CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND PRODUCTS SALES: ASSESSING THE IMPACTS OF BAYER LIFE SCIENCE PROJECT ON SALES OF AGRO-PRODUCTS AMONG SMALLHOLDER FARMERS IN WEST POKOT COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The general objective of this study was to investigate the impact of CSR on sales of company products. Using Bayer Life Science Project 2017, the study sought to achieve the following specific objectives: to examine the impact of the project on the sales of the 'belt' insecticide in West Pokot, to establish the impact of the project on the purchase of new hybrid onion seed variety 'Matahari F1' among youthful farmers in West Pokot; and to investigate the impact of project on uptake of new animal health product 'Bayticol Pour-On' among smallholder farmers in West Pokot. The study relied on evaluation design with a target population comprising of Bayer East Africa's sales and marketing staff, the Life Science Project team, agrovet retail shops, key dealers and selected project beneficiaries, approximated at 500 people. The study selected a sample of 200 respondents made up of 160 smallholder farmers drawn using stratified random sampling from three groups of farmers based on the project activities, 36 sales and marketing staff from Bayer and the agrovet dealers in West Pokot, both selected using systematic random sampling from registers provided by the project team, and four members of the project team selected using purposive sampling. Quantitative data from smallholder farmers was collected using survey questionnaires while qualitative data from Bayer sales/marketing team, agrovet dealers and the Bayer Project team were collected using interview schedules. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics generated by the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 and presented in tables while qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis presented in report and quotations extensively used to augment the survey data. The study found out that all the stakeholders involved in the Life Science Project in West Pokot were aware of the Belt Insecticide and were using it to control insects in plantations of smallholder farmers in West Pokot. The farmers were aware of the goals and activities of the Bayer Life Project. The study also found out that Bayer Life Science Project positively influenced the purchase of 'Matahari F1' onion seed variety by increasing the rate of purchase of the onion variety among youth in West Pokot County. The demand for the 'Matahari F1' onion seed variety among youth was higher than it was before the project launch in 2017. The study also found that most of the smallholder farmers had adopted the use of Bayticol parasiticides especially by recommending it to be sprayed on the leaves of crops to control weeds and other parasites. The study concluded that corporate social responsibility projects are important in behaviour change. Especially, the Bayer Life Project changed the purchase behaviour of smallholder farmers in West Pokot. The study recommended that other projects on new techniques and practices should be run by the same company to enhance sustainable food production in West Pokot, such as horticulture, fish farming and goat farming for diversification purposes.

Key Words: *corporate social responsibility, products sales, Bayer Life science project, sales, agro-products, smallholder farmers, West Pokot County, Kenya*

INTRODUCTION

Corporate social responsibility (CSR), also called corporate conscience, corporate citizenship, social performance, or sustainable responsible business is a form of corporate self-regulation integrated into a business model. CSR policy functions as a built-in, self-regulating mechanism whereby business monitors and ensures its active compliance with the spirit of the law, ethical standards, and international norms (Scholtens, 2014). The goal of CSR is to embrace responsibility for the company's actions and encourage a positive impact through its activities on the environment, consumers, employees, communities, stakeholders and the general public. The contemporary view is that business, as important and influential members of society, are responsible to help maintain and improve the society's overall welfare, and that society cannot tolerate profits or existence of business that do not serve it. Majority of research on corporate social responsibility roams around financial performance, consumer behaviour and its effects on environment for instance Lin *et al*., (2014), Renneboog et al. (2016) and Arx and Ziegler (2016) have studied relationship between CSR and corporate financial performance. Further the strategic significance of corporate social responsibility for corporate success has been emphasized (Heslin & Achoa, 2015).

From a global perspective, CSR has been adopted mainly by European, U.S.A and Japanese companies such as British Petroleum, Shell and Nestle among others. International conventions such as the United Nations Global Compact MNE declaration and OECD Principles have also encouraged companies to adopt CSR. These companies have implemented deliberate corporate citizenship programs not only in the countries where their headquarters are located, but throughout their global operations. This has been necessitated by the realization that those companies deemed to be behaving badly as far as issues on human rights and environmental issues is concerned are bound to face business failures, such as falling sales attributed to boycotts of their products. According to Schwartz, (2015) the Nestle boycotts was probably the most global boycott. It lasted ten years. The boycott was attributed to instant breast milk formula, which advocacy groups were against as it was to discourage the use of breast milk and hence undermine early childhood development.

In Kenya, CSR is increasingly being adopted by such companies such as Barclays Bank, Del-Monte, Kenya Breweries Limited, Safaricom, Nation Media Group and Bayer East Africa Limited. Del-Monte has found itself in wrong books with human rights activists due to negative publicity attributed to media claims of human rights violations towards the workers and surrounding communities. Since adoption of CSR is inevitable although not legally binding in current business understanding, its influence on profitability would perhaps stimulate its wider and speedy acceptance.

Various associations have developed their own definitions of Corporate Social Responsibility. The underlying definition being operating a business in a manner that meets or exceeds the ethical, legal, commercial, and public expectations of society. Companies see corporate Social Responsibility as more than a collection of discrete practices or occasional gestures, or initiatives motivated by marketing, public relations, or other business benefits. Rather, it is viewed as a comprehensive set of policies, practices and programs that are integrated throughout business operations, and decision-making processes that are supported and rewarded by top management. Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) give the meaning as Corporate Social Responsibility is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families, as well as of the local community and society. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development has given the definition as the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as the local community and society at large. To sum it all up this is a concept that an enterprise is accountable for its impact on all relevant stakeholders.

Sales performance alludes to the volume of offers accomplished inside a predefined period contrasted with predetermined sales levels (Siegler, 2015). Accomplishing more noteworthy sale execution is the most essential part of sales pioneers as it specifically impacts on their key execution pointers. Sales performance has been conceptualized to incorporate both the result and behavioural measurements (Silva, 2016). Sales execution is utilized to decide the capacity of a salesman to finalize the negotiations with the organization and meet set performance objectives as plot by the organization or business. Sales performance can likewise demonstrate the rate of client reliability to the business or a particular worker. Sales performance becomes the value of the result of the price of a product or service deducted from all costs (supplies, materials, human labour, etc.) that go into the effort.

The effect of corporate social responsibility on sales is well illustrated in cross-promotion. To understand the advantage of cross-promoting a product alongside corporate social responsibility efforts, consider the consumer's perspective. Cross-promotion draws attention to corporate social activities and at least one product. Instead of putting a game on the back of a cereal box, for example, a cereal maker might print a feature about its rainforest mitigation activities (Kotler & Lee, 2015). If the company announces it will feature more stories about the rainforest, specifically related to its activities, people might buy more cereal boxes to read them. Or, people might keep buying the cereal brand because they like the company's cause.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

There has been growing awareness among business stakeholders especially consumers on issues that concern the environment, product safety, health and human rights. Globalisation has also led to changing business practices on the realisation that what happens locally in an organisations environment is bound to have impacts at the international level. This has led to what is now known as ethical business where organisations are encouraged to pursue profits, but not at the expense of the social and ecological environment. Many corporate organizations have engaged in various forms of public relations activities such as CSR, sponsorships and public campaigns to either promote their corporate visibility or market different products. Whether CSR as a public relations strategy has been effective in sales promotion and to what extent CSR has been successful in promoting sales of company products has not been fully established. In light of this significant resource have been used, there is therefore a need to establish whether these social responsibility initiatives have any impact on a company's top line. This study seeks to identify whether marketing and promotion of company products is a 'hidden' objective of CSR and to what extent CSR impacts on a company's sales. Locally studies carried out on corporate social responsibility include; Amara (2013) did a study on the factors that influence choice of corporate social responsibility programs among commercial banks in Kenya. Likewise, Omwenga (2013), did a study on the management perception of corporate social responsibility at Kenya power lighting company while Munyoki (2013), did a study on the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility practices and market share among supermarkets in Kisumu town. Muiruri (2014), who did a study on the challenges of aligning corporate social responsibility to corporate strategy for Safaricom Foundation and lastly, Mwai (2015), conducted a study on the impact of the corporate social responsibility on the corporate financial performance in the corporate and NGO partnerships in Kenya. It is evident therefore from the foregoing that no study has been done linking corporate social responsibility with sales of company products. This study therefore aims to bridge this gap by investigating the impact of corporate social responsibility on sales of different company products.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The general objective of the study was to investigate the impact of the Bayer Life Science project on sales performance of Bayer East Africa Limited in West Pokot County.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the impact of Bayer Life Science Project on sales performance of the 'Belt' insecticide in West Pokot
2. To establish the impact of Bayer Life Science Project on the purchase of Bayer's new hybrid onion seed variety 'Matahari F1' among youth groups in West Pokot County
3. To investigate the impact of Bayer Life Science Project on the uptake of Bayer's 'Bayticol Pour-On' parasiticide among smallholder farmers in West Pokot County

LITERATURE REVIEW

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Phenomenon

Corporate Social Responsibility is not a new issue (Ullmann, 2015). Corporate Social Responsibility is clearly not a new phenomenon, however in the recent past, CSR is in spotlight more than ever before and this is because multinational corporations across the world are engaging more into CSR activities due to an increase in the society's demand on environmental and social responsibility. Globalization has led to an increase in the society's anxiety on how a corporate conducts itself (Martin, 2012). Corporate Social Responsibility is the best way for a corporation to care for all needs of its stakeholders. Companies have a duty to satisfy not only the shareholders but include also those with less implicit and explicit claims (McGuire, 2014).

Sims (2013) stated that the business should continue to conduct itself ethically and seek to contribute to economic development whilst improving its workforce's quality of life and the society at large. He argued that there was an expectation on the business to serve as a good corporate citizen whilst contributing to the financial and human resources of the society and to ultimately improve the society's quality of life. Sims argued that generally, CSR is an organization's duty to carry out programs that contribute to the overall welfare of society.

Corporate social responsibility is a set of policies, practices and programs that are set in order to achieve commercial success in ways that honour ethical, commercial, economic and other expectations that the society has for business and making decisions that fairly balance the claims of all key stakeholders (Balabanis, 2015). It is an obligation, beyond that required by the law and economics, for a firm to pursue long term goals that are good for society. It is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as that of the local community and society at large.

Corporate Social responsibility has four dimensions namely; Philanthropic which means giving back to the society. Firms should obey laws protecting consumers, laws promoting equity and protecting the environment; Economic, this society; Ethical means doing good and not harming our natural environment it also comprises values business has a responsibility to the community where they are conducting their business. That responsibility may be carried in many ways. Often companies support or sponsor community events such as medical camps, sports, school fees, festivals, scholarship and awards and environmental clean-up. Most organizations encourage their employees to get involved in their communities. It is not un-usual to find business people holding key positions as community volunteers. Most organization depends on such cadre of volunteers to accomplish their goals. Getting involved in such activities would repay the company in a thousand ways one never even knew existed.

It is generally held that corporate social responsibility (CSR) could increase company profits and thus most large companies are actively engaged in it. Most executives believe that CSR can improve profits. They understand that CSR can promote respect for their company in the marketplace which can result in higher sales, enhance employee loyalty and attract better personnel to the firm. Also, CSR activities focusing on sustainability issues may lower costs and improve efficiencies as well. Corporate Social responsibility behaviour can benefit the firm in several ways, It aids the attraction and retention of staff, attracts green and ethical investment, attracts ethically conscious customers, lead to a reduction in costs through re-cycling, It differentiates the firm from its competitor and can be a source of competitive advantage and it also lead to increased profitability in the long run.

Snieska (2015) defines corporate social responsibility as basically what an organization does to positively influence the society in which it exists. It could take the form of community relations, volunteer assistance programs, health care initiatives, and special education. Corporate social responsibility is the way in which corporations take back to the community for having allowed it to operate and make profit. Dubrin (2016) defines corporate social responsibility as the idea that firms have obligations to society beyond their economic obligations to owners or stockholders and beyond those prescribed by law or contract. He goes on to explain that both ethics and social responsibility relate to the goodness or organization's morality. Corporate social responsibility is a broader concept that relates to an organization's impact on society beyond doing what is ethical. Therefore, to behave in a socially responsible way, managers must be aware of how their actions influence the environment.

Gordon (2015) describe social responsibility as the implied, enforced or felt obligation of managers, acting in their official capacities, to serve or protect the interests of other groups other than themselves. This calls for banks to incorporate in its strategic planning on how it plans to give back to the community. Chandler (2015) defined strategy as the determination of the basic long term goals and objectives of an enterprise and the adoption of action and allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals.

It is an unwritten law that organizations should adopt CSR which covers a wide range of issues such as employee relations, human rights, corporate ethics, plant closures, community relations and the environment (Wanyama, 2012). Kotler (2015) posits that CSR strategies or corporate social initiatives are major activities undertaken by a firm to support social causes and to fulfil commitment to society. Social undertakings most often supported through these initiatives are those that contribute to community health, safety, education, employment, the environment, community and economic development and other basic human needs and desires. Carroll and Shabana (2013) observed that there is a clear distinction between CSR, which can be a strategic business management concept, and charity, sponsorships or philanthropy. They maintain that CSR is about how companies manage the business processes to produce an overall positive impact on society. Jooh *et al*., (2014) opined that important domain in CSR for business researchers has been in sustainability due to the imperative that businesses must create value for their stakeholders while simultaneously meeting their social responsibility obligations, enhanced further by the notion of engaging beyond compliance achieved through adoption of CSR culture, which makes the business ethically desirable, even if it takes away resources from a firm's immediate needs (Eisingerich, 2011). Though CSR diverts resources of an organization into non-directly profitable activities, it has a direct impact to the organization in the long run, and can be linked to the long term development of organization performance, which is best measured as organization growth.

Akpan (2016) found that in developing countries, the importance of CSR has been recognized by most corporations to ensure long-term business success where CSR has been adopted within companies' policies, strategies, programmes and commitments toward social and environmental undertakings. However, he opines that organizations must evaluate CSR projects in light of their ability in producing not only social benefits to the community but also economic benefits and thereby, ensuring value for stockholders. Babalola (2012) posits that organizations have developed a variety of strategies for dealing with the intersection of societal needs, the natural environment and corresponding business imperatives with respect to how deeply and how well they are integrating social responsibility approaches into both strategy and daily operations of organizations worldwide.

In many cases, the time frame of the costs and benefits of CSR are out of alignment. The costs are immediate, and the benefits are not often realized immediately. Nevertheless, many benefits can be identified. An example is where a bank regarded as socially responsible can also benefit from its reputation within the business community by having increased ability to attract capital and trading partners (Wanyama 2012). Ratichek (2014) claim that reputation is hard to quantify and measure and it is even harder to measure how much it increases the value, and though organizations have developed methods to measure the benefits of their advertisement campaigns, similar methods can and should be able to be applied in the case of corporate reputation.

Corporate Social Responsibility in Developing Countries

There have been similar approaches towards business responsibility in many different countries (Blowfield *et al*., 2015; Prieto-Carron *et al*., 2016). However, the current dissemination of Corporate Social Responsibility instruments is somewhat different in that it stems from the Anglo-American tradition, highlighting the voluntary nature of Corporate Social Responsibility as well as focusing especially on Northern multinational companies (MNCs) (Fox, 2014). In doing so, it follows the trend of a diffusion process of policy instruments from North to South and therefore of a global convergence of policy structures (Jänicke, Kern, & Jörgens, 2014; Tews, Busch, & Jörgens, 2013; Weidner & Jänicke, 2014). The dramatic rise in importance of Corporate Social Responsibility from a developing country perspective is based on both the multitude of new large-scale Corporate Social Responsibility approaches, as well as the new role that has been assigned to the private sector vis-à-vis official development assistance. Doing well by doing well has gained a large and growing number of advocates.

A plethora of best practice examples of Corporate Social Responsibility in developing country contexts has evolved, to a large extent highlighting the “business case of Corporate Social Responsibility”. Several studies highlight the economic potential for Multi-National Corporations tapping into developing country markets (Kirchgeorg & Winn, 2016; Prahalad, 2015; Thorpe & Prakash-Mani, 2013; World Business Council on Sustainable Development, 2014). Regardless of the question whether these new Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives are effectively producing viable outcomes in terms of (sustainable) development, Corporate Social Responsibility has proven to be an attractive option vis-à-vis regulative approaches.

Business can increase its regulatory autonomy; host governments can devolve responsibility to business and therefore save scarce resources; and non-governmental organizations can raise their profile and funding opportunities (Michael, 2013). One tangible result that has certainly been achieved by the current Corporate Social Responsibility “movement” is that it has got people talking about worker rights, global governance, sustainable enterprise, and all manner of topics that have relevance. Legitimacy as a key driver and determinant of Corporate Social Responsibility in Developing Countries to the well-being of the poor and marginalized (Blowfield, 2015). However, one central theme regarding Corporate Social Responsibility in a developing country context is that current practice is outpacing research on the broader implications of this increased reliance on business self-regulation. Therefore, the Corporate Social Responsibility and development agenda is shaped and consolidated while failing to address a number of substantial shortcomings of the concept itself Prieto-Carron *et al*., 2016). In his analysis of the relationship between companies and poorer local communities, Newell concludes, mainstream Corporate Social Responsibility approaches assume a set of conditions that do not exist in most of the world.

Corporate Social Responsibility in Kenyan companies

A study conducted by Ayele (2013) to investigate the corporate social responsibility practices of polythene manufactures in Kenya found that though they were well aware of the concept, they were not in a position to implement it. This is because of the prohibitive costs associated with the practice. Many are of the view that their main responsibility is production and profit maximization. This is the Friedman doctrine in which the argument against corporate social responsibility holds that the sole responsibility of the company is to its shareholders, and it is set up to earn the highest return on investment. Managers in businesses are duty bound to maximize profits, and the company is strictly speaking an economic institution that has the sole purpose of creating economic wealth.
For Kenyan companies the lure of corporate social responsibility is great, but financial pressures place an obstacle. As Rue (2015) contends, the greatest barrier to corporate social responsibility is in the form of financial analysts and stockholders. In their concern for immediate profits, they deliberately ignore investment in areas that cannot be accurately measured, and whose returns are long run in nature. This pressure for short term earnings affects corporate social responsibility as most companies are geared to short term profit goals. According to Kamau (2015), managers who seek corporate social responsibility goals may find stockholders unsympathetic, and many are very cautious when it comes to expenditure on social responsibility initiatives. The challenges facing corporate social responsibility initiatives in Kenyans firms are perhaps due to the influence and pressure exerted by those who argue that a company has no business pursuing social goals. The concept of corporate social responsibility is very important to companies today especially in this era of intense competition, changing customer expectations and global trade. Managers should find innovative ways of attracting and retaining customers, and one of the ways is to be good corporate citizens demonstrated in consistent corporate social responsibility initiatives.

The corporate social responsibility concept has become very popular in Kenya, with many companies adopting it (Okeyo 2014). Nation Media Group, for example is actively involved in fencing the Aberdares forest and also offers to publish the social responsibility activities of other firms at zero cost in its newspapers. East African Breweries on the other hand has sponsored the government hospital beds project to the tune of kshs 4 million and runs a kshs 8 million annual Guinness Strathmore University scholarship award. Magadi Soda Company continues to sponsor schools, hospitals and community based projects around Lake Magadi (Corporate Concern, 2015). Mabati Rolling Mills and British American Tobacco are also actively involved in contributing to community projects. Other companies actively involved in social responsibility initiatives include Reckitt and Benkiser, which sponsors the Dettol heart run, Safaricom limited and its Safaricom Foundation and the East African Standard.

Although corporate social responsibility is now very important, there is no much evidence from a majority of Kenyan companies on its level of implementation. This is probably due to the fact that it is regarded as a public relations exercise (Mutuku, 2014). It may also be due to the conception that social responsibility has no direct influence on performance and that there is no evidence of its return to investment. In this era of intense competition and fast changing consumer needs, firms have to design innovative ways of attracting and retaining customers. Corporate social responsibility can be used to create and maintain appositive corporate image that will differentiate the company from the competition and also appeal to interests and causes that are at the heart of consumers.

Corporate Social Responsibility Activities

Corporate social responsibility activities have four distinct and heterogeneous dimensions that exist. The first dimension is an environmental capability. The natural environment these days is a very important part of doing business (Panapanaan *et al*, 2013). The firms are required to manage their impact on the natural environment through means such as reduction of waste (water, air and solid waste), planting of trees, emissions, recycle of waste and their overall consumption of raw materials (McWilliams and Siegel, 2015). Organizations are subsequently expected to disclosure their level of involvement with the natural environment as part of an inclusion in their sustainability reports.

The second dimension is a workplace capability. It is expected that employees will be provided with a safe and healthy workplace (Carroll, 2013). This includes offices with good lighting, fresh air, and enough space as well as good and right tools and equipment. Workplace may also involve the management of human resources through an ethical work climate, employee empowerment and teamwork (McWilliams & Siegel, 2015) through training and development programs. Organization should also improve the balance between work and home life of its employee by having form such as day care centre for employees' children. Many organizations list both People and Health and Safety as important areas of CSR that they concentrate on within their sustainability reports.

The third dimension is a marketplace capability. This dimension comprises the development of long-term ethical relationships with suppliers, customers, and business partners (Whysall, 2014). Further it involves manufacturing a product that is safe and desired by the community as well as educating them on usage of those product or services. The final dimension is a societal capability. The societal obligation involves short-term investments into the local community for the current generation (Panapanaan *et al*, 2013) as well as long-term investments into the local community for future generations. Philanthropic behaviour of a monetary or non-monetary nature and the promotion of basic human rights of all local and global citizens also fall within this dimension. In Kenya such activities include investment in Jua kali sector, sponsorship of sports among others.

Factors influencing CSR Adoption in Organizations

CSR has two meanings. First, it's a general name for any theory of the corporation that emphasizes both the responsibility to make money and the responsibility to interact ethically with the surrounding community. Second, corporate social responsibility is also a specific conception of that responsibility to profit while playing a role in broader questions of community welfare. Bob (2012) argues that CSR is a specific theory of the way corporations interact with the surrounding community and the larger world. In this regards, CSR is composed of four obligations:

The economic responsibility to make money. Required by simple economics, this obligation is the business version of the human survival instinct. Companies that don't make profits are; in a modern market economy, doomed to perish. For the vast majority of operations, however, there have to be profits. Without them, there's no business and no business ethics. These views were also supported by (Brammer & Pavellin, 2014).

The legal responsibility to adhere to rules and regulations. Like the previous, this responsibility is not controversial. What proponents of CSR argue, however, is that this obligation must be understood as a proactive duty. That is, laws aren't boundaries that enterprises skirt and cross over if the penalty is low; instead, responsible organizations accept the rules as a social good and make good faith efforts to obey not just the letter but also the spirit of the limits.

The ethical responsibility to do what's right even when not required by the letter or spirit of the law. This is the theory's keystone obligation, and it depends on a coherent corporate culture that views the business itself as a citizen in society, with the kind of obligations that citizenship normally entails (Bob, 2012). The philanthropic responsibility to contribute to society's projects even when they're independent of the particular business. Sensitivity to local stakeholders is a factor according to Clarkson (2014), the CSR concept has been developed in and for medium sized companies. But even though SMEs are unlikely to see CSR in terms of risks to public reputation and brand image, they are often likely to follow sentiments closer to home such as employer motivation and retention, and community involvement. Virtually all firms in their sample regarded local community involvement as an important issue, and were engaged in social or environmental activities at the local level.

Sensitive to public perceptions, one of the most cited drivers of CSR is corporate reputation, or more specifically, the public perception of the firm or of the firm's products or services. This may include the perception of consumers (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2014), of the firm's employees, potential employees and investors, creating a market for socially responsible investments. CSR-related activities may be part of such a strategy which demands considerable corporate resources. In other words, many organizations seem to lack resources, competences, and even the rationale, to utilize CSR as an instrument to fend off government regulations. Still, the literature in general describes businesses' perceptions of government as a threat to autonomy rather than as a source of inspiration.

Organizations through corporate social responsibility are giving back to the community to improve the communities in which they operate. To achieve this they have opted to value-based business practices as drivers to CSR initiatives. Mowat, (2015) presents business ethics as the key drivers of CSR. Business ethics defines how a company integrates core values – such as honesty, trust, respect, and fairness, into its policies, practices, and decision making. Business ethics also involves a company's compliance with legal standards and adherence to internal rules and regulations. Effective Human Resources Management is the most important and critical to a company. According to Moan and Swaen (2014) good CSR practices relating to workplace and labour relations can help in improving the workplace in terms of health and safety, employee relations as well as result in a healthy balance between work and non-work aspects of employees' life. It can also make it easier to recruit employees and make them stay longer, thereby reducing the costs and disruption of recruitment and retraining.

Equal opportunity employer, diversity of workforce that includes people with disability, people from the local community etc., gender policy, code of conduct/guidelines on prevention of sexual harassment at workplace, prevention of HIV/AIDS at workplace, employee volunteering etc. are some of the good practices which reflect CSR practices of a company at the work place according to Moradi and Zaeri (2011). The business process of the company is not just limited to the operations internal to the company but to the entire supply chain involved in goods and services. If anyone from the supply chain neglects social, environmental, human rights or other aspects, it may reflect badly on the company and may ultimately affect business heavily. Thus, a company should use its strategic position to influence the entire supply chain to positively impact the stakeholders.

The products and services of a company are ultimately aimed at the customers; Nzovah (2012). The cost and quality of products may be of greatest concern to the customers but these are not the only aspects that the customers are concerned with. With increased awareness and means of communication, customer satisfaction and loyalty would depend on how the company has produced the goods and services, considering the social, environmental, supply-chain and other such aspects. For a company meeting legal requirements does not comprise CSR but it includes engaging in a way that goes beyond mandatory requirements and delivering environmental benefits. This would include, but not limited to, finding sustainable solutions for natural resources, reducing adverse impacts on environment, reducing environment-risky pollutants/emissions as well as producing environment-friendly goods Moan and Swaen (2014). A major stakeholder to the business is the community in which the company operates. The involvement of a company with the community would depend upon its direct interaction with the community and assessment of issues/risks faced by those living in the company surrounding areas. This helps in delivering a community focused CSR strategy making positive changes to the lives of the people and improving the brand-image of the company. Involvement with the community could be both direct & indirect, through funding and other support for community projects implemented by local agencies.

Recent years have seen a growth in the breadth of topic considered under the CSR umbrella. However, the implementation of CSR leads to various advantages for the companies that will try them. Businesses now acknowledge that it is in their interest to consult their stakeholders and also that by demonstrating social responsibility gain specific benefit, although not all can be quantified in a direct measurable way. More specifically Adams and Zutshi (2014) based on a review of literature points out the CSR benefit such as better recruitment and retention of staff in which Simms (2012) claims that acting responsibly and being accountable for social and environmental impacts assist organizations in attracting and retaining the most talented people.

Improved corporate image and relations with stakeholders as evidence of organizations benefiting by practicing CSR can be seen in a study of 10 entrepreneurs who had developed successful ventures (Joyner & Payne, 2014). The study found that all 10 organisations and their entrepreneurs went beyond requirements of law with respect to CSR and in their interaction with stakeholders. The organizations benefited by growing in size and establishing their presence in the community. Joyner and Payne also identified a positive link between firm's value, business ethics, corporate social responsibility and financial performance, indicating that investors may be making money through socially responsible investments as well as adhering to their own values. Adam (2012) suggested that CSR improved internal decision making and cost savings by ensuring that better internal control system and decision making together with cost savings resulted in continuous improvements. Improved operational and process efficiency results in reduced risk and improved safety at work (Kings, 2012).

Measuring Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate social responsibility is absolutely difficult to assess (Mutuku, 2014). It is a concept with many dimensions, which do not behave similarly and have their own characteristics in different industries. The main approach is to use the reputation indices such as the ratings by New York Stock Exchange, Fortune magazine and locally the company of the year (COYA) awards. All these are based on surveys and opinions of analysts and executives. According to Griffin and Mation (2015), there are eight attributes of reputation namely: quality of management, quality of products, innovativeness, long term investment value, financial soundness, employee talent, use of corporate assets, and responsibility to the environment. These are combined to derive a reputation index. Griffin and Mation (2015) also outline the social audit. This comprises systematic third party assessment of an organization's social behaviour such as community service, environmental action, and corporate philanthropy.

Corporate philanthropy assesses the charitable activities of a firm compared with others. Management social responsibility principles and values of particular firms can also be used to gauge the extent of social responsibility. This assesses the values and principles inherent in an organization's culture such as economic, legal, ethical and discretionary responsibilities. Mutuku (2014) explains that currently, there are no indices developed on corporate social responsibility in Kenya. Hence, very few companies have issued corporate social responsibility reports starting from the year 2004. This should gradually see firms not only releasing their annual financial reports but also including a report on their corporate social responsibility practices.

The Percent Standard is UK's best known benchmark for corporate social responsibility and demonstrates a business commitment to its local community (Muthuri, 2015). It is a voluntary initiative used in benchmarking and measuring cash donations, staff time, and gifts in kind and management time, shown as a percentage of pre-tax profits. The percent giving is widely used in the UK (one per cent) and the US (increased recently to two per cent) to encourage corporate giving. This is not a ceiling mark. It is open both to the large and small businesses. In 2004, 152 businesses in the UK reported their corporate investment through business in the community, and this has encouraged corporate social reporting. The advantages are immense, both to the community and the companies. It recognizes and celebrates corporate giving, raising awareness by reporting publicly and encouraging companies to compare themselves against the best in class. Participating in the index also supports a whole range of business objectives such as building brand familiarity, boosting staff morale, developing skills and generating positive media coverage. The Percent Standard produces meaningful analysis of the full extent of corporate contributions to the community. Besides, the contributions in excess of one per cent of pre-tax profits are recognised with the award of a certificate and the use of the Percent Club logo.

Another method of quantifying CSR is by use of uni-dimensional indicators. This concerns indicators that express a judgment on a single aspect of various socially responsible practices that companies can undertake. The CSP proxies most used in the literature have been: dialogue with local community and philanthropy, orientation towards the client, the degree of involvement in illegal practices and respect for the environment. Ethical rating is also to quantify Corporate Social Responsibility. This concerns a multi-dimensional index elaborated by specialized agencies. Each one of these has devised its own model of quantification on the social results of companies that foresee the selection of some indicators (for the most part concerning stakeholder typologies with which companies interface) to which is singularly attributed a score, then aggregated into a synthetic result (ethical rating) according to an arithmetic or weighted average.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Corporate Social Performance Theory

Bowen (1953) explained that social responsibility of businessmen refers to the obligation of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make decision or to follow those lines of action which are desirable to society. In the 1970s new directions appeared in the field of business and society relationship. These were as a result of increased protests about capitalism and business growing social concerns that led to increased government regulations, procedures and formal requirements (Mele, 2016). One of the requirements was the adaptation of corporate behaviour to social needs and demands including being proactive (Mele, 2016).

In 1979 Carroll introduced the concept of corporate social performance, and later in 1985 Wartick and Cochran extended Carroll’s approach suggesting corporate social involvement rests on the principles of social responsibility, proves of social responsiveness and policy issues of management. In 1991 Wood gave the basic model of corporate social performance which includes institutional, organizational and individual CSR, the process of corporate social responsiveness and outcomes of corporate behaviour.

When it applies to the institution it is known as the principle of legitimacy which states that society grants legitimacy and power to business and that those who don’t use it well tend to lose it. Under the organization CSR, a business should adhere to the standards of performance, law and existing public policy. Individual CSR has to do with the managers exercising discretion in their decision making to ensure socially responsible outcomes. Firms therefore need to be more proactive in publishing reports on their economic, social and environmental performance for their CSR activities to be known.

Social Capital Theory

Research has established the fact that information users prefer other people who might be their colleagues, mates, friends and families as their preferred source of information (Utulu, 2014; Meghaghab, 2015). This form of information seeking behaviour has gradually led to the establishment of webs of relationships among people who seek to access information and other forms of social benefits from one another. The aggregation of relationships between individuals and organizations on the web has tremendously increased because of the proliferation of technology, internet penetration and increase in people's willingness and capacity to use the internet and the benefits. The aggregation of this kind of webs of relationships has been referred to as social capital has increased productivity of organizations.

Woolcock and Narrayan (2014) averred that social capital is, to use a well-known phrase, “not what you know, it's who you know”. Widen-Wulff and Ginman (2014) extended this definition by submitting that social capital is networks, norms, trust, and mutual understanding that allow people with shared objectives act together. As a result, social capital is primarily seen from the perspective of social network formation and social cooperation that bind together those that are interested in the capital available only to people within the particular social web. Concisely, social capital theory is rooted in how individuals' and organizations' self-gain (what they want) and their resources determine who they relate with and who relates with them.

Grootaert et al. (2013) postulated that social capital is usually discussed on two fronts by sociologists and political scientists. While sociologists see social capital as resources such as information, ideas and supports which are only available based on the social relationship one has with other people, political scientists approach social capital research from the perspective of political participation and associational life. Totterman and Widen-Wulff (2014) pointed out that social capital is studied by sociologists and political scientists at three levels: macro, meso, and micro levels. Macro level studies involves citizenship in geographic regions, meso level involves studies of sociological perspectives of business organizations and how units within them exchange capital resources, while micro level studies focus on individuals and their relationship with others which produces capitals. Widen-Wulff and Ginman (2014) put forward three dimensions of social capital: structural, content and relational; and pointed out how information science research developed and used them to explain various aspects of knowledge sharing.

Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory evolved from psychology, sociology, and economics to explain human behaviour based on self-interest and choices made to accomplish personal goals. According to the proponents of social exchange theory (Homans, 1964), Blau (1964, 1967) and Emerson (1972), the basic premise of the theory is that people make choices to maximize rewards and minimize costs. Social behaviour is viewed in terms of the pursuit of rewards and the avoidance of punishment and other forms of costs. Exchange theory is based on the premise that human behaviour or social interaction is an exchange of activity, tangible and intangible, particularly of rewards and costs. Rewards can be tangible (money) or intangible (attention, status, affection) so long as they are seen as having value or bringing satisfaction. Costs occur as either physical or emotional advantages or missed opportunities to gain rewards. The theory treats the exchange of benefits, notably giving others something more valuable to them than is costly to the giver, and vice versa, as the underlying basis or open secret of human behaviour and so a phenomenon permeating all social life (Coleman, 2012).

A key concept of social exchange theory is the idea of reciprocal exchange. Reciprocal exchange refers to the expectation that when people receive rewards, they respond by doing good things for others. Furthermore, reciprocal exchange involves the idea that interactions between people should remain stable (Thibaut & Kelley, 2013). Cultural norms and laws provide parameters that guide reciprocal exchanges. In general, cultural norms and laws are upheld when large numbers of people see them as beneficial. In some circumstances, however, people may violate norms, laws when they believe the costs are too great, and the rewards too small.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used an evaluation research design. Evaluative research is a scientific method used to determine the impact of a social intervention. Mugenda and Mugenda, (2009) state that a social intervention is an action taken within a social context designed to produce an intended result. Evaluation research analyses the impact of a particular programme on an existing or perceived social problem that the programme is trying to solve. A mixed method approach was used in this study. A qualitative approach was used in order to gain a better understanding and possibly enable a better and more insightful interpretation of the results from the quantitative study. This method concerned the intense investigation of problem solving situations in which problems were relevant to the research problem. The underlining concept was to select several targeted cases where an intensive analysis identified the possible alternatives for solving the research questions on the basis of the existing solution applied in the selected case study.

Study Population

Kombo and Tromp (2011) define a population as a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement. Cooper and Schindler (2011) observe that population is the total collection of elements about which one wants to make inferences. Kothari (2011) defines population as the researcher’s “universe.” Wambugu, Kyalo, Mbii & Nyonje (2015) define a population as the entire group of people, events or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate and is abbreviated as N. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2014) define a target population as a specific proportion of the entire population that can be narrowed to achieve research objectives. The target population for this study comprised of 500 respondents in four groups: Sales and marketing staff of Bayer East Africa

Limited, the BLS Project team, sales staff of different agrovet retail and key dealer shops in West Pokot County as well as the beneficiaries of the Bayer Life Science Project.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sampling plan describes the sampling unit, sampling frame, sampling procedures and the sample size for the study. The sampling frame describes the list of all population units from which the sample will be selected (Cooper & Schindker, 2013). The study employed Stratified random sampling technique and systematic random sampling. Stratified random sampling is unbiased sampling method of grouping heterogeneous population into homogenous subsets then making a selection within the individual subset to ensure representativeness. Random systematic sampling was used to identify the respondent from the different groups categorised through random stratified sampling. The goal was to achieve the desired representation from various sub-groups in the population. Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) observed that there are certain non-definite practices among social research workers that the beginner can adopt. One such practice suggests that if population is a few hundreds, a 40 % or more samples will do: if many hundreds; a 20% will do; and if several thousands, a 5% or fewer samples will do. Accordingly, a 40% sample size was used for this study, drawn from a total target population of 500 individuals who are either sales and marketing staff of Bayer East Africa, sales staff of different agrovet retail and key dealer shops in West Pokot County or project beneficiaries who were smallholder farmers. Using stratified and systematic random sampling, 40% sampling fraction was picked from each representative stratum i.e. from the stratum representing sales and marketing staff of Bayer East Africa, stratum representing sales staff of different agrovet retail and key dealer shops in West Pokot County and the stratum representing project beneficiaries. This gave 20 respondents sampled from 50 sales and marketing staff of Bayer East Africa, and another sample of 16 picked from 41 sales staff of different agrovet retail and key dealer shops in West Pokot County. On other hand 40% of 400 respondents representing the direct project beneficiaries', smallholder farmers, stratum was selected. Additionally, 4 respondents were purposively sampled, based on their involvement in the project and the information they had, to give a total of 160 respondents. This realized a total sample size of 200 respondents.

Data Collection Techniques

According to Ngechu (2014) there are many methods of data collection. The choice of a tool and instrument depends mainly on the attributes of the subjects, research topic, problem question, objectives, design, expected data and results. This is because each tool and instrument collects specific data. Donald (2016) notes that there are two major sources of data used by respondents: primary and secondary data. The researcher used primary data for this study. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2009), primary data is data the researcher collects from the original source and is considered more reliable and up to date. The main instrument for data collection was structured questionnaires that allowed for uniformity of responses to questions. The questionnaire is a fast way of obtaining data as compared to other instruments (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009). Questionnaires give the researcher comprehensive data on a wide range of factors. Both open-ended and closed-ended questions were used.

Questionnaires allow greater uniformity in the way questions are asked, ensuring greater compatibility in the responses. In developing the questionnaire two broad categories of questions were considered, namely: structured and unstructured questions. According to Field (2015), structured questions are usually accompanied by a list of all possible alternatives from which respondents select the answer that best describes their position. Questions were constructed so as to address specific objectives and provide a variety of possible responses. Unstructured questions give the respondent freedom of response which helps the researcher to gauge the feelings of the respondent. These kinds of questions expose respondents' attitudes and views very well (Field, 2015). A 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 were used as answers to statement like questions where 1 represented strongly disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Neutral, 4- Agree and 5- Strongly agree. The Likert - type format was selected as the format yields equal - interval data, a fact that allows for the use of more powerful statistical to be used to test hypotheses (Kiess & Bloomquist, 2014). Interviews and Observation were also used in this study as methods of data collection. While interviews were exclusively used for the first two strata i.e. Bayer East Africa Sales and Marketing staff and sales staff of the different agrovet retail and key dealer shops in West Pokot County, the survey method, where the questionnaires were used, and observation method was used for the third strata of the direct project beneficiaries.

Data Analysis and Presentation Techniques

Data analysis is the whole process which starts immediately after data collection and ends at the point of interpretation and processing data (Kothari, 2004). Therefore before processing the responses, the completed questionnaires were edited for completeness and consistency. The study generated both qualitative and quantitative data. Quantitative data was coded and entered into Statistical Packages for Social Scientists (SPSS Version 21) and analysed using inferential and descriptive statistics. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis based on the content of the responses. Responses with common themes or patterns were grouped together into coherent categories. Descriptive statistics involved the use of absolute and relative (percentages) frequencies, measures of central tendency and dispersion (mean and standard deviation respectively). Quantitative data was presented in tables and graphs and explanation was presented in prose.

RESEARCH RESULS

Impact of BSL Project on Sale of the 'Belt' Insecticide in Kapenguria

The first objective was to investigate the impact of BSL project on sale of Belt insecticide. The study found that all the stakeholders engaged in corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities were aware of the Bayer Life Science CSR Project and that its main focus was on agriculture category. The Bayer sales marketing staff and agrovet and key dealers staff also indicated that CSR had an impact on sales of company products and that they were aware of Bayer East Africa Limited and their products such as belt, milraz, roundups, thunder, wuxal, lambada, matahari, tihan, obero and thunder. It is clear that, though ***'Belt'*** insecticide was already available in West Pokot before the BLS Project was introduced and that some of the smallholder farmers were using it. However, the BLS project greatly promoted ***'Belt'*** visibility and usage thereby increasing its sales. These findings are in line with (Martin, 2012) and (McGuire, 2014) who argued that CSR is in spotlight more than ever before and this is because multinational corporations across the world are engaging more into CSR activities due to an increase in the society's demand on environmental and social responsibility.

Companies have a duty to satisfy not only the shareholders but include also those with less implicit and explicit claims. The business should continue to conduct itself ethically and seek to contribute to economic development whilst improving its workforce's quality of life and the society at large. There was an expectation on the business to serve as a good corporate citizen whilst contributing to the financial and human resources of the society and to ultimately improve the society's quality of life. Sims argued that generally, CSR is an organization's duty to carry out programs that contribute to the overall welfare of society (Sims, 2013).

Impacts of BSL Project on Purchase of New Hybrid Onion Seed Variety 'Matahari F1' among Youth Groups in West Pokot County

The second objective of the study was to determine the impact of BSL project on the sales of new hybrid onion seed variety called "Matahari F1". According to the findings, the Bayer sales marketing staff and the agrovet and key dealers staff agreed on statements related to the impact of Bayer Life Science project on the purchase of '***Matahari F1'*** onion seed variety in West Pokot to a great extent. The direct project beneficiaries also agreed to a great extent to the statements related to the impact of BLS project on their awareness, purchase and usage of ***Matahari F1'*** onion seed variety. Clearly, from the findings, the Bayer Life Science project played out as a channel to introduce a new seed variety, '***Matahari F1'*** onion seed variety, to most of the smallholder farmers of West Pokot, who until the BLS project did not know and had not tried the new onion seed variety. This ultimately promoted the sales of this agro product and is supported by Snieska (2015) who notes that corporate social responsibility (CSR) could increase company profits and thus most large companies are actively engaged in it. Most executives believe that CSR can improve profits. They understand that CSR can promote respect for their company in the marketplace which can result in higher sales, enhance employee loyalty and attract better personnel to the firm. Also, CSR activities focusing on sustainability issues may lower costs and improve efficiencies as well. Corporate Social responsibility behaviour can benefit the firm in several ways, It aids the attraction and retention of staff, attracts green and ethical investment, attracts ethically conscious customers, lead to a reduction in costs through re-cycling, It differentiates the firm from its competitor and can be a source of competitive advantage and it also lead to increased profitability in the long run.

Impact of BSL Project on Uptake of Bayer's 'Bayticol Pour-On' Parasiticide among Smallholder Farmers in West Pokot County

The third objective of the study was to explore the impact of BSL project on the uptake of Bayticol parasiticides among smallholder farmers in West Pokot. The study found out that the Bayer sales marketing staff and the agrovet and key dealers staff agreed with statements related to the impact of Bayer Life Science project uptake of ***'Bayticol Pour-On'*** animal health product (parasiticide) among smallholder farmers in West Pokot County to a great extent and that the Direct Project beneficiaries also agreed with statements related to the impact of BLS project on their awareness, purchase and usage of ***'Bayticol Pour-On'*** animal health products (parasiticide) to a great extent. Generally, the respondents agreed that the Bayer Life Science project had a direct impact on the uptake of 'Bayticol pour-on' as its usage particularly increased after the BLS Project.

This is similar to Whysall (2014) findings who argued that manufacturing, purchase and usage a product that is safe and desired by the community as well as educating them on usage of those product or services. The societal obligation involves short-term investments into the local community for the current generation as well as long-term investments into the local community for future generations.

Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Product Sales

As per the findings, the Bayer Sales Marketing Staff, Agrovet and Key Dealers staff and the Direct Project beneficiaries agreed on statements related to corporate social responsibility to a great extent. These findings correspond with Ullmann (2015) who stresses that corporate Social Responsibility is not a new issue. Corporate Social Responsibility is in spotlight more than ever before and this is because multinational corporations across the world are engaging more into CSR activities due to an increase in the society's demand on environmental and social responsibility. Globalization has led to an increase in the society's anxiety on how a corporate conducts itself. Corporate Social Responsibility is the best way for a corporation to care for all needs of its stakeholders (Martin, 2012).

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that respondents' organizations' engaged in corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, and that they were aware of the Bayer Life Science CSR Projects. They also engaged in farming activities such maize farming and livestock keeping.

The study also concludes that Bayer Life Science projects influenced sales performance of '***Belt'*** insecticide in Kapenguria constituency in that the sales of the '***Belt'*** insecticide increased after the Bayer Life Science Project (2017), more farmers in Kapenguria preferred the '***Belt'*** insecticide compared to other insecticides available in the market, agrovet Retail shops/key dealers were stocking more '***Belt'*** insecticides than before Bayer Life Science Project (2017) and that the increased rate of sales of the '***Belt'*** insecticide was attributed to the Bayer Life Science project. As much as '***Belt'*** insecticide was already available in West Pokot and some farmers were using it, the BLS Project promoted it leading to increased visibility and uptake.

The study further concludes that Bayer Life Science project greatly influenced introduction, purchase and usage of ***'Matahari F1'*** onion seed variety among youth groups in West Pokot County in that the increased rate of purchase of the ***'Matahari F1'*** onion seed variety among youthful farmers had been attributed to the Bayer Life Science project, the demand for the ***'Matahari F1'*** onion seed variety among youth groups was more than it was before Bayer

Life Science Project (2017), more agrovet retails shops/key dealers were now stocking the ***'Matahari F1'*** onion seed variety, more youth groups now preferred the ***'Matahari F1'*** onion seed variety compared to other varieties available in the market and that agrovet retail shops/key dealers were now stocking more ***'Matahari F1'*** onion seed variety than before Bayer Life Science Project. The BLS project played out as platform to introduce and promote the new ***'Matahari F1'*** onion seed variety in West Pokot County.

Additionally, the study concludes that the BLS project greatly impacted the awareness and uptake of the ***'Bayticol Pour-On'*** animal health product (parasiticide) among the goat keeping farmers in West Pokot. The parasiticide was not well known before the project but became popular and the preferred choice among the famers after the implementation of the Bayer Life Science Project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Policy: The County Government of West Pokot should collaborate with more partners to offer more trainings and empowerment to youth groups and women groups on modern agricultural practices, such as pest identification and control, to increase their yields for agri-business.
2. Strategy: Bayer East Africa Limited through its CSR strategies should extend the new agricultural practises such as horticulture (vegetable and fruit farming) and fish farming to more smallholder farmers in West Pokot County and other parts in the country. Best practises in goat keeping and identifying markets for sheep and goat products including meat, milk and skin should also be introduced.
3. Practise: The concept of Bayer Life Science Project should be adopted for another phase for sustainability and continuous capacity building among key agricultural professionals including refresher trainings to veterinary doctors on general animal health and hygiene practices in the County.

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