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INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY BRANDING STRATEGIES FOR APPLES FROM NYANGA, ZIMBABWE

BY

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Abstract

The study evaluated the prospects of intellectual property branding strategies for apples from Nyanga, Zimbabwe. Specifically, the study assessed how apple producers in Nyanga can create perceived differences among products through branding using geographical indicators and evaluate how apple producers can create value that can translate to financial benefit using geographical indicators. The study also sought to determine any implications of GI branding for apples on competitive advantage and recommend strategies that can be used to promote Geographical indications of apples from Nyanga Zimbabwe. In order to explore the potential of intellectual property branding strategies for apples from Nyanga, the study used the brand equity model which enunciates particular upgrading strategies that disadvantaged producers may pursue in order to influence improved value chain and competitive advantage. Brand quality marks, including geographical indications can reduce information asymmetry between remotely situated producers and potential buyers in a value chain. The study adopted a qualitative research design. The use of qualitative methods provided data that was primarily descriptive and allowed for interpretation in order to develop a deeper thoughtful of the processes of the branding strategies for agricultural commodities. A total of 45 apple producers were selected to participate in the study. In addition, the study population comprised of 5 experts from Zimtrade, Zimbabwe Farmers Union and ARIPO based in Harare. The study utilised both interview guide and focus group discussion guide. Primary data collected from both interviews and focus groups were content analysed. The aim of content analysis was to reduce written texts transcribed from both focus groups and interviews. This involved data reduction of qualitative material. It was concluded that the stronger the connection between the apples and the geographical region of Nyanga, the tougher the competitive advantage. The study concluded that in light of decreasing prices and increased competition in the commodity markets GIs provide an alternative approach for marketing agricultural products. As a result, the participants agreed that apple farmers had to move away from commodity production and move to lucrative product branding. The study also concluded that potential buyers in the European market prefer production methods of all natural and organic production. In many cases consumers no longer prefer GI apples which are inorganically produced. It is recommended that there is the need to establish a GI Office and Secretariat that can provide support/advice for the elaboration of GI applications in Zimbabwe. The study also recommended that the government should attract private investments in export-oriented activities and infrastructure for agricultural products such apples.

Key Words: Apples, Branding, Brand Equity, Copyright, Geographical Indicators, Intellectual Property, Logo, Trademark

Declaration

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my original work except where sources have been cited and acknowledged. The work has never been submitted, nor will it ever be submitted to another university for the award of a degree.

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Copyright

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Dedication

To my mum and dad, Taku, Tino and Tawanda.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ARIPO	African Regional Intellectual Property Organization
GI	Geographical Indicators
GMO	Genetically Modified Organisms
IP	Intellectual Property
OAPI	African Intellectual Property Organization
TRIPS	World Trade Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of International Property Rights
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

This study evaluates the prospects of intellectual property branding strategies for apples from Nyanga, Zimbabwe. This section provides an introduction to the background, problem statement and justification of the study. The section also provides the research gap, aim and the objectives of the study. The section then identifies the research questions and discusses the research contributions, assumptions of the study, delimitation and limitations.

1.2. Background to the Study

Intellectual property branding has become an important instrument to promote products and agricultural commodities commercially as well as generating wealth, adding value, protect the producing and expand the export of products, strengthen the domestic (Gatrell, Reid & Steiger, 2018; Kabadayi & Lerman, 2019). In the past decades, the role of intellectual property branding in agribusiness had been increasing enormously in both developed and developing countries. In particular, intellectual property branding such as geographical indications can provide a basis for differentiating commodity agricultural products (Chatterjee & Kumar, 2017). As such, intellectual property rights such as geographical indicators (GIs) and trademarks can be used as a branding strategy for improving competitive advantage. In particular, geographical identities can afford agricultural producers brand name equity that is usually not available to commodity products such as apples. With GI protection, producers are able to command premiums for their products, especially if perceived quality differences exist, including product differences attributable to their unique geographical origins (Coelho, Coelho & Egerer, 2018).

Developing countries, such as Bangladesh, Kenya, India, Indonesia and Thailand have been using geographical indications to create higher economic returns, improving market access, potential price premiums as well as enhancing rural development (Barjolle, 2015; Bellatti, Marescotti, Paus & Deppler, 2019; Ghazali, 2019). Indeed, geographical indications is one of the intellectual property rights tools that have been widely used to convey the association between quality of agricultural products and their place of origin. More so, geographical indication-based branding strategies have long been available in the European Union with examples of Swiss Etivaz cheese (Adinolfi, Rosa & Trabalzi, 2017). Other examples of products known both in domestic and global market include Darjeeling tea from India, Ceylon tea from Sri Lanka, Barbados sugar, Florida Oranges, Idaho Potatoes, Vidalia onions, Antigua coffee from Guatemala and Napa Valley Wine (Stasi, Nardone, Viscecchia & Seccia, 2018; Thualetal, 2019). As noted by Ngokkuen and Grote (2017), Barbados sugar captured almost US$1 million in added value for producers in 2016 alone whilst a Namibian beef brand delivered price premiums to farmers worth over US$25 million in 2015. When agricultural commodities are branded using geographical indications consumers revert to making repeat purchases thereby developing a strong sense of brand loyalty, a willingness to buy at a premium and creation of an image of exoticness.

Studies by Blakeney, Coulet, Mengistie and Mahop (2012) revealed that consumers have become increasingly willing to pay a premium in many developed countries for region of origin labels. However, in Africa there are still very few products that are registered as GIs despite the fact that the majority of African countries are members of the WTO. In particular, only south Africa has been the leading African country with registered GI products ranging from wines, spirits as well as agricultural products (Coelho, Coelho & Egerer, 2018).

Despite the adoption of Geographical Indications Act (chapter 26:06), Zimbabwe is yet to fully realize its economic benefits with regard to apple products. For instance, apple products from Zimbabwe are popular in the Southern African region commanding over 40% of import markets in Namibia, South Africa, Malawi and Zambia because they are deemed to be of better quality (Gatrell, Reid & Steiger, 2018). The quality and tastes of the apples grown from the Nyanga are the most valued attributes. In the wake of this, apple farming has remained a life changer employing over 2000 individuals (The Manica Post, 2018). The area has been specifically blessed with good soils and climate, optimum rainfall, good soils and favourable chilling units which contribute to good yields of apples. However, it should be noted that the apples from Nyanga continue to face competition from imports coming from South Africa, some of which will be genetically modified (GMOs). As noted by Slade (2018), there has been a high percentage of apple imports coming from South Africa.

In order to cope with the competition in the market, the farm producers need to look for labels added to the fruits as well as the information on quality aspects. However, the power of branding has eluded most apple producers in Nyanga leading to inelastic demand. Moreover, these apple producers have been unsuccessful in using traditional branding strategies to sell these commoditized products. As the use of GI-based marketing strategies increases, there has been the need for apple producers in Nyanga to consider GIs as brand names. This can become the most important asset for apple producers and their greatest source of competitive advantage in the marketplace. More so, the appropriate use of geographical indicator can help producers in Nyanga to transform this knowledge into marketable products. More so, there had been indications that consumers seek organic fruits, quality fruits and more recently local fruits (Barjolle, Quinones-Ruiz, Bagal & Comoe, 2019). Consumers worldwide increasingly

seek information on the quality of the goods they wish to purchase among other qualities, and because the geographical indicator scheme responds to such needs, consumers are ready to pay a premium price for origin products. In this regard, GI characteristics can make these apples create a niche in the market making them an opportunity that can be exploited by marketers or sellers to their benefits. Through geographical indicators therefore, the apples from Nyanga can be differentiated in the market based on their geographical source. Against this background, the study was premised to evaluate the prospects of intellectual property branding strategies for apples from Nyanga.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Agro-based products such as apples are usually rooted in a given geographical environment. The unique qualities and characteristics of apples from Nyanga are fundamentally based on their origin by virtue of the climate and soil composition (Deciduous Fruits Growers Association, 2020). The apples from Nyanga have continued to face low demand despite their high quality. Consequently, these apples are sold at very low prices making it economically unviable for the producers. In addition, the apples have not managed to break into the competitive expert market (Deciduous Fruits Growers Association, 2020). According to Zimtrade (2020), apples from Nyanga can have an export niche because of their quality as such, geographical indications provide the prospect of differentiating apples from Nyanga against other international competitors. In particular, branding apples from Nyanga using geographical indication can protect producers against genetically modified products (GMO) coming from South Africa. Moreover, studies on the prospects of intellectual property branding strategies for agricultural commodities in the Zimbabwean context had been sparse. Most studies have been conducted in countries such as France, Spain, Germany, Brazil,

Jamaica and Kenya (Adinolfi, Rosa, & Trabalzi, 2017; Albrecht, & Smithers, 2018; Bellatti, Marescotti, Paus & Deppler, 2019). As such, the study sought to fill this literature gap by evaluating the prospects of intellectual property branding strategies for apples from Nyanga in Zimbabwe.

1.4 Research Objectives

The primary purpose of the study was to evaluate the prospect of intellectual property branding apples from Nyanga. The specific research objectives include the following:

1. Assess how apple producers in Nyanga can create perceived differences among products through branding using geographical indicators.
2. Evaluate how apple producers can create value that can translate to financial benefits using geographical indicators.
3. Determine any implications of GI branding for apples on competitive advantage.
4. Recommend strategies that can be used to promote Geographical indications of apples from Nyanga Zimbabwe.

1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How can apple producers in Nyanga create perceived differences among products through branding using geographical indicators?
2. How can apple producers create value that can translate to financial benefits using geographical indicators?
3. What are the implications of GI branding for apples on competitive advantage?

4. What strategies that can be used to promote Geographical indications of apples from Nyanga Zimbabwe?

1.6 Assumptions

The study made the following assumptions:

- There is compatibility between consumer perceptions and preferences for Geographical Indications (GI) and purchase of apples.
- It is assumed that the opinions and insights gathered from the respondents will be representative and applicable to the study population.

1.7 Significance of the Study

1.7.1. To the academia

This study can provide both theoretical and practical contributions to the academic literature. In particular, the study provides an insight into consumers' awareness and their expectations of local Zimbabwean apples in terms of origin. Theoretically, the study fills the gap in Zimbabwean agribusiness strategy, particularly the value-addition strategic objective that missed on GI as a possible market targeting intervention. The study sought to contribute to the understanding of the implications of IP protection for GIs. Specifically, the study offered an evaluation of how Zimbabwean consumers perceive GIs and whether they recognize and value the informational content of a variety of nested geographical origin labels. More so, the study provided a new theoretical insight into understanding consumer behaviours towards apples.

1.7.2. Methodological significance

From a methodological perspective, the previous empirical researches have been quantitative and experimental (Kaneko & Chern, 2005; Moncayo, Rosales, Izquierdo-Hornillos, Anzano & Caceres, 2016). This study made use of a qualitative study of actual consumers of apples from Nyanga in Harare. This particular methodology used focus groups interviews in order to understand consumers' value perceptions and preferences.

1.7.3. To policy makers

Findings from the study were expected to inform policymakers like Zimtrade on geographical indicators and traceability of agricultural products. Moreover, the study contributes to the country's national economic stabilization strategy that focuses on value addition of agricultural produce and improving market access for farmers.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited into geographical delimitation, theoretical delimitation and time delimitation. These are explained in the following section.

1.8.1. Geographical Delimitation

The geographical scope of this study were producers of apples from selected from Nyanga. In particular, the study focused on apple producers in Montclair, Rukotso and Nyamagaya areas. This was based on the premise that these areas where most apples come from. Moreover, farmers from the area have been facing immense competition from imports mainly from South Africa.

1.8.2. Theoretical Scope

The theoretical scope of the study focused on evaluating how geographical indications can be used as a branding strategy for agricultural commodities. More specifically, the study assessed how apple producers can create perceived differences among products through branding, evaluate how apple producers can create value that can translate to financial using geographical indicators and implications of setting up a GI for apples.

1.8.3. Time Scope

The time scope of the study focuses on the period January 2013 to December 2019. This has been the period when consumers have been inundated in apples from both foreign and local suppliers.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

The most significant limitation to this study was the nationwide lockdown imposed due to the state's efforts to curb the rise in COVID-19 infections. This led to limited physical interactions with the respondents and some interviews had to be conducted remotely via telephonic conversations and Zoom meetings. The researcher also followed the COVID-19 regulations whilst conducting physical interviews through wearing of masks and observing a safe distance. Written permission had to be sought and was obtained to collect data during the lockdown. Another limitation pertained to the adequacy of research materials such as textbooks with adequate and relevant information for the study are rarely found hence the researcher mitigated this by researching using relevant and current journals with relevant information from the internet. The researcher also experienced time constraints which affected the gathering of all intended information due to competing work, school and personal

commitments. Financial constraints also posed a problem for the researcher as she was personally funding her research. This was resolved by applying for a loan from the researcher's employer in order to meet these obligations.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The following chapter discusses relevant theoretical and empirical literature relating to intellectual property branding strategies for agricultural commodities. In particular, the brand equity model is analysed as the underlying theoretical framework including its importance to the Study. The chapter also discusses the concept of geographical indicators as well as the international legal framework for geographical indication protection. In addition, the chapter discusses how producers can create perceived differences using geographical indicators and how producers can create value using geographical indicators. The implications of geographical indication branding on competitive advantage are also broadly discussed. Literature relating to strategies that can be used to promote geographical indications as well as relevant empirical studies are also reviewed.

2.2. Theoretical Framework: Brand Equity Model

The brand equity model propounded by Keller (2003) is a sequential framework that seeks to understand how organisations can build strong brands. The succinct of this model explains Keller's argument that building brand equity requires a lot of efforts and resources and does not just happen overnight. The theory includes four steps in the brand building process which are in the form of basic questions: Who are you? (brand salience) What are you? (brand

imagery) What do I think or feel about you? (customer judgments and feelings) What kind of relationship or connection will I have with the brand? (brand resonance).

According to Keller (2003), a brand with high saliency can be described as a great amount of depth and breadth of brand awareness. The second step in building a strong brand involves the creation of products that meet the functional and social needs of consumers. Brand performance and brand imagery are regarded as key aspects of achieving this step in building a strong brand and creating loyalty (Rodrigues and Francisco, 2016).

The third step in building a strong brand is eliciting consumer responses to the brand by means of brand judgment and brand feelings. According to Keller (2016), brand judgment refers to the cognitive evaluation of overall superiority, quality, credibility, and consideration of the brand. This aspect of brand response seeks to evaluate functional and symbolic aspects of the brand in reference to its competition. Another aspect of this step is the elicitation of affective response from consumers (Çifci, Ekinci, Whyatt, Japutra, Molinillo and Siala, 2016). The final step, brand resonance, refers to the characteristics of the relationship between the consumer and the brand and the level of time and effort spent on behalf of the consumer towards the consumption of the target brand.

Brand resonance can be characterized by the bond the consumer shares with the brand as well as the amount of effort the consumer exerts to consume the brand. This brand resonance has several dimensions that include behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement (Calvo-Porral and Lévy-Mangin, 2017; Datta, Ailawadi and Heerde, 2017). Thus, in order to explore the potential of intellectual property branding strategies for apples from Nyanga, the study will use the brand equity model which enunciates

particular upgrading strategies that disadvantaged producers may pursue in order to influence improved value chain and competitive advantage. Brand quality marks, including geographical indications can reduce information asymmetry between remotely situated producers and potential buyers in a value chain (Ingram, Hansen & Bosselmann, 2020). Moreover, geographical indications also prevent fraudulent use of GI labels thereby creating economic value through product differentiation. To successfully maintain geographical indications, producers may need to deliver a 'homogenous' product to the market where consumers base product reputation on experience.

By using the brand equity model, the farmers of apples will know which strategies to implement and how to give the right experiences to their audience so that they create customer loyalty. Thus, the brand equity model describes the purpose and strategic direction of for apple producers as they seek to increase competitive advantage. From an economic perspective, the brand equity model allows the producers of apples to differentiate their product in the market, whilst simultaneously functioning as a barrier to entry to this specific market segment (Belletti, Marescotti, Sanz-Cañada & Vakoufaris, 2015; Fernández & Saunders, 2018). In addition, the brand equity model predicts that geographical indications create economic value, since a differentiated product is able to capture a premium price through meeting consumers' needs and expectations (Gee, 2017). Moreover, geographical indications can be differentiated from other forms of market-based governance as they address the customary regulation of stakeholders in the value chain of a product. Theoretically, the brand equity model adopts a network approach that focuses on linkages among various stakeholders among the value chain.

2.3. Relevance of the theoretical framework to the study

The brand equity model is relevant in understanding intellectual property branding strategies for agricultural commodities since it seeks to create a successful brand through brand identity, brand meaning, brand responses as well as brand relationships. With rising number of genetically modified fruits coming from neighbouring countries, it has become important for local farmers to have strong brands. As estimated by Srinivasan and Hanssens (2019), countries such as South Africa have been producing genetically modified fruits with potential revenues of up to US$14.5 million per annum. As the brand equity model helps the local producers of apples to brand across branding across various touch-points that brings competitive advantage.

Jennewein (2015) points out that if a company does not have legal rights on using its brand, the exclusivity of the returns of it will be difficult. Due to the fact that brands are such a key part of doing business, the law protect a business' right to identify its own merchandise and to keep other people from imitating merchandise or using confusingly similar brands (Shiling, 2012). That is why Intellectual property rights enable any enterprise to protect its creative and intellectual investment (Clifton et al. 2019). This can be achieved by obtaining property rights such as trademarks, patents, geographical indications and copyrights among others.

Moreover, many studies have confirmed the positive effects of brand equity on marketing performance for both products and commodities (Brexendorf, Bayus & Keller, 2015; Kapferer, 2012; Qiuqin, Guaita-Martínez & Botella-Carrubi, 2020). Furthermore, the brand equity theory also enables producers of apples to have a competitive advantage by creating economic value through geographical indications. For example, the local producers of apples can use new geographical indications knowledge to reconfigure their resources and through

understanding the consumer behaviours and their needs. The brand equity model helps to know the most important components of consumer behaviours. According to Qiuqin, Guaita-Martínez and Botella-Carrubi (2020), one of the purest benefits of intellectual property such as geographical indications is that these bring, they increase brand image, add value to the product and also boost perceived quality.

Kapferer (2012) elucidates that branding which is supported by intellectual property assets can have both competitive advantage and protection through increased sales price premiums and increased purchase intention. Strong brands which are supported by intellectual property also led to behavioural loyalty, sense of community, active engagement and brand identity (Verganti, 2016). The brand equity model helps in creating customer loyalty, building brand awareness and increasing favourable brand associations. According to Sugimitsu (2015), using the brand equity model in understanding intellectual property branding strategies for agricultural commodities creates strong brands which in turn create loyalty, resonation with customers and improved brand identity.

2.4. Intellectual Property Branding Strategies

Intellectual property includes artistic and musical works, designs, images, literature and software—all of which help to develop your reputation in a given sector (Belletti & Marescotti, 2011). Intellectual property rights can be defined as those intangible assets of a company, which are protected by legally enforceable rights, respected by society and represent, therefore, the company's private ownership (Jennewein, 2015). Brand owners of all sizes are increasingly realising the importance of applying intellectual property principles in their overall business strategy. For most businesses, an effective intellectual property branding strategy will prioritise protecting core assets through trademarks, patents,

copyrights, geographical indications and trade secrets. Notable examples of marketing collateral that are eligible for IP protection include aspects such as commercial identity, promotional collateral and creative assets (Brexendorf, Bayus & Keller, 2015). These intellectual property branding strategies help businesses in securing competitive advantage, grow market share, and increase valuation. It should be noted that each intellectual property branding strategy is appropriate for specific business.

Trademarks include a design or expression that associates a product or service to the trademark owner (Kharal, Abrar, Zia-ur-Rehman, Khan & Kharal, 2014). When a brand gathers significant goodwill in the marketplace, consumers are likely to associate that goodwill to any future products or services with that same brand. Trademark protection can be obtained either by officially registering the name or sign in the trademark register of the respective national register or by simply using the name or sign in business activities (Jennewein, 2015). Considering that trademarks prohibit competitors from using similar source-identifying marks leading to consumers' confusions, the concept ensures that a sign, for which protection is wanted, is neither identical nor too similar to other already existing trademarks (Sandner, 2019). Thus, the first requirement is that all characters and words including letters, colours, phonetic signs and figures are legally protectable and eligible for register as long as they can be graphically represented. It is important to point out that, if a trademark is already granted, the law contains a list of exceptions to challenge it.

Patents help protect any new process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter that a business develops (Gollin, 2018). Patent rights can be asserted to stop another party from making, using, selling, or importing the patented invention. Patent rights can also be transferred or licensed, and so patents can be a critical tool in any plan to commercialize

innovations. Trade secrets are information that a business can keep confidential and has commercial value. Examples of trade secrets include a secret recipe or internal business data (Gabrielczak & Serwach, 2018). On advantage of using trade secrets is that the term of protection lasts as long as that information is kept confidential. This is in contrast to patents, which provide only a limited term of protection. However, there are risks in relying on trade secret protection. The moment the information is disclosed, it is no longer protected as a trade secret (Srinivasan & Hanssens, 2019).

Industrial designs protect the "look and feel" of a product (Brexendorf, Bayus & Keller, 2015). Where customers choose your product over a competitor's largely due to aesthetic design considerations, industrial design protection should be a key component of your IP portfolio. This applies to finished products, as well as designs intended to improve user experiences, such as graphical user interfaces. The protection is not limited to an object's physical shape and but can include its colours, linear features, and even depth of dimensions such as overall touch and feel (Belletti, Marescotti & Touzard, 2015).

Furthermore, copyright protects original works and exists the moment the work is created (Qiuqin, Guaita-Martínez & Botella-Carrubi, 2020). Copyrights are a highly relevant cornerstone of IP in marketing campaigns due to a copyright's ability to grant its owner the exclusive right of usage on specific forms of original works. An author of an original work has the exclusive right to control most uses of the work. However, copyright is focused on protecting how a work is expressed rather than ideas. Furthermore, infringement of a copyright often occurs only when access to the original work can be shown and when a substantial part of the work is copied. Contrary to other forms of intellectual property

protection, copyright law is applied instinctively and is needless of actual initial registration (Belletti, Marescotti, Sanz-Cañada, & Vakoufaris, 2015).

Traditionally, fruit produce had been considered as a commodity (undifferentiated products), and thus subject to strong price competition. As a result, fresh fruit producers had focused more on producing a large volume of products, paying attention to technical features, such as increasing production efficiency, improving food preservation, and standardizing product quality, rather than focusing on quality differentiation, marketing, and promotion efforts. As a consequence, the spot price market was the main determinant of the informal contracts between producers and retailers (Trienekens et al., 2012; Young and Hobbs, 2002).

However, in recent years more attempts have been made to add value to fruit and vegetables, focusing on satisfying the specific needs and wants of consumers. This had been challenging; specifically, when developing a new food product and a brand, it is necessary to involve and coordinate all food supply chain actors in marketing activities (Brown and Maloney, 2009; Linnemann et al., 2006). The shift from the supply-driven activities to demand-based activities in the food sector is called “chain reversal” process (Linnemann et al., 2006).

In order to be successful in the market it is increasingly necessary to adopt a consumer-oriented approach, given the widespread situation of oversupply and fierce price competition for commodities (Gellynck et al., 2012; Kohli and Jaworski, 1990; Linnemann et al., 2006). Furthermore, changes in consumer demand, retail, and competitive environment have driven producers to take more market-oriented approaches in which brand management has been a key approach (Edwards and Shultz, 2005). When justifying this, the profound works of various authors (Banterle et al., 2014; Gellynck et al., 2012; Lichtenthal and Long, 1998; Miles et al., 1997) stated that future success of agribusinesses would require an increased

focus away from the mere technical quality aspects of the product, towards and closer to consumer perception of quality, the development of marketing strategies promoting strong brands, unique selling propositions, and closer relationships along the supply chain. In other words, this meant some tremendous shifts, towards a more marketing and consumer-oriented approach.

Therefore, branding is one of the possible strategies for product innovation. Gardner and Levy (1955) defined a brand as "… a complex symbol that represents a variety of ideas and attributes. It tells the consumer many things, not only the way its sounds but, more important, via the body of associations it has built up and acquired as a public object over a period of time." Brand equity (the value of a brand as a company asset) depends on awareness, recognition, and, top-of-the mind awareness of these products in the market among other products or traders. This should generate positive associations with the product, perceived quality, and brand loyalty (Beverland, 2001). According to Beverland (2007), Gehlhar et al. (2009), and Nijssen and van Trijp (1998), brand awareness could provide firms with strong economic returns and assets that are difficult to be imitated (Anderson and Narus, 2008; Webster and Keller, 2004).

There are many examples of successful branding in the fresh produce industry; among the different branding strategies in the fruit industry, the "Club variety" model has recently become popular. Club varieties are patent-protected fruit cultivars that are commercialized through a trademark license for which fruit growers could join a "club" of licensed growers, but they might negotiate the rights to produce together with marketing these fruits with the patent holder (e.g., research institute, breeders, etc.) and might comply with the rules set in the licensing contract in terms of quality attributes as well as quantity. Moreover, club varieties have higher costs for growers where members would be required to pay royalty fees to the

patent holders at planting, and periodic fees to support brand-marketing activities. These patent holders avoid overproduction by controlling the quantity supplied on the market, qualify and distinguish the offer from similar fruits in order to limit substitution, emphasize advertising and promotion activities to obtain price *premia*, which in turn should be able to guarantee higher economic return to both patent holders and growers. The typical examples of club varieties could be seen in the apple industry, where one could find cultivars, such as Pink Lady, Ambrosia, Jazz, Modì, Evelina, and Kanzi, while in the pear industry an example is the Sweet Sensation.

From the foregoing, it can be seen that intellectual Property can be roughly divided into various categories that included copyright, patents, trademarks, industrial rights and geographical Indications. This study used and geographical indications since they show valuable opportunity to differentiate their products from competition for producers of agricultural commodities. Geographical indications provide market incentives towards ecosystem management. Geographical indications also seek to increase production and create local jobs through helping producers to obtain a premium price for their products in exchange for guarantees offered to consumers on quality.

2.5. Concept and Characteristics of Geographical Indications

According to Zhao, Finlay and Kneafsey (2017), a geographical indication can be described as a denotation for products with an explicit geographical origin and possess qualities that that are due to that place of origin. Thus, in order for a product to function as a geographical indication it must originate from a given place. In addition, it should be noted that there should be qualities of the product that are due to the place of origin. In general, geographical indications consist of the name of the geographical origin or the name of the production place.

As explained by Marie-Vivien and Chabrol (2018), geographical indications are labels for products assigned to communities of producers that have a specific geographical origin and do have unique qualities. In other words, geographical indications seek to identify products that originate in a specific territory and whose specificity is anchored on local characteristics and expertise.

The term "geographical indication" has also been used interchangeably with Appellations of Origin and Indications of Source. An Indication of source is an indication referring to a country as being the country (Bellatti, Marescotti, Paus & Deppler, 2019). An indication of source also provides information about the geographical origin of a product. On the other hand, an Appellation of Origin is the geographical denomination of a country, region, or locality, which serves to designate a product originating therein (Chabrol, Mariani & Sautier, 2017).

For producers of agricultural commodities, geographical indications show a valuable opportunity to differentiate their products from competition. As elucidated by Quiñones, Penker, Belletti, Marescotti and Scaramuzzi (2016), geographical indications provide market incentives towards ecosystem management. Geographical indications also seek to increase production and create local jobs through helping producers to obtain a premium price for their products in exchange for guarantees offered to consumers on quality (Bellatti, Marescotti, Paus & Deppler, 2019).

According to Ponte and Sturgeon (2017), geographical indications constitute the main pillar of the European Union's quality policy on agricultural and industrial products. Examples include wine from Bordeaux in France, Scotch whisky from Scotland, Bohemian Crystal from

Czech Republic, Swiss watches from Switzerland (Ghazali, 2019). Although many registered GI products are largely in Europe, Asia and South America, there has been increased interest by African countries to protect and market origin products as geographical indications. African countries that have adopted legislations and actions regarding geographical indications include Kenya, Morocco, Cameroon, Mozambique, Uganda and South Africa (Chabrol, Mariani & Sautier, 2017; Marie-Vivien, Carimentrand, Fournier, Cerdan & Sautier, 2019). GIs can also be protected through laws on the repression of unfair competition. These laws do not create an individual industrial property right over the GI. However, they indirectly protect geographical indications insofar as they prohibit certain acts that may involve their unauthorized use (Yang, 2014).

Geographical indications have various functions that include origin, distinctive and qualitative as well as three aspects that comprise cultural, economic and marketing. The origin function refers to the identification of the origin where the products are extracted, and is based on the principle of accuracy (Vandecandelaere, Arfini, Belletti & Marescotti, 2017). On the other hand, the distinctive function refers to the fact that the geographical name differentiates the product of others available on the market (Barjolle, 2015). In addition, the qualitative function, refers to the unique quality given based on the existence of production and control standards. The cultural aspect of geographical indications refers to traditional cultural knowledge whilst the economic aspect refers to the value that satisfies the differentiation role in the market (Menapace, 2018).

2.6. International legal framework for geographical indication protection

There are a number of international conventions and treaties that offer protection for geographical indication such as the TRIPS Agreement, the Paris Convention, the Madrid

Agreement and Protocol, the Lisbon Agreement and the Geneva Act. The Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their Recognition concluded that the "contracting parties" would recognize other appellations of origin in return for recognition of their own (WIPO, 2015). The Madrid Agreement protected indications of source and restricts their misuse by unauthorized persons. The Agreement also sought to prevent the marketing of goods with false or misleading assertions as to their sources. According to Ngokkuen and Grote (2017), the Lisbon Agreement had been the most comprehensive multilateral agreement around GIs to date.

The Agreement of Madrid aims mainly at suppressing false indications of origin of goods, whereas the Treaty of Lisbon focused on denominations such as localities denominations used to designate products from where they originated and whose quality or characteristics are due exclusively or essentially to the geographical environment in which they are inserted (Hassan, Monier-Dilhan & Orozco, 2019; Thualetal, 2019). More so these agreements provided the exclusive use of the recognized geographical name for goods or services designed on the record; the right to have a geographical name recognized regardless of the product or service, the use of expressions and the right to make use of legal means to prevent third parties from employing them as a distinctive sign (Adinolfi, Rosa & Trabalzi, 2017).

GIs are awarded through national legislation and then include into bilateral and multilateral agreements. The specific legal protections for geographical indications in any country can be sui generis and this include legal protections specific to a product. Sui generis methods of provide legal protection for signs and characteristics associated with a product, such as a logo or a specific shape, by including them in the related product specifications (Menapace, 2018). Sui generis protection system exists in the European Union, India, Russia, Switzerland,

Thailand, the Andean Community countries and the African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI), among others (Vandecandelaere, Arfini, F., Belletti, G. & Marescotti, 2017.

Geographical indications can also be protected either through the registration of collective marks which may only be used by members of an association. According to Stasi, Nardone, Viscecchia and Seccia (2018), many countries choose to protect GIs under the private trademark system. This means that if one country wants to register a GI in any country with a system of trademark law, it would then have to protect the GI through the registration of a certification mark in the national office of that country (Hassan, Monier-Dilhan & Orozco, 2019). For example, the use of certification mark for Idaho Potatoes is restricted to certain farmers who comply with the rules that have to be observed for such use to be allowed (Belletti, Marescotti & Touzard, 2015). In other cases, GIs follow the legal structure of trademarks and intellectual property rights where it becomes a collective label granted by a certifying body (Menapace, 2018). In both cases, there is usually strong association between the product's characteristics and the producing region (WIPO, 2015).

On the international level, GI protection occurs through various bilateral and multilateral treaties by national governments and international bodies like the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of International Property Rights (TRIPS) are the two primary institutions that administer international treaties related to GIs (Barjolle, 2015). More significantly, the TRIPS Agreement and the WIPO advocates for and protects GIs through the establishment of agreements between nations to designate various products as unique to specific regions. In addition, the WTO also recognizes the importance of GIs and elaborates

the regulations around GIs in section 3 of the TRIPS Agreement (WIPO, 2015). It also provides legal protections against misleading uses of the label and from other activities that could constitute unfair competition.

In view of various negotiations regarding GI protection extension under WTO, some developing countries have started to register their GI products. In Africa, two regional organisations relevant to intellectual property protection include the African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI) and the African Regional Intellectual Property Organisation (ARIPO). According to Chabrol, Mariani and Sautier (2017), OAPI member countries, recognizes GIs and protects appellations of origin within its member states. On the other hand, ARIPO recognises the potentials of geographical indications in the protection of the quality products of member countries (Ponte & Sturgeon, 2017).

2.7. How Producers Can Create Perceived Differences Using Geographical Indicators

There is general consensus among scholars that GI provides substantial differentiation of the commodities (Chen, 2014; Liu, 2016; Ponte & Sturgeon, 2017). According to Liu (2016), GIs provides uniqueness and identity in market beyond that the perceived quality comes into consumer senses. In the same vein, Stanciu, Stanciuc, Dumitrascu, Ion and Nistor (2013) argue that GIs promote long term differentiation strategies as they guarantee safety and quality to consumers. In addition, Coelho, Coelho and Egerer (2018) expound that using geographical indicators improve redistribution of added value to the producers and processors throughout the production chain thereby bringing added value to the region of origin.

Overall, marketing literature focuses on consumer responses to GIs, which can be seen as the bases for a successful differentiation strategy. According to Porter (1985), differentiation is

one possible strategy to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. In a differentiation strategy, companies seek to be unique in their market along some dimensions that are valued by customers; because of their superiority in this respect, they are rewarded with a premium price. Differentiation can be based on functional and/or symbolic benefits (Kabadayi & Lerman, 2019). Developing a brand using GI will help producers and exporters to effectively exploit the commercial potential of their products. According to Gatrell, Reid and Steiger (2018), a GI brand helps produces create a unique identity and thereby giving cues to customers on criteria that matter to them like product features, origin, quality and uses.

Moreover, GI brands add value for consumers as it gives quality assurance and the benefit of authenticity. Success stories from Brazil and Colombia demonstrated that GIs are intangible assets with interesting potential for the creation of differentiation (Belletti & Marescotti, 2011; Deconinck & Swinnen, 2014). Thus, leveraging GI in Branding Strategy can be a powerful tool because it can help in providing a source of differentiation due to quality/product differences attributable to their unique geographical origin. It also leads to the creation of brand equity by aiding recognition and increased awareness, establishing quality perceptions, creating desired brand associations and building customer loyalty (Quinones-Ruiz, Penker, Vogl & Samper-Gartner, 2015).

Indeed, geographical indications have increasingly become helpful tools for achieving product differentiation, and increase economic efficiency because such measures provide producers with incentives to deliver appropriate supply to the market. A study by Stanciu, Stanciuc, Dumitrascu, Ion and Nistor (2013) on the effects of horse meat scandal on Romanian meat market revealed that geographical indication can have a significant impact on a region's economic performance because it protects the identity of indigenous products. More so,

geographical indication provides higher value-added products through product differentiation based on guaranteed quality. Additionally, geographical indications protect consumers as it provides officially certified information regarding product attributes; and enhances identity of the region. This is corroborated by Coelho, Coelho and Egerer (2018) who argue that consumers of regional products assign high importance to labels that contain regional certification. In this regard, GI labels positively affect consumers' willingness to pay, relative to the protected regional product (Blakeney, Coulet, Mengistie & Mahop, 2012).

Furthermore, GIs assist consumers in making the right choice. A consumer survey by Roman, Popiela-Pleban and Kozak (2013) showed that more than 40% of consumers in Poland showed willingness to pay a 10% price premium if the origin of the product was guaranteed. Thus, from a marketing perspective GIs act as quality signals for both distribution channels and consumers thereby facilitating access to domestic and foreign markets. Due to product differentiation, GIs act as drivers of consumer preference and purchase intention allowing producers and retailers to sell products protected by GIs at higher prices (Cosmina, Gallenti, Marangon & Troiano, 2016).

More significantly, common GI branding will enable all producers from the GI region to differentiate their products from the non-GI producers. For differentiation, within the GI producers, individual product/company brands can be further created with link to a common identity that of the GI brand name (Carbone, Caswell, Galli & Sorrentino, 2014). By differentiating itself through branding the GI product becomes unique and cannot be easily substituted by other products offering similar physical characteristics. If a customer identifies with a brand and finds value in it, it is likely that the customer will continue to purchase the

brand over a period of time (Chabrol, Mariani & Sautier, 2015). This increases customer stickiness and they are not likely to switch merely on the basis of lower price.

Keller (2017) highlighted that customers' emotional reactions to the GI brand relate to the social currency the brand evokes. Feelings, particularly relevant in the GI context include security, social approval and self-respect. The branding and marketing strategy therefore create a distinct identity and awareness for the GI products in the domestic/ international markets as well as promoting GI brands through better customer engagement and customer experience (Lombart, Labbé-Pinlon, Filser, Anteblian & Louis, 2018).

GI branding also provides additional value to customers in terms of quality assurance, authenticity, uniqueness, and other aspects like social recognition or emotional satisfaction and enabling marketers to charge a price premium or increase market share. In the same vein, well-recognized brands with a strong reputation help producers of agricultural products penetrate new markets more easily (Chabrol, Mariani & Sautier, 2015). Because of the ease of processing information for purchase decision, a high degree of trust and added value delivered by the brand, customers gain confidence in the purchase decision and this enhances post purchase satisfaction with the product usage (Albayrak & Gunes 2010; Sarmento, Giasson, Weber, Flores & Hasenack, 2012).

2.8. How Producers Can Create Value Using Geographical Indicators

Geographical Indicators products has generated a lot of interest among agricultural producers as they unlock value by capitalising on consumer’s desire for diversity and quality products. The entitlement to use a geographical indication generally lies with local producers, and the added value generated by it accrues therefore to all such producers. According to Ingram,

Hansen and Bosselmann (2020), French GI cheeses are sold at an average of 2 euro per kilo more than French non-GI cheeses. Another study by Fernández and Saunders (2018) noted that producers of Italian "Tuscano" olive oil managed to increase prices for their olive oil by 30% after it had been registered as a GI. In the same vein, a study by Belletti, Marescotti, Sanz-Cañada and Vakoufaris (2015) revealed that 40% of European consumers are always ready to pay a 10% premium price for GI products. A quantitative study by Quiñones, Penker, Belletti, Marescotti and Scaramuzzi (2016) showed a significant positive effect of GIs on price, regardless of the type of product. Indeed, the registration of GIs substantially increased the price of the final product in many Asian countries studied (Bellatti, G., Marescotti, Paus & Deppler, 2019; Chabrol, Mariani & Sautier, 2017; Marie-Vivien, Carimentrand, Fournier, Cerdan & Sautier, 2019). Thus, it can be argued that geographical indicators have the ability the ability to create value for producers because the products are often rooted in tradition and geography.

Furthermore, GIs provide high value-addition for agricultural products and many products if they are attributed to specific region. On the consumer side, GIs decrease search costs of the consumers by sending quality signals and provide consumers to consume high quality products. According to Zhao, Finlay and Kneafsey (2017), the willingness to purchase these kinds of products with higher prices is greater than other standard products. On the producer side, the protection of GIs provides income flow for the producers by encouraging them to continue their production with the standardized quality with established reputation.

Another study by Ngokkuen and Grote (2017) on the opportunities for protecting geographical indications on Colombian coffee revealed that GIs had a positive impact on value redistribution to upstream segments. The study also revealed that the share of the price

transmitted to producers by the National Coffee Federation increased by 37% with the registration of the protected geographical indication. In addition, another study by Menapace (2018) on geographical indications and quality promotion in food and agricultural markets showed that Kona coffee had a 250% increase between 2010 and 2016, and Manchego cheese had 83% increase in volume between 2010 and 2014. This also occurred with Futog cabbage, where the amount produced under the GI increased by 76% between 2010 and 2017 (Stasi, Nardone, Viscecchia & Seccia, 2018).

Furthermore, geographical indications also facilitate the marketing of the territory to provide greater visibility of the place. Uniqueness, coupled with a perception of higher quality, tends to make the highest monetary value and consequently raises the income of producers (Hassan, Monier-Dilhan & Orozco, 2019). Similarly, Thualetal (2019) argues that that GIs facilitate the insertion of small and medium producers, since this uniqueness can raise competition with large producers. Moreover, geographical indication also facilitates the presence of products in the market and promote the stability of demand (Adinolfi, Rosa & Trabalzi, 2017). Collective mobilization around the GIs can also be viewed as a means to strengthen the supply chain for the benefit of producers and consumers because they can reduce the strength of off-takers (Vandecandelaere, Arfini, Belletti & Marescotti, 2017).

It should also be noted that GIs maximise the added value of exports for the benefit of rural communities. As noted by Belletti, Marescotti and Touzard (2015), GIs are a powerful differentiation factor for products in national and international markets. There are also spill-over effects over the economy since GIs have the potential to generate positive effects on the overall economy of a country through employment, creation of opportunities in other sectors such as tourism (Yang, 2014).

2.9. Implications of GI branding on competitive advantage

GIs can be understood as a strategy to add competitive advantage to products unique characteristics and related to the territory where they belong (Coelho, Coelho & Egerer, 2018). As such, GI-based marketing strategies for agricultural products in the world have built up their reputation based on their geographical origin. According to Chen (2014), GI branding creates value and competitive advantage for local communities through products deeply rooted in culture and geography. In particular, GI branding supports rural development and promote new job opportunities in production, processing and other related services (Liu, 2016). In the European Union, highly competitive products with a strong link to certain geographical regions have been considered useful tools in rising farmers' income and fostering rural development, especially in less-favoured production areas (Chatterjee & Kumar, 2017).

GI registration is a kind of guarantee about the originality of the product and provides quality information about the products for consumers. Under an effective marketing process, GI registration leads to a highly competitive advantage of the product. Like trademarks, GIs are the most valuable assets for the producers since they provide competition power and have a contribution to maintain this advantage (Stanciu, Stanciuc, Dumitrascu, Ion & Nistor, 2013).

Furthermore, geographical Indications are also considered as potential instruments of territorial development, as they allow to exploit difficult to transpose intangible assets to other territories, constituting a competitive advantage in markets even more marked by product differentiation (Blakeney, Coulet, Mengistie & Mahop, 2012). According to Roman, Popiela-Pleban and Kozak (2013), GIs attract tourists thereby allowing exploiting indirect profitable

activities. Moreover, a collective" approach among producers and various actors of the value chain create and develop a GI generates economies of scale that are beneficial for producers, especially for small scale farmers (Cosmina, Gallenti, Marangon & Troiano, 2016).

2.10. Significance of Geographical Indications for developing Countries

There are various reasons that can explain the significance of geographical indications for developing countries. It should be noted that many developing country economies remain largely dominated by the informal sector where the use of registered GIs has been less important than developed countries. In spite of limited product and export diversification, mainly consisting of raw and low value-added products, a valuable array of traditional products is available in many developing countries with potential to graduate to products of excellence. For instance, in Uganda the people recognise Katakwi chickens as superior and high-quality products (Kabadayi & Lerman, 2019). Other examples include Cambodian Kampot pepper; Moroccan Argan oil; Nicaragua's Chontaleño cheese; and Rooibos tea from South Africa that are already recognized but not yet formally protected in other countries (Belletti & Marescotti, 2011; Gatrell, Reid & Steiger, 2018).

According to Deconinck and Swinnen (2014), GIs provide opportunities to protect local species that serve as raw material for potential GI products. In the African context, the registration of GIs would protect biodiversity in the sense that a particular variety or ecosystem, distinct from neighbouring ones. For example, the specificity of a GI product can be closely linked to the use of unique and locally adapted genetic resources, and its governance might include the sustainable management of local landraces or breeds (Quinones-Ruiz, Penker, Vogl, & Samper-Gartner, 2015). The other outcomes of

implementing GIs are the opportunity to bring together diverse players along the supply chain, government authorities, and research (Carbone, Caswell, Galli & Sorrentino, 2014).

The other benefits of collective action concerning the GI protection relate to the savings of transaction costs, which counterbalance all costs for building up the agreement for quality standards and certification mechanisms (Chabrol, Mariani & Sautier, 2015). The role of collective action in the GI implementation as a trade policy can result in collective action. According to Albayrak and Gunes (2010), organization and self-organization require efforts to reach agreements as diverse types of groups with diverging interests are involved. However, these costs and efforts can be counteracted when goals for the GI implementation are reached.

2.11 Challenges of geographical indicators

It should be noted that GIs are not without controversy. In general, GIs are protected at the level of national jurisdictions and these jurisdictions differ quite remarkably across countries. Countries with a more lenient approach to protect GIs, such as the United States or Australia, fear that countries with a rather strict approach, particularly the EU, could use GIs as non-tariff trade barriers at the international level (Abadie, Diamond & Hainmueller, 2015). From a legal point of view, the possible obstacles to the successful registration of a geographical indication include costs and benefit GI protection, time-consuming to obtain GI protection, the existence of a homonymous GI, conflict with a prior mark and lack of protection of the GI in its country of origin (Sarmento, Giasson, Weber, Flores & Hasenack, 2012).

The costs associated with the development and adoption of a GI can be both direct and indirect, at both the individual and the collective level, and not always easy to quantify in

advance. The costs of marketing and legally maintaining the protection can be considerable. Some of the most successful GIs spend more than a few hundred thousand dollars annually (Ngokkuen & Grote, 2011). The indirect costs incurred to establish and operate a GI are by far the costliest and the most difficult. This is because these costs involve not only financial expense but also considerable time and effort to adapt local operations and even forms of governance among organizations in order to achieve and effectively manage a GI (Grunert, Loebnitz & Zhou, 2015). According Lombart, Labbé-Pinlon, Filser, Anteblian and Louis (2018), registration and protection costs varying from one country to another. In nations such as Japan in order to be granted the GI certificate, the GI registration fee of JPY90,000 must be paid to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery (Dagne, 2015). Thus, a GI registration is not cost-effective in the short term.

Furthermore, the establishment of a complete GI system can take several years because it involves several actors and needs to take into account multiple interests and political considerations. According to Belletti, Marescotti, Sanz-Cañada and Vakoufaris (2015), the actual time required to develop a complete GI system depends on the level of cohesion and organization of the group of producers and the number and degree of conflicting interests. Although GIs deliver significantly higher margins to producers compared with non-designated alternatives, similar results cannot be assumed for nascent systems (Marie-Vivien & Chabrol, 2014).

The GI concept of a product–quality–origin nexus is well-established in European culture through specialized organizations, and strong informal and formal rules. In contrast, protection of products linked to a specific quality and origin does not have a long history in developing countries (Anson & Pavithran, 2014). The implementation of GIs in developing

countries is challenged by weak institutional structures (Eckhardt, Belk & Wilson, 2015). In addition, many developing countries do not have the conformity assessment and enforcement mechanisms for GI protection and monitoring (Swinnen, Meloni & Haeck, 2018). When poorly structured, GIs can be detrimental to communities, traditions and the environment. As noted by Nelan, Jansson and Szabo (2017), African countries are not known for having the four essential components needed for GIs to be successful. This poses an extreme complication when least-developed African countries want to use a GI system.

2.12 Strategies that can be used to promote Geographical indications

Despite the obstacles faced by developing countries, especially developing countries s, GIs can be considered as a means to gain a certain value, local biodiversity and endogenous knowledge or skills. In the context of market liberalization, the emergence of GIs gives countries scope to manage IPRs and build up. It is clear that strong institutions are essential for building GIs, whether in formal or informal rules conventions of collaboration; respect of local, fair and traditional practices without any specifications or controls (Khakzad, 2018). These institutions will shape the evolution of GI processes (Albrecht & Smithers, 2018). The State and its semi-public authorities play a crucial role as they can support the registration process with formal structures, knowledge, impartial facilitation or mediation.

Regardless of the success of the GI registration, Croft, Voyer, Adams, Visser, Leadbitter, and Reverly (2019), recommends that producers should design commercial strategies to consider GIs as a business tool. In other words, producers should engage in business-to business relationships and/or strategic alliances to bring their goods to local, regional or international buyers. Otherwise, GI registration merely on paper will be insufficient to ensure the long-term success of quality marketing (Björk & Kauppinen-Räisänen, 2017).

The other way in which GIs may facilitate small-scale producer upgrading is by stimulating diversification into new, higher margin products or markets. For example, entering downstream activities like processing or retailing, or broadening into auxiliary activities such as farm tourism generated from visitors drawn to an area by a product's reputation. Studies of cases in France and Italy identify how PDO/PGI products from established systems can facilitate the growth of auxiliary activities such as festivals, agro-tourism and gastronomic routes (Angostino & Trivieri, 2014).

2.13. Chapter summary

The chapter discussed relevant theoretical and empirical literature relating to intellectual property branding strategies for agricultural commodities. In particular, the brand equity model was analysed as the underlying theoretical framework including its importance to the Study. The chapter also discussed the concept of geographical indicators as well as the international legal framework for geographical indication protection. In addition, the chapter discussed how producers can create perceived differences using geographical indicators and how producers can create value using geographical indicators. The implications of geographical indication branding on competitive advantage were also broadly discussed. Literature relating to strategies that can be used to promote geographical indications was reviewed.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents methodological considerations which were used in collecting data relating to intellectual property branding strategies with particular reference to apples from Nyanga. The chapter specifically deals with the research design, population and sampling procedures used to select participants. The chapter also vividly outlines the data collection instruments, pre-test of the research instrument and data collection procedure. In addition, analysis and organization of data as well as measures utilise to ensure ethical treatment of all participants selected for the study.

3.2 The Research Design

The study adopted a case study that discusses real exiting issues happening for apples producers in Nyanga. The case study strategy sought to investigate a contemporary issue in depth and within its real-life context. The primary purpose for choosing a case study was to explore the particularity of a single case, in this instance, Nyanga apple producers. One of the strengths of the case study strategy was that it allowed the researcher to have various sources, types of data and research methods as part of the research design. Consequently, this facilitated the validation of data through using both focus group discussions and interviews. Furthermore, the case study research allowed the researcher to deal with any subtleties and intricacies of complex social situations relating to the study thereby providing a rich and all-inclusive account of the study problem.

More importantly, the case study was specifically suitable to answer “how” and “why” questions and allowed to address explorative examinations so as to produce a first-hand

understanding of research problem within a real-life context. For this study, the case study was selected on the basis of both geographical and thematic relevance to the research questions which were: How can apple producers in Nyanga create perceived differences among products through branding using geographical indicators? How can apple producers in Nyanga create value that can translate to financial using geographical indicators? What are the implications of GI branding for apples on competitive advantage? What strategies that can be used to promote Geographical indications of apples from Nyanga Zimbabwe?

The study adopted a case study research methodology. The case study research methodology employed the use of open-ended questions that allowed subjects to be themselves during the research process. This resulted in specific outcomes which contributed to the development of explanation of behaviour with regard to how apple producers in Nyanga can create perceived differences among products through branding using geographical indicators and how apple producers can create value that can translate to financial using geographical indicators. More significantly, a qualitative research design valued the uniqueness of individual cases which was significant in developing an understanding of issues relating to intellectual property branding strategies for apples from Nyanga, Zimbabwe.

Generally, the qualitative research design refers to embedded experiences of participants. The qualitative research design paid significant attention to detailed observations and experiences of apples producers in Nyanga in attempt to produce a rich and deep description. The qualitative research design also provided persuasive, in-depth insights through subjective interpretations of participant's perceptions and preferences for certain intellectual property rights.

3.3 Population and Sampling

In this study, the target population comprised of apple producers in Nyanga. Apple producers for this study were farmers from Montclair, Rukotso and Nyamagaya areas. There are approximately 100 apple producers in Nyanga. The researcher used purposive sampling techniques to select the study participants. Due to COVID 19 restrictions on movement, a total of 25 apple producers participated in the study. In addition, the study population comprised of 5 experts from Zimtrade and ARIPO based in Harare. These were chosen using judgmental sampling. The inclusion criteria were apple producers in Nyanga who had been in the business for the past 10 years and have been experiencing difficulties to market their produce. For the key informants they had to have knowledge and expertise in geographical indication and copyright laws to be eligible. It was hoped these participants would provide relevant information relating to intellectual property branding strategies with particular reference to apples from Nyanga.

The study used non probability sampling methods to select study participants. In particular, purposive sampling techniques were used to collect qualitative responses from as many participants as possible. Purposive sampling offered the researcher a degree of freedom and control. With purposive sampling, the researcher recruited participants who had enough knowledge and experience with regard to intellectual property branding strategies for apples produced in Nyanga. As such, with purposive sampling the researcher had participants with in-depth and rich sources of information relating to intellectual property branding strategies. At the same time, the researcher could explore and understand various central themes related to the study. More significantly, purposeful sampling methods assured the quality of the study through extraction of relevant information since the participants were selected on the basis of

their experience and closeness to the topic under study. The researcher was able to squash a lot of information out of the primary data.

Another benefit of using purposive sampling was the robust range of sampling techniques that could be utilised across the qualitative research designs. Moreover, there were several purposive sampling types that the researcher could use to collect primary data and these included heterogeneous, homogenous, deviant, critical case sampling and expert. The researcher specifically used expert sampling since the goal was to intentionally select participants to gather primary data.

More so, the use of purposive sampling meant that the researcher took advantage of plentiful qualitative research designs. As such, the purposive approach allowed the research designs to be more adaptive and there were opportunities to create generalisations from the data. Furthermore, purposive sampling techniques helped the researcher to save both time and money whilst collecting primary data. This is corroborated by Merriam and Tisdell (2018) who argued that purposive sampling has been one of the most cost-effective and time-effective sampling methods. More significantly, information collected using purposive sampling had a low margin of error since the data came straight from the source.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

The study utilised both interview guide and focus group discussion guide. These are explained in the following section.

3.4.1. Interview Guide

The study used an interview as the primary data collection instrument. The benefit of using the interview guide was that it had direct contact with participants selected for the study and lead to constructive suggestions. The interviews with intellectual property rights experts and individuals had knowledge about the farming industry helped in obtaining in-depth knowledge. Thus, the aim of using interview guide allowed the participants to vividly describe their viewpoints.

The interview guide meant that all topics and issues relating to intellectual property branding strategies for apples were specified in advance. More so, the interview guide was useful in the maintenance of focus during the interview process. Furthermore, having an interview guide helps reduce variation amongst the interviews, thereby making it a more standardized procedure to compare and contrast issues. In addition, using an interview guide made interviewing different participants more systematic and comprehensive through the delimitation of issues to be explored in advance.

The study's interview guide was informed by various sources including research questions and relevant empirical and theoretical literature review. Specifically, the interview guide composed of robust, guiding questions which related to the objectives of the study. These guiding questions were supported by prompting and probing questions that encouraged participants to expand on their answers. The Interview guide consisted of two sections whereby Section A asked about background characteristics of the participants such as marital status, educational qualifications, job title and work experience. The second section of the interview guide had questions based on the study's research objectives highlighted in chapter one.

3.4.2. Focus Group Discussion Guide

The study also used focus group discussion guide to collect data from producers of apples in Nyanga. The research tool focused on group discussions and responses from apple producers where participants expressed their thoughts and views. A total five focus groups comprising of five members in each group were formed. As elucidated by Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls and Ormston (2017), a focus group discussion is a good tool for collecting primary data from people with similar backgrounds and experiences. The focus group discussion guide allowed participants to share information using their own words.

In addition, the focus group discussion guide allowed the study participants to either agree or disagree with each other thereby providing insight into how the groups thought about issues relating to intellectual property branding strategies. The focus group discussion guide also revealed any inconsistencies and variations that existed among the participants with regard to beliefs and experiences and practices. Thus, this enabled the whole data collection process to be managed smoothly. Other important points considered included careful wording key questions as well as maintaining neutrality and appearance. Using the focus group discussion guide also meant that the researcher was able to check off some questions on the guide so that they could not be asked explicitly later. The focus group guide also helped the researcher with pacing during the discussions. Moreover, the guide also ensured that all participants had received the same questions.

3.5 Pilot Study

Before conducting the interviews and focus group discussions pilot studies were done first in order to identify any ambiguities or inappropriate wordings. Importantly, the pilot study was

also used by the researcher as a rehearsal to the actual study. The purpose of the pilot study was to identify any necessity for modifying questions any other procedures that could not elicit appropriate responses and counteract any threats to trustworthiness. The pilot study also looked at the wording and order of the questions.

The other reason for conducting the pilot study was to develop and test adequacy of research instruments, assess feasibility of a conducting full-scale study and also design a research protocol. The pilot study also helped the researcher to identify resources needed as well as identifying any practical problems with regard to the research procedure. For this study, 3 participants took part in the pilot study for the interview guide whilst 10 participants took part in the pilot study for focus group discussion guide. After the pilot study had been conducted, the researcher was able to refine some of the questions as well as estimate the time and costs needed for data collection.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

Primary data was collected using both interviews and focus group discussions. There was a total of 5 five focus groups comprising of 9 members in each group. The researcher first sought both verbal and written informed consent from the participants to take part in the study. During the discussion, the questions were open ended. The apple producers were gathered at their shopping centres to discuss the topic under study. All questions were open-ended as this was meant to stimulate informal discussions with participants and get to know their perceptions, beliefs, and experiences with regards to intellectual branding strategies for apples. In line with COVID 19 health protocols on preventing the spread of corona virus, all social distance measures were maintained. In addition, all participants were first sanitised and

temperatures checks carried out by the local health officer. Those who had high temperatures were excluded from taking part in the study.

In order to conduct a successful focus group discussion, the researcher had a note taker and the note taker was fluent in the local language. The researcher, who acted as the facilitator, probed further using responses that had been received. Furthermore, the researcher kept the participants on the research topic and ensured that everyone in each focus group discussion had a chance to express their views and opinions. Each focus group discussion took around between 30 minutes and 45 minutes to be finished. Only one focus group discussion was conducted per day and all the focus group discussions were conducted in a period of 5 days. Key informant interviews were held with representatives Zimtrade, Zimbabwe Farmers Union and ARIPO. The interviews were important in understanding the inner feelings of study participants and also served as weapon for cognizing the respondents' ways of feelings towards intellectual property branding issues. Due to COVID 19 regulations, it was quite difficult to get hold of key informants for face-to-face interviews since most of them were working at home or their work premises did not allow visitors. In this regard, all interviews were conducted view zoom video conferencing. The advantages of using zoom were that it was free, reliable, flexible, could be recorded, convenient and cost-effective (Heyvaert, Hannes & Onghena, 2017; Pratt & Yezierski, 2018). In addition, zoom video conferencing was considered for the study because of its consistency to the process, inclusivity and elimination of in-person interview stress.

The study participants were initially briefed on purpose of the study and the reason why they had been selected participate. Thereafter, the participants were made aware of their ethical obligations and issue of confidentiality of their responses were clearly explained. The

researcher began the interviews by asking general questions relating to demographic characteristics of participants. There after interview questions were asked in line with research objectives. In order to extract the actual respondents' feelings, attitudes, opinions and aspirations, all questions were open-ended. All answers were summarised through the use of written notes. Each zoom interview lasted between 40 and 45 minutes. All interviews were held between 15 February 2021 and 25 February 2021.

3.7 Analysis and Organization of Data

With regard to data analysis, the first step included cautious consideration of the research questions and the relevant responses to them. The data was first organized through doing some minor editing, data cleaning of field notes. The researcher then read through the raw data numerous times familiarizing with it. After reviewing the collected data, the researcher then sorted it out to find connections through generating various themes and patterns.

Primary data collected from both interviews and focus groups were content analysed. The aim of content analysis was to reduce written texts transcribed from both focus groups and interviews. This involved data reduction of qualitative material. The reduction affected the data that fell outside of core consistencies and meanings. The aim of the analysis was to gain a deeper understanding for intellectual property branding strategies.

Data reduction was employed through breaking down the sample data into various lumps through labelling and coding in assigning meaningful units to the data. In this regard, bigger patterns and narrower patterns of information will be generated, depending on the specificity of answers given by the respondents. This assisted the researcher into converting the

extensive amounts of data into c manageable segments. More significantly, reducing the data into smaller units made it easier for successive data analysis in the enquiry.

The study also used thematic analysis because of its flexibility in identification, analysis, and reporting patterns. The thematic analysis enabled the identification of major themes meant to adequately reflect the textual data. By adopting the thematic analysis method, the researcher linked and compared various responses and opinions expressed by participants during the interviews. The benefit of using thematic analysis was that it helped reducing and simplifying the collected data. Moreover, thematic analysis gave the researcher the capability to structure the qualitative data collected through focus groups and in a way that satisfies the accomplishment of research objectives. Thus, the thematic analysis method was well-suited for the study as it enabled the researcher to decode, scrutinise and construe meaningful themes that emerged out of primary data collected.

The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim; and the data was then organized into easily retrievable units. Each case from the interviews was examined individually in order to identify thematic patterns within each interview transcript. Moreover, apriori coding was utilised and this involved establishment of categories prior to the analysis basing on existing theories. This approach allowed the researcher to confirm, refute or amplify the existing theories.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations were of profound significance in the selection of participants. The first important step was to obtain permission to conduct the study. Additionally, informed consent was sought from all the participants by email. This was attained by providing them with a

detailed explanation of the purpose of the study; how the data would be used; what kind of participation would be required from them, and how the research would be processed and disseminated. Here, all the necessary steps were taken to ensure that all the participants understood and agreed to the process in which they would be engaging.

Data privacy was an important principal the protection of participants' identity. As such, all participants for both interviews and focus group discussions were anonymised. The use of codes in the study did not raise any ethical concerns and this facilitated openness with information for valuable insights. More significantly, participation in the study was purely voluntary and no incentives were given to participants as that reduced the risk of biasness. Participants were also guaranteed of their data confidentiality during the collection process. In addition, the participants were provided with the option of unfettered access to data from the study at any point. Furthermore, the interview questions did not pose any issues in being answered as they were sent to the study participants prior to the interviews being conducted. The nature and use of the research were fully briefed to each participant and the researcher practiced objective interview techniques with active listening to ensure comfortable interview sessions for each participant.

All data in relation to this study was kept in password-protected folder on a computer requiring login. All interview files were transferred to this folder as soon as they were complete and permanently deleted from the recording device. Any requests by participants to access interview recordings or transcriptions were granted via sharing to their email address.

3.9 Chapter Summary

The chapter presented methodological considerations which were used in collecting data relating to intellectual property branding strategies with particular reference to apples from Nyanga. The chapter specifically dealt with the research design, population and sampling procedures used to select participants. The chapter also vividly outlined the data collection instruments, pre-test of the research instrument and data collection procedure. In addition, analysis and organization of data as well as measures to ensure ethical treatment of all participants selected for the study were explained. The participants were informed of the research and they were provided with consent forms. Only those participants who had voluntarily agreed to partake in the research were interviewed. The researcher first obtained approval to conduct the research from Africa University Research Ethics Committee. The participants were informed that the interviews would be confidential so that they would be comfortable to share their true opinions without the fear of being exposed. The interviews were held at a time that was suitable for the participants.

CHAPTER 4 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents results from the qualitative interviews and focus group discussions. A total of 45 apple producers were selected to participate in the focus group discussions whilst 5 experts from Zimtrade, Zimbabwe Farmers Union and ARIPO based in Harare took part in key informant interviews. The data was analysed thematically.

4.2. Data Presentation and Analysis

4.2.1. Perceived differences among products through branding using geographical indicators.

The study participants were first asked about their knowledge and awareness of GIs in Zimbabwe. This was to make sure that the participants knew what GIs are all about. It was noted that majority of the participants did not have knowledge of the concept of GIs or had heard about. Lang As such, majority of the participants exhibited lack of knowledge about the concept of GI. After this had been clearly explained to them and how they could potentially benefit, they acknowledged that GIs had the prospect of uplifting their lives. The study participants were asked on how apple producers in Nyanga can create perceived differences among products through branding using geographical indicators. From the focus group discussions, it was noted that geographical indicators had the potential to help the apple producers communicate the connection between Nyanga region and apples. There was unanimous agreement among participants that the “Nyanga region with good soils and

weather made the apples grown to be of high quality and excellent taste". This was stated by participant 1 from focus group discussion 1 who elucidated the following sentiments:

> "The quality of apples in Zimbabwe varies from region to region; the eastern highlands apples, especially those from Nyanga, tend to be of high quality and has a sweet taste due to mineral nutrients from climatic conditions, rich soils, cold weather, high rainfalls, traditional production techniques and local knowledge. These factors affect the quality and taste of apples from Nyanga and you cannot find this anywhere else in the country."(Interview with participant 1, 12 February 2021).

The participants also expressed that through the collective ownership of the brand 'Nyanga apples' could be of profound benefit to the people of Nyanga. Participant 2 from focus group discussion 1 pointed out the following:

> "Apple production in Nyanga has been of high standard since time memorial…… as such, I can say using GIs maybe what is needed at the moment as this can help in creating added value locally; increasing production of apples, creating jobs; as well as helping producers obtain good price. When we send our apples to Sakubva Musika in Mutare or Mbare Musika in Harare, buyers always look for apples from Nyanga because of their quality and taste" (Interview with participant 2, 14 February 2021).

Furthermore, the idea that 'Nyanga apples" was all that was required for the producers pointed out by key informants. One interviewee from Zimtrade expounded that certification schemes such as geographical indicators had the potential to establish reputation as well as

assuring quality of apples coming from Nyanga. There was also unanimity among the key informants that using geographical indicators could play a vital role in extenuating any potential informational problems.

It also emerged from both the focus group discussions and interviews that having a GI system for apples had the potential to valorise the Nyanga region through authentication of agricultural production in the area. In particular, it was noted that the promotion of apples from Nyanga through GIs could touch various dimensions that include economic, environmental and social. In other words, the promotion of GIs had the potential of contributing towards sustainable development in the country. This was confirmed by participant 4 from focus group discussion 2 who pointed out the following:

> "If you look at the current market in Zimbabwe, there is competition from South African apples some of which are genetically modified (GMOs). I think if apples from Nyanga are registered as a GI, this can result in economic growth of the area. I have noticed that many consumers will be willing to pay more for these apples."
> (Interview with participant 4 from focus group discussion 2, 16 February 2021).

The study also noted that most of the participants in the focus group discussions agreed that GIs had the potential in helping to organise not only the value chain but also improve the apples' value. More particularly, it was noted that registering apples from Nyanga under GIs had the potential to contribute towards emancipation of rural women. In the case of apples, it was found that women were actively present in the value chain and would immensely benefit

from the valuation of these apples. This was corroborated by participant 5 from focus group discussion 3 who stated the following:

> "Women are actively involved in the growing of apples in Nyanga, therefore, promoting these apples from Nyanga can empower many women and ultimately improve their standards of living. I can confidently tell you that branding strategies that centre on geographical origins of apples will provide the foundation for differentiating these commodity products. With GIs coming in with more quality, control and safety the potential for demand is quite high. With GI, I think we as apple producers can be able to significantly add value to our commodities basing on quality, attributes and cultural heritage of people in the region."

(Interview with participant 5 from focus group discussion 3, 18 February 2021).

Although the participants appreciated the potential of using GIs for their apples, few of them were sceptical about the capability of collectivism among producers to grant it. For instance, they pointed out that in rural settings the main challenge was coordination and it was going to be a daunting task "engaging numerous single apple producers" to become one association or group.

4.2.2. How can apple producers create value using geographical indicators?

The study sough to establish how apple producers from Nyanga could potentially create value that might translate to financial benefits using geographical indicators. According to the key informants who participated in the study "GIs could be very important when venturing into export markets. It was noted that GIs for apples could provide the consumers with much

needed information about the variety of apples they were purchasing. The key informants also agreed that GIs for apples from Nyanga could potentially help producers in "obtaining premium prices for their fruits due to "guarantee of safety and quality to consumers". More so, there was also general sentiment among the participants that GIs could result in "increased apple production (leading to economies of scale), creation of local jobs as well as the region's general economic performance". Participant 3, a key informant from Zimtrade stated the following:

> "I can say that geographical indications can be a very helpful tool for increasing economic efficiency in apple production since those measures provide both small scale and large-scale apple producers with financial incentives to deliver commodities supply to the market. I have also noted that consumers in the Zimbabwean retail sector are willing to pay premium prices for GI products." (Interview with participant 3, 16 February 2021).

It was also noted that the use of GIs could potentially provide a niche market for Nyanga apples which are reputable thereby barring others from free-riding off that reputation. Moreover, the focus group discussions and interviews with key informants found that the apples from Nyanga could create a collective monopoly which provide the producers within origin-labelled niche markets. By restricting supply of other apples and potentially creating barriers to entry, GIS could act as a commanding marketing tool for improving market access. This was further elaborated by participant 2 from ARIPO:

> "Apple producers can only be motivated to improve their product quality if line with price. The premium is usually related to product reputation.

> Product reputation is usually a by-product of various actions of different players." (Interview with participant 2 from ARIPO, 17 February 2021).

In addition, it was found that the uniqueness of the Nyanga area could potentially lead to differentiation since consumers will be recognising the value. The study also revealed that geographical indications could become a tool by whereby producers of apples will be able to have premium, thereby improving their living conditions. However, it was noted from discussions with key informants who pointed out that there were primary infrastructural costs that could be incurred in establishing a GIs registration system. It was also noted that there are administrative costs which could also be incurred.

4.2.3. Implications of GI branding of apples on competitive advantage

The study also analysed the Implications of GI branding of apples on competitive advantage. As indicated from the findings, setting up GIs for apples in Nyanga could provide an opportunity for promoting local products, as well as improving producers' incomes. It was found that in light of decreasing prices and increased competition in the commodity markets GIs provide an alternative approach for marketing agricultural products. As a result, the participants agreed that "apple farmers had to move away from commodity production and move to lucrative product branding". With more products entering the Zimbabwean market, GIs could allow producers to move away from being price takers toward being price makers thereby bringing freedom from the price fluctuations related with other commodity markets. It was noted that premium prices for apples could be charged when they become GI-protected products. As noted during, the discussions "this had been the experience for many European countries over many years. A participant from Zimtrade pointed the following:

> "The level of competition for apple products in Southern Africa has been quite high and there is the need for sustainable competitive advantage strategies. In this regard, a place of origin can potentially provide a unique positioning opportunity. I strongly believe that a place like Nyanga should be used as the basis for commodity differentiation"

The study also noted that in many cases consumers no longer prefer GI apples which are inorganically produced. There revise please was also general agreement during the focus group discussions and interviews that GIs could potentially become a tool for rural development in Nyanga area through economic sustainability and social sustainability. Regarding economic issues, the participants pointed out that GIs of apples in Nyanga could result in further development of tourism another services. It was also pointed out that the benefits of benefits of GIs by far outweighed the disadvantages and difficulties. This was emphasised by a key informant from Zimtrade:

> "I can say that the promotion of GI can lead to the growth of the whole Nyanga region as well as protecting the cultural heritage of the region. These apples are deeply rooted in the Nyanga tradition. In many cases I have seen among African countries like Kenya, GIs act as a catalyst for value addition for the benefit of rural communities who can now expect their agricultural commodities."

Other potential benefits that were noted included "improved market access for producers, increased profitability due to economies of scale, assurance of qualities or characteristics and authenticity for the consumers and increased land values". However, the disadvantages which came out during the interview discussions of using GIs protection included long

processes of designation, preparing specifications and registering the product. It was pointed out that introducing of GIs protection was a potential hurdle for some producers thereby rendering the producers economically vulnerable. Furthermore, the key informants pointed out that another challenge of GIs centres around volunteerism since participation is purely voluntary. It was also pointed out that GIs in developing countries were complicated due to the fact that they were new to numerous developing countries and majority of the population were poor who would not directly respond to the niche market concept of GIs.

4.3 Discussion and Interpretation

In was found from the qualitative findings that that GIs for Nyanga apples had the potential to provide substantial differentiation of these commodities. This agreed with Liu (2016) who argued that GIs provides uniqueness and identity in market beyond that the perceived quality comes into consumer senses. In the same vein, the findings agree with Stanciu, Stanciuc, Dumitrascu, Ion and Nistor (2013) who argued that GIs promote long term differentiation strategies as they guarantee safety and quality to consumers. In addition, the findings are in line with Coelho, Coelho and Egerer (2018) who expound that using geographical indicators improve redistribution of added value to the producers and processors throughout the production chain thereby bringing added value to the region of origin.

It was found from the study that differentiation was one possible strategy to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage for apples in Nyanga using GIs. GIs are viewed as the most appropriate strategy since it covers the natural environment of Nyanga. A GI signals a link not only between a product and its specific place of origin, but also with its unique production methods and distinguishing qualities. A GI is thus a differentiator, often a key to higher and more stable export earnings. Yet, until now, very little consolidated information was available

about these unique forms of intellectual and cultural property and their potential to provide a sustainable means of competitiveness even for remote regions of developing countries. But differentiation can be done by way of a trademark. This was in line with Gatrell, Reid and Steiger (2018) who argued that a GI brand helps produces create a unique identity and thereby giving cues to customers on criteria that matter to them like product features, origin, quality and uses. Moreover, the findings agree with other empirical studies which showed that GI brands add value for consumers as it gives quality assurance and the benefit of authenticity. Success stories from Brazil and Colombia demonstrated that GIs are intangible assets with interesting potential for the creation of differentiation (Belletti & Marescotti, 2011; Deconinck & Swinnen, 2014).

The study also noted that geographical indications can become helpful tools for achieving product differentiation, and increase economic efficiency because such measures provide producers with incentives to deliver appropriate supply to the market. This concurs with a study by Stanciu, Stanciuc, Dumitrascu, Ion and Nistor (2013) on the effects of horse meat scandal on Romanian meat market which revealed that geographical indication can have a significant impact on a region's economic performance because it protects the identity of indigenous products. This is corroborated by Coelho, Coelho and Egerer (2018) who argue that consumers of regional products assign high importance to labels that contain regional certification.

It was found during the discussions that GIs provide high value-addition for agricultural products like apples. According to Ngokkuen and Grote (2017), opportunities for protecting geographical indications on Colombian coffee revealed that GIs had a positive impact on value redistribution to upstream segments. In addition, another study by Menapace (2018) on

geographical indications and quality promotion in food and agricultural markets showed that Kona coffee had a 250% increase between 2010 and 2016, and Manchego cheese had 83% increase in volume between 2010 and 2014. This also occurred with Futog cabbage, where the amount produced under the GI increased by 76% between 2010 and 2017 (Stasi, Nardone, Viscecchia & Seccia, 2018).

Both interviews and focus group discussions found that GI branding creates value and competitive advantage for local communities through products deeply rooted in culture and geography. In particular, GI branding supports rural development and promote new job opportunities in production, processing and other related services. Furthermore, it was revealed that geographical indications are also considered as potential instruments of territorial development. This corroborated studies by Roman, Popiela-Pleban and Kozak (2013) who stated that GIs attract tourists thereby allowing exploiting indirect profitable activities.

4.4. Chapter Summary

The chapter presented results from the qualitative interviews and focus group discussions. A total of 45 apple producers were selected to participate in the focus group discussions whilst 5 experts from Zimtrade, Zimbabwe Farmers Union and ARIPO based in Harare took part in key informant interviews. The collected data was analysed using thematic analysis. The following chapter presents conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents summary of findings in relation to research objectives. The chapter also outlines conclusions implications and recommendations. Areas of further study are also recommended.

5.2 Discussion

It was noted that majority of the participants did not have knowledge of the concept of GIs or had heard about. From the focus group discussions, it was also noted that geographical indicators had the potential to help the apple producers communicate the connection between Nyanga region and apples. It also emerged from both the focus group discussions and interviews that having a GI system for apples had the potential to valorise the Nyanga region through authentication of agricultural production in the area. In particular, it was noted that the promotion of apples from Nyanga through GIs could touch various dimensions of sustainable that include economic, environmental and social. In other words, the promotion of GIs had the potential of contributing towards sustainable development in the country.

The study also noted that most of the participants in the focus group discussions agreed that GIs had the potential in helping to organise not only the value chain but also improve the apples' value. More particularly, it was noted that registering apples from Nyanga under GIs had the potential to contribute towards emancipation of rural women. In the case of apples, it was found that women were actively present in the value chain and would immensely benefit from the valuation of these apples. Although the participants appreciated the potential of

using GIs for their apples, few of them were sceptical about the capability of collectivism among producers to grant it. For instance, they pointed out that in rural settings the main challenge was coordination and it was going to be a daunting task "engaging numerous single apple producers.

The study found that GIs for apples from Nyanga could potentially help producers in "obtaining premium prices for their fruits due to guarantee of safety and quality to consumers". More so, there was also general sentiment among the participants that GIs could result in increased apple production (leading to economies of scale), creation of local jobs as well as the region's general economic performance. It was also noted that the use of GIs could potentially provide a niche market for Nyanga apples which are reputable thereby barring others from free-riding off that reputation. Moreover, the qualitative study found that the apples from Nyanga could create a collective monopoly which provide the producers within origin-labelled niche markets. By restricting supply of other apples and potentially creating barriers to entry, GIS could act as a commanding marketing tool for improving market access.

It was found that in light of decreasing prices and increased competition in the commodity markets GIs provide an alternative approach for marketing agricultural products. As a result, the participants agreed that apple farmers had to move away from commodity production and move to lucrative product branding. With more products entering the Zimbabwean market, GIs could allow producers to move away from being price takers toward being price makers thereby bringing freedom from the price fluctuations related with other commodity markets. However, the study found that there are also disadvantages which came out during the interview discussions of using GIs protection and these included long processes of designation, preparing specifications and registering the product. It was pointed out that

introducing of GIs protection was a potential hurdle for some producers thereby rendering the producers economically vulnerable.

5.3 Summary

The study evaluated the prospects of intellectual property branding strategies for apples from Nyanga, Zimbabwe. Specifically, the study assessed how apple producers in Nyanga can create perceived differences among products through branding using geographical indicators and evaluate how apple producers can create value that can translate to financial benefit using geographical indicators. The study also sought to determine any implications of GI branding for apples on competitive advantage and recommend strategies that can be used to promote Geographical indications of apples from Nyanga Zimbabwe. In order to explore the potential of intellectual property branding strategies for apples from Nyanga, the study used the brand equity model which enunciates particular upgrading strategies that disadvantaged producers may pursue in order to influence improved value chain and competitive advantage. Brand quality marks, including geographical indications can reduce information asymmetry between remotely situated producers and potential buyers in a value chain. The study adopted a qualitative research design. The use of qualitative methods provided data that was primarily descriptive and allowed for interpretation in order to develop a deeper thoughtful of the processes of the branding strategies for agricultural commodities. A total of 45 apple producers were selected to participate in the study. In addition, the study population comprised of 5 experts from Zimtrade, Zimbabwe Farmers Union and ARIPO based in Harare. The study utilised both interview guide and focus group discussion guide. Primary data collected from both interviews and focus groups were content analysed. The aim of content analysis was to reduce written texts transcribed from both focus groups and interviews. This involved data reduction of qualitative material. It was concluded that the

stronger the connection between the apples and the geographical region of Nyanga, the tougher the competitive advantage. The study concluded that in light of decreasing prices and increased competition in the commodity markets GIs provide an alternative approach for marketing agricultural products. As a result, the participants agreed that apple farmers had to move away from commodity production and move to lucrative product branding.

5.4 Conclusions

The findings presented in the study presented strong economic arguments for the protection of geographical indications in Nyanga. It was concluded that the stronger the connection between the apples and the geographical region of Nyanga, the tougher the competitive advantage. This is in line with various studies that found that geographical indications showed the greatest potential to benefit local small scale and large-scale producers (Ingram, Hansen & Bosselmann, 2020). This also confirmed the potential of using economic benefits of geographical indications to enhance development for local communities in most developing countries (Fernández & Saunders, 2018). The study concluded that in light of decreasing prices and increased competition in the commodity markets GIs provide an alternative approach for marketing agricultural products. As a result, the participants agreed that apple farmers had to move away from commodity production and move to lucrative product branding. The study also concluded that potential buyers in the European market prefer production methods of all natural and organic production. In many cases consumers no longer prefer GI apples which are inorganically produced. There was also general that GIs could potentially become a tool for rural development in Nyanga area through economic sustainability and social sustainability. Regarding economic issues, the participants pointed out that GIs of apples in Nyanga could result in further development of tourism another services. In this manner, it was found that the exploitation of geographical indications.

5.5 Implications

From a theoretical point of view, the study made substantial contributions to theory in geographical indication especially for developing countries. Furthermore, intellectual property practitioners can use the brand equity model to improve marketing of commodities such as apples through geographical indicators. The brand equity model propounded by Keller (2003) provides such a model which argues that the farmers of apples will know which strategies to implement and how to give the right experiences to their audience so that they create customer loyalty. As such, the theoretical framework provided a launchpad from which to come up with a detailed analysis of various aspects that affect implementation of geographical indicators in Zimbabwe.

In Zimbabwe, the agricultural sector is viewed as the engine for driving the country's economic growth. From a practical point of view, the study provided apple producers with information that can help in identifying the intellectual property branding strategies suitable. Thus, findings from the study could be used b to improve the implementation of intellectual property branding strategies. Findings from this study also offer suggestions for the promotion of adopting geographical indications for apple producers in Nyanga. In particular, GIs could be very important for apple producers in Nyanga when venturing into export markets. The study also found that GIs for apples could provide the consumers with much needed information about the variety of apples they were purchasing. From the findings, it can be inferred that GIs for apples from Nyanga could potentially help producers in obtaining premium prices for their fruits due to guarantee of safety and quality to consumers. Hence a thorough understanding of the GIs for the producers of commodities like apples is essential.

Thus, the brand equity model describes the purpose and strategic direction of for apple producers as they seek to increase competitive advantage. From an economic perspective, the brand equity model allows the producers of apples to differentiate their product in the market, whilst simultaneously functioning as a barrier to entry to this specific market segment (Belletti, Marescotti, Sanz-Cañada & Vakoufaris, 2015; Fernández & Saunders, 2018).

A major contribution of this study is that it highlighted the potential factors and challenges that would affect the introduction of GIs. This information can then be used to develop and implement GIs for the country. It was found that that protecting GIs can generate significant gains for apple producers. For policymakers wishing to preserve local farmers while recognizing foreign GIs, it is, therefore, important to leave domestic firms with as much latitude as possible when marketing their products.

5.6 Recommendations

The study makes the following recommendations:

- Branding agro-based products using geographical indications is an asset to producers. This is achievable through promotions of well-designed and sustained brand communication messages. It is recommended that there is the need for a GI Office and Secretariat that can provide support/advice for the elaboration of GI applications in Zimbabwe.
- There is the need for the government to first attract private investments in export-oriented activities and infrastructure. Developing countries where resources like funding, infrastructure and expertise are scarce, strategy is all the more crucial for complex commercial enterprises. The key ingredients include effective management of stakeholders, partners and suppliers.

- The government should also start collecting, documenting indigenous and traditional knowledge, geographically known goods, and its global consumptions.
- In an era where brand value draws sales, GI is the best possible brand-creator and holds potential for increasing value for artisan communities. Suitable marketing strategy for GI products will help develop these products into brands.
- Awareness about GI is very crucial for achieving the potential benefit from GI registration of crafts. The level of awareness among the producers as well as consumers needs to be improved. The NGOs, CSR, governments, charitable trusts, etc., need to embrace GI as a job and income enhancing tools.

- There is need to strengthen the protection for GI products in the market places so that the producers do not face any problem like counterfeiting of products by enforcing agencies like police, customs, etc.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

The study dealt broadly on intellectual property branding strategies for apples from Nyanga, Zimbabwe. The researcher suggests that a future study may be done on other commodities and products like Tanganda and Mazoe. Moreover, results of this study could have been limited due to the fact that the study was only done in Nyanga. As such, the results may not be generalized with a lot of certainty. Future studies can use a bigger sample size.

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Appendix 1: Consent Form

RESEARCH TOPIC: BRANDING AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES USING GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS (GIS): THE CASE STUDY OF APPLES FROM NYANGA.

My name is **Plaxcedes Chiedza Marimo (Reg:200060),** a final year Masters In Intellectual Property Degree student from AU. I am carrying out a study on ***BRANDING AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES USING GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS (GIS): THE CASE STUDY OF APPLES FROM NYANGA.*** I am kindly asking you to participate in this study by answering filling in the questionnaire.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the evaluates how geographical indications can be used as a branding strategy for agricultural commodities with specific reference to apples from Nyanga**.** The study also seeks to assess how apple producers in Nyanga can create perceived differences among products through branding using geographical indicators; evaluate how apple producers can create value that can translate to financial using geographical indicators and determine any implications of setting up a GI for apples. You were selected for the study because you have the knowhow and know what for apple production and geographical indications. If you decide to participate you will have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. It is expected that this will take about 10 to 15 minutes of your time.

Please note that the study does not have any foreseeable risks, discomforts or inconveniences to the participant. The researcher will not disclose any identity of study participants during the analysis of data. It is expected that the study will provide an insight into producers' awareness and their expectations of local Zimbabwean apples in terms of origin. It also points out consumer interest in labelling, and quality of apples in the same vein, the findings from this study will be relevant to Zimbabwean apple producers and marketers in developing formidable strategies in their efforts to boost demand in the face of rising competition from apple imports.

Any information that is obtained in the study that can be identified with the participant will not be disclosed without their permission. Names and any other identification will not be asked for in the questionnaires. Furthermore, participation in this study is purely voluntary. If you decide not to participate in this study, your decision will not affect future relationship with the researcher. If you chose to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation without penalty. Before you sign this form, please ask any questions on any aspect of this study that is unclear to you. You may take as much time as necessary to think it over. Thanks in advance for your willingness to generously contribute to this research.

If you have decided to participate in this study please sign this form in the space provide below as an indication that you have read and understood the information provided above and have agreed to participate.

---------- ----------

Name of Research Participant (please print) Date

Signature of Research Participant or legally authorised representative

If you have any questions concerning this study or consent form beyond those answered by the researcher including questions about the research, your rights as a research participant, or if you feel that you have been treated unfairly and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, please feel free to contact the Africa University Research Ethics Committee on telephone (020) 60075 or 60026 extension 1156 email aurec@africau.edu

Name of Researcher **Plaxcedes Chiedza Marimo**

Email

Cell

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

i. For how long have you been producing apples?

ii. How big is your current market for apples?

iii. Do you face competition from other producers within and outside the country?

iv. Are you aware of on GIs and their potential significance?

v. Do you face competition from inorganic apples coming from somewhere else?

vi. How can apple producers in Nyanga create perceived differences among products through branding using geographical indicators?

vii. How can apple producers create value that can translate to financial? using geographical indicators?

viii. What do you think are the implications of setting up a GI for apples?

ix. What Challenges that can be met in coming up with a GI

x. What are strategies that can be used to promote Geographical indications of apples from Nyanga Zimbabwe?

xi. Any other comment

Appendix 3: Approval Letter

AFRICA UNIVERSITY
(A United Methodist-Related Institution)
INVESTING IN AFRICA'S FUTURE

AFRICA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (AUREC)

P.O. Box 1320 Mutare, Zimbabwe, Off Nyanga Road, Old Mutare Tel (+263-20) 60075/60026/61611 Fax: (+263 20) 61785 website: www.africau.edu

Ref: AU1883/21 29 January, 2021

MERCY AUMA ODHIAMBO
C/O CBPLG
Africa University
Box 1320
Mutare

RE: **BRANDING AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES USING GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS (GIS): THE CASE STUDY OF APPLES FROM JULIASDALE**

Thank you for the above titled proposal that you submitted to the Africa University Research Ethics Committee for review. Please be advised that AUREC has reviewed and approved your application to conduct the above research.

The approval is based on the following.

a) Research proposal
b) Data collection instruments
c) Informed consent guide

- **APPROVAL NUMBER** AUREC1883/21
  This number should be used on all correspondences, consent forms, and appropriate documents.
- **AUREC MEETING DATE** NA
- **APPROVAL DATE** January 29, 2021
- **EXPIRATION DATE** January 29, 2022
- **TYPE OF MEETING** Expedited
  After the expiration date this research may only continue upon renewal. For purposes of renewal, a progress report on a standard AUREC form should be submitted a month before expiration date.
- **SERIOUS ADVERSE EVENTS** All serious problems having to do with subject safety must be reported to AUREC within 3 working days on standard AUREC form.
- **MODIFICATIONS** Prior AUREC approval is required before implementing any changes in the proposal (including changes in the consent documents)
- **TERMINATION OF STUDY** Upon termination of the study a report has to be submitted to AUREC.

AFRICA UNIVERSITY
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (AUREC)
APPROVED
P.O. BOX 1320, MUTARE, ZIMBABWE

Yours Faithfully

MARY CHINZOU – A/AUREC ADMINISTRATORFOR CHAIRPERSON, AFRICA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE