

## ABSTRACT

Distributor SMEs provide employment, jobs and support economies. They represent the interest of exporters in their specified territories for agreed range of products. However, a 2016 survey indicated that in 2015 and 2016, distributor SMEs had anticipated growth of 58% and 70% respectively. Yet, 11% was the reported growth totally in line with the plans in 2015. Further, a 2013 report by the ministry of industry and commerce in Kericho County indicated that the distributor SMEs in the county have to contend with issues of changing relationships, employee retention and customer expectations. An attempt to solve this problem focused on enforcing legislation on local content for public projects, establishing 'buy Kenya, build Kenya' policies in public procurement, research and development support and increased contributions to funds such as Uwezo. The problem continues to exist. There are no efforts directed towards investigating the issue of streamlining physical distribution for these SMEs with a direct bearing on their viability, competitive advantage and growth. Empirical literature has failed to address the issue of streamlined physical distribution in this context. Therefore, no empirical information is available on extent of adoption of streamlined physical distribution, factors contributing to effectiveness of streamlined physical distribution and challenges to streamlining physical distribution among distributor SMEs in Kenya and Kericho County. The study thus seeks to establish the contribution of streamlined physical distribution among distributor SMEs in Kericho County, Kenya. Specifically, the study seeks to determine the extent of adoption of streamlined physical distribution, factors affecting effectiveness of streamlined physical distribution and challenges to streamlining physical distribution among the distributor SMEs. The study will be guided by systems approach theory. The study will adopt descriptive cross sectional survey design and target 48 owners or managers of distributor SMEs. Census sampling will be applied. Primary data will be used and shall be collected by means of structured questionnaire. Construct validity and test-retest reliability will be employed to determine the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics will be used to analyze the four objectives of the study. Means, variance, cross tabulations, standard deviation and frequencies will be used. The findings will be presented in tables and figures. The results may be used by policy makers dealing with distributor SMEs and researchers who may wish to further their research based on this study.