Review Article

AN EVALUATION OF MARKETING STRATEGIES INFLUENCE ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF UCHUMI SUPERMARKET SUPERMARKET OUTLETS IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA

Abstract

Many retail outlets in Kenya are facing declining performance due to myriad of challenges from changing business environment. One of the major variables threatening their performance is marketing aspects. The organizations work hard in their distress for survival. To effect this they initiate and implement marketing turnaround strategies to attain recovery and sustainable performance. This article is an effort to study and establish the relationship between marketing turnaround strategies and organizational performance. Specific marketing turnaround strategies studied included aggressive marketing stance of the company's products, development of new products, marketing of new products, marketing of the company's history, adoption of relationship marketing strategy, adoption of multichannel marketing strategies, market acquisition strategies through promotions, market retention strategies through promotions, marketing of the company values such as home-grown, and marketing of the company's service elements. The objective of the study was the relationship of marketing turnaround strategies on performance of Uchumi supermarket. The study used a casual research design. The investigation was carried out using open ended, closed ended questionnaires and interviews. The theories underpinning the study were Resource Based View, Dynamic Capabilities Theory, Open Systems Theory, and competitive theory. The target population is 450 Uchumi supermarket staff members respectively. The sample size of the study was 82 employees. The validity of the questionnaire was examined using the face and content validity while the reliability was examined using the Cronbach alpha coefficient. Data analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics (means, frequency distribution and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (linear correlation and multiple linear regressions). The null hypothesis was rejected since $F\ (10, 58) = 17.413$, $p<0.05$. Since p value is 0.000, it implied that there is a 0.000% likelihood or probability that the model gave a wrong prediction and therefore the model was found to a good fit of the data. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis that marketing strategies have significant influence on organizational performance of Uchumi supermarket was adopted.

Introduction

One of the marketing strategies that firms undertook included market penetration strategies to acquire and consolidate its market share. The market share is the aggregation of the potential and available customers' demand for the products or services which the customer regards as being capable of satisfying the same need (Ruth & Nabatanzi, 2012).

Nyariki, (2014) argued that market share is the proportion of actual sales (either volume or value) within a specified market in terms of what constitutes the it like identification of target customers. Wachira (2013) further defines the market share as the consumer's preference for a product over similar products. There are several determinants of market share of a business; the standard benefits, company benefits, and differential benefits (Kagunga, 2010). The standard benefits are those product features that are not unique to the product but are standard across the industry through making the customers know of these features may give it advantages if the other firms' are not mentioning it (Omollo, 2013). The company benefits relate to the specific features that the customer benefits from compared to him buying similar products from other service providers (Peter, 2014). Finally, the differentiation benefits relate to the benefits that the organization's products or services provide (Kagunga, 2010). The company must actively market the standard benefits, company benefits, and differentiation benefits to gain and consolidate its market share.

Firms that have are having a declining performance are often also afflicted with poor customer service and organizational inefficiencies that collectively undermine it brand value and positioning within customers' minds. As part of the market share acquisition and market penetration strategies, the companies must work on its brand positioning. "The brand positioning is the systematically planned and implemented process of creating and maintaining a favourable reputation" (Connolly & Moore, 2010). Mwanzia (2012) noted that brand positioning is the creation of point of similarities and points of differences in consumer's mind. Therefore, the focus of branding is the perception of brand features which can either be positive, neutral, or negative. There are several advantages associated with brand positioning including the ability to influence the market environment positively, creation of value for the customers, and enable company to leverage on the tangible and non-tangible assets (Kariuki, 2014). In conclusion, Idris (2012) argues that the brand positioning in the marketplace was influenced by communication of the benefits and product attributes to its consumers and users. The ultimate aim of the brand positioning is the ability of the firm to differentiate itself based on price, quality, product traits, distribution and usage occasions.

Munyae (2015 noted that Kenol Kobil undertook aggressive marketing for it to acquire and protect its market share. Amongst the strategy it undertook in this regard included introduction of a fueling card that offered motorists the fuel at a discount and therefore locking them into the firm. Obonyo (2013) suggests that marketing strategies are very important in determining the performance level of the supermarket industry. The author noted that promotional strategies help to communicate the products and services offered by a company and hence creating customer awareness regarding their goods and services. Promotion has an emotional effect of consumers hence causing them to buy products and services from a particular company. However, Obonyo (2013) had a contrasting view by asserting that adoption of relationship marketing was the least mentioned in the study. Obonyo (2013) examined the marketing strategies used by various supermarkets in the Kisii town such as Naivas, Tuskys, Nakumatt, and Oshwal and concluded that relationship marketing is gaining momentum in the Kenyan retail market. The author noted that marketers need to relate with customers to increase customer acquisition and retention. The author argued that customer retention was a major challenge facing the retail sector in Kenya and hence companies with relational marketing strategies are able to attract and retain customers. Murcott, Belasco and Jackson (2013) argued that marketing company values and company's service elements help in acquiring and retaining customers. The authors noted that aggressive marketing helps in product development because there is a wide customer base for the produced goods and services. The authors further noted that aggressive marketing creates customer awareness helping to create a demand for the produced products and services. However, Murthi and Rao (2012) noted that marketing is important in organizational performance. The authors noted that companies should use price strategy in acquiring and retaining customers.

Nzuki (2016) concluded that marketing strategies are very paramount in the banking sector. The author focused on the marketing strategies employed by KCB bank in Kenya and concluded that product development and marketing of company's services are the most common strategies. Ondieki (2011) had earlier supported the idea by asserting that marketing the company's history is an important marketing strategy used in KCB bank. The author employed the customer experience management theory to assert that customer experience influence the customer decision to purchase products and services. The author noted that in the banking sector customers' decisions are influenced by their past experiences whereby positive experience positively influence customer buying decisions while negative experiences negatively determine customer decisions. Kehinde, Oludayo and Yusuf (2014) argued that aggressive marketing allows a company to increasingly and regularly develop new products and hence satisfying their customers. They based their arguments on the Ansoff strategy to indicate that in the banking sector product development attracts customers because they can get a wide variety of services in the sector. A good example is mobile and internet banking products offered by banks in the African markets. KCB has been able to compete with local and international banks such as Equity Bank and Barclays Bank respectively due to effectiveness in product development and marketing aggressiveness. Sakwa and Oloko (2014) noted that KCB bank has adopted multichannel marketing strategies and employed information technology to improve operating efficiency and sustain competitive advantage. It was found that multiple service delivery positively impact on the performance of the bank.

Kehinde, Oludayo and Yusuf (2014) argued that marketing strategies are not used equally in all companies and are effective in some companies than others. They used telecommunication companies in Nigeria to assert that customer retention strategies are effective in some companies than others depending how they are implemented. However, Aliata et al. (2012) gave a contrasting view by noting that marketing strategies depend on the target market. The authors noted that promotional strategies are used in developed markets while aggressive marketing campaigns are used in new markets. The authors based their arguments from Porter's generic strategies approach to assert that strategies used in mature markets may not be applicable in new markets and hence different companies do not have similar outcomes for their marketing strategies.

In their study, Ondieki (2011) argued that KCB bank adopts similar strategies with other banks in the market but the process of implementation is different. KCB bank faced a declining challenge and it effectively implemented marketing strategies such as acquisition strategies through promotions and aggressive marketing strategies in order to regain its market position. Obonyo (2013), Murcott, Belasco and Jackson (2013), and Murthi and Rao (2012) found that marketing strategies impact the organizational performance of retail sector. It was noted that marketing strategies employed by an organization influence customer satisfaction, customer retention, market share acquisition and development of new products.

As mentioned by Obonyo (2013), aggressive marketing and marketing company values help in acquiring new customers and development of new products in the retail sector. Murthi and Rao (2012) argued that for any company to excel in the market, it must ensure that its products and services are well known by customers. Therefore, it was noted that marketing strategies increased the profitability level of an organization. This conquered with Murcott, Belasco and Jackson (2013) who noted that aggressive marketing and promotional strategies are more effective in improving the organizational performance. However, Gibson and Billings (2010) had a contrasted this view by indicating that development and marketing of new products have higher effect on organizational performance as compared to aggressive marketing in the retail sector.

Sakwa and Oloko (2014), Ondieki (2011), and Nzuki (2016) agreed that marketing strategies have significant influence on organizational performance of KCB bank. It was noted that the performance of KCB bank relied on the marketing strategies employed by the company. Sakwa and Oloko (2014) found that the performance of KCB bank is determined by the ability of the company to develop new products, conduct aggressive marketing campaigns, adoption of multichannel marketing strategies, and market retention strategies through promotions. On the other hand, Ondieki (2011) noted that the performance of KCB bank is influenced by acquisition strategies through promotions and marketing of the company values such as home-grown. However, Aliata et al. (2012) argued that the quality of services offered in the banking sector influence the decision of customers and hence influence the organizational performance of the sector. The authors noted that some banks collapse in the market due to provision of low quality services and since the level of competition is very high in the market, customers shift to other banks. Therefore, provision of quality customer services influenced customer satisfaction, customer retention, market share acquisition and profitability level of the banking sector.

Statement of the problem

Organizations facing poor performance in Kenya have implemented different marketing strategies on their firms. Despite various marketing being implemented by diverse companies, not all of them have been successful (Otieno, 2015). The unsuccessful marketing initiatives often resulted into wasting of resources, destabilized workforce and management changes amongst other effects (Ngati, 2009). Uchumi supermarket in 2006 initiated turnaround strategies to resuscitate its distressed business. However, several branches were closed after and even exited its international business.

Methodology

The study opted to use mixed method approach. The target population was 450 Uchumi supermarket staff members from 9 branches in Nairobi. A sample size of 82 participants was involved in the study. Questionnaire and interview schedule were used to gather information from the respondents. The validity of the questionnaire was examined using the face and content validity while the reliability was examined using the Cronbach alpha coefficient. Data analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics (means, frequency distribution and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (linear correlation and multiple linear regressions).

Result

Table 1: Frequency distribution for marketing strategy

The following marketing strategy elements in turnaround strategy parameters have played a significant role in the Organizational Performance of your company;	**SA Freq. (%)**	**A Freq. (%)**	**U Freq. (%)**	**D Freq. (%)**	**SD Freq. (%)**
Aggressive marketing stance of the company's products	3 (4.3)	39 (56.5)	15 (21.7)	8 (11.6)	4 (5.8)
Development of new products	13 (18.8)	29 (42.0)	18 (26.1)	9 (13.0)	0 (0.0)
Marketing of new products	0 (0.0)	17 (24.6)	16 (23.2)	29 (42.0)	7 (10.1)
Marketing of the company's history	2 (2.9)	26 (37.7)	25 (36.2)	16 (23.2)	0 (0.0)
Adoption of relationship marketing strategy	0 (0.0)	20 (29.0)	27 (39.1)	19 (27.5)	3 (4.3)
Adoption of multichannel marketing Strategies	5 (7.2)	34 (49.3)	23 (33.3)	7 (10.1)	0 (0.0)
Market acquisition Strategies through promotions	10 (14.5)	29 (42.0)	18 (26.1)	12 (17.4)	0 (0.0)
Market retention Strategies through promotions	3 (4.3)	31 (44.9)	20 (29.0)	15 (21.7)	0 (0.0)
Marketing of the company values such as home-grown	11 (15.9)	29 (42.0)	16 (23.2)	13 (18.8)	0 (0.0)
Marketing of the company's service elements	21 (17.4)	32 (46.4)	16 (23.2)	9 (13.3)	0 (0.0)

In the context of aggressive marketing stance of Uchumi supermarket product, a cumulative of 60.8% of respondents were affirmative that aggressive marketing led to improved organizational performance at Uchumi supermarket. This is in comparison to a minority of 17.4% (N= 12) of respondents who were negative on the role of marketing leading to organizational performance at Uchumi supermarket. The development of new products had a majority of 42.0% (N= 29) of the respondents agreeing that it led to improved organizational performance at Uchumi supermarket.

The marketing of new products was not seen to significantly led to improvement in organizational performance at Uchumi supermarket due to a cumulative percentage of 52.1% (N= 36) of the respondents disagreeing that it led to improvement in organizational performance at Uchumi supermarket. The marketing of the company's history as a means for organizational performance at Uchumi supermarket had 2.9% (N= 2), 37.7% (26), 36.2% (N= 25), 23.2% (N= 16), and 0.0% of the respondents strongly agreeing, agreeing, being uncertain, disagreeing and strongly disagreeing respectively. Relationship marketing could a potential critical strategy for improvement of organizational performance. The adoption of relationship marketing influence on organizational performance at Uchumi supermarket had only a small percentage of 29% agreeing that it helped in improving organizational performance at Uchumi supermarket. A further 39.1% of the respondents were uncertain while 27.5% (N= 19) and 4.3% (N= 3) of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. The adoption of the multichannel marketing as means of organizational performance had a majority of 49.3% of the respondents agreeing that it helped in organizational performance. It was only a small percentage of 10.1% (N= 7) of the respondents who disagreed that multichannel marketing strategy led to improvement in organizational performance. The aspects of market acquisition strategies through use of promotions had a cumulative percentage of 56.5% (N= 39) of the respondents agreeing that it led to improvement in organizational performance. On the other hand in respect to market retention Strategies through promotions leading to improved organizational performance, a majority of 44.9% (N= 31) of the respondents agreed that it led to improvement in organizational performance. Uchumi supermarket depended on marketing of the company values to improve on its organizational performance. This was as evidenced by a cumulative percentage of 57.9% (N= 40) of the respondents who agreed that it led to improvement of organizational performance.

Finally, in relations to marketing of the company’s service elements leading to improved organizational performance, then 17.4% (N= 12), 46.4% (N= 32), 23.2% (N= 16), 13.3% (N= 9) and 0.0% of the respondents chose strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree, and strongly disagree respectively.

Table 2: Organizational performance showing mean calculations and Std. Dev Calculations

	N	**Mean Calculations**		**Std. Dev. Calculations**	
		Mean	Respondents on average tended to;	Std. Dev.	Responses distributed;
Aggressive marketing stance of the company’s products	69	3.4203	Uncertain	.96109	Moderately
Development of new products	69	3.6667	Agree	.93410	Moderately
Marketing of new products	69	2.6232	Uncertain	.97168	Moderately
Marketing of the company’s history	69	3.2029	Uncertain	.83278	Moderately
Adoption of relationship marketing strategy	69	2.9275	Uncertain	.86294	Moderately
Adoption of multichannel marketing Strategies	69	3.5362	Agree	.77800	Moderately
Market acquisition Strategies through promotions	69	3.5362	Agree	.94837	Moderately
Market retention Strategies through promotions	69	3.3188	Uncertain	.86590	Moderately
Marketing of the company values such as home-grown	69	3.5507	Agree	.97824	Moderately
Marketing of the company’s service elements	69	3.6812	Agree	.91544	Moderately

The means and standard deviations of marketing strategy were examined with a view of gaining more insights into marketing strategy. All the marketing metrics had the respondents on average tending to agree that the specific marketing metric led to organizational performance due to means that lay between 3.5 and 4.5 as illustrated in Table 2. This was true except for aggressive marketing stance of the company's products, marketing of new products, marketing of the company's history, adoption of relationship marketing strategy and market retention strategies through promotions which had the respondents tending to be uncertain due to means between 2.5 and 3.5. In the context of standard deviations, all the metrics were moderately distributed around the mean due to standard deviations of between 0.5 and 1.0.

Table 3: Normality Tests for Marketing Strategy

	Skewness Calculations		Kurtosis Calculations	
	Observed Skewness	Skewness within -3.0 to 3.0?	Observed Kurtosis	Kurtosis within -10.0 to 10.0?
Aggressive marketing stance of the company's products	.412	Yes	2.429	Yes
Development of new products	.745	Yes	1.342	Yes
Marketing of new products	.827	Yes	1.209	Yes
Marketing of the company's history	.821	Yes	1.218	Yes
Adoption of relationship marketing strategy	.839	Yes	1.192	Yes
Adoption of multichannel marketing Strategies	.750	Yes	1.333	Yes
Market acquisition strategies through promotions	.154	Yes	6.484	Yes
Market retention Strategies through promotions	.313	Yes	3.197	Yes
Marketing of the company values such as home-grown	.863	Yes	1.158	Yes
Marketing of the company's service elements	.172	Yes	5.819	Yes

The normality of the data was assumed if the skewness statistics is within the interval (-3.0, 3.0) and kurtosis statistic is lying in the interval (-10.0, 10.0).Therefore since the individual metrics of marketing strategy for Uchumi supermarket lay within the given cutoff points as illustrated through Table 4 for both skewness and kurtosis, normality of the data was assumed.

Table 4: Model Summary for Uchumi supermarket Marketing

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the

				Estimate
1	.866[a]	.750	.707	.24762

a. Predictors: (Constant), Marketing of the company's service elements , Development of new products , Marketing of the company's history , Adoption of relationship marketing strategy, Adoption of multichannel marketing Strategies , Marketing of the company values such as home-grown , Marketing of new products , Aggressive marketing stance of the company's products, Market retention Strategies through promotions , Market acquisition Strategies through promotions.

The multiple correlation coefficient (R) of marketing metrics was positive indicating the cumulative effect of marketing on the Organizational Performance. The multiple correlation coefficient of 0.866 indicates a very strong positive correlation between marketing metrics and the Organizational Performance of Uchumi supermarket. The coefficient of determination (R Square) indicates the variance of the Organizational Performance of Uchumi supermarket that was determined or explained by the marketing. In this context, the coefficient of determination of 0.750 indicates that marketing aspects account for 75.0% of the variance in the organizational performance of Uchumi supermarket.

Table 5: ANOVA for Uchumi supermarket marketing

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.677	10	1.068	17.413	.000[b]
	Residual	3.556	58	.061		
	Total	14.234	68			

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Marketing of the company's service elements , Development of new products , Marketing of the company's history , Adoption of relationship marketing strategy, Adoption of multichannel marketing strategies ,Marketing of the company values such as home-grown , Marketing of new products, Aggressive marketing stance of the company's products, Market retention strategies through promotions , Market acquisition strategies through promotions

The study findings agreed with Obonyo (2013), Murcott, Belasco and Jackson (2013), and Murthi and Rao (2012) that marketing strategies impact the organizational performance of retail sector.

Organizational performance of Uchumi supermarket

OP = 1.678+ 0.144(x_1) + 0.060(x_2) + 0.024(x_3) -0.114(x_4) + 0.040(x_5) + 0.165(x_6) + 0.224(x_7) + 0.033(x_8) -0.029(x_9) -0.0014(x_{10}) where

x_1 = Aggressive marketing stance of the company's products

x_2 = Development of new products

x_3 = Marketing of new products

x_4 = Marketing of the company's history

x_5 = Adoption of relationship marketing strategy

x_6 = Adoption of multichannel marketing Strategies

x_7 = Market acquisition strategies through promotions

x_8 = Market retention Strategies through promotions

x_9 = Marketing of the company values such as home-grown

x_{10} = Marketing of the company's service elements

The coefficient for the intercept is 1.678 which indicates that if the marketing metrics are at zero then organizational performance of Uchumi supermarket would stand at 1.678. The regression model indicates that a unit increase in aggressive marketing of the company's products, development of new products, marketing of new products, adoption of relationship marketing strategy, adoption of multichannel marketing strategies, market acquisition strategies through promotions, and market retention strategies through promotions would lead to a 0.144, 0.060, 0.024, 0.040, 0.165, 0.224, and 0.033 increase in organizational performance at Uchumi supermarket respectively. On the other hand, a unit increase in marketing of the company's history, marketing of the company values such as home-grown, and marketing of the company's service elements would lead to 0.114, 0.029 and 0.0014 decreases in organizational performance of Uchumi supermarket respectively with the other metrics kept constant. This implies that these metrics individually are not able to positively influence organizational performance.

Table 6: Multiple Linear Regression of Uchumi supermarket Marketing

	Unstandardized Coefficients		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig**
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.678	.269		6.232	.000
Aggressive marketing stance of the company's products	.144	.049	.303	2.963	.004
Development of new products	.060	.037	.122	1.605	.114
Marketing of new products	.024	.034	.051	.702	.486
Marketing of the company's history	-.114	.040	-.208	-2.87	.006
Adoption of relationship marketing strategy	.040	.038	.076	1.063	.292
Adoption of multichannel marketing Strategies	.165	.045	.281	3.702	.000
Market acquisition Strategies through promotions	.224	.081	.464	2.777	.007
Market retention Strategies through promotions	.033	.062	.063	.535	.595
Marketing of the company values such as home-grown	-.029	.033	-.063	-.887	.379
Marketing of the company's service elements	-.004	.079	-.009	-.054	.957

Based on the research findings indicated in Table 6 above, market acquisition strategies through promotions and aggressive marketing stance of the company's products have high effect on the dependent variable because of their beta values (0.464 and 0.303 respectively). The study findings indicated that marketing of the company's service elements (0.009) had the least effect on the dependent variable. The study findings agreed with Obonyo (2013) and Murcott, Belasco and Jackson (2013) that aggressive marketing and promotional strategies are more effective in improving the organizational performance. On the contrary, the study findings contrasted with Gibson and Billings (2010) who asserted that development and marketing of new products have higher effect on organizational performance as compared to aggressive marketing in the retail sector.

To examine on whether the individual metrics of marketing aspects were significant predictors of Organizational Performance at Uchumi supermarket the p value method were used. In this context, aggressive marketing stance of the company's products, marketing of the company's history, adoption of multichannel marketing Strategies, and market acquisition Strategies through promotions had their p values less than 0.05 and hence were significant predictors of organizational performance of Uchumi supermarket.

Conclusion

The effect of marketing strategy on the organizational performance was examined using ten metrics; aggressive marketing stance of the company's products, development of new products, marketing of new products, marketing of the company's history, adoption of relationship marketing strategy, adoption of multichannel marketing strategies, market acquisition strategies through promotions, market retention strategies through promotions, marketing of the company values such as home-grown, and marketing of the company's service elements.

The means and standard deviations of marketing strategy were examined with a view of gaining more insights into marketing strategy. All the marketing metrics had the respondents on average tending to agree that the specific marketing metric led to organizational performance due to means that lay between 3.5 and 4.5. This is except metrics for aggressive marketing stance of the company's products, marketing of new products, marketing of the company's history, adoption of relationship marketing strategy, and market retention strategies through promotions which had the respondents tending to be uncertain due to means between 2.5 and 3.5. In the context of standard deviations, all the metrics were moderately distributed around the mean due to standard deviations of between 0.5 and 1.0. .

Recommendations managerial practice

Going by the findings of this study fast moving consumer goods retail outlets facing declining performance should least apply marketing turnaround strategies; they have least impact on organizational performance.

Recommendations for further research

This study was only carried out in fast moving consumer retail outlet (Uchumi supermarket). Further studies should be carried focusing in additional sectors such as agricultural, manufacturing, construction, learning institutions for effective comparisons. This would provide for diversity, increasing the statistical relevance due to difference in the background, organizational culture and directions.

From the empirical evidence and conclusions drawn turnaround strategy implementation are becoming popular. Therefore further research can compare the turnaround strategies in two or more selected firms dealing with fast moving goods say Uchumi and Naivas or in five financial institutions say KCB bank, Equity bank, Family, Bank of Africa and Cooperative Bank. This would be used to ensure more accuracy and reliability of data in comparing the results.

Specifically, the study concentrated on the relationships that marketing had on the organizational performance. The study were definitely not exhaustive and further research could be carried out to find out how other turnaround strategies; technological, creativity and innovations turnaround strategies can be applied to change the fortunes of declining financial and retail outlets.

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