of ISO certified organizations in Kenya.

To determine the relationship between green marketing practices and corporate image, a linear regression analysis was conducted. The relevant results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Regression results of Green Marketing Practices on Corporate Image

a) Model Summary

| Model Summary | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| | .044 ^a | .002 | -.011 | .94303 |

b) Model ANOVA

| Model ANOVA | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------------|----------------|----|-------------|------|-------------------|
| Regression | .132 | 1 | .132 | .148 | .701 ^a |
| Residual | 68.477 | 77 | .889 | | |
| Total | 68.609 | 78 | | | |

c) Model coefficients

| Model coefficients | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|--|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 5.539 | .443 | | 12.502 | .000 |
| Green Marketing Practices | .056 | .145 | .044 | .385 | .701 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Green marketing practices | | | | | |
| b. Dependent Variable: corporate image | | | | | |

Source: Primary Data

Results in Table 8 show a very low positive relationship between green marketing practices and corporate image with a beta value of .044 and a t-value of 0.385, which are not statistically significant. These results are surprising and inconsistent with those by Ottman (2003), D'Souza and colleagues (2006) and the European Commission (2010) who linked green marketing practices to corporate image management and improvement. This implies that green marketing practices do not appear to have direct influence on corporate image among Kenyan firms. This can be explained by the fact that the concept of green marketing is relatively new in the minds of stakeholders and is not one of those they use to judge the corporate image of organizations in Kenya. The hypothesis is therefore, rejected.

Corporate Image and Organizational Performance

The hypothesis to be tested was:

H₃: There is a relationship between corporate image and performance of ISO certified organizations in Kenya.

The current study hypothesized that there is a significant relationship between corporate image and organizational performance. To test the relationship, a regression analysis was carried out for individual performance measures and thereafter with composite performance index.

Results of correlation analysis between corporate image and various measures of organization performance of the study are presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Correlation between Corporate Image and Various Measures of Organizational Performance

| | Pearson Correlation coefficient |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Corporate image and innovativeness | .066 |
| Corporate image and efficiency | .060 |
| Corporate image and effectiveness | .058 |
| Corporate image and competitive advantage | .112 |
| Corporate image and market share | .163 |
| Corporate image and sales turnover | .181 |
| Corporate image and gross profit | .063 |

Source: Primary Data

As shown in Table 9, there is weak positive relationship between corporate image and organization performance as depicted by the low r values, which ranged from .058 to .181. These findings are surprising because existing empirical and theoretical literature have a contrary view (Smith, 1993; Ottman, 1993; Hu and; Porter and Van der Linde, 1995; Corrigan, 1996).

The summary of effect of corporate image on individual measures of organizational performance is depicted in Table 10.

Table 10: Summary of the effects of Individual Measures of Corporate Image on individual measures of organizational Performance

| Organization performance as function of Corporate image | B | SE | Beta | T | Sig. |
|---|-------|------|-------|--------|------|
| Organization Effectiveness as a function of corporate image | .062 | .124 | .058 | .501 | .618 |
| Innovativeness as a function of corporate image | .085 | .147 | .066 | .232 | .563 |
| Efficiency as a function of corporate image | .070 | .134 | .066 | .527 | .600 |
| Competitive advantage as a function of corporate image | .166 | .167 | .112 | .991 | .325 |
| Sales turnover as a function of corporate image | .206 | .194 | .148 | 1.060 | .294 |
| Gross profit as a function of corporate image | .064 | .200 | .045 | .318 | .751 |
| Market Share as a function of corporate image | -.454 | .297 | -.182 | -1.529 | .131 |
| Overall Composite Performance Index | .182 | .096 | .211 | 1.895 | .062 |

Source: Primary Data

The study results in Table 10 reveal statistically non-significant linear relationships between corporate image and all measures of organizational performance. The overall composite performance index is also not significantly ($\beta = 0.062$) influenced by corporate image. It is important to note that significance level of results is determined by a number of factors including the number of units in the study and testing level. The overall conclusion for the hypothesis is that the results tend to be inconsistent with the existing literature (Wall, 2005; Chen *et. al.*, 2006; Chang and Fong, 2010).

Green Marketing Practices, Corporate Image and Organizational Performance

The hypothesis here was:

H₄: Corporate Image mediates the relationship between green marketing practices and organizational performance.

The relevant study results for testing hypothesis 4 are depicted in Table 11.

Table 11: Regression Results of the effect of Intervening Variable (Corporate Image) on Individual Measures of Performance

| Model Summary | Regression results of green marketing practices on individual performance measures | | | | Regression Results of Green marketing practices and Corporate Image on Individual Performance Measures | | | | | |
|--|--|----------------|---------------------|------|--|----------------|-----------------------|-------|----------|------|
| | R | R ² | F | Sig | R | R ² | R ² Change | F | F change | Sig |
| Market share | .167 ^a | .028 | 1.962 | .166 | .317 | .100 | .072 | 4.189 | 2.227 | .190 |
| Sales turnover | .085 ^a | .007 | .373 | .544 | .266 | .071 | .064 | 1.867 | 1.494 | .165 |
| Effectiveness | .311 ^{**} | .096 | 7.151 | .009 | 0.60 | .004 | -.092 | .133 | -7.018 | .876 |
| Efficiency | .255 [*] | .065 | 4.319 | .042 | .299 [*] | .089 | .024 | 3.676 | -.643 | .030 |
| Competitive Advantage | .311 ^{**} | .096 | 7.151 | .009 | .336 [*] | .113 | .017 | 4.820 | -.2331 | .011 |
| Innovativeness | .585 ^a | .342 | 38.020 [*] | .000 | .450 ^{**} | .203 | -.139 | 9.669 | -28.351 | .000 |
| Gross profit | .234 ^a | .055 | .663 | .419 | .326 | .106 | .051 | 2.619 | 1.956 | .084 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Green marketing practices | | | | | Predictors:(constant) Green marketing practices and corporate image | | | | | |

*Significant at P≤0.01, Source: Primary Data

The results in Table 11 show that interaction effects of green marketing practices (independent variable) and the mediating variable (corporate image) yielded statistically significant results with respect to some dimensions of organizational performance (innovativeness $\beta = .000$; competitive advantage $\beta = .011$; and efficiency $\beta = .030$). The pertinent results are not statistically significant for market share ($\beta = .190$), gross profit ($\beta = .084$), sales turnover ($\beta = .165$) and effectiveness ($\beta = .876$). The influence of composite measures of green marketing practices on performance is presented in Table 12.

Table 12: Regression results of Green marketing Practices on Organizational Performance

| Model Summary | R | R Square | R Square change | F | Sig |
|--|--------|----------|-----------------|--------|------|
| | .386** | .149 | .149 | 13.678 | .000 |
| Predictor (constant) Green Marketing Practices | | | | | |
| Regression Results of influence of intervening variables | | | | | |
| Model Summary | R | R Square | R Square change | F | Sig |
| | .451** | .204 | .204 | 9.718 | .000 |
| Predictor (constant), Green Marketing, Corporate Image | | | | | |

**Significant at $P \leq 0.01$, Source: Primary data

Results in Table 12 indicate that the intervening variable (corporate image) reduces the statistical significance of green marketing practices. The value of F changed from 13.678 to 9.718. In addition, corporate image strengthens the relationship and

explanatory power of green marketing practices and performance as R^2 value changed from .149 to .204. It is important to note that results still remained significant both before and after the intervening variable was introduced in the regression model. The presented results imply that corporate image significantly mediates the relationship between green marketing practices and performance.

8. Conclusions and Recommendation

The Relationship between Green Marketing Practices and Organizational Performance

The first objective of the study was to determine the relationship that exists between green marketing practices and performance of ISO 9000 and 14000 certified organizations in Kenya. To achieve this objective, respondents were asked to indicate prevalence of green marketing practices in their respective organizations. The results showed that adoption of green marketing practices in Kenya was moderate. This is consistent with theoretical and empirical evidence, which assert that green marketing seems to have underperformed despite the euphoric discovery of the environment by marketing practitioners and academics in the early 1970s (Polonsky, 1994; Crane, 2005). Furthermore, research findings are in line with Cronin and Colleaguesl (2010) who state that though green marketing strategies are beneficial to people and the planet, if superior profits are not present it is unlikely that organizations will engage fully in these practices.

The study hypothesized that there is a relationship between green marketing practices and performance. This hypothesis was supported. This is because although the relationships between green marketing practices and individual measures of organizational performance according to results were statistically significant for innovativeness, effectiveness, competitive advantage and efficiency but not significant for market share, sales turnover and gross profit, the overall results showed that the relationship between green marketing practices and performance was statistically significant. Therefore, it can be inferred that as the level of green marketing practices increases, organization performance also increases.

The significant relationship between green marketing practices and innovativeness, effectiveness, competitive advantage, and efficiency is consistently supported in literature (Lanole & Tanguay, 2000; Porter and Van der Linde, 1995). Furthermore, other researchers have also argued that although the cost of green marketing effort is substantial, this effort has been linked to increased financial performance, competitiveness, and innovation benefits (Kassinis & Vafeas, 2006; King & Lenox, 2002; Klassen & Whybark, 1999; Majumdar & Marcus, 2001). From a strategic point of view, firms that engage in green marketing practices find these actions to be a source of competitive advantage, especially if the organization's primary stakeholders value environmental initiatives (Rivera-Camino, 2007). The influence exerted by green marketing practices on firms' performance, particularly competitive advantage, may also result from the positive impact on firms' costs and differentiation levels (Molina-Azorín et al, 2009).

The significant relationship between green marketing practices and efficiency could be as a result of straight forward improved materials efficiency due to use of less raw materials, lower transportation costs and lower internal materials handling costs, among others (Wheatley, 1993). Furthermore, green marketing practices may achieve efficiency through preventing pollution, which may, in turn, enable the firm to save pollution control costs, input and energy consumption. Reuse of materials through recycling is another contributor to efficiency (Hart, 1997; Taylor, 1992). Therefore, companies must learn to view environmental improvement in terms of resource productivity.

The results that there is no significant relationship between green marketing practices and market share, sales turnover and gross profit are contrary to the belief that companies, worldwide, have used green marketing to bolster market share (Wasik, 1997). The results also disagree with Ottman (1999), Conway (1990), and Holusha (1991b) as well as Gerstman and Meyers (1989) who theorized that these practices can improve profitability and market share. However, the results agree with Lee and Rhee (2007) who argue that though many researchers support the view that proactive green marketing practices lead to higher financial performance, there is still difficulty in accepting the positive relationship as a universal law.

A further explanation as to why green marketing practices are not significantly related to gross profit could be because of substantial initial costs associated with them as well as inadequate understanding of stakeholder and consumer perceptions of these

practices. It means that firms are not likely to reap financial rewards associated with green strategies in the short-term (Cronin *et. al.*, 2010). In general, these results agree with Jacobs and colleagues' (2010) views that the relationship between green marketing practices and performance is partial.

Relationship between Green Marketing Practices and Corporate Image

The second objective of the study was to determine the relationship that exists between green marketing practices and corporate image of ISO certified organizations in Kenya. The study hypothesized that there is a significant relationship between green marketing practices and corporate image. The initial investigation showed that majority of the studied organizations had a positive corporate image. Further analysis using linear regression analysis to assess the direction of relationship and statistical significance between the variables indicated that green marketing practices are positively related to corporate image and that variation in corporate image is influenced, to a very small extent, by green marketing practices. Hypothesis test yielded mixed results regarding the relationship between green marketing practices and corporate image. The results are largely inconsistent with literature, which suggests that a positive relationship exists between green marketing practices and corporate image (Ottman, 2003; European Commission, 2010). Overall results showed that the relationship between green marketing practices and corporate image was not statistically significant this again implies that stakeholders in Kenya do not use green marketing practices to judge its image due to the fact that these practices are not familiar or relatively new to them.

Relationship between Corporate Image and Performance

The relevant results indicated that corporate image predict organizational effectiveness, competitive advantage and innovativeness. A good corporate image, according to existing theoretical and empirical evidence, creates competitive advantage through improvement in sales, customer satisfaction, loyalty and support of new products by customers, amongst others (Smith, 1993; Chang and Fang, 2010). In addition, corporate image can help a company achieve competitive advantage over its rivals because positive reputation is a powerful corporate asset and may be the basis for a consumer's purchasing decision. Furthermore, increasing competition has led to narrowing of the distinction between prices, technologies or features of different products. A good corporate image, together with a sound business strategy, can result to competitive advantage, which, in turn, improves the bottom line of an organization and its ability to face challenges in a complex business environment.

There is minimal existing literature either supporting or disagreeing with the significant relationship between corporate image and organization effectiveness as well as corporate image and innovativeness. However, as far as corporate image and effectiveness are concerned, one explanation that can be offered is that a positive organization's image can affect employees' work attitudes and behaviours resulting in organizational performance particularly effectiveness (Riordan *et. al.*, 1997).

According to Fatt and colleagues (2000), in the 21st century, innovation and creativity may not be sufficient to guarantee

success of a company because there is an increasing emphasis on whether or not a company is a trusted member of the community and a good global citizen. This further helps to exemplify the relationship between corporate image and organization effectiveness.

The study results further showed that corporate image does not appear to influence on sales turnover, gross profit, market share and efficiency. Lack of a linear relationship between corporate image and sales turnover, specifically could be because corporate image alone may not have sufficient power to influence on sales turnover. According to Fatt and co-workers (2000), corporate image is one of the pre-determinants of sales turnover, other pre-determinants are quality and customer satisfaction. This implies that corporate image alone may not be a precursor of sales turnover. As a matter of fact, sales turnover and customer satisfaction are determinants of corporate image.

The partially inconsistent relationship between corporate image and gross profit could be because corporate image building is a very costly exercise, whose benefits accrue in the long run (Evans *et. al.*, 2011).

Influence of Corporate Image on the Relationship between Green Marketing Practices and Performance

Corporate social responsibilities and environmental issues engagements by organizations are important drivers of corporate image and reputation, which, in turn, affect a firm's performance positively in terms of customer satisfaction and financial returns

(Tuppen, 2004; Uadiale and Fagbemi, 2011). This study revealed that corporate image mediates the relationship between green marketing practices and performance although results are only significant at $\beta = .062$. Inglis and colleagues (2006) concluded that there is no significant relationship between corporate image and performance.

Implications

The study results showed that green marketing practices do not appear to influence market share, sales turnover and gross profit. The implication of these results to the theory is that it has confirmed the existing theoretical literature (Cronin *et. al.*, 2010; Lee and Rhee, 2007). It also contradicted the existing theoretical as well as empirical evidence (Ottman, 1999; Wasik, 1997; Holusha 1991; Conway, 1990; Gerstman & Meyers, 1989). The implication to the practice is that green marketing practices benefits will be felt in the long-run probably after larger scale adoption of these practices by an organization due to initial cost associated with their design, development, implementation and acceptance in the market. Another implication is that marketers should inform, persuade and remind consumers on benefits of green products both to them and to the environment because the general population in developing countries such as Kenya has inadequate knowledge on environmental issues. This is likely to improve the understanding of consumers as well as their perceptions about green products. Practitioners and managers should also identify and target the right customers and satisfy their needs if the organization is to enhance its market share, sales and profits.

According to study results, the relationship between green marketing practices and corporate image is not convincingly significant, which suggests that corporate image may not linearly affect green marketing practices. The implication of this to theory and practice is that corporate image is a function of multiple determinants, among them financial soundness, a well managed company, high quality products and services, and high earnings (Fatt, 2000). As the public becomes more aware of the causal link between rising environmental and social issues, companies should establish a corporate identity of social and environmental consciousness and communicate the same to all stakeholders with a view to enhancing the relationship between green marketing and corporate image.

Pertaining to the relationship between corporate image and performance, results showed that corporate image does not significantly influence performance, in general. However, it influences on effectiveness, competitive advantage and innovativeness but does not influence on sales turnover, gross profit, and market share. The implication of these findings to theory and practice is that corporate image is very important to an organization. It is also a very complex issue because it is affected by a multiplicity of factors. It is worth noting that corporate image is a long-term process and involves efforts of the entire company. However, proper development of a good corporate image, together with a sound business strategy, may enable a company to achieve the necessary competitive advantage in order to improve its bottom line and face the challenges in a complex business environment.

Directions for Further Research

The current research study, like any other study, was not without limitations. The study did not attain 100 percent response rate due to unwillingness and unavailability of some of targeted respondents. Furthermore, the study only targeted ISO 9000 and 14000 certified organizations based on the researchers' view that they were more likely to be knowledgeable about green marketing issues. The current results may not be generalizable beyond this population.

Given that this study focused only on ISO 9000 and 14000 certified organizations in Kenya, it is recommended that a similar study should be conducted among organizations that are not ISO certified as well as those in the informal sector with a view to broadening the scope of knowledge. The study can also be replicated in other developing countries in Africa as well as the developed countries to determine whether or not the same results would be obtained.

The study used perceptual measures of internal publics particularly marketing managers. This restriction may not be relevant to all variables of this study because, as Baker and Sinkula (2005) put it, subjective performance measures are highly correlated with objective measures (Lo'Pez-Rodri'Guez, 2009). In addition, a study on why green marketing practices is not a strong predictor of corporate image as well as market share, sales turnover and profitability should be investigated. Overall, these limitations did not negatively affect the quality of the study. Thus, the study has made a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge. The current study did not cover the antecedents of green marketing

practices. Therefore, conducting a study to identify such antecedents should be conducted. In view of the fact that this study focused on organization as a unit of analysis, another study targeting consumers' perceptions on green marketing practices as well as their preferences for green products is a fertile field of future study.

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