

**SEGMENTATION PRACTICES OF FURNITURE
MANUFACTURING BUSINESSES
IN MAUA MUNICIPALITY AND ITS ENVIRONS**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to assess the segmentation practices of furniture manufacturing business. A survey of sixty two registered furniture manufacturers was carried out in Meru north district. The general objective of this study was to find out how furniture manufacturers determine the customers for their products, their marketing practices and t they consider important. During this study, primary data was collected from Maua Municipality and its environments using structured, semi structured questionnaires and direct observation was used. Secondary data from Maua Municipal Council records were **also** used. The study looked at the nature of segmentation practices, variables commonly used in segmenting the market, effects of current practices on furniture manufacturing businesses and sort options on how market segmentation could be improved. Data analysis was done using Microsoft excel computer packages. Information was presentation through bar charts, percentages, tables and pie charts. This research reveal that more than half of the respondents segment their market and produced specific items for specific customers, which helps them make more profits and allocate their resources. Those who did not segment thought it was not important. The variables used were income, social class and institutions. Majority of the respondents said it was important to give the customers what they wanted. The study concluded that furniture manufacturers are aware of segmentation and marketing practices. Their main source of furniture raw materials were wholesalers and retailers who obtain timber from Nyambene Forest and its environment, which has caused destruction of the forest. The study recommends that the government through financial institutions should give the furniture manufacturers financial support since these businesses contribute greatly to Kenyan economy, reduced poverty and offer employment. Government needs to put emphasis on their training and offer financial support because furniture manufacturing creates jobs and supports the economy.