Does strategy matter for an enterprise market performance? A theoretical review of marketing strategies and industry life cycle (ILC)

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Abstract

Does marketing strategy matter for enterprise behaviour and, ultimately, for its market performance? Should firm adopt exit strategies in the declining stage of the industry life cycle?. This conceptual study paper seeks to provide an answer for these questions. Different strategy dimensions of marketing strategy have been discussed as well as consequences of a good or bad marketing strategy on enterprise performance. As first result from the different marketing strategy typologies reviewed, the study confirms that marketing strategy predict market performance outcomes for an enterprise. Marketing strategies form a strong foundation for enterprise superior performance in multidimensional ways. As second result, the study argues that enterprises can adopt growth strategies in the declining stage of the industry life cycle. It shows which marketing strategies are appropriate at different industry life cycle stages. As third result, the study unveils that marketing strategies differ from country to country, region to region and from organisation to organisation. Undoubtedly the consequences of customer centric marketing philosophy will be felt by the customers, through general enterprise innovativeness by its employees. This study identifies a theoretical knowledge gap in application of industry life cycle concept in business strategy formulation which other future researchers can fill by carrying out an empirical study as a continuation of this theoretical work.

Key words: Rwanda; Strategy; marketing strategy; market performance; industry life cycle;

JEL Classification Codes: D13; D63; H53; I131; I138; J13;

1.0 Introduction

The strategic imperative of understanding the market in which an enterprise operates in has been a key issue for researchers (Jyoti et al. 2012). This view takes due cognition of the day-to-day business environment which is very dynamic and competitive on one hand and the requirements for a business to gain a competitive advantage and superior performance. Global economy seems not to have completely recovered from the consequences of the global financial crisis. Costs still add up for businesses and consumer, vulnerabilities continue to build and new business models of international character bring many changes on local markets' business behaviour. Under current situation, enterprises need to respond to this opportunity and challenge in an affirmative manner. They need to enhance strength and marketing capacity in order to avoid being eliminated by the market during fierce competition.

Why some businesses adopt exit strategies in their product introduction stage is a contentious issue. It has been observed that many products do not survive their introduction stage. Some soft drink manufacturing enterprises' products in Rwanda for example, Marakujya Juice in 2010, Ingenzi Pineaple Juice in 2016, have not lived to see their first anniversary. This scenario can partly be explained by (Hilda, 2016) who observes that some businesses face marketing challenges to retain customers which result in loss of revenue and consequent closure. Mustapha, (2017) attribute business performance challenges to ineffective marketing strategies that fail in terms of product quality that does not satisfy customer needs, non competitive prices, narrow distribution coverage and inadequate promotion campaign. Graham et al. (2008) observe that many companies have done little more than pay lip service to marketing and to the fundamental marketing principle of making focus on the customer as a strategic priority. Cant et al. (2013) also associate business failure to unprofitable marketing decisions and actions, while Lippitt et al. (1967) unveil capital shortage, weak corporate management and unsuccessful business concept as reasons for first year business failures. The key question for business managers today is why one or a few organizations can thrive, while others in the same industry struggle for survival (Wentland, 2009).

How business enterprises choose to behave in different industry conditions and how industries evolve and how enterprises deal with related issues that arise over time has raised keen interest to prominent strategic management scholars in search of which appropriate strategies (Miles et al., 1993; Klepper, 1996, 1997 and McGaham, 2004). Indeed, (Hilda, 2016) argue that businesses cannot survive their first 5 years if they cannot implement marketing strategies that appeal to their customers. Rationally, and as Aghadavood et al. (2014) put it; every organisation's goal is to meet the needs and wants of the customers.

The understanding and application of industry life cycle concept in the day to day enterprise strategy formulation seems to be more wanting. It's alleged that the way many industries evolve is captured by the product life cycle (Klepper, 1997). Consequently, in view of that, the stages in an industry's life cycle can in general be described by the stages in the product life cycle, which includes *the exploratory stage, growth stage, maturity stage* (Klepper, 1997) *and the declining stage* (McGaham, 2000). Though there is no one way in which all industries evolve the industry life cycle helps to understand how strategies can be adapted to specific stage in an industry and at specific time (Porter, 1980). So to speak the theory has been instrumental in explaining firm behaviour in terms of strategy to adopt. Ordinarily, entrepreneurs have always exhibited pessimistic tendencies when they experience a change in demand for their products due to shift

in customer tastes and preferences. Yet, Murmann et al. (2006) and Harrigan et al. (1983) argue that such phenomena may be a cyclical industry characteristic that is normal. These scholars are optimistic that the declining phase of an industry may offer profitable opportunities. This is quiet contrary to the conventional way of thinking about it for many entrepreneurs. Same scholars also argue that some declining industries age slowly and can yield a high level of profitability for many years. Not much has been explored related to the findings by Harrigan et al. (1983) that *"some firms in declining industries have successfully turned to strategies that they only would have adopted if the industry demand is growing"*. Indeed, considering how fast technology is developing today and how this makes consumer preferences change rapidly, Lilja et al. (2015) believe that the connection between declining industries and growth strategies is an important point that will benefit from further exploration. There are higher chances that entrepreneurial activities within the firm can yield other strategic options than exiting a declining industry (Martin et al. 2004).

The present study intends not to look at survival or exit strategies per se but to explore into the question of which marketing strategy to adopt by enterprises at different levels of industry life cycle. The explanatory power of marketing strategy on market performance seem not to have been well documented or even when it exists it is scanty or even context-specific; so the study wants to theoretically bridge this gap. This is to further reemphasise that, despite the huge sum of money that is being spent on marketing function on yearly basis by firms, quiet limited and scanty information exist about the effects of this practice on firm performance. Enterprises need to adapt their strategies to specific stages of the industry life cycle Porter, (1980). Use of appropriate strategic approaches can enable enterprises to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage and improve their performance and profitability to the optimal level based on organizational competencies (Afzal et al. 2017).

When using marketing as a construct, this study poses the question: does marketing strategy matter for enterprise behaviour and, ultimately, for its market performance? Should firm adopt exit strategies in the declining stage of the industry life cycle?

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical perspectives

2.1.1 Resource-based theory

According to Birger, (1984) a resource is anything which could be thought of as a strength or weakness of a given firm. More formally, a firm's resources at a given time could be defined as those (tangible and intangible) assets which are tied semi permanently to the firm. Examples of resources are: brand names, in-house knowledge of technology, employment of skilled personnel, trade contacts, machinery, efficient procedures, capital, etc. In this study, we will ask the question: 'Do resources lead a firm to a higher market performance Excellency both in short and longer period of time'?

Why firms differ, how they behave, how they chose strategies and how they are managed are among other critical questions in the business arena (Porter, 1991). Initiated in the mid-1980s by Wernerfelt, (1984); Rumelt, (1984) and Barney, (1986) the resource based approach, became dominant in the analysis of sustained competitive advantage. This consequently, shifted the focus of strategy researchers from industry to firm specific affects (Spanos et al. 2001). Resource based

view (RBV) is premised on one principle that firms compete on the basis of their resources and capabilities (Peteraf et al. 2003). It is a tradition for resource based view researchers to look within the enterprise and down to the factor market conditions that the firm must contend with, to search for possible causes of sustainable competitive advantage, keeping a blind eye to all external environmental factors (Peteraf et al. 2003). This inward-looking approach has been influential and useful as a strategic analysis tool in issues of sustained competitive advantage conditions and diversification (Foss et al. 2003).

2.1.2 Market-based theory

From a market-oriented perspective, high performance of an enterprise is guaranteed when customers are satisfied (Kotler, 2003). They become more loyal to the enterprise products and willing to buy in large quantities, pay higher prices and spread the good word to their circles of acquaintances. The performance impact of market orientation is related to an enterprise's narrowing of its business focus and meeting industry standards. This argument has been supported by Wiersema, (1993) emphasising that to achieve a leading position an enterprise must not broaden its business focus.

Many scholars have reemphasised on the benefits of market orientation Miles et al. 1978; Porter, 1980; Porter, 1985) arguing, however, that it requires continuous superior performance of the business. It is too demanding therefore since an enterprise is not operating in a vacuum from other activities and pressure from the business environment (Hooley et al. 2001). Evidence of recent changes in business environment has precipitated the urgency for industries to be more and more market-oriented no matter what it takes. The globalisation effect, fragile shifts in information technology, increased importance of services and relationships across enterprise functions and other outside enterprises producing identical products mean a lot to the whole enterprise architecture. Undoubtedly, in relation to market orientation, both customer and competitor information should be integrated in the strategy formulation (Hunt et al. 1995) at all levels of the enterprise. The same authors try to give a broad scope of market orientation definition thus;

"*(A) a systematic gathering of information on customers and competitors both present and potential, (B) systematic analysis of information for the purpose of developing market knowledge, and (C) systematic use of such knowledge to guide strategy recognition, understanding, creation and selection, implementation and modification"*

The hidden message in this definition is that myopic market perspective leads to success only in relatively short term.

Market orientation is understood differently by different scholars. Noble et al. (2002) adds the dimension of brand focus to the above definition. Ruekert, (1992) excludes the competitors component emphasising only on the extent to which a business unit obtains and uses information from the customer in developing a strategy that meet customer needs.. Despite the varying definition, what is apparent is that market orientation is intangible and cannot be bought from the market. Hunt et al. (1995) posit that it *"is socially complex in its structure, with components that are highly interconnected and has mass efficiencies and effectives that grow in strength in time"*.

Research in strategic marketing specifies that a firm's market orientation is a foundation of competitive advantage because it enables the firm to recognise and respond to market necessities effectively Kirca et al. (2011). Others have tended to come up with a market orientation framework linked to the idea of delivering value to customers (i.e operational excellency,

customer intimacy) as a direct ticket to acheievement of market leadership (Treacy et al.1995). Rationally, when an enterprise executes an operational excellent marketing plan by providing customers with reliable products or services at competitive prices, delivered to places of convenience, customers get excited. Tailoring the offerings to match the exact demands of the market niche also yields customer intimacy. Consistent offering customers with leading-edge products and services also enhance their use and application of the product hence switching from rivals' products. This in a sense leads to product leadership. There is a strong conviction that pursuing a strategy of customer intimacy or product leadership breed customer loyalty for a long term. Achieving this goal is possible only by narrowing of business focus to meet industry standards. This is commensurate with common quotes of the most prominent strategic marketing management scholar Michael Porter thus:*…'strategy delineates a territory in which a company seeks to be unique…….'*. His view emphasises that an enterprises cannot be everything to all.

It has been succinctly proved that enterprises with highest market orientation have been empirically found to perform better (Narver et al. 1990). They emphasise that it does not pay to be "stuck in the middle". Though they see it applicable in long-established technology industries, its application has wide coverage. The superiour market-sensing and customer linking attribute in market-driven organisations is an outside-in marketing capability that Day, (1994) denote to give a high sounding market position. That said, marketing orientation and outside-in marketing capabilities literally reminds us of other related strategic marketing components i.e marketing assets and capabilities. This drives us to yet another question : *To what extent do marketing resources influence market performance*? A reasonable degree of consensus exist among scholars that superior performance in the market place is a function of many interrelated processes. Though resources offer a good explanation for the performance differentials among enterprises, managemenet ability or role in converting those resources into position of competitive advantage is exceedingly paramount (Fahy et al.1999). Marketing resources of an enterprise consist of marketing assets and marketing capabilities. Proctor, (2000) aggregates together marketing assets and marketing capabilities together to include: distribution penetration, marketing expertise, market positioning, market knowledge, customer loyalty, brand name reputation and relationship with distributors.

2.2.1 Marketing concept and Marketing orientation

Society exists with many needs and wants which must be met! Marketing philosophy is premised on this natural order, to identify and understand these needs and wants as a fronted business opportunity. The ultimate goal of marketing is to facilitate exchange so that satisfaction is enhanced for all parties involved (Ibidunni, 2010). Exchange requires two or more individuals or groups that have certain want satisfying products. The understanding of marketing in the essence is customer focus and company image. The retention, maintenance and expansion of the relationships with present customers call for greater customer relationship management approach to ensure that clients are kept as close as ever before. Marketing is the process of value creation and delivery to customers. In line with the marketing concept Narver et al. (1990) note that there must be a business culture that most effectively and efficiently creates the necessary behaviour for the creation of superior value for customers. This kind of behaviour cannot happen in a vacuum. The antecedents of customer-centred philosophy, according to Kohli et al. (1990) are senior management factors, interdepartmental dynamics and organisational structure and systems. This presupposes that in development of an appropriate marketing strategy senior management, departmental dynamics and organisational structure and systems should be taken

care of. The senior management of an enterprise must whole heartedly be willing to increase the level of market orientation because they are strategy developers and they have the power to infuse the marketing orientation concept in the mission statement and strategies of the enterprise. Inter-departmental dynamics represent the interactions and relationships between an enterprise's departments meaning that departments within an enterprise need to be connected so that business intelligence can flow well within and across departments. The structural variables are formalisation, centralisation and departmentalisation. Hall et al. (1967) define *formalisation* as the degree to which rules define roles, authority relationships, communications, norms, sanctions and procedures. The same authors define *departmentalisation* as the number of departments into which an organisation's activities are departmentalised. Aiken et al. (1980) view *centralisation* as the inverse of the amount of delegation of decision making authority in the enterprise and the extent of participation of organisational members in decision making. These discussions all emphasise that internal environment is the principal moderator of a market oriented working culture within an organisation (Nuansate et al. 2013). Since the management and staff are responsible for developing organisational values and culture, they can equally be barriers to existence of a market oriented working atmosphere. Impliedly, if employees choose not to change their systems, processes and work place rules, to align them with changing circumstances, market oriented work behaviour may remain wanting which can be a threat to an organisation's performance.

Literature however, present out scenarios where a market oriented behaviour may not be in want. For example, Day et al. (1988) argue that market orientation is less likely to affect performance in situations where there is a strong demand for an enterprise's products. In a market experiencing scarcity such that products are rationed to customers, a market orientation does not matter at all (Nuansate et al. 2013). It is rationally conceived that market turbulence and competition strengthens the relationship between market centred behaviour while technology turbulence will weaken this relationship (Kohli et al. 1990). This market orientation relevancy or irrelevancy discussion has been essentially related to the level of turbulence. In markets with a higher level of turbulence, firms need a higher level of market orientation in order to perform well (Kumar et al. 2011) and vice versa, where in markets with little changes, the level of market orientation is irrelevant.

A significant amount of literature exists to support the view that the marketing philosophy influences an enterprise performance (Tajeddeni et al. 2006; Dauda et al. 2010; Njeru et al. 2014). The changing market landscape characterised by shifting customer preferences, stiff competition and technological changes, necessitates that an enterprise matures a proactive ability to anticipate opportunities and threats (Achrol et al. 1999). Enterprises require strong sensing of the market and its environmental forces to be able to provide value to the customer better than the competitors. There is a need for strong understanding of market orientation as a way of doing businesses that place the customer at the centre of operations, and align people and structures around the value-creation process. It is a business perspective that makes the customer the focal point of the company's total operation. Graham et al. (2008) write this:

"The successful organisation of the future will be customer-focused, not product or technology focused, supported by a market information competence that links the voice of the customer to all the firm's value delivery processes…….

Successful marketing organisations will have the skills necessary to manage multiple strategic marketing processes, many of which have not, until recently, been regarded as within the domain of marketing"

2.2.2 Marketing capability

Literature tends to show varying positions on the scope of marketing capabilities that enable a business enterprise to deliver services to society. Day, (1994) suggest different marketing capability classification. He established three categories of marketing capabilities that depend on the orientation of the processes in which they are involved. The first category includes the *Inside-out capabilities* that allow companies to offer certain products or services: these capabilities are exercised because of market requirements, competitive changes, and opportunities in the environment. Within this category are activities of production and transformation, logistics, cost control, financial and human resources management, and technological development. In essence, this type of capability corresponds to different functional activities in the company and how they support the marketing function. The second category involve the *outside-in capabilities*, which help organizations to understand their clients; to be the first in anticipating market requirements (market-sensing capabilities such as market research); and to create lasting relations with their customers, suppliers, and distributors (market-bonding capabilities such as customer relationship management). The aim of outside-in capabilities is to connect the internal processes that sustain prior capabilities with the external environment. The third category, are the *spanning capabilities* needed to integrate and connect internal and external processes. Spanning capabilities are based on the analysis or knowledge of both the market and the company's internal functioning; for example, the new product development skill combines information on customer needs with technical capabilities. These capabilities also include customer order fulfilment, pricing, or customer service delivery.

2.2.3 Marketing strategy

Quiet a number of definitions of marketing strategy exist in the literature and such definitions reflect varying perspectives Gbolagade et al. (2013). Goi, (2005) tends to agree with Gronroos, (1999) in defining marketing strategy: as the set of marketing tools that firms use to pursue their marketing objectives in the market. The marketing strategy function is to determine the nature, strength, direction and interaction between the marketing mix- elements and the environmental factors in a particular situation. Yet others have referred to marketing strategies as tactical actions and or marketing assets that influence customer satisfaction attitudes towards the brand loyalty or other customer-centred attributes (part of consumer behaviour) which have practical implications on an enterprise market share and sales (Day, 1994). Marketing activities do influence intermediate outcomes (the thoughts, feelings, knowledge, and ultimately the behaviour of customers), which in turn influence the firm's financial performance. This is to emphasise that the organizational strategies must be coordinated with each other. Appropriate marketing strategy should be considered as a functional strategy in the organization like other functional strategies such as research strategy, human resource development strategy etc to support the overall organisational strategy (Lavai, 2010). Gbolagade et al. (2013) define marketing strategies *"as the means by which a marketing goal is to be achieved usually characterised by a specific target market and a marketing program to achieve it".* The main goals of marketing strategies for business leaders are to fill market needs, grow market share and increase shareholder value (Jemaiyo, 2013). Marketing strategy reflects a company's relationship and interaction with its business environment. It is a

vital prerequisite of enterprise's ability to strengthen its market share and minimise the impact of competition. According to Owomoyela et al. (2013) quoted in Mustapha, (2017) marketing strategy is a way of providing a quality product that satisfies customer needs, offering affordable price and engaging in wider distribution backed up with effective promotion strategy. A marketing strategy of an enterprise is its chosen line of action selected to help it achieve its marketing objectives both in short and long term. It does with systematic selection of activities that provide satisfaction to customers. It's the enterprise managerial judgement for coping with environmental ambiguities and uncertainty involving how to establish, build, defend and maintain its competitive advantage.

Yhi, (2006) warns that it is in fact fatal for enterprise to ignore the importance of the marketing function in its core business architecture. The strategic management aspect of marketing strategy and its focus on organisation performance as a whole rather than on increasing sales and, its operational significance of linking an organisation with the environment, gives it a strategic importance that is far beyond a specialised function. Drucker, (1977) as quoted in Uslay et al. (2008) denote on the key constituents of this function processes: *analysing environmental, market competitive and business factors affecting the corporation and its business units, identifying market opportunities and threats and forecasting future trends in business areas of interest for the enterprise and participating in setting objectives and formulating corporate and business unit strategies.*

Different typologies of marketing strategy exist in the empirical scholarly literature, including the works of Akbar et al. (2017); Chiliya et al. (2006); Hilda, (2016); Jenkins, (2015). Hilda (2016) in her qualitative study on marketing strategies used by franchise small business, found out most frequently used strategies as: personalisation of customer service, marketing segmentation, innovative advertising, networking, brand identity and loyalty programs. Brand awareness, brand equity, product characteristics and positioning, and marketing communications activities are fronted by Jenkins, (2015) after carrying out a qualitative, exploratory and multi-case study on marketing strategies used by small, independent restaurants in US. In a similarly related study on 38 grocery shops, Chiliya et al. (2006) found out that retailers/grocery shops compete on the basis of product differentiation strategy; quality improvement strategy; packaging strategy and place (distribution) strategy. These researchers intended to investigate whether the retailers combine marketing mix principles into a marketing strategy that ensures profitability and customer satisfaction. Despite their adoption of these strategies, same authors conclude that grocery shops in Mdanstane do not display behaviour that could reflect on a high degree of marketing orientation. The fact that these retailers offer discounts to loyal customers was a desperate aim of getting turnover rather than a long term orientation focus on the needs and wants of customers. It became apparent to them that these retailers/grocery shops do not apply the principles of marketing strategy to enhance profitability to a significant degree. Similarly, in their pilot study on the effect of marketing strategy construct on firm performance in Malaysia, Akbar et al. (2017) find out common marketing strategies as: Entrepreneurial strategy, Guerrilla marketing strategy, Relationship marketing strategy, Ambush marketing strategy, Viral marketing strategy and niche marketing strategy.

Marketing strategies do vary from organisation to organisation, brand to brand and from country to country. In order to achieve a satisfactory and adequate marketing strategy which has a positive outcome on overall enterprise success, the marketing department should bear in mind all marketing mix strategies that generally can influence competitive success of an enterprise. From 1964 when Neil Borden coined the term 'marketing mix' to cover the main activities of the firm

as reported in Graham et al. (2017) till today, it has been thought to contribute to marketability of firms' products and services. These main activities of marketing have been classified under famous '4Ps' of marketing: Product, Price, Promotion and Place.

Product

Graham et al. (2017) refer to product as mix of physical, emotional, tangible and intangible elements that go to make up the overall market offer. It is important to always bear in mind that the product is what it does for the customer. Customers do not buy products; they buy what the product can do for them. Products are best viewed as solutions to customers' problems or ways of satisfying customer needs. Customers essentially buy the benefits a product can bring to them, rather than the product itself. There are reasons why customers choose one product over another. In seeking to understand customers' choice criteria it is useful to distinguish two main sets, the rational and overt; and the emotional and covert causes or reasons. The objective reasons for their actions relate to practical benefits of the product, belief about value for money, the availability of the product and perhaps habit. Emotional reasons for example may relate to purchase of branded goods, because of the reassurance that a well-known and respected brand can bring (why else would someone pay thousands of pounds for a watch, such as a Rolex, when a cheap alternative can be as accurate in delivering the overt, rational benefit of telling the time?). This has different marketing implications in terms of strategy formulation! For successful marketing, product differentiation is central – ensuring that the total market offer is different and distinct from competitor offerings in ways that are of value to the target customer. Differentiation concerns in particular relate to ways of tailoring the product to individual customer requirements. This is becoming difficult for many firms especially with the convergence of manufacturing technology, and the widespread application of total quality management (TQM) methods.

Price

Setting prices can be one of the most difficult decisions in marketing. Price too high and customers may not buy, price too low and the organisation may not achieve the profit levels necessary to continue trading or invest in its future. As Graham et al. (2017) notes there are a number of factors needed to be taken into account when setting price levels: Production costs, Economic value to the customer, Competitor price levels, Desired competitive positioning (price charged can be a powerful signal to the market of the quality and reliability of the product), Corporate objectives and Price elasticity of demand i.e considering the extent to which demand will vary at different price level.

Promotion or communication

For many people advertising is synonymous with marketing. In practice, advertising is one (albeit an important one) of the ways in which firms communicate with their customers and prospective customers. The range of communications tools available is increasing as new technologies present new opportunities. According to Graham et al. (2017) AIDA – Awareness → Interest → Desire → Action model is one of the communication models that have been developed. At a very basic level marketing communications set out to create or raise awareness of the market offering among the selected target market (Awareness); once awareness has been created the communication goal changes to creating interest in the market offer where customers are bombarded by many messages every hour of every day and may have an awareness of many products and services (interest); once interest has been stimulated, communications seek to create

desire for the offer ahead of other offers in the market where interest of marketer is on creating desire for this particular brand or offering. Awareness, interest and desire are of little value to a supplier unless they result in purchases or other forms of support i.e communications aimed at taking the customer to the next stage. Creating action, include offers, promotions and deals to stimulate purchase, as well as the use of personal selling. A number of decisions need to be made regarding communications: What message to convey? What communications tools to use? Which media to use? How much to spend on communications? Commonly used communication tools are: Advertising (i.e use of internet, TV, radio, cinema, newspaper, magazines, outdoor etc); Public relations; Sales promotions; Personal selling, Sponsorship and direct marketing.

Place or distribution

Distribution strategy focuses on how products and services will be physically delivered to the customer. According to Graham et al. (2017) the distribution network used or created will depend on a number of factors including whether the final customers are consumers or other businesses. The main choice facing most marketers is whether to sell through intermediaries or direct to customers. Intermediaries, such as wholesalers and retailers, can have a number of advantages. The most significant advantage is that they have direct relationships with customers that may be helpful. The Internet has ushered in a new era facilitating the distribution of bit-based products such as information, music and video.

2.2.4 Industry life cycle and Marketing strategy

What is apparent is that every organisation has a natural and predictable life cycle. Just like trees undergo a specific life cycle (seedlings sprout and mature), a business go through a business life cycle (development, start up, growth, expansion and maturity). Understanding the different stages of the business cycle helps a manager to prepare for the obstacles that the business will need to conquer in order to succeed. Of central importance in developing and implementing a robust marketing strategy is awareness of how the environment in which marketing takes place is changing. Apparently, the behaviour of markets differs from region to region and from country to country. Every firm ideally aspires to operate in attractive markets which are large, growing, with high contribution margins, low competitive intensity and rivalry, with high entry and low exit barriers where it's not vulnerable to uncontrollable events! However competition between firms to serve customers becomes indispensable and it is the very essence of modern, market-led business philosophy in emerging economies! Different market conditions exist and firms' behaviour must align to changing industry conditions. Today's firms' marketing strategy making is arguably linked to Industry life cycle concept. Strategy-making approaches are different arranged on a continuum from formal to informal at times not linked to the stage of industry life cycle. Industry life cycle is one of the prominent theories in the field of strategic management focusing on industry evolution. It was popularized by authors like Dean, (1976) and seeks to explain the different stages that an industry goes through as it ages. The industry life cycle and product life cycle are closely related. The industry life cycle studies how the industry as a whole evolves, while product life cycle is narrower in its focus and only addresses the life cycle of individual products.

The way many industries evolve is captured by product life cycle, hence, as Klepper, (1997) and McGaham, (2000) put it, the stages of an industry's life cycle can in general be described by the stages in the product life cycle: i.e exploratory stage, growth stage, maturity stage and decline stage. The *exploratory stage* exhibits low production volume and the industry is characterized by

product innovation. The industry moves into the *growth stage* as the product evolves and output level takes off. With specific product designs emerging, firm entry gets high which increases competition. The industry experiences a shakeout in the number of competing firms (Agarwal et al. 2002). When competition stabilises and sales growth levels off, the most efficient producers establish their market shares and the industry reaches the *maturity stage*, where the focus to product innovation is switched out in favour of process, research and technology. According to Harrican et al. (1983) the *declining stage* is characterised by unutilised capacity, where the strategies that incumbent firms employ to cope with the decline are highly varied.

Lumpkin et al. (2001) use a relatively similar description. They describe an industry life cycle as having four phases namely: introduction, growth, maturity and decline. There seems however to be no agreement on this conceptualisation, since, Klepper et al. (1990) talk of three industry life cycle stages. In close reference to a study they carried out on 46 new products, they define ***stage one*** of the industry life cycle as the period during which the number of firms grow. During ***stage two*** there is a decline or skakeout in the number of firms, while the number of firms stabalises during ***stage three***. There has been tendencies of combining introduction and growth stage under growth and maturity and decline under maturity mantle for purposes of ease of identification of stages of firms in the industry.

Researchers anonymously agree that firms behave differently during different stages of the industry life cycle. Abernathy et al. (1978) explain the evolution of an industry life cycle in terms of uncertainty about user preferences. They posit that this uncertainty is one that initially produces an influx of firms into the industry producing different variants of the product and that the whole competitive behaviour of firm anchor on innovation. Gradually a dominant design emerges, sparking the beginning of the shake-up stage where producers who cannot produce the dominant design exit the industry. The firms which remain in the industry look into the dominant design, signalling a decline in innovation and an increase in investment in capital intensive production methods which raises barriers to entry and leads to the demise of smaller manufacturers who cannot compete. Klepper, (1996) suggests that firms start to leave an industry when insufficient innovation (research and development investment) puts them in vulnerable position incapable of competing. He for that matter challenges the idea of a dominant design, alleging that innovation attracts only new buyers resulting in market advantage for early industry entrants and increasing entry barriers. During the growth phase innovation peaks and then falls as producers devote increasing effort to process relative to product innovation

Though there is no one way in which all industries evolve the industry life cycle helps to understand how strategies can be adapted to specific stage in an industry and at specific time (Porter, 1980). So to speak the theory has been instrumental in explaining firm behaviour in terms of strategy to adopt. However, some empirical researches have raised concerns on the weaknesses of the theory: it is not possible to unequivocally determine separate stages, it is impossible to determine the exact beginning and end of a stage and it is impossible to determine the length of a separate stage (Hank et al.1993). The industry life cycle stages can differ among countries because the needs of the consumers differ depending on the standard of living. The theory emerged with a major aim of explaining changes undergone by industry enterprises over the time.

Product life cycle according to Raymond, (1966) refers to a product's market life: the complete process from a new product entering the market to being eliminated by the market. It includes

four stages: *Introduction, growth, maturity and decline*. Each stage displays distinctive features in terms of consumer groups, competitors, distributors and profits. As an important concept, Product Life Cycle is directly related to an enterprise's marketing strategy. If an enterprise executes targeted marketing strategies for the four stages of the product's life cycle results will be optimized i.e the product's life cycle is prolonged to the maximum, and eventually create profit greater than cost of product R&D and market promotion (Hong, 2013). He gives a detailed account of marketing strategies which several classic domestic brands used for different stages in their product life cycle, hopefully, to help more domestic enterprises as sources of targeted alternative marketing strategy options for different stages in product life cycle thus:

Marketing strategy during introduction stage

During introduction stage, product uniqueness and establishment of correct business model are of utmost importance. Since it is the initial stage for a product to enter the market, the enterprise is subject to conditions such as technology limitations and high promotion costs. Issues such as incomplete product category, low production output and low market recognition could persist, leading to limited sales, thin profit or even loss.An appropriate marketing strategy could help the enterprise seize market share in a short time before other potential competitors enter the market, thus shortening the introduction stage and lowering market risk. In this stage, enterprises should look at the market from customer's perspective, grasp the real demand in the market and build a complete and effective marketing model.

Marketing strategy during growth stage

When demand and sales of a product accelerate, the Growth stage has arrived. The main focus during this period is to conquer market and strengthen its position. The decreasing production costs and fast growing profit at the same time mean that other competitors start entering the market, fighting for market share. Eventually, price gradually goes down and profit growth slows. In terms of marketing strategy selection, the enterprise should follow the rule of maintaining market growth rate as well as prolonging time period for gaining maximized profit.

Marketing strategy during maturity stage

The market demand reaches saturation in this stage, with fierce competition, slowed sales growth, raising cost of product improvement, after-sale services, and profit drop. A product's maturity stage is again divided into three sub-stages: growing, stabilizing and descending maturity. It concludes the complete process from sales growth slowing, reaching maximum sales, to sales slowly descending. The strategy during this stage should include keeping market share, increasing sales and prolong on-sale time by all means, or innovating on technology to restart the life cycle, in order to maximize sales revenue.

Marketing strategy during decline stage

When sales slip further and profit is extremely low, it means that the product has reached its decline stage. The product cannot meet customers' demand anymore in any aspect such as performance and price, its sales and profit will inevitably decline; eventually production will stop and the product will become history. The guiding principle of market strategy selection in this stage is to treat laggard products effectively. However, it is not necessarily the best choice to stop production immediately, as the enterprise would risk losing clients of its other products by doing so. Prolonging a product's discontinuation period at the right moment allows

the enterprise to receive clients of other similar products sold by competitors who have exited the market, thus maintaining sales and avoiding loss. In addition, it will eventually win customer loyalty, so that more customers would choose more advanced products of the same company.

2.2.5 Growth strategies in the declining stage of the industry life cycle

As referred to in the previous section growth has different indicators. Under normal business situation, many different measures or indicators of growth have been used, including sales levels, profitability, number of employees and market share (Gilbert et al. 2006; Story, 1994; Shepherd et al. 2009). However, growth in a declining stage is a different story.

There is no absolute definition/characteristic of what constitutes a declining industry, however, various synonymous names have been used for declining industries: 'bear markets' and describe 'stalemate industries' signifying industries where technological knowledge is widely spread and where competitive advantages are few and firms rely on price competition (Calori et al. 1988). They refer to declines in the paper, sugar and steel industries as specific examples of this type of industry decline. According to Porter, (1980) short-term discontinuities like material shortages or employee strikes are 'true situation' characteristics of a declining industry. End-game strategies in such situations must be developed by the incumbent to survive.

Other scholars like Schreuder et al., (1990) as quoted in Lilja, (2015) have a specific definition of a decline "*that industries with a drop in the industry value added over a period of at least three years and with a continuous decline count*". Accounting-based definition on account of a four-year return on investment, declining demand, lower marketing efforts, less product innovation and lower research and development expenditure of incumbent firms (Miles et al. 1993; Ghemawat et al.1990; Robinson, 1986) have also been used to define a declining industry. They agree that a declining industry is one that has a shrinking amount of competitors, dwindling unit sales, and less competition based on differentiation. Scholars also agree that when an industry maintains a negative outlook over a long period then it should be classified as a declining industry. Porter maintains that such a situation happens usually without any short term influences as recession or temporary shortage of labour. Despite these negative market characteristics, literature unveils some array of optimistic growth strategies in the declining industry. For example, Faulconbridge et al. (2008) specifies growth strategies that firm can pursue in a declining industry: i.e organic growth, mergers and acquisition and strategic alliance.

Organic Growth strategy

This implies that a company achieves growth by developing its capabilities and resources internally, for example when a company's research and development department develops new technologies or product that provides the company with new growth opportunities. There are both benefits and drawbacks of pursuing organic growth. Factors such as strategic independence and internal knowledge development are perceived as the main advantages of organic growth, whereas slow progress, high risk and high cost are possible disadvantages (Mognetti, 2002).

Mergers and Acquisition (M&A) strategy

These imply that a company seeks growth by acquiring or merging with a company that operate in the same or different industry (Anand et al. 1997). M&A activities offer opportunities to quickly acquire new capabilities, enter new markets and gain financial advantage. These authors

propose that acquisition strategies can be split into two: *asset redeployment* and *asset consolidation*. The former is about redeploying excess resources by acquiring firms in industries with positive growth prospects, while the latter strategy advocates for increasing market share in the declining industry through horizontal acquisitions. Asset consolidation, also known as horizontal acquisition, reduces the number of players in the industry and creates opportunities for high profitability and growth despite the fact that an industry is in decline (Scherer et al. 1990). Anand et al. (1997) supports this notion and claim that consolidation strategies offer superior performance to deployment oriented acquisitions, i.e acquisition of firms in unrelated industries, in declining industries. Same authors found out that asset consolidation strategies perform better in declining industries than in growing markets due to the fact that consolidation within declining industries might offer the opportunity to rationalise capacity and resources. Indeed, Barbero et al. (2012) argue that a growth strategy must take advantage of a firm's resources, capabilities and the external environment in order to establish a competitive advantage. As an alternative strategy, Castaldo et al. (2014) state that rather than acquiring other players in a declining industry using consolidation strategy, a firm can achieve economies of scale in a declining industry through a merger. A merger strategy offers a firm with an alternative solution to redeploy their excess resources and improve a firm's productivity in a declining industry. Similar to the consolidation strategy, a merger gives the merging companies an opportunity to reduce the number of competitors as well as gain the higher market share in a declining industry (Castaldo et al. (2014).

Strategic alliances strategy

Whereas M&A strategies imply that companies are united through change in ownership, a strategic alliance implies that a company pursues growth by sharing resources and capabilities with other companies without change in its ownership (Bernard et al. 2000). Strategic alliances can take many different forms, from simple unilateral contracts such as licensing, to more complex contractually-based arrangements such as technology sharing, as well as pure equity joint ventures, where ownership is a separately incorporated entity is shared by the partner firms (Mowery et al. 1996).

Hybrid modes of growth

Hybrid mode of growth is not organic growth or acquisitive growth, but rather a combination of elements from both (McKelvie et al. 2010). Hybrid modes consist of contractual relationships that bind external actors to the firm at the same time as the firm maintains a certain amount of ownership and control over how any assets are used. Therefore hybrid modes of growth can take several forms such as franchising, licensing, strategic alliance and joint ventures according to the same authors.

In addition to strategies discussed above, Martin et al. (2004) suggest corporate entrepreneurship as an alternative approach to exit strategies. They argue that this process provides a means for corporations to transform and grow their business units. Though it was tested on companies with a great access to resources and therefore not applicable to a vast majority of firms, the approach provides a way for large multi-business corporations to cope with declining industries.

It is proposed that in the declining industries a firm can adopt end-games strategies as porter proposed in his competitive strategy framework. The framework is built upon four strategies that can be employed to cope with declining industry. They range from advocating further investment

in the industry to complete exit. The firm can either take a *leadership* role by aiming to be one of the last operating firms in the industry, *niche* itself into a specific segment within the industry, *harvest* investments by focusing on cash flow, or making a *quick divestment* and exit the industry (Porter, 1980). The framework has been influential in guiding strategy-making in declining industries.

2.2.6 Market performance

No one definition has been used in literature to cover the scope of market performance as a construct. But many scholars have given their views on the concept. For example, Neely, (1998) defines market performance as the ability of an enterprise to achieve its expected objective with greater efficiency and effectiveness than its competitors. Performance has been viewed as an end result of many activities, dealing with market share, sales growth, cost reduction and profitability among others (Otley, 2002). Li et al. (1998) define performance in relation to how well an organisation achieves its market-oriented goals as well as its financial goals using specific indicators: market share, return on investment, growth on market share, growth of sales, growth in return on investment, profit margin on sales and overall competitive position. Company performance has been seen to encompass three specific areas of company outcomes: (a) financial performance related with profits, return on assets, return on investment, etc; (b) product market performance related with sales, market share, etc and (c) shareholder return Richard et al.(2009).

Today market competition for customers, inputs and capital as noted by Singh et al. (2010) make organisational performance essential to the survival and success of the modern businesses. They need to carefully design strategies for success, establish goals, and execute activities by making proper decisions that lead to stated goals. Enterprise market performance is the extent to which an enterprise achieves proposed objectives using resource economically in the face of internal/external environment (stockholders, competitors, society). Taking due cognizance of industry and or enterprise life cycle concept, an enterprise is expected to reap benefits from every development stage and take strategies that suit the current development stage conditions/requirements. What is apparent is that every organisation has a natural and predictable life cycle. Just like trees undergo a specific life cycle (seedlings sprout and mature), a business go through a business life cycle (development, start up, growth, expansion and maturity). Understanding the different stages of the business cycle helps a manager to prepare for the obstacles that the business will need to conquer in order to succeed. However, why some or a few organizations thrive, while others in the same industry struggle for survival (Wentland, 2009) remains a key performance question that manager face today. When using marketing as constructs, this study poses the question: does marketing strategy matter for an enterprise behaviour and, ultimately, for its market performance?

Since the focus of the study is on marketing strategy processes in influencing market performance, an enterprise can confirm market competitive position when its market share, sales, profitability are increasing and most favoured in its operating market niche.

3.0 Empirical Review

3.1 Empirical studies

3.1.1 Marketing strategy and Market performance relationship

For quite a number of reasons including increased competition among local and international companies, informed and demanding customers and technological advances in product design and communication, the operating market enterprises is complex. This has made it strategically imperative for enterprises to have a none challengeable marketing strategy if they are to have a competitive advantage over their rivals and offer services and values that not only meet customer's demand, but surpass them. This study poses the question: does marketing strategy matter for an enterprise behaviour and, ultimately, for its market performance? The study is premised on an assumption that marketing strategy plays an essential role in rising performance levels.

Literature is replete with many empirical studies on marketing strategy-performance relationship. For example, in a study conducted by Gbolagade et al. (2013) among SMEs in Ibadan Nigeria, Marketing strategies (i.e *Product, Promotion, Place, Price, Packaging and After sales service*) were found to significantly and positively influence business performance in terms of profitability, market share, return on investment and expansion. Only 46.5% of variance in business performance was jointly explained by these marketing strategies. The study however found out that promotion has no positive significant effect on business performance especially caused by the negative perception consumers tend to have on heavily promoted products. Also, in a survey of 82 manufacturing companies selected at random in Akure-South local government area, Ondo state, Nigeria, Ogunyemi et al. (2018) observe that there is a positive and significant relationship between the marketing mix strategies and organisational performance of the companies. The study finds out that marketing strategies are effective tools in boosting the sales performance. In this study, contrary to differing opinion by Gbolagade et al. (2013) promotional strategy here was found to have a greatest impact on organisational performance.

Ojoma et al.(2017) also in their study on 2 Soft-drink manufacturing companies in Nigeria confirm that a significant relationship exists between Marketing Strategies and Performance. Their observed regression values showed positive relationship between marketing mix-based strategies (product, pricing, promotion and place) and performance constructs of profitability, return on investment, returns on assets and market share indicating that marketing strategies are significant in achieving effective performance. They conclude that the extent of the performance of any soft drink manufacturing company is determined by the successful development and implementation of its marketing mix policies and strategies. Jenkins, (2015) further in a qualitative and exploratory multiple case study among 3 Small Independent Restaurants in Philadelphia, explored into the question of what marketing strategies these restaurants needed to generate profit and concluded that brand awareness, brand equity, product characteristics and positioning, and marketing communications influence profitability levels of an enterprise. In their review of effectiveness of Marketing Strategies and Performance Marketing in the City of Sanandaj Banks, Afzal et al. (2017) confirm that there is a significant positive relationship between the effectiveness of marketing strategies and Performance. All the components of the effectiveness of marketing strategies and Performance Marketing i.e customer-philosophy, Integrated Marketing Effort, Marketing Information, Strategic orientation, Orientation Efficiency were found to have a significant relationship. Ochieng, (2016) equally portray similar outcomes in his study on how marketing strategies effects on organizational performance. The study results show that marketing strategies collectively accounted for 76.5% of change in performance of media houses in Kenya. His regression model shows that holding all factors (i.e product differentiation strategy, price strategy, promotion strategy and distribution

strategy) constant at zero, organisational performance of media houses would be -0.980. The result is statistically significant at p>0.05 at 0.000. The t-value of constant produced (t=-9.08) significance at 95% level (Sig.F<0.05), thus confirming the strength of the used model. Subramania et al. (2009) in their study on 159 acute care hospitals in U.S find out a positive significant relationship between market orientation and superior performance in the areas of cost containment, growth in revenue, success in retaining patients and success of new services in the surveyed hospitals. Mustapha, (2017) on his study on Marketing Mix Strategy on Performance of Small Scale Businesses in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State Nigeria, gets related similar findings like others presented here up: Marketing strategies (i.e product, price, promotion and place) were significantly independent and joint predictors of business performance. His results show that when quality product is produced by an enterprise, appropriately priced, efficiently distributed, it leads to a higher business performance in terms of profitability, increased market share, customer satisfaction and market expansion. However, just like Gbolagade et al. (2013) the relationship between business performance and promotion was found to be negative but significant (r = -0.030; df = 3, 197; p<.01).

Furthermore, in his empirical survey study of 240 small and medium scale enterprises from two local government districts Akwa, Ibom state, Nigeria, Ebitu, (2016) proves that there is a significant impact of product quality strategy and relationship marketing strategy on the profitability and increased market share. His study acknowledges that an enterprise's business performance especially the market share improves when the entity values and respects customers, give gift packs to loyal customers occasionally and discuss with customers in a bid to get their views on features and quality of products and services. He advises that business should invest so much in product quality rather than in advertisement as this would enhance business profitability. In an attempt to unearth, marketing strategies used by indigenous construction firms (ICFs) in Nigeria, Chukwuemeka, (2017) carried out also a survey among 87 CEOs and managers of ICFs in the six states of the South-South geopolitical zone and identified dominant marketing strategies as: *Third-party-based strategy* (i.e engaging and managing relationships with construction professionals and networking with other firms), *client-based strategy* (focusing on interacting directly with clients and drive towards relational marketing), *firm-based strategy* (emphasising on management and technical capabilities) and *publicity-based strategy* (advertising and promotional activities). Despite the significant differences in adoption or frequency of use of these marketing strategies among low, average and high performer ICFs, third-party-based, client-based, firm-based, and publicity-based strategies explain largely the high performance among ICFs.

Desai, (2013) in regard to marketing strategy-performance relationship, observe that effective marketing strategies strengthen competitive position, improve profitability and performance on long term basis. A reasonable degree of agreement exist among scholars to the effect that overall business performance is influenced by the marketing strategy (Shim et al. 2004).

Clark, (2000) reminds us of the consequences of an ineffective marketing strategy as low profit margin, low return on investment, law return on assets and low market share.

3.1.2 Summary of empirical review and knowledge gap

The empirical review covered a number of studies on marketing strategy and market or business performance relationship, their findings and knowledge gaps which were identified are summarised in the following table:

Table 3.1 Summary of empirical review and knowledge gap

Study	***Focus of the study***	***findings***	***Knowledge gap***
Ogunyemi et al. (2018)	Marketing strategies and organizational performance in the manufacturing industry in Akure-south local government area, Ondo state, Nigeria.	A positive and significant relationship exists between the marketing mix strategies and organisational performance of the companies. Marketing strategies are effective tools in boosting the sales performance	Study limited to manufacturing sector in Nigeria. Performance was measured by sales volume and quality of service only. Industry life cycle-based marketing strategies not studied
Mustapha, (2017)	Effects of Marketing Mix Strategy on Performance of Small Scale Businesses in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State Nigeria	Marketing strategy (product, price, promotion and place,) were significantly independent and joint predictors of business performance. Each one has its unique contribution and impact to the performance of small Businesses.	Study limited to small scale businesses in Borno state Nigeria. Industry life cycle-based marketing strategies not studied
Ojoma et al. (2017)	Impact of Marketing Strategies on the Performance of Soft-Drinks Manufacturing Companies in North-Central, Nigeria	They confirm that a significant relationship exists between Marketing Strategies and Performance.	Study limited to soft drink manufacturing companies in Nigeria Industry life cycle-based marketing strategies not studied
Chukwuemeka, (2017)	Marketing strategies and performance of indigenous construction firms (ICF) in Nigeria	*Third-party-based strategy* (i.e engaging and managing relationships with construction professionals and networking with other firms), *client-based strategy*	Study limited to construction firms in Nigeria Industry life cycle-based marketing strategies not studied

		(focused on interacting directly with clients…… drive towards relational marketing), *firm-based strategy* (management and technical Capabilities) and publicity-*based strategy* (advertising and promotional activities) influence ICF performance levels.	
Afzal et al. (2017)	Reviews about the Effectiveness of Marketing Strategies and Performance Marketing in the City of Sanandaj Banks	There is a significant positive relationship between the effectiveness of marketing strategies And Performance Marketing Banks city of Sanandaj. Customer-philosophy, Integrated Marketing Effort, Marketing Information, Strategic orientation and Orientation Efficiency explain a lot of variations of performance marketing of private banks in Sanandaj city.	Study limited to Banks in Iran Industry life cycle-based marketing strategies not studied
Ochieng, (2016)	Marketing strategies and performance of media houses in Kenya	Marketing strategies have significant effects on organizational performance with a strong positive significance	Study limited to media houses in Kenya Industry life cycle-based marketing strategies not studied
Ebitu, (2016)	Marketing strategies and the performance	There is a significant impact of product	Study limited to SMEs in Akwa Ibom

	of Small and Medium Enterprises in Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria.	quality strategy and relationship marketing strategy on the profitability and increased market share of SMEs in Akwa Ibom State.	state, Nigeria Industry life cycle-based marketing strategies not studied
Adekunle et al. (2015)	Performance Effects of Strategic Marketing Management in the Nigerian Telecoms Industry: Empirical Insight from Globacoms Ltd.	Strategic marketing management has positive impact on the performance of Globacom Limited	Study limited to Telecoms Industry in Nigeria. Industry life cycle-based marketing strategies not studied
Gbolagade et al.(2013)	Impact of Marketing Strategy on Business Performance A Study of Selected Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Oluyole Local Government, Ibadan, Nigeria.	Marketing strategies (*Product, Promotion, Place, Price, Packaging and After sales service*) significantly and positively influence business performance	Study limited to SMEs in Nigeria Industry life cycle-based marketing strategies not studied
Azizi et al. (2009)	The effect of marketing strategy and marketing capability on business performance. Case study: Iran ’ s medical equipment sector	Marketing strategy has a positive relationship with non-financial performance i.e more aggressive / effective marketing strategy will lead to higher non-financial performance. Also high marketing capability leads to better use of marketing tools and the application of creative and novel marketing plans and ideas (marketing capability has positive relationship with overall performance).	Study limited to medical equipment industry in Iran Industry life cycle-based marketing strategies not studied

Source: Empirical Literature Review (2019).

4.0 Summary and Conclusion

4.1 Summary

Market performance has been defined as the ability of an enterprise to achieve its expected objective with greater efficiency and effectiveness than its competitors Neely, (1998). This theoretical study was construed to answer two questions: does marketing strategy matter for enterprise behaviour and, ultimately, for its market performance? Should firm adopt exit strategies in the declining stage of the industry life cycle? Quiet a number of empirical studies reviewed confirm that a strong and significant relationship exist between an enterprise marketing strategy and its performance (Ogunyemi et al. 2018; Mustapha, 2017; Ojoma et al. 2017; Chukwuemeka, 2017; Afzal et al. 2017; Ochieng, 2016; Ebitu, 2016; Adekunle et al. 2015; Gbolagade et al. 2013; Azizi et al. 2009). Different business entities observably, compete on the basis of different things implying that marketing strategies vary form organisation to organisation, country to country and from region to region. The review of these empirical works manifest different typologies of marketing strategies including: Personalisation of Customer Service, Marketing Segmentation, Innovative Advertising, Networking, Brand Identity and Loyalty Programs, Brand awareness, Brand Equity, Price, Product Characteristics and Positioning, Marketing Communications/promotion, Product Differentiation, Quality Improvements, Packaging, Place (Distribution), Entrepreneurial Strategy, Guerrilla Marketing Strategy, Relationship Marketing Strategy, Ambush Marketing Strategy, Viral Marketing Strategy, Niche Marketing Strategy, Third-Party-Based Strategy; Client-Based Strategy; Firm-Based Strategy, Publicity-Based Strategy, Customer-Philosophy, Integrated Marketing Effort, Marketing Information, Strategic Orientation, Orientation Efficiency, Packaging and after sales service. From the perspective of reviewed works these strategies offer explanation to performance variations in terms of customer loyalty, market share, sales, profitability, return on investment, and return on assets. Overall, it may be concluded that most of the marketing strategy-performance studies reviewed seem to have found a moderately positive correspondence. Though their correlations identified have varied among studies, the t-values were in a normal range and therefore provides a reasonable basis to confirm that marketing strategy matter for enterprise behaviour and ultimately, for, its market performance, we have to take due cognition of the extent to which correlation tests depend on the context goals of the evaluation and the motivation of researchers.

On the second part of the study objectives, emphasis on exit-strategies during declining stages of the industry is overtly wrong. The fact that declining industry may not be doomed to perish is seemingly neglected by some researchers. There are possibilities for an industry experiencing a change in demand when superior technology is introduced (Porter, 1980). Due to pessimism some entrepreneurs have neglected the possibility for other strategic alternatives available during this time, such as growth, which may be important due to an industry's potential cyclicality (Martin et al. 2004). Faulconbridge et al. (2008) specify growth strategies that firm can pursue in a declining industry: i.e organic growth, mergers and acquisition and strategic alliance. Other authors like Harrigan et al. (1983) see normalcy in technological changes and variations in consumer needs which cause industry to decline. They are optimistic that the declining phase of an industry may offer profitable opportunities which are quiet contrary to the conventional way of thinking about it for many entrepreneurs. They also argue that some declining industries age slowly and can yield a high level of profitability for many years. Indeed, considering how fast technology is developing today and how this makes consumer preferences change rapidly, Lilja

et al. (2015) argue that the connection between declining industries and growth strategies is an important decision component that would benefit entrepreneurs. There are higher chances that entrepreneurial activities within the firm can yield other strategic options than exiting a declining industry (Martin et al. 2004).

In line with the marketing concept Narver et al. (1990) note that there must be a business culture that most effectively and efficiently creates the necessary behaviour for the creation of superior value for customers. Marketing managers should put attention to determinants of a market-oriented business culture internally within the enterprise i.e senior management factors, interdepartmental dynamics and organisational structure and systems. The more the market orientation levels increases, the more the enterprise proactive abilities to manage change increases also. It is argued that market orientation is more relevant in markets with a higher level of turbulence (Kumar et al. 2011).

4.2 Conclusion and future research

In light of the view that customers in the market place today have become more educated about their needs, wants and rights and the proliferation of product information, to gain a competitive advantage and superior performance, requires an enterprise to have a clear and near-perfect understanding of the market (Maydeu-Olivares et al. 2003). There is a growing consensus among scholars that a business which adopts a market-oriented strategy performs better in terms of their relationship with customers and this enhances sales, market share and profits (Morgan et al. 1994).

The paper looked at growth strategies in declining industry, future research can look into causes of a declining industry. Understanding empirical antecedents of market-orientation philosophy within the firm would also be informative. These are pertinent for a desired level of market orientation behaviour to exist within the enterprise, the cause for realising performance outcomes i.e sales, market share and profits.

As Hong, (2013) notes, buyer’s market today is almost saturated of all kinds of goods, where the life cycle of the products shrinks day by day, and new products replace old ones faster and faster. He advises therefore that enterprises come up with proven effective method(s) to design and execute their specific marketing strategies based on Product Life Cycle Theory.

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