

Marketing Challenges and Strategies of Livelihood Organizations: Basis for Developing a Business Resilience Plan

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Abstract: This study explores the marketing challenges and strategies of livelihood organizations engaged in food processing in Mountain Province as a basis for developing a Business Resilience Plan. Livelihood organizations, particularly micro and small enterprises (MSEs), play a crucial role in rural economic development by providing employment and strengthening local industries. However, these organizations face persistent marketing challenges such as limited market access, pricing difficulties, weak advertising, and intense competition. The study utilized the Four S's Exercise—Self, Situation, Support, and Strategies—to assess the marketing management practices and resilience strategies of selected livelihood organizations. Findings reveal that major marketing challenges include difficulty in selling products, pricing struggles due to fluctuating production costs, limited advertising, and increased competition from commercial brands. To overcome these challenges, livelihood organizations employed various strategies such as participating in trade fairs, adopting social media marketing, seeking support from local government units (LGUs), and improving product packaging. They demonstrated sagacity by holding on to values of persistence, community collaboration, and continuous learning. Solution-seeking behavior involved consulting government agencies, attending seminars, and exploring new market channels. Based on the findings, a Business Resilience Plan was developed to guide livelihood organizations, government agencies, and stakeholders in strengthening their capacity to withstand marketing-related disruptions. The plan includes recommended actions such as capacity-building programs on marketing and financial literacy, product innovation, digital marketing adoption, and establishing strong market linkages. This study aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by promoting economic resilience, poverty reduction, and sustainable community development. It serves as a valuable resource for policy formulation and capacity-building initiatives aimed at enhancing the sustainability and competitiveness of livelihood organizations in rural communities.

Keywords: Livelihood organizations; Marketing challenges; Resilience strategies; Business resilience plans; Food processing; Mountain Province; Sustainable development.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Context

Livelihood organizations play a vital role in supporting the socio-economic development of rural communities by providing income-generating opportunities and enhancing local industries. These organizations, particularly micro and small enterprises (MSEs) engaged in food processing, contribute to poverty reduction, employment generation, and the promotion of sustainable community development. Through their products—ranging from processed agricultural goods to local delicacies—these enterprises not only create value-added commodities but also preserve cultural heritage and support the rural economy.

Despite their importance, livelihood organizations face persistent marketing challenges that threaten their sustainability. Limited market access, weak promotional capabilities, inconsistent product pricing, and intense competition with larger commercial brands often hinder their growth and profitability (Nguyen, 2020). Compounding these issues are limited financial resources, low marketing literacy, and insufficient support systems, making it difficult for these organizations to penetrate wider markets and sustain operations over time (Otto, 2024). The COVID-19 pandemic has further amplified these challenges, causing disruptions in supply chains, loss of market demand, and reduced incomes (Eggers, 2020).

In the Philippines, various government programs such as

the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) and the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028 aim to strengthen micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) by providing capital assistance, capacity-building, and market linkages (Acosta & Avalos, 2018; Philippine Development Plan, 2024). However, livelihood organizations in rural provinces like Mountain Province continue to face marketing-related vulnerabilities due to geographic isolation, limited access to technology, and weak business management practices (Padilla et al., 2021).

In Mountain Province, food processing livelihood groups involved in coffee production, banana chips manufacturing, and vegetable preservation contribute significantly to local economic development. However, challenges such as poor marketing strategies, supply chain inefficiencies, inconsistent pricing, and limited customer reach have led many of these organizations to struggle or cease operations. Despite interventions from agencies like the Public Employment Service Office (PESO), issues of market sustainability and competitiveness remain pressing concerns.

Business resilience—the ability of organizations to anticipate, adapt, and recover from market disruptions—has become increasingly critical for the survival of these livelihood organizations (Wang, 2023). Strengthening marketing management practices such as product innovation, effective pricing strategies, improved advertising, and strong customer relationships can help enhance their resilience and long-term sustainability (Mutisya, 2020).

1.2. Literature Review

1.2.1. Marketing Challenges of Livelihood Organizations

Livelihood organizations, particularly micro and small enterprises (MSEs) involved in food processing, often encounter significant marketing challenges. One of the most common issues is limited market access due to geographic isolation, poor infrastructure, and a lack of market information, which restricts these enterprises from expanding their reach beyond local markets (Nguyen, 2020). Additionally, intense market competition from larger, well-funded companies creates difficulties for small enterprises in establishing a sustainable market share (Otto, 2024).

Pricing strategies also pose a challenge for livelihood organizations, especially those with limited financial literacy. Inadequate cost computation often leads to underpricing or overpricing, which either minimizes profit or deters potential buyers (Padilla et al., 2021). Moreover, many livelihood groups struggle with promoting their products due to a lack of knowledge and resources in advertising and branding (Mutisya, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed the vulnerabilities of these organizations, disrupting supply chains, reducing demand, and forcing many enterprises to cease operations (Eggers, 2020). These realities emphasize the need for adaptive marketing strategies to ensure survival and resilience.

1.2.2. Marketing Strategies and Resilience Building

Effective marketing strategies are critical to improving the resilience of livelihood organizations. Product innovation, market diversification, and the use of digital platforms have been recognized as effective ways to enhance competitiveness and adaptability (Wang, 2023). For instance, the adoption of e-commerce and social media marketing has allowed small enterprises to reach wider markets, even during times of economic disruption (Islam & Ryan, 2016).

Capacity-building programs focusing on marketing skills, pricing strategies, and product development are also essential for resilience. According to Acosta and Avalos (2018), government initiatives such as the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) provide training and market linkages that help improve the marketing competencies of community-based enterprises. Strengthening networks and partnerships with local governments, NGOs, and private sectors enhances support systems, providing critical assistance during crises (Philippine Development Plan, 2024).

Furthermore, developing sustainable and climate-resilient products improves the marketability of local goods, aligning them with global consumer preferences for eco-friendly and socially responsible products (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2023).

1.2.3. Business Resilience and Sustainable Development

Business resilience, defined as an organization's capacity to anticipate, respond to, and recover from disruptions, is increasingly recognized as vital for the survival of small enterprises (Wang, 2023). Integrating resilience into marketing management practices ensures that livelihood organizations can adapt to market shifts, economic downturns, or environmental challenges.

Building resilience is also aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and SDG 13 (Climate Action). Supporting small food-processing

enterprises through business resilience plans contributes to poverty reduction, local economic stability, and sustainable community development (UNDP, 2023).

1.3. Conceptual Framework

1.3.1. The Four S's Exercise (Resilience Plan)

The study is anchored on the idea that business resilience is essential for the sustainability and growth of livelihood organizations engaged in food processing. The conceptual framework is grounded in business resilience theory, which emphasizes an organization's ability to anticipate, adapt to, and recover from challenges (Wang, 2023). It integrates key components of marketing, financial, human resource, and operations management practices to assess their impact on organizational performance and long-term sustainability. The study applies the Four S's Exercise (Self, Situation, Support, and Strategies) (Poole & Alberts, as cited in Serrat, 2017) as a guiding framework to develop a Business Resilience Plan that will strengthen the capacity of these organizations to withstand challenges and sustain long-term operations.

The Four S's Exercise (or Resilience Plan), designed by Dr. Lucinda Poole and Dr. Hugo Alberts, provides a structured approach to understanding how individuals and organizations navigate challenges. The framework examines how people recall past challenges, identify sources of support, implement coping strategies, reflect on key insights, and develop solutions (Patrick, 2023). While the original Four S's framework is often applied to personal resilience in overcoming adversity—such as illness, financial struggles, or job loss, this study extends its application to organizational resilience, particularly in the context of livelihood organizations engaged in food processing in Mountain Province.

1.3.2. Business Resilience

Resilience, as defined by Sibert (n.d.), is the process of adapting successfully despite difficult circumstances. In the case of livelihood organizations, resilience refers to their ability to adapt to market challenges, financial constraints, operational inefficiencies, and environmental disruptions while maintaining business continuity. According to Cassidy (2015), resilience is associated with inner strength, competence, optimism, flexibility, and the ability to cope with challenges. It involves minimizing risk factors—such as limited financial capacity and market competition—while maximizing protective factors, such as government support, community partnerships, and adaptive business strategies.

1.3.3. Business Resilience in Livelihood Organizations

Livelihood organizations in food processing, particularly in rural areas like Mountain Province, Philippines, face various business challenges that affect their operations. These challenges include limited access to financial resources, inefficient supply chains, weak market linkages, gaps in business management strategies, and regulatory compliance issues (Nguyen, 2020). These constraints threaten their ability to sustain operations and compete in the broader market (Padilla et al., 2021). To counteract these challenges, organizations employ business strategies, such as product innovation, financial transparency, digital marketing integration, optimized production scheduling, and enhanced workforce management (Mutisya, 2020).

The **Four S's** framework—Self, Situation, Support, and Strategies—provides a structured approach to understanding the resilience of livelihood organizations engaged in food processing. This model helps assess both

internal and external factors that influence organizational sustainability. Self refers to the internal capacities, skills, and resources of these organizations, including leadership effectiveness, workforce commitment, and business acumen. It highlights the role of human capital in ensuring continuous operations and adapting to challenges. The situation pertains to the external challenges faced by livelihood organizations, such as market constraints, competition, raw material shortages, and limited access to funding. These factors significantly impact business stability and require strategic interventions to mitigate risks.

Support focuses on the institutional, governmental, and community assistance that strengthens business resilience. Programs from agencies such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Agriculture (DA), and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) provide crucial financial aid, capacity-building initiatives, and market access support. These external reinforcements enable livelihood organizations to sustain operations and enhance their competitiveness. Finally, Strategies represent the coping mechanisms, business adjustments, and innovative solutions employed by these organizations to navigate business challenges. This includes product diversification, digital marketing adoption, financial improvements, and the implementation of sustainable practices. By applying the Four S's framework, this study will identify the key resilience-building practices of livelihood organizations, forming the basis for a Business Resilience Plan that can guide other enterprises in overcoming operational difficulties and ensuring long-term sustainability.

1.4. Research Problem and Significance

Livelihood organizations engaged in food processing play a crucial role in fostering local economic development and providing sustainable income opportunities, especially in rural communities. However, these organizations face significant challenges in marketing management, limiting their capacity to grow, compete, and withstand economic disruptions.

This study seeks to examine the marketing challenges encountered by these organizations and determine the strategies, support systems, and solution-seeking behaviors they employed to recover from these challenges. The findings will serve as the basis for formulating a Business Resilience Plan that can strengthen their ability to cope with future marketing-related disruptions.

The study is significant as it provides insights into the factors that impact the sustainability and growth of livelihood organizations engaged in food processing. These organizations play a crucial role in local economic development, particularly in rural communities, by creating employment opportunities, promoting the use of locally sourced raw materials, and preserving traditional food processing techniques. However, they face numerous business challenges, including financial constraints, limited market access, operational inefficiencies, and regulatory compliance issues. Addressing these challenges through effective business strategies is essential for their long-term survival and contribution to sustainable development.

For livelihood organizations, this study offers practical strategies for improving marketing, financial management, human resource development, and operations management. By identifying business challenges and successful coping mechanisms, the study provides a framework that can guide

these organizations in enhancing their resilience. The proposed Business Resilience Plan serves as a strategic tool for mitigating risks, optimizing resource utilization, and strengthening market competitiveness, ensuring the sustainability of small-scale enterprises.

For government agencies such as the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and local government units (LGUs), the findings offer valuable insights into the specific needs of livelihood organizations. The study highlights areas where policy interventions, capacity-building programs, and financial assistance are needed to support small-scale food processors. This can lead to better program design and targeted support mechanisms that enhance the sustainability of livelihood organizations.

For academic institutions, the study serves as a reference for researchers, educators, and students studying business resilience, entrepreneurship, and community development. It contributes to the body of knowledge on sustainable livelihood practices and provides a basis for further research on micro-enterprise development, particularly in the context of rural food processing industries. Additionally, the study's findings can be integrated into Information Education Campaign (IEC) materials, which can be used in training programs for livelihood organizations.

For policymakers and non-government organizations (NGOs), this research provides evidence-based recommendations for enhancing the resilience of small-scale enterprises. The study underscores the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration in fostering economic empowerment, poverty alleviation, and sustainable enterprise development. The proposed resilience framework can serve as a model for other livelihood organizations facing similar challenges in different regions.

In alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), this study contributes to efforts in promoting sustainable business practices. By strengthening the resilience of livelihood organizations, the research supports inclusive economic growth, local food security, and environmental sustainability.

Overall, this study is significant as it bridges the gap between research and practice by offering a strategic approach to business resilience that can be applied by livelihood organizations, government agencies, academic institutions, and policymakers. It serves as a guide in enhancing the sustainability, efficiency, and market competitiveness of food-processing livelihood organizations, ensuring their ability to thrive in a challenging and dynamic business environment.

1.5. Research Objectives and Scope

This study aims to examine the business challenges and strategies of livelihood organizations engaged in food processing, with the goal of developing a Business Resilience Plan to enhance their sustainability and performance. It seeks to address the pressing issue of marketing management among these organizations by identifying the specific challenges they face in this area. The study also investigates the current marketing strategies employed to overcome these challenges, evaluates their effectiveness, and proposes enhanced marketing practices. Ultimately, the research aims to develop a Business Resilience Plan centered on marketing

strategies that can be utilized by livelihood organizations, government agencies, and other stakeholders to strengthen market competitiveness and promote long-term sustainability.

By achieving these objectives, the study contributes to the development of practical, research-based interventions that can help livelihood organizations navigate challenges, optimize resources, and foster long-term sustainability.

Furthermore, this research aligns with several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and SDG 13 (Climate Action) (UNDP, 2023). The outcome of this study will be a business resilience plan designed to provide guidance for livelihood organizations and support institutions engaged in capacity-building initiatives.

By generating evidence-based insights and policy recommendations, this study aims to contribute to the sustainability and competitiveness of livelihood organizations in the food processing sector, promoting economic resilience and inclusive growth in Mountain Province.

2. Methodology

This chapter covers the research design, population and locale of the study, data gathering tools, data gathering procedure, treatment of data, and ethical considerations. This section describes the specific procedure or techniques used to identify and analyze information in addressing the research problem.

2.1. Research Design

The study employed a qualitative case study approach to explore the marketing challenges, strategies, and resilience mechanisms of livelihood organizations engaged in food processing. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 8–10 organizations from Bauko, Mountain Province, based on criteria such as years of marketing experience, participation in trade fairs, and endorsement by local government units. These criteria ensured the inclusion of active, experienced enterprises capable of providing meaningful insights into marketing management practices.

Data was collected through group interviews guided by a tool adapted from the Four S's framework, revised to align with the study's focus. The interview guide systematically explored marketing challenges, support systems, strategies, sagacity, and solution-seeking behaviors. Prior to the data collection, ethical protocols were followed, including informed consent and the translation of interview questions into the local dialect to enhance participant understanding. The researcher coordinated with local government offices and livelihood forums to identify suitable participants and conducted face-to-face interviews with organization leaders and members until data saturation was reached. Supplementary documentation, including notes, photographs, and audio/video recordings, supported the analysis and ensured accuracy.

2.2. Data Analysis

In this study, thematic analysis was employed to examine the qualitative data by identifying and interpreting recurring patterns and themes, following the six-step process outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). The researcher transcribed and reviewed interview data, generated codes inductively based on the research problems, and categorized responses under key areas such as marketing, finance, human resources, and

operations. These codes were refined into themes and reviewed for consistency, ensuring that the findings were systematically aligned with the study's objectives (Creswell, 2018).

2.3. Ethical Considerations

The researcher obtained permission from the Municipal Mayor of Bauko and secured informed consent from the livelihood organizations and participants to ensure voluntary participation. Ethical considerations were strictly observed, including respect for confidentiality and proper documentation through photos, videos, and audio recordings, with participants' approval. Manual notes were also taken to capture key insights. Participants were assured that all collected data would be discarded after analysis, and the study's findings were shared with the local government, implementing agencies, and participants.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Marketing Challenges Faced by Livelihood Organizations Engaged in Food Processing

Livelihood organizations engaged in food processing confront several persistent marketing challenges that impact their performance and sustainability. The following discussion highlights these challenges corroborated by recent studies.

3.1.1. Selling Products

One of the primary challenges encountered by livelihood organizations is the difficulty in selling their products consistently. Limited market access due to geographic isolation and inadequate infrastructure prevents these groups from reaching larger markets. Consequently, many organizations experience unsold inventories, causing financial strain (Padilla et al., 2021). Moreover, weak connections with consistent buyers further exacerbate the issue, making it hard to maintain a steady cash flow.

Recent studies confirm this challenge, highlighting that many micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), particularly those in rural areas, lack the market linkages necessary to sustain demand for their products (Zambrano et al., 2023). Furthermore, seasonal fluctuations in demand, particularly for food products, leave these organizations vulnerable to income instability (Santos et al., 2022).

3.1.2. Market Competition

Market competition is another significant hurdle for livelihood organizations. Many compete against commercial brands that offer similar products with superior packaging, standardized quality, and competitive pricing. Larger manufacturers benefit from economies of scale, enabling them to sell products at lower prices, thus attracting more customers (Mutisya, 2020).

Livelihood organizations, on the other hand, often struggle with quality inconsistencies due to limited resources and production capacity. This puts them at a disadvantage in highly competitive markets where consumers prefer well-packaged, consistently high-quality products (Nguyen, 2020). The absence of proper market differentiation strategies further compounds this challenge.

3.1.3. Pricing Products

Proper pricing is a recurring challenge among these organizations. Many livelihood groups lack the financial

literacy and market research skills necessary to determine appropriate product pricing. As a result, they either underprice products to attract buyers—jeopardizing profitability—or overprice them, which negatively affects sales volume (Otto, 2024).

This challenge is consistent with findings from a study on rural MSMEs in Southeast Asia, which emphasized that improper pricing strategies often stem from insufficient cost analysis and poor understanding of consumer purchasing power (Rosales et al., 2023). Consequently, pricing decisions frequently result in either financial losses or decreased competitiveness.

3.1.4. Advertising Products

Advertising and promotional activities are notably weak among food processing livelihood organizations. Financial constraints, limited knowledge of marketing tools, and a lack of exposure to digital platforms restrict their advertising efforts. Most organizations rely heavily on word-of-mouth and community-based promotions, limiting their reach to local markets (Eggers, 2020).

According to a study by Oduor (2022), many small enterprises in rural areas still depend on traditional marketing methods, failing to harness the potential of social media, e-commerce, and digital advertising channels. This leads to minimal market visibility, which directly affects sales growth.

3.1.5. Other Marketing Issues

In addition to the challenges outlined above, livelihood organizations face other marketing-related problems such as limited branding knowledge, lack of market research, and minimal understanding of changing customer preferences. These factors prevent them from developing effective marketing strategies that resonate with target markets (Oduo, 2024).

Seasonal demand fluctuations also pose risks, especially for food-based products. During off-peak seasons, organizations face difficulties maintaining sales levels, exacerbating their financial vulnerabilities (Santos et al., 2022). The absence of branding initiatives further weakens their product appeal in competitive markets.

The cumulative impact of these marketing challenges undermines the sustainability of livelihood organizations engaged in food processing. Limited selling opportunities, intense market competition, improper pricing, poor advertising, and minimal understanding of market dynamics constrain their growth potential. These findings align with the broader literature emphasizing that small-scale enterprises, particularly in rural and developing regions, require targeted support in marketing management to achieve resilience and competitiveness (Zambrano et al., 2023; Rosales et al., 2023).

3.2. Strategies, Support Mechanisms, Sagacity, and Solution-Seeking Behaviors Applied by Livelihood Organizations to Overcome Marketing Challenges

3.2.1. Business Strategies Employed

Livelihood organizations employ various strategies to mitigate marketing challenges and sustain their operations. One common approach is product diversification, where organizations develop new food products or modify existing ones to attract different customer segments. This enables them to respond to changing consumer preferences and market demands, reducing reliance on a single product line (Padilla et al., 2021).

Additionally, some groups utilize direct-to-consumer selling techniques, such as participating in local fairs, weekend markets, or farm-gate sales, to bypass middlemen and maximize profits (Santos et al., 2022). This method enhances visibility and builds relationships with loyal customers. Furthermore, organizations that can leverage social media platforms for marketing and advertising gain wider reach at a relatively low cost, allowing them to compete more effectively with larger businesses (Oduor, 2022).

3.2.2. Support Mechanisms Utilized

Support from various institutions is crucial in helping these organizations overcome marketing barriers. Livelihood groups often rely on local government units (LGUs), cooperatives, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for capacity-building programs, marketing training, and financial support. For instance, LGUs provide access to shared facilities such as processing centers and packaging equipment, which improve product quality and competitiveness (Rosales et al., 2023).

Moreover, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) initiatives, like the "One Town, One Product" (OTOP) program in the Philippines, provide marketing assistance, product development support, and opportunities to showcase products at national trade fairs (Zambrano et al., 2023). Private partnerships and microfinance institutions also serve as critical sources of capital and technical guidance.

3.2.3. Sagacity or Insights Gained

Livelihood organizations display sagacity by recognizing the importance of continuous learning and adaptability in business. Many have embraced the idea that understanding the market, monitoring competitors, and responding to consumer trends are essential to long-term survival. These insights push organizations to focus on quality improvement and branding efforts, gradually differentiating their products from competitors (Otto, 2024).

Some groups reported that collaboration, not competition, often leads to mutual growth, especially when dealing with other micro-enterprises. By forming alliances or cooperatives, they gain collective bargaining power and increase their market presence (Nguyen, 2020).

3.2.4. Solution-Seeking Behaviors

In response to marketing challenges, these organizations engage in various solution-seeking behaviors. A key behavior is actively pursuing training opportunities offered by government agencies, NGOs, and universities, particularly on product development, pricing strategies, and digital marketing (Mutisya, 2020).

Organizations also demonstrate proactive market scanning, gathering feedback from customers to refine products or adjust pricing based on demand elasticity. Furthermore, many seek partnerships with private sector players for co-branding or distribution support (Eggers, 2020).

Digital transformation is another solution-seeking behavior gaining traction. With the rise of online platforms, several livelihood organizations have begun exploring e-commerce and social media as cost-effective tools to reach wider markets, especially during periods of restricted mobility such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Oduor, 2022).

The collective efforts of these livelihood organizations—combining strategies, external support, sagacious insights, and active solution-seeking behaviors—strengthen their resilience against marketing-related challenges. These behaviors reflect a shift towards market-oriented thinking,

innovation, and adaptability, which are essential for sustainable development in the food processing sector.

These findings are consistent with recent research emphasizing that MSMEs' survival largely depends on their ability to adapt strategies, leverage support systems, and engage in continuous learning (Eggers, 2020; Nguyen, 2020; Zambrano et al., 2023). The application of these resilience-enhancing practices positions livelihood organizations to better withstand future disruptions and seize emerging opportunities.

3.3. Business Resilience Plan for Livelihood Organizations to Strengthen Capacity Against Marketing-Related Disruptions

Based on the findings, a Business Resilience Plan (BRP) for livelihood organizations engaged in food processing is essential to equip them with tools, strategies, and partnerships that enhance their capacity to withstand and recover from marketing-related disruptions.

3.3.1. Strengthening Marketing Capacities through Continuous Learning and Innovation

Continuous learning is central to marketing resilience. Livelihood organizations must regularly participate in capacity-building activities such as marketing seminars, product development workshops, and digital marketing training provided by government agencies like the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and private stakeholders (Zambrano et al., 2023). Building knowledge on market trends, customer preferences, and pricing strategies will allow them to innovate and differentiate their products (Eggers, 2020).

Investments in digital marketing and e-commerce platforms should be prioritized. The pandemic has shown the importance of online presence in maintaining sales channels during disruptions (Oduor, 2022). Social media marketing, participation in online trade fairs, and partnerships with delivery services should be part of the resilience plan.

3.3.2. Enhancing Financial Preparedness and Resource Mobilization

Financial resilience is critical for marketing success. Livelihood organizations should maintain robust financial records and cash flow management systems to prepare for uncertain periods. Accessing microfinance, cooperative loans, or government grants can provide the capital needed for marketing campaigns, production upgrades, or market expansion (Mutisya, 2020).

Furthermore, developing a contingency fund specific to marketing activities (advertising, rebranding, or emergency promotions) can support rapid responses during market disruptions (Rosales et al., 2023).

3.3.3. Building Strategic Partnerships and Market Networks

Collaborating with cooperatives, private companies, and local governments increases market access and reduces individual vulnerability. Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) should be encouraged to assist livelihood organizations in product development, market linkages, and distribution channels (Nguyen, 2020).

Participation in programs like DTI's OTOP helps food processors gain wider market exposure and continuous product improvement support (Zambrano et al., 2023). Forming clusters or federations enhances bargaining power and allows shared marketing resources, reducing costs and

risks.

3.3.4. Institutionalizing Market Research and Customer Feedback Systems

Livelihood organizations must integrate regular market scanning and customer feedback mechanisms into their operations. Understanding changing market demands helps organizations adjust their marketing strategies, improve product offerings, and sustain competitiveness (Padilla et al., 2021).

Periodic SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) should be conducted to align marketing efforts with organizational capabilities and external market forces.

3.3.5. Promoting Sagacity and Adaptive Mindset

Resilience stems not only from strategies but also from mindset. The plan should emphasize adaptability, resourcefulness, and entrepreneurial sagacity; the ability to make sound judgments amidst adversity (Otto, 2024). Encouraging a culture of innovation, risk management, and strategic thinking will enable livelihood groups to overcome marketing challenges proactively.

Mentoring programs involving successful entrepreneurs can help instill these values, creating a cycle of learning and knowledge-sharing within the community.

3.3.6. Policy Support and Advocacy for Livelihood Organizations

Government agencies and NGOs must institutionalize policies that provide consistent marketing support. This includes:

- Subsidizing marketing training and digital transformation programs.

- Creating shared marketing platforms (both physical and digital).

- Developing inclusive market policies that prioritize MSMEs and local food processors in procurement programs.

- Supporting research and development (R&D) to help groups improve packaging, branding, and marketability (Rosales et al., 2023).

A comprehensive Business Resilience Plan enhances the ability of livelihood organizations to anticipate, withstand, and recover from marketing-related challenges. The plan's core lies in capacity-building, financial preparedness, collaborative partnerships, continuous market intelligence, adaptive mindset cultivation, and policy support.

These elements, when combined, create an enabling environment for food-processing livelihood organizations to thrive even amidst disruptions like economic downturns, market competition, or global crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. The Business Resilience Plan offers a roadmap for livelihood groups, government bodies, and stakeholders to collaborate in strengthening rural economies and ensuring sustainable development.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1. Summary of Key Findings

Livelihood organizations engaged in food processing play a vital role in supporting local economies and rural development. However, they are highly vulnerable to marketing challenges due to limited resources, market knowledge, and technological capacity.

The study concludes that resilience in marketing management is achievable through a combination of

proactive strategies, access to support systems, sagacity, and continuous learning. Building a strong Business Resilience Plan tailored to their needs enhances their capacity to survive disruptions, adapt to changing market conditions, and sustain their operations.

Marketing resilience is not solely dependent on individual efforts but requires a holistic approach involving government agencies, private sectors, and the community to ensure the sustainable growth of livelihood organizations.

4.2. Recommendations

4.2.1. For Livelihood Organizations

To strengthen the marketing performance and resilience of livelihood organizations engaged in food processing, several strategic actions are recommended. First, there is a need to enhance digital marketing capacities by participating in digital literacy and e-commerce training programs. This will enable organizations to improve their online marketing skills and expand their market reach (Oduor, 2022). Additionally, improving product development and branding is crucial. This includes regularly updating product designs, packaging, and brand identity to align with evolving market preferences and to differentiate from competitors. Strengthening financial management is also essential; establishing a dedicated marketing contingency fund and maintaining transparent financial records can support future promotional efforts and improve preparedness for potential crises. Finally, conducting regular market research should be institutionalized. Gathering and analyzing customer feedback and market trends will ensure informed marketing decisions and continuous product improvement.

4.2.2. For Government Agencies and Stakeholders

To effectively support livelihood organizations in enhancing their marketing efforts and overall resilience, several institutional and policy-level strategies are recommended. Providing continuous capacity-building programs is essential; this involves offering training and workshops focused on marketing, product development, and financial literacy, specifically tailored to the unique needs of these organizations. Facilitating easier access to funding is also critical. Streamlining the processes for acquiring microfinance, cooperative loans, and grants can empower these groups to invest in marketing activities and scale their operations. Moreover, the creation of shared marketing platforms—both physical and digital—can serve as centralized hubs where livelihood organizations can showcase their products and connect with wider markets. Lastly, strengthening policy support by integrating livelihood groups into mainstream market systems, such as through procurement preferences for MSME-produced goods, will help promote inclusive growth and ensure long-term sustainability.

4.2.3. For Future Researchers

Future research may consider expanding the scope of the study to include other livelihood sectors or geographical areas, allowing for broader generalizations of the findings. Further investigations could also explore additional business challenges beyond marketing, particularly those related to financial management, human resources, and operations management. Moreover, it is recommended that future studies assess the long-term impact of implemented business resilience plans on the sustainability and growth of livelihood organizations. Such research would provide valuable insights into the effectiveness and adaptability of resilience strategies

over time.

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