

**EFFECTS OF A SALES PERSON'S TRAITS AND SKILLS ON SALES
PERFORMANCE OF FAST-MOVING CONSUMER GOODS MULTINATIONAL
MANUFACTURERS IN NAIROBI KENYA**

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DECLARATION

The project is my original work and has not been earlier submitted for any award of degree in any institution.

Signed..... Date.....

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D61/87834/2016

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate the entire project to my friends, colleagues and relatives.

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My sincere gratitude and appreciation goes to the Almighty God for his guidance and protection during the entire period I was pursuing this project. In addition I take this opportunity to thank my supervisor Professor Mary Kinoti for her counsel, advice and guidance from development of the research proposal to completion of the research proposal. May the Almighty lord bless you abundantly. Thirdly, I would also like to thank my employer for allowing me adequate time to continue with my studies despite the busy schedule. I really appreciate your efforts and a greater level of understanding. Lastly, I would wish to thank my colleagues, family and friends for the assistance both moral support and prayers during this tough academic journey. I don't take you for granted and I am so much thankful.

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ABSTRACT

There exist various factors that have a contribution to the performance of a salesperson and they may range from the sales persons skills or sales personality traits. Other authors and scholars have established that sales person personality skills play a very crucial role towards sales performance. This study focused on determining the effect of sales person personality traits and skills on sales performance among FMCG manufacturing companies in Nairobi Kenya. The main goal of the study was to enumerate the effect of sales person's traits and skills on sales performance among FMCG Manufacturers in Nairobi Kenya. The population of study for this research consisted of sales people from 20 Multinational FMCG Manufacturers in Nairobi Kenya. Primary data was collected by means of a structured questionnaire this gave room for homogeneity in terms of how respondents would tackle the queries. The structured questions were in form of a five-point Likert scale, whereby respondents were required to indicate their views on a scale of 1 to 5. Moreover, secondary data was also used from different brochures' and journals from the FMCG manufacturing companies' public information, websites and libraries. A descriptive research design was the most suited for the study. This research proved that not only certain personality traits that a sales person should possess, the management should also consider demonstration of a certain level of skills to help in execution of their jobs as sales people. Based on the finding, the big five personality traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, emotional stability) and sales person skills play an important role in influencing salesperson's performance in work. The findings could provide a clear picture for the management of private and public firms to apply greater emphasis on personality and autonomy issues. Lastly, the researcher was faced with certain limitations which included the geographical coverage, size of the sample and the short time frame used to conduct the study, however this did not affect the findings of the study.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

There exists many factors that contribute to salesperson performance among them personality traits and skills. In addition, other studies have upheld the fact that the skills of a seller greatly affect the performance in terms of sales. The skills a salesperson possesses were seen to be among the most crucial factors that would determine the performance of a particular salesperson. From the arguments by psychologists, that characteristics of a certain salesperson can be used to determine their behaviour when it comes to job performance and this can be made possible through keen examination of the characteristics (Churchil, et.al, 2003). It is then vital to identify and examine the various personality traits and sales people skills that influence one's sales performance.

Various theoretical approaches in relation to sales performance, personality traits and skills have been explored by different scholars. The main traits of personality that will determine the performance of sales are five and include; experience openness, extraversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness, and lastly agreeableness. There are several studies of psychology which have clearly shown that the behavior of the sales person is highly influenced and determined by human personality in the jobs. In addition, Victor Vroom came up with this proposal that what instigates a certain individual to act and behave in a particular way is the outcome they expect of the behaviour they choose. The expected outcome is what motivates them to behave in a certain way. Maintaining a good competitive advantage against the competitors of a business will be made possible through the good performance of the sales (Hossain, Sultana & Mazmum, 2016; Dey et al., 2016). Sales performance greatly affects volume of the sales made, the level of

production, loyalty to the customers and lastly the expenses that are unpredicted (Buciuniene and Skudiene, 2015).

Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) are the goods which use low costs to manufacture, are manufactured in bulk and are sold in bulk. These goods are able to bring about large amounts of profits. In the provision of the fast moving goods to customers, the manufacturers avail goods which are purchased frequently. These are the likes of toiletries, various brands of soap, products for teeth cleaning, cosmetic goods, products used in shaving and lastly detergents among several others. The fast moving goods provided in the market by manufacturers include goods that do not last long like glassware products, paper products, bulbs, batteries and many more. Equipping the sales people with good skills and traits will make it easy to ensure that the market for the fast moving goods is intensified. There are studies which have analyzed how personality traits affect sales people and these studies were based on the five traits mentioned above. However, very little has been done on how personality traits impact on performance of sales in firms that manufacture FMCG.

1.1.1 The Concept of Personality

Personality refers to special characteristics or behaviors of an individual. These behaviors are either hidden or open and they always determine differences or commonality of behavior in a particular organization (Friedman 2016). According to Robbins et al. (2013) personality is often described as a set of measurable traits that person exhibits. Personality is viewed in three major dimensions. Number one of the three dimensions is in connection to the physical appearance of a particular individual in terms of their age,

weight and even height. The second dimension views personality as distinctive and which involves thought patterns, emotions as well as the behavior that to a large extent will define the style of a person while at the same time influencing the person's interaction with their environments (Ambridge2014). For example ego, empathy, self-efficacy, self-monitoring, locus of control and lastly sociability. When it comes to the third dimension, personality is viewed in terms of the verbal intelligence, orientation of music, and mathematical abilities which are generally known as the abilities of the mind or rather achievement in the field of psychology. This study has greatly used the second dimension and that is behavioral characteristics that differentiate sales people. These characteristics are like locus of control, self-efficacy, self-monitoring among others which impact on performance of sales.

1.1.2 The Concept of Sales Skills

There are several categories of the sales skills which include; behavioral skills, interpersonal skills, technical skills and then salesmanship. Rahman et al., (2014). The above categories are important to predict the performance of sales persons. Additionally, Abdullahi (2013) brought about the skills of marketing as a factor that would also measure the performance of a sales person. Interpersonal are communication and mental algorithms which are used in social communications as well as interactions in order to attain particular results and effects (Abdullahi, 2013). International skills refer to the measures of the ability of an individual to operate in business firms by interactions and social communications. They can be classified into three smaller groups which are empathy, listening and then skills of perceptive observation.

The skill of salesmanship refers to that skill of selling or being able to persuade a customer to buy (Buciuniene, 2015), as well as operating independently on the basis of categories like adaptability, questioning, negotiation, cues of salespersons, skills of communication styles and consultative selling (Rahman et al., 2014). On the other hand, technical skills refer to the ability of a sales person to be proficient in the provision of information on specification and design of various products, applications as well as functions services and products. Behavior also manifests the technical skills to keep in line with the changes in technology of services and products. Behavioral skills help one to be able to mingle with fellows in the working environment and help them to succeed in the organizations.

1.1.3 Sales Performance

Performance of sales people can be referred as the extent to which the sales persons contribute towards achievement of the organization's goals. In this case, results that are attributed to the salesperson are considered instead of factors like competition intensity, potential of the market, and image of the brand that affect performance and which cannot be controlled by the sales person (Miao, 2013). Both subjective and objective perspectives are used to measure the performance sales persons (Behrman and Perreault, 2013).

Rolstadas (2014) argued that unit sales volume, contribution profit, the number of new accounts, dollar sales volume are used to measure objective performance. On the other hand, evaluations through supervisors, co-workers, customers and sales persons themselves are used in the measurement of subjective performance. This is done such

aspects as sales volume, mastering selling skills, customer relations, communication effectiveness, controlling expenses, territory management, providing information to management teamwork, and more.

1.1.4 FMCG Manufacturing Companies

In the Kenyan economy, FMCG is one among the sectors which are so large. This industry has had a serious growth over time now both qualitatively and quantitatively and this is on the side of consumable products. Due to all this, various organizations have put up strategies that will help them achieve a competitive advantage over those they are competing with and get more profits. 13% of Kenyan economic growth has been contributed by firms which produce FMCG with the same creating 18% of jobs. This is according statistics of KIPPRA. The FMCG industry is so much important in economic growth. These firms face a lot of problems as they try to play their key role. These problems are like competition, technological influences, varied customer needs, globalization among several other challenges. Due to this, managers have tried to come up with effective strategies which can help them improve in terms of sales performance. Recruiting sales persons who are highly skilled is one strategy that they have seen useful. Highly skilled sales people have traits that will improve sales. Analyzing how personality traits and sales skills impact on sales performance level is of great importance in the FMCG industry.

1.2 Research Problem

The most important part of an organization is that of the sales people. This is because they are the ones who actively generate the income for these particular firms. Therefore,

the organizations should focus on the factors that will trigger performance of the sales persons. A lot of research has been done with the main aim being to determine the factors that will impact on the performance of the sales people. The researches have been entirely based on the researcher's backgrounds and respective thoughts. There are many factors which have been proved to affect the performance of sales persons and these include the factors like perceptions of roles, variables of the organization, skills, efforts, learning of the sales persons, market orientation both individual and organizational, sales skills, orientation of the customers and lastly personal traits among several others (Churchil et al., 2013).

With the sector of FMCG being among the largest in the economy of Kenya, the goods are used up and also replaced within very short time frames which range from days, weeks, months and years unlike the durable products which will take long time before they are replaced. Therefore due to this, FMCG are faced with many challenges despite efforts to raise sales volume by the firms which produce them. With consideration of this, highly skilled sales personnel are important assets to the FMCG firms. Researches were pursued at international levels and local levels been done on sales persons, sales persons traits and sales performance skills. Abubakar and Muhammad (2015) looked about the effect of the five personality traits factors on the performance of sales people. This was done at the Malaysian International Islamic University and it considered the mediation roles of the customer orientation, moderating roles of culture and then application of the model of factors. The study resulted in the conclusion that there were no factors which could have in any way led to the best performance of sales people and this was because performance remained to be an outcome that is context-based. Karmur and Muhammad

(2017) researched on the factors that would affect the performance of sales persons in the mobile phone service providers in Bangladesh.

They found out that both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, compensation and organizational commitment would highly affect the performance of a typical sales person. Job satisfaction would not affect this performance. To add more on this, Memory and Tendai (2015) analyzed the effects of personality of the salespersons on performance of sales related to internet service providers of the telecommunication arena in the Zimbabwean republic. There is evidence that personalities of salespersons greatly determine their success.

Skills and traits of sales persons have been known to be great factors of measuring performance of salespersons but there is no research that has been done to prove that skill factors of individual level affect sales performance in any way. Studies that have been done to analyses salesperson performance are often done in the advanced economies of the West. Impact of traits and skills of sales persons on FMCG firms in the Kenyan economy have not been measured by any of all these studies. How then do sales person personality traits and skills impact on sales performance in FMCG manufacturers in Kenya?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study purpose is to determine the effect that traits and the skills of salespersons have on the FMCG sales performance in the capital of Kenya Nairobi.

1.4 Value of the Study

In spite of the volume of literature on this area, there exist a limited empirical research which has investigated salesman's personality traits and skills on sales performance of FMCG Manufacturers in Nairobi Kenya. Based on the subject of discourse, this work will contribute to existing knowledge on salesman's personality traits and skills on sales performance in fast moving consumer goods and services in academia. Researchers can use my research as a point of reference.

This research will help the Kenyan government to improve its service delivery and its bottom line as it works towards streamlining its delivery of government services to Kenyan citizens. It will help the Kenyan government plan better for the economic growth of the country leading to better living standards and conducive business environment for both local and international investors. The Kenyan government utilizes results of the study for setting bench marks/measure performance in different government institutions. It will aid manufactures and marketers gain insight into important personality traits and skills that contribute to sales success. It will help distributors and retailers to get a clear understanding on how best one can convince prospective buyers to become customers for their firms. Future researchers who will be researching on a similar or related topic will benefit from the findings by borrowing a leaf in form of related literatures. Again it will assist to build the knowledge of the researchers and also make clear variables understanding and gain more skills of conducting research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Introduction.

In Chapter number two, we will have a look at the theoretical foundation of this study focusing on two theories: the big five personality theory and the expectancy theory. After which we will look at the relationship and different critique view points between sales person personality traits and sales performance, sales skills and sales performance and personality traits, skills and sales performance. We will review different theories that either agree with or disagree with the above. Finally we will have an empirical review of all the literature gathered for this chapter.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation of the Study

Various theories have been suggested and used by different scholars in relation to sales performance through the influence of the sales person skills or personality traits. Some of the theories that have been widely used include the expectancy theory, big five traits theory and the social cognitive theory.

2.2.1 Big Five Personality Theory

Most researchers in the psychology field have come to a common agreement that there exist five traits of personality or rather attributes of salespeople. The arguments made by D. W. Fiske (1949) were supported by more psychologists (Norman, 1967; Smith, 1967; Goldberg, 1981; McCrae & Costa.1987), and they all supported these 5 traits of personality would work to measure performance of an employee in the work environment. There is no stable evidence on the particular characteristics in salespersons which affect the sales performance (Sitser et al. 2013)

Other studies done to support the five personality traits model are; Vinchur et al.'s (2017) says that personality variables which strongly predict sales performance also reflect skill levels and motivation of that particular salesperson. Controversy of personality traits stability often faces researches traits of personality. There are studies which show that traits of personality levels continue to increase throughout the lifecycle of an individual. (Roberts & Jackson, 2015). However, it has been upheld that personality traits stabilize when an individual becomes an adult. (Almlund et al. 2017) proved that the personality traits growth comes to a stable point when one becomes thirty years old. (Cobb-Clark and Schurer 2013) continued to conclude that become stable at the age of working for four years with little changes in personality during this period.

2.2.2 Expectancy Theory

This is a motivation theory which is based on the argument that there is a big relationship between efforts that people employ in their work, performance achieved from that particular work, rewards the people draw from the efforts and lastly performance they are able to get from those efforts. Motivation comes where people strongly believe that great efforts result in good performance, while good performance results to achievement of expected rewards. Victor Vroom (1964) developed the first theory of expectancy which had applications directly to the work settings. This theory was continued and made clear by Porter and Lawler (1968) and many more (Pinder, 1987). It is largely built on some 4 assumptions (Vroom, 1964). Assumption one argues that individuals join various firms and possess motivations, needs expectations, experiences of the past and these determine their adaptability. For the second one state that a conscious choice is the determinant of the behavior of a certain individual and people are allowed to select their behaviors out of

their calculations on expectancy. Assumption number three is that different people do not want the same thing from a firm. There are those that want good pay, others security of their jobs, challenge and advancement. Assumption number four is that there are several alternatives from which people choose in order to optimize all the outcomes personally.

Basing this expectancy theory on the four assumptions, it has three very important elements; valence, instrumentality and expectancy. Here an individual will be motivated up to a point where they get to believe that efforts gives them performance which is acceptable (expectancy), performance has got a reward(instrumentality) and that rewards have got highly positive values(valence). This theory again describes motivation to be a result of continuous interaction between a certain individual and their situations. To managers performance is the main goal and to workers it remains a means of personal goals attainment. In order for one to understand the motivation of workers to perform, it is clear that one ought to identify how this performance exactly fits into their “equation” of personal expectancy. More generally, the theory of expectancy tells us that one must understand causal beliefs of a particular situation if they are to know the levels of people’s efforts on a task. Again, one must clearly know more about what remains important for them.

2.3 Sales Person Personality Traits and Sales Performance

The sales persons are an integral part for any part. This is because they get revenue directly for these firms. Sales performance is known to be the quantity as well as quality of sales that are closed within a certain time frame. Bandura (2013), Locke (2014) has done research on personal traits of salespeople and on sales performance. The personality

of a salesperson can be defined as the way in which that particular salesperson will understand themselves through their own viewing as well as the way in which this salesperson mingles with others and reacts to various situations. Understanding factors affecting the salesperson's performance is of great importance for any firm. Different industries have gone into research to get to know these factors. The researchers have found out that personality traits greatly influence performance of sales.

Thoresen's study for evaluation of individual growth of job performance and personality showed that for jobs that have stages of transition, agreeableness is able to determine the differences in job performance and the trends found in every stage of that job (Thoresen et al., 2014). Not many researchers agree with agreeableness in overall performance determination but the study by Thoresen et al. (2014) identified important relationship that was positive. Other studies like that of Witt et al., (2013) stated that agreeableness strongly impacts when combined with other traits of personality like conscientiousness to predict sales performance.

Despite the overall intelligence for personnel, Behling (2013) stated that one of the most important personal traits that would assist to determine sales performance is conscientiousness. Several other scholars supported this by saying that conscientiousness was very basic or simply the only trait of personality that is used in selection of employees (Hurtz & Donovan, 2013). Excellent controls of impulse, thoughtfulness of high level and behaviors which are goal directed have been used by the scholars in description of conscientiousness. Results of several researches of psychology have shown

that persons who possess high conscientiousness always mind on details and also well organized in all their activities (McCrae et al., 2015).

To give an example, work of Barricket al. (2013) proved that there is bigger relationship when it comes to conscientiousness unlike in other traits of personality and this made researchers to conclude that regardless of the type of industry, conscientiousness can be a good sales performance measure. This is correct since conscientiousness is one of the few determinants of performance (Barricket al., 2013; Hurtz & Donovan, 2014). Moreover, employees with conscientiousness are able to be depended on highly, are very reliable and oriented towards achievement. On the other hand, the employees who lack conscientiousness are opposite whereby they are characterized by carelessness, are halfhearted and undependable (Thoresenet al., 2014).

Sales performance can also be predicted by the use of experience openness as trait in the five factor model of traits (Thoresenet al., 2014). Here, the individuals are invariably imaginative; they are creative and always inquiring about new ideas. (Costa & McCrae, 2013; Furnham & Fudge, 2018). In the UK, a study was done with 66 workers and the result was that experience openness had an important connection with the performance of sales persons.

Personal selling can be simply defined as presentation by sales persons of the firm and this is done for matching purposes, sales and for the building of relationships with customers (Kotler and Armstrong, 2014). Wiley and Carolyn (2013) described it as the ability of a person to do the job using the correct personal traits as well as the correct capabilities of the mind in the selling. Face to face encounters with the prospective

customers by the salespersons impacts more positively than having to advertise or display the products. The salesperson will control their talks or actions in order to match the customer cultural or behavioral influences. Salespeople ask questions to find out about a customer's specific interests for a product. The salespersons act as an intermediary between sellers and buyers. They act like a company to multiple customers and account for major marketing costs in diversified industries. They originate value for the customers.

The personality of a salesperson is connected to three main dimensions with the first one connected to the physical form of that salesperson up to and including age, height and the weight. Dimension number two becomes the personality which has got unique attribute thought patterns, actions, emotions and special traits that identify the style of the salesperson as well as manipulates how they interact with their environments. Dimension three is abilities of the mind like mathematical abilities, verbal astuteness as well as orientation of music which are collectively referred to as accomplishment by psychologists (Atkinson, Smith and Bern, 2013).

Funder, (2015) explained traits of personality like characteristics, thinking patterns that last, behaviors and emotions that remain constant at all times and which explain how people behave in diverse situations. Additionally, Bang (2013), saw these traits as distinctive behavioral patterns that are enduring and characterize an individual. The traits come out of the individual and are consistent throughout lifetime of that person. Many psychology researchers have already agreed that people have got five basic personality traits. D. W. Fiske's work (2013) got support from several other researchers to a

conclusion that the five basic traits of personality could be made use of in the prediction job performance for employees. The main dimensions used in this are openness, agreeableness, extraversion, neuroticism and conscientiousness.

Churchill et al. (2015) puts it clear that different sales situations, conditions in the market, types of products and more others determine the factors that affect sales performance but the most striking commonality across different descriptions of salesperson job performances is necessity of selling skills. Johlke (2016) on the other hand concludes that efforts and skills of salespersons impact on all their outcomes individually and also on organization effectiveness. Sales force works to implement marketing strategies and the business and therefore Ford et al., (2018) got to know that apart from aptitude, motivation, perception of roles, organizational factors, skills of sales and traits of personality impact on sales performance of any sales person.

2.4 Sales Skills and Sales Performance

Sales skills refer to very special abilities possessed by the salespersons that help them to make sales and attain sales performance. Interpersonal skills on the other hand are the communication and mental skills that are used for communications done socially and in interactions for attainment of some results. Rentzet al., (2013), gives the interpersonal dimensions to be empathy, listening, perceived skills of observation and optimism. Shepherd et al., (2014) identified a good salesperson needed to be equipped with the best skills of listening. Meanwhile, Comer and Drollinger (2015) stated that sales performance is influenced by empathy. Additionally, Rich and Smith (2016) salespersons need

possession of good observation skills and responsive skills for them to deliver in their field.

Rapisarda (2014) proved in the research she did that performance was determined by empathic competency in a strong way. Research showed a deep connection between interpersonal skill dimensions, which are consultative selling, skills of communication style, questioning and negotiation, cues of salespersons and the last one being adaptability. Earlier studies made use of every dimension alone in representation of skills of salesmanship in the testing of the relationship it had with performance of salespeople. (Rentzet al., 2014. Williams and Spiro (2013) realized that salespersons who succeeded only needed to adapt styles of communication for them to socialize with their customers. William et al., (2016) argued that the salespeople who would adjust their styles of communication depending on the customers were in a good position to make good sales.

Nonverbal cues of an individual affect the behaviors of other people (Cho, 2015). Nonverbal cues are so much important in the selling skills of a salesperson (Leigh and Summers, 2016). Any salesperson who is able to adjust with the sales environment in relation to the cues of the buyer while at the same time incorporating all salesperson skills like excellent negotiation, consultative selling practices, probing skills, customer needs questioning, communication skills which are commendable whether verbal or nonverbal will always stand out to make the best sales and enjoy their performance. If the salespersons have the ability to provide information about specification and design of products, applications as well as functions of services and products, they have technical knowledge. They also know about their industry, trends like customers, products and the

markets, products of their rivals, their services, policies of sale, understanding of competitor lines of products, and the operations of customers (Baldauf and Cravens, 2016). These make up the selling skills of the salesperson. Large knowledge base really helps the salespeople to be able to cope with large market environments. Technological knowhow will make the sales to make alarming sales (Babakuset al., 2015).

Additionally, Churchill et al., (2014), Schoemaker and Johlke (2012), and Ingram *et al.*, (2014) put it across that knowing the issues that are in the organization and the external environments really boost the salespersons' performance. The salespersons need to possess high customer knowledge for their success in making great sales. (Ingram et al., 2014). Pettijohn and Pettijohn (2014) gave support to this by saying that sales training needed incorporation of crucial topic which is customer knowledge. A good salesperson has got very rich interrelated structures about the knowledge of their customers. Moreover, Weitz (2014) proved that sales performance and capabilities for formulation of strategies strongly relate to each other. For example, knowledge of products, competitors and the market.

To add more on this, Ahearne and Schillewaert (2015) argued that skills of marketing were important in determining sales performance of an individual. Sengupta et al., (2013) said that strategic and entrepreneurial abilities (variables of individual level) were real determinants of performance effectiveness of salespersons. Similarly, Darianeet al., (2015) and Makinen (2014) proved it that salespersons knowledge of the products is also crucial.

2.5 Knowledge Gaps

Despite there being several factors that determine to performance level of sales, sales skills and traits of personality have been considered and actually termed the very basic determinants of the same (Basiret al., 2013; Churchill et al., 2015). Ingram et al., (2014) in addition to this said that for turbulent environments of business, the firms will need to look for salespersons that have high skills so that sales can be consolidated and secured. The best salespeople give good improvements in performance in the business environments of the present day (Baldauf and Cravensm, 2013). Staffs that sell goods of highest quality get a lot of revenue from their old customers therefore being able to convert, identify systematically and manage the new prospects well and as a result allowing businesses to be able to grow much faster than that of a competitor. (Futrell, 2016). This therefore shows that skills personality traits are very important in sales performance in any business set up.

Moreover, study of Rentzet al., (2016) classified skills of selling into three main categories which are technical, salesmanship and lastly interpersonal skills and the three categories termed as important factors that would affect the sales performance. Furthermore, Ahearne and Schillewaert (2017) brought into existence skills of marketing as a new factor that would be used to predict salesperson's sales performance. According to Judge and Bono (2017) it will be easy for a salesperson that has proactive trait of personality to maintain good relationships with their customers. These kinds of salespersons are able to keep their customers satisfied and therefore keeping good relationships. They know positively that they are able to make more relationships for their organization. Garcia-Murillo and Annabi (2013) noted that salespeople with the

personality traits which are proactive possess customer knowledge and therefore they are able to keep customer relationships with them up and running. Customer knowledge can be defined as the ability to understand ones customers, all their wants and needs, the aims and so forth.

Relationship or rather the connection between traits of personality and performance of sales has of late been examined clearly (; Chow & Ong, 2015; Pendharkar& Pandey, 2011). In a similar way, Sitser et al. (2013) described the five traits of personality that predict performance of sales. The explained traits are agreeableness, experience openness, extraversion and neuroticism follows. Above all, Suj Janet al., (2018) identified the relationship positive in this case between sales performance of a salesperson and working smart. Perception abilities of a salesperson ranging from asking questions, probing, listening, detection of nonverbal and verbal cues, create a good adaptive selling basis. To summarize this, different studies about salespeople traits and their skills and the impact it has on sales performance overall, have been done. However, very little about FMCG manufacturers was done despite the large number of researches and this shows that there is a big gap in the studies recently.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter was to discuss the methodology of research the study was to make use of. In particular the focus was on research design, population of study, sample size, collection of data and analysis of the data.

3.2 Research Design

The best design of a research incorporates all the necessary information and gives a chance to consider several different parts of that problem being researched about. Research design was influenced by the studies nature as well its context. A research design that seemed best for a study may never fit for any other study. The research design made use of a survey which is both cross-sectional and very descriptive so as to give the researcher a good chance to be able to explain in details variables of much interest and their characteristics.

The design was about determining the effect of sales persons traits and skills on sales performance in FMCG manufacturing companies in Nairobi Kenya. It was therefore justified that a descriptive design was the most suited with application of Regression analysis to determine how different variables of prediction and performance of sales relate. Sekaran and Bougie (2013), describe descriptive design as a type of research design that was basically meant to provide answers to the why, what and how questions. For a study like this it was the best design since central tendency was utilized for collection of information and data not leaving behind regression.

3.3 Population of the Study

This was the number of individuals, the number of things of interest, events which are being investigated in the study in its entirety (Sekaran, 2013). In simple terms, it was all cases which the researchers are going to come up with conclusions about. To come up with the design for a research, it was important to talk about the research population as it relates to the main purposes of the study. In this case here, what was being focused on is the sales persons of FMCG manufacturing firms in Nairobi Kenya.

The population of study for the research consists of sales people from 20 Multinational FMCG Manufacturers in Nairobi Kenya. (Kenya Association of Manufacturers, 2017) Multi National FMCG's provided a bigger extent of representation to the population participants and a wider FMCG market both regionally and globally thus enabling more accurate findings for the study. The 20 Multinational FMCG manufacturers give a population of 1,185 sales people. See Appendix III with the breakdown on the number of sales people in each FMCG manufacturing firms in Nairobi.

3.4 Size Sample

Kothari (2014) describes sampling technique as the process that was used to select the number of responders that were used in the study. Polit (2014), Defines a sample size as a proportion of the population of study. In this study, the sampling method by Slovin in (1960) was used to determine the size of the sample.

Formula; $n = N / [1 + N (e)^2]$ (and n = size of sample; N = frame of sample; and e = level of confidence/error margin)

$$n = \frac{1185}{[(1 + 1185(e)^2)]}$$

$$n = \frac{1185}{[1 + 2.9625]}$$

$$n = \frac{1185}{3.9625} = 300 \text{ (sample size)}$$

3.5 Data Collection

A questionnaire that was structured in this case was used for the collection of the needed primary information or rather data. Cooper and Schindler (2016) say that using these types of questionnaires makes it easy to have uniformity when answering questions. The questionnaire utilized is five-points Likert scale, whereby respondents were required to indicate their views on a scale of 1 to 5. Moreover, secondary data was also be used from different brochures' and journals from the FMCG manufacturing companies' public domains, websites and libraries. Information from existing literature from past or current studies which explains the relationship between sales person's personality traits and skills on sales performance was used. The data was collected from 300 sales people from each organization. The questionnaires were administered by the researcher.

3.6 Data Analysis

There are a number of stages used in the analysis of data. At first, questionnaires which are completed are taken for editing in order to make sure that they are complete and consistent. From there, data was checked to remove errors and identify omissions then

the analysis was done by use of SPSS. Sekaran (2015), points out that the analysis of data has operations which are closely related, and the operations are only done to provide summary of the data that was collected and then make sure that it was organized in such a way that it answers the research objective of the study. Editing, classifying, coding and then putting the data in tables are the operations done on the data. In addition, data was categorized, ordered, manipulation, as well as summarized giving answers to the question researched. All the processes make sure that the data collected remained organized in such a way that it can be easily analyzed (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Further regression analysis was utilized, the purpose of regression was to do data analysis and identify any relationships between the variables of prediction and the sales performance levels.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected in line with the research objective of this study; which was to investigate effects of a sales person's traits and skills on sales performance of fast-moving consumer goods multinational manufacturers in Nairobi Kenya. Descriptive statistics was first computed including the mean and standard deviation. Descriptive statistics enable the respondent to understand the characteristics of the respondents. Regression analysis was also performed to establish the effect of sales person's traits and skills on sales performance.

4.2 Response Rate.

The response rate of 90% was achieved as 270 out of 300 questionnaires were completed successfully and returned for data analysis. Mugenda and Mugenda (2004) when there is a response rate of more than 50% it is adequate for analysis. Babbie (2004) also argue that when there is 60% return rate it means the study is good and 70% return rate is very good. Information from the questionnaires was adequate for analysis.

4.3 Demographics Information of the Respondents

The demographic information of the respondents is considered very crucial not only for subsequent discussions of the findings but also for the authenticity and generalization of the results. This section, therefore, presents respondents' background information of gender, age, level of education and work experience.

4.3.1 Gender of the Respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their gender. The results are presented in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	223	82.4%
Female	47	17.6%

From Table 4.1, 82.4% were male and 17.6% were female which indicates that the Multinational fast moving consumer goods manufacturing companies in Kenya employs high proportions of male than female. This may be attributed to individual related factors that affect women career advancement. Mwai (2017) supported the finding by observing that multinational companies tend to have social and at times physically-straining assignments, especially those in grassroots areas in Kenya, hence the choice of male employees compared to female. Gender inequality in labor markets is often caused by the historical status of women, who are perceived mainly as homemakers, as well as by conservative religious or traditional approaches and national laws that forbid women from inheriting or owning property, gaining education and engaging in business interactions (Munin, 2013).

The respondents were asked to indicate their age. Table 4.2 presents the findings.

Table 4.2: Age of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 30	50	11.4
30-39	140	57.1
40-49	60	28.6
50 and above	20	2.9
Total	270	100.0

The results revealed that 57.1% were between 30 and 39 years, 28.6% were between 40 and 49 years 11.4% of the respondents were less than 30 years while above 49 years were 2.9%. This implies that majority of salespeople working in fast moving consumers goods manufacturers multinational companies are young adults. This is because young adults are energetic to carry out the sales person job.

4.3.2 Level of Education

The respondents were requested to indicate their level of academic qualifications. The results are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Level of Education

Education	Frequency	Percentage
PhD	20	15.8
Master's Degree	50	24.6
Bachelor's Degree	190	49.1
Diploma	10	10.5
Total	270	100

The results revealed that 49.1% of the respondents had a bachelors, 24.6% were master degrees holders, 15.8% of the respondents were PhD, and 10.5% were diploma holders. This shows that most of respondents in fast moving consumers good manufactures multinational companies attained university education thus could understand the research questionnaires and provide relevant data.

4.3.3 Work Experience

In order to determine whether the respondents had reasonably worked long enough in their organization to determine if they had the necessary traits and skills. The respondents were asked to indicate the duration in which they had been working in the company. The results are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Work Experience

Years	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 2 years	30	12.3
Between 2 to 5	50	21.1
Between 6 to 9	120	40.4
Between 10 to 13	70	17.5
Greater than 13	40	8.7
Total	270	100

The results revealed that 12.3% of the respondents had an experience of less than 2 years, 21.1% between 2 to 5 years, 40.4% between 6 to 9 years, 17.5% between 10 to 13 years while 8.7% greater than 13 years. This therefore means that most of the respondents in the company had worked for a long duration of more than 5 years, and hence they had rich information on skills and traits that are necessary for a sales person to succeed in sales career and performance.

4.4. Sales people Personality Traits

The study sought to find out the personality traits possessed by salespeople working for FMCGs Multinational manufacturers operating in Kenya.

4.4.1 Personality traits

The study sought to find out the personality traits used by sales people working for FMCGs multinational manufacturers in Kenya.

Table 4.5: Personality Traits

Personality traits	N	MEAN	SDV
Extraversion	270	4.46	1.21
Agreeableness	270	3.89	1.01
Conscientiousness	270	3.83	1.32
Emotional stability	270	3.80	1.43
Openness to experience	270	3.04	1.19
Overall mean		3.67	1.67

From the respondents' findings the respondents indicated that they use extraversion always with a mean of 4.46 and standard deviation 1.21 meaning that the responses were very varied. Further emotional stability trait was also used frequently with a mean score of 3.89 and S.D of 1.43.

4.4.2 Sales Skills

The respondents were given statements on sales skills and they were asked to indicate their level of agreement in relation to the extent they use the skills in their sales profession. The results are as shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Sales Skills

Sales Skills	N	Mean	SDV
Interpersonal skills	270	4.79	.631
Marketing skills	270	4.11	.658
Technical skills	270	4.37	.597
Problem solving skills	270	4.98	.649
Overall mean		4.29	0.636

Respondents agreed that the problem solving skills and interpersonal skills are necessary for sales person to a very large extent with a mean of 4.98 and S.D of 0.649 and 4.79 and S.D of 0.631 respectively. Further the respondents agreed to a large extent that marketing skills and technical skills are necessary in selling activities with that a mean score of 4.37 and S.D of 0.597 and 4.11 and S.D of 0.658 respectively. This implies that sales representative should possess or acquire the above studied skills for them to succeed in sales career.

4.5 Sales Performance.

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree on how their sales performance is measured in their organizations using 5 point Likert scale. The findings are shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Sales Performance

Sales Performance	N	Mean	SDV
Sales volume	270	4.05	.705
Sales targets	270	4.63	.496
Quality of customer satisfaction	270	4.37	.761
Level of profits	270	4.05	.705
Number of customers served	270	4.58	.607
Customer loyalty	270	3.42	.607
Overall		4.19	0.677

According to the finding in Table 4.7 respondents indicated that sales target is a very important measure of sales performance with a mean of 4.63 and standard deviation of 0.496. The respondents also stated that customers served can be used as a very important measure of sales performance as shown by a mean of 4.58 with standard deviation of 0.607. The respondents further agreed that quality of customer satisfaction is an important measure of sales performance with a mean of 4.37 and standard deviation of 0.761. The respondents further said that sales volume is another important measure of sales performance with a mean 4.21 and standard deviation of 0.855. The results revealed customer loyalty is a moderately important measure of sales performance.

4.6 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was used to test the effect of personality traits and skills on sales performance.

4.6.1 Personality Traits and Sales Performance

The findings on the effect of personality traits on sales performance, are indicated in the Table 4.8, and 4.9.

Table 4.8: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.651	.624	.287	.42283

Table 4.9: Personality Traits and Sales Performance

Model	Coefficients				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.148	1.581	1.992	.060	
Personality traits	.303	.392	(.275)	.773	.000

4.7 Sales Skills and Sales Performance

To find out the effect of predictor variables sales skills and sales performance a regression analysis was done. results are indicated in the Table 4.10 below.

Table 4.10: Sales Skills and Sales Performance

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.813 ^a	.660	.228	.40896

From the results in Table 4.10 above, R^2 is 0.660 meaning that independent variables- sales skills explain 66% of the variation in sales performance. This implies that the independent variable contributes 66% to the sales performance while remaining 34% is

explained by other variables other than sales skills. It is therefore justifiable to make conclusion that sales skills are essential in enhancing the sales performance.

Table 4.11: Sales Skills and Sales Performance

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.117	1	.423	2.532	.000
	Residual	3.512	268	.167		
	Total	5.630	269			

The analysis of variance shows whether or not a model is a good fit for the data and the Table 4.11 above indicates F statistics value as 2.532 and a significant level of 0.000. The p values are less than the critical value ($p < 0.05$) meaning that the impact of sales skills is statistically significant on sales performance.

Table 4.12: Sales Skills and Sales Performance

Coefficients				
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error Beta		
(Constant)	1.235	1.424	.867	.396
Sales Skills	-.094	.353	-.090	.792

Dependent Variable; Sales Skills

4.8 Personality Traits, Skills and Sales Performance.

From the Table 4.13, it can be observed that R is 0.954 and R Square=0.910 at 0.005 level of significance. There is a strong positive relationship between personality trait skills and sales performance as shown by $R=0.954$. The results also indicated that 91.0%

of variation in personality traits skills as explained by the predictors in the model, while 9.0% variation is unexplained due to other factors that are not in the model.

Table 4.13: Personality Traits, Skills and Sales Performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R. Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.954	.910	.897	.14318

a. Predictors: (Constant), Persons skills, Personality traits

b. Dependent Variable: sales performance

4.8.1 Personality Traits, Skills and Sales Performance.

Further analysis of ANOVA as shown in Table 4.14 showed that $F(3, 267) = 8.076$ was significant at 95% level of confidence. This postulates that the model used was fit to explain the relationship between the person's traits, skills and sales performance. Significance explains the usefulness of regression model at 95% level of confidence in which p-value of the F test is less than alpha ($0 < .05$) hence its evident that personality traits and skills are significant predictor of sales performance.

Table 4.14: ANOVA

Model	Sum Squares	DF	Means Square	F	Sig
Regression	3.032	3	.606	8.076	.000 ^b
Residual	8.472	267	.292		
Total	11.505	269			

a. Dependent Variable: Sales Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), sales skills, Personality traits

4.8.2 Personality Traits, Skills and Sales Performance.

The findings in Table 4.15 shows unstandardized coefficients, standardized coefficients, t statistic and significant values.

Table 4.15: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-4.126	.539		-7.955	.000
Sales skills	.188	.108	.100	1.742	.000
Personality traits	1.516	.114	.915	13.337	.000

From Table 4.15, all the variables carried positive predictive power although there was variation in significance level. The results also show that sales skills had a positive and significant effect on sales performance ($\beta = 0.100$, $p=0.000$). From above equation it meant that when other variables are controlled, a unit change in the sales skills would result to sales performance change significantly by 0.100 units in the same direction. However, sales traits had a positive and significant effect on sales performance ($\beta = 0.915$, $p=0.000$). From regression equation it implied that when other variables are controlled, a unit change in the sales traits would result to sales performance change significantly by 0.915 units in the same direction.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

5.1 Introduction

This chapter present the summary of the key findings, conclusion, limitations of the study recommendations with suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of the Findings.

The investigated effects of a sales person's traits and skills on sales performance of fast-moving consumer goods multinational manufacturers in Nairobi Kenya. According to the findings most multinational companies in Kenya consist of male workers than female workers this can be attributed to individual and social related factors that affect women career advancement.

In relation to personality traits used in FMCGs multinational manufacturing companies in Kenya, salespeople, used extraversion always, agreeableness, conscientiousness and emotional stability more frequently while openness to frequently while openness to experience was used frequently. Further it can be the finding showed problem solving skills and interpersonal skills are necessary to a very large extent in sales job where technical skills and marketing skill were necessary to a large extent.

FMCGs multinational manufacturers sales measure of sales target performance new customer served are very important, while they treat customer satisfaction, sales volume and level of profits as important. However, customer loyalty is moderately important measure of sales performance. The effect of sales personality traits and skills on sales performance is statistically significant.

5.3 Conclusion of the Study

Most multinational companies in Nairobi consist of male workers than female and also most of the employees in multinational companies are youths who are starting their career since they are energetic to carry out the sales person job. It can be further concluded that sales people personality traits of extraversion, are used always while agreeableness, conscientiousness and emotional stability are used very frequently. Sales skills that are very necessary in sales job are problem solving and interpersonal skills. Salespeople personality traits and sales skills affect sales performance significantly.

5.4 Recommendations from the Study

This study recommends multinational company management in order to increase sales performance there should be regular measurement of sale representative satisfaction and the firms should put more emphasis on rewarding sales representative and managers who are committed to achieving the vision of the organization. These can be done by having staff who are customer oriented to make sure they expand number of customers and avoid practices that may disatisfy clients. The study also recommends that a combination of communication channels be used to communicate the marketing activities too all employees as well as stakeholders. A well trained marketing team should be recruited in the marketing department. The team should be well versed with the firm operations and have good knowledge of the current technology. The management should also provide enough funds to cater for marketing operations.

Policy recommendations are that the Kenya manufacturers association can educate multinational managers on the factors that influence sales representative skills and traits in order to apply some of the best traits and skills in their businesses hence ensuring

businesses growth. The study also recommends the government together with its agents to formulate policies regarding manufacturing regulations to come up with policies that protect employees and customers.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to Nairobi County, this was as a result of time and cost limitations, Therefore, it has not been determined if the result findings would turn out to be the same if the study was to be conducted elsewhere. In addition challenges including non-response rate were also experienced. There is no justification whatsoever that similar findings would be replicated in other countries. Since the study employed primary sources of data through the use of questionnaires, there was the challenge of non-response to some questions in the questionnaire or even the respondents not returning the entire questionnaire.

5.6 Recommendations for Further Research

The current study's was limited to Nairobi County, it would be interesting to conduct further research in other parts of the country including East African, African, and other global countries this can be helpful to confirm or disapprove the findings of this study. A lot of knowledge has been gained in this study, hence the researcher has suggested some areas for further research. First, the study sought to determine the effect of sales person skills and traits. East African, African, and other global countries can conduct the study in these jurisdictions to ascertain whether the current study findings would hold. Primary data was solely utilized in the study, alternative research can be employed using secondary sources of data sourced from publications, websites, and regulatory authorities. These can then approve or disapprove the current study findings.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire

Questionnaire code

Date:

Time:

Introduction.

The aim of the questionnaire is gather data on the effect of sales person personality traits and skills on the sales performance of FMCG manufacturing companies. Kindly provide relevant answers in the spaces provided. The information provided here will be confidential and for academic purposes only.

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

1. Gender

a) Male [] b) Female []

2. Age

a) Less than 30 [] b) 30-39 [] c) 40-49 [] d) 50 and above []

3. Highest level of education

a) Diploma [] b) Bachelor's Degree [] c) Masters Degree [] d) PHD []

4) For what time in years or month shave you been able to work with this company or in any other firm as a sales person?

a) Less than 2 years [] b) 2 -5 years [] c) 6 - 9 years [] d) 10-13[] e) Over 13 years []

PART B: (1) STATEMENTS ON SALES SKILLS.

1. According to your profession as a sales person, to what extent do you apply the following skills in your work in an attempt to improve the sales performance. Please tick appropriately.

*1= Not at all 2= To a lesser extent 3= To a moderate extent 4= To a greater extent
5 = To a very greater extent.*

	Not at all	To a lesser	To a moderate extent	To a greater extent	To a very greater extent
Interpersonal skills					
Marketing skills					
Technical skills					
Problem solving skills					

(2) STATEMENTS ON PERSONALITY TRAITS

1. How frequently do you apply the following personality traits in your job as a sales person

1= Not At All 2= Less Frequently 3= Frequently 4=More Frequently 5= Always

	Not at all	Less frequently	Frequently	More frequently	Always
Extraversion					
Agreeableness					
Neuroticism					
Openness					
Conscientiousness					

PART C: MEASURES OF SALES PERFORMANCE

1. In your organization, how is sales performance measured in your organization?

(Kindly tick where appropriate)

1=very important, 2= Important, 3=slightly important, 4= Not Important

Measure of Performance	1	2	3	4
Sales Volume				
Sales Targets				
Quality of customer satisfaction				
Level of profits				
Number of customers served				
Customer loyalty				
Average deal size				
Conversion rate/ win rate				

Thank you

Appendix II: List of Multi National Manufacturing Companies in Nairobi Kenya

1. Coca Cola
2. Weetabix
3. Proctor and Allan
4. Nestle Kenya Limited
5. British American Tobacco
6. Unilever Kenya Limited
7. Colgate Palmolive East Africa Limited
8. Wrigley Company East Africa Limited
9. Beiersdorf East Africa Limited
10. PZ Cussons East Africa Limited
11. East Africa Breweries Limited
12. Alliance One Tobacco Kenya Limited
13. Danone Baby Nutrition Africa And Overseas
14. Fresh Del-Monte
15. Johnson Diversey
16. Glaxo Smith Kline Kenya Limited
17. James Finlays
18. Reckitt Benkiest East Africa Limited
19. Pepsi Cola East Africa Limited
20. L'oreal East Africa Limited

Source: Kenya Association of Manufacturers (2017)