

MARKETING STRATEGIES AND CONSUMERS' SATISFACTION OF CEMENT PRODUCTS IN CALABAR, NIGERIA

Ezekiel Tom Ebitu

Department of Marketing, University of Calabar, P.M.B. 1115, Cross Rivers State, Nigeria

Phone: +2348039451333 e-mail:sntap27472yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: *The essence of every marketing activity is to attract customers and increase their desires for specific product or service. Thus organizations pursue consumers' satisfaction with large amount of resources but to what extent has United Cement Company Limited met this objective in Calabar. This study thus, evaluated the effect of United Cement marketing strategies on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar. To this end, the survey research design was adopted. The respondents consisting of customers and staff of United Cement Company Limited, Calabar were drawn using convenience and random sampling techniques respectively. Primary data were collected through the use of structured research questionnaire, and were analysed statistically using analysis of variance, a regression analysis technique. The results of the analysis revealed that United Cement Company marketing strategies have significant positive impact on cement consumers' satisfaction in Calabar. It was therefore recommended that UniCem should retain its current marketing strategies in Calabar because they have positive influences on consumers' satisfaction. Also, that UniCem should evolve other marketing strategies such as total quality management to maintain its cement quality, give discounts to create and sustain customers' loyalty and create customers friendly outlets to directly keep in touch with many small customers.*

KEYWORDS: Marketing Strategies, Marketing Mix Strategy, Market Development And Expansion Strategy, Innovation Strategy, Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy, Consumers' Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Consumers' satisfaction is the perceived fulfillment of consumers' desires after utilizing a company's product. Such satisfaction may be measured by degree of direct survey. Consumer's satisfaction is so important that many organizations allocate large portion of their resources to pursue this objective. One of the ways to achieve consumer's satisfaction is through effective marketing strategies which are developed around the identification of consumers' expectations using such dimensions as product, price, place, promotion along with organization's distinctive competence (Shaw, 2012). Virtually everything the marketers do is done with the ultimate aim of getting or attracting the potential consumers.

Marketers are eager to know what these expectations are in order to satisfy them adequately. They allocate huge amount of resources on strategies toward consumers' satisfaction in order to attract, retain and sustain consumers' loyalty and increase demands for their products. Whether cement consumers' expectations are met in view of the marketing activities of United Cement Company Limited in Calabar was the focus of this study. United Cement

Company Limited has over the years evolved different marketing strategies including the traditional marketing mix (product branding and improvement, pricing and price adjustment, placing, packaging and promotion), market segmentation and penetration, product innovation and distribution, total quality management, market development and expansion, company growth and corporate social responsibility among others. All these strategies were developed to satisfy the consumers and thereby increase sales and profit. But are these objectives met, how, and to what extent?

The level and direction of consumers' satisfaction may be determined by the extent organization effectively utilize their resources to achieve this objective, in this regard, how has United Cement Company Limited effectively allocated its resources towards consumers' satisfaction, and to what extent are the consumers satisfied? These are the crucial issues that this study was set-forth to examine. To this end the following hypotheses were tested

- H₁: Cement marketing strategies of United Cement Company have no significant impact on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar.
- H₂: Cement marketing mix strategy of United Cement Company has no significant effect on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar.
- H₃: Market development and expansion strategy of United Cement Company has no significant effect on cement consumers' satisfaction in Calabar.
- H₄: Cement innovation strategy of United Cement Company has no significant effect on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar.
- H₅: Corporate social responsibility strategy of United Cement Company has no significant impact on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Anderson's (2007) explanation on the "Assimilation approach to consistency theory" established a cognitive comparison between expectations about a product and its perceived performance. According to Mattila and O'Neill (2008), consumers seek to avoid dissonance by adjusting perception about a given product to bring it in line with its expectations. Consumers can reduce the tension resulting from a discrepancy between expectations and product's performance either by distorting expectations so that they coincide with perceived product's performance or by raising the level of satisfaction by minimizing the relative importance of the disconfirmation experienced.

Thus, the approach assumes that for every product or service consumed, there is an expected as well as actual level of satisfaction. That there is a relationship between expected and actual satisfaction, and that consumers are motivated to adjust either expected or perceived performance of a product. Payton (2003) criticized the approach as lacking in explanation on how disconfirmation of an expectation leads to either satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Also, a number of researchers have found that controlling for actual product performance can lead to a positive relationship between expectation and satisfaction (Youjae, 2010). Therefore, it

would appear that dissatisfaction could never occur unless the evaluation processes were to begin with negative consumer's expectation which is often not the case.

Concept of marketing strategy and consumer's satisfaction

Strategy is an action plan or a set of plans intended to achieve specific goals or objectives over a period of time. Marketing strategy is action plan on how an organization intends to achieve its marketing objectives. Shaw (2012) explained that strategy is a broad statement of the way which an organization sets out to accomplish its objectives. Marketing strategy is therefore a process of strategically analyzing environmental competitiveness and business factors affecting business units, and forecasting functional trends in business areas of interest to the enterprise (Scrizzi, 2007). Aaker (2008) defined marketing strategy as a process that can allow organization to concentrate resources on optimal opportunities with goals of increasing sales and achieving sustainable competitive advantage. Based on the foregoing statement, it can therefore be said that marketing strategy is an organisation's strategy that combines all of its marketing goals into one comprehensive plan. It involves participating in selling business objectives and formulating corporate and business unit strategies.

Marketing strategy involves all basic and long term marketing activities of an organization including strategic direction of the organization, formulation, evaluation and selection of market-oriented strategies that therefore contribute to the goals of the organization and its marketing objectives, which is to satisfy consumers profitably. The ultimate objective of any marketing strategy is consumer's satisfaction without which no organization can meet its goals.

Consumer satisfaction is the overall impression of consumer about suppliers and their products or services. Youjae (2010) defined consumer satisfaction as a measure of how products and services supplied by a company meets or surpasses customer's expectation. Consumer satisfaction is a key performance indicator. It shows how prudent a company has used its business unit strategies. In a competitive marketplace where business organisations compete for customers, consumer satisfaction is seen as a key differentiator and increasingly has become a key element of business strategy. Consumer satisfaction provides leading indicator of consumers purchase intention and loyalty (Dow, Alexander, Ofir & Jeff, 2006). The central focus of consumer satisfaction on the part of the supplier is to narrow the gap between consumers' expectations and perceived performances of the product or service. Farris, Neil, Philip and David (2010) explained that consumer satisfaction is a central concept in modern marketing thought and practice. The concept emphasizes delivering satisfaction to consumers and obtaining profits in return. Thus, consumer satisfaction is crucial to meeting various needs of consumers, business and society.

For any organization, marketing strategies are designed and developed to help the organization meet its objectives. However, if the objectives are to be met, consumer satisfaction must be taken seriously. It is for this reason that marketing strategies are evolved as means to consumers' satisfaction. It should be clarified that marketing strategy is quite different from organisation's corporate strategy. Corporate strategy consists of top

management action in deciding the scope and purpose of the business, its objectives, actions and resources necessary to achieve the objectives (Ekinici, 2008). Marketing strategy is a narrow construct of corporate strategy. It deals basically with how company competes in a given business environment and position itself among competitors.

Types of marketing strategies

Different organisations have different marketing strategies, which they designed, developed and implemented based on their unique environment. In effect, there are more marketing strategies than appear in literature. However, the following are some of the common marketing strategies:

Market dominance strategy

Market dominance strategy strives to put an organization's product or service at the top of other products or services. According to Preston (2012), this strategy is used by organisations to dominate the market. Organisations develop and implement dominance strategy to lead the market or to challenge the market leader with the intention to dominate the leader. Thus, within this strategy, organisations are categorized according to their market share. Kurtz (2012) listed companies in this category into four specific areas including leader, followers, challenger and nicher. Accordingly, a leading company controls the largest share of the market of a specific product or service. In Ehow (2013), such company's market objectives include expanding the overall market, protecting the current market position and increasing market share. A market follower on the other hand attempts to imitate products that have the highest market share (Preston, 2012). Market challenger implement tactics aimed at attacking the market leader and other followers. In a survey of 25 companies in Indonesia, Zila (2012) found that firms that were classified as market challengers were very aggressive. They target on condition for success such as the vulnerability of the market leaders, and pierce through them from dissatisfied customers to technology shift, and attack them along all parts of their marketing mix. They concentrate on the weakness of the companies they attack. Market challengers may sometimes uncover market needs not served by the leader or identify shift in the market segment.

In Preston (2012) opinion, a firm that adopts market challenging strategy employs offensive marketing strategy while the leader deploys defensive marketing tactic. An offensive marketer may attack opponents rather than its weakness, they match opponents' adverts, price, product, quality and segment – front attack aggressively. They may penetrate into areas where the products of the opponents have not made the right impact – flank attack. They may even bypass competitors through diversification into unrelated products. According to Zila (2012), bypass strategy is the most indirect assault strategy of a market challenger.

While the market challenger may be busy strategizing on how to takeover market share and dominate the market, the market leader concentrates strength using its resources to build an impregnable fortification round its market share. It may even stretch its dominance to new territories through brand proliferation, diversification, customer service and good corporate

image through corporate social responsibilities (Aaker, 2008). Companies that fall within market niche strategy according to Anyanwu (1999) are small firms without the requisite skills and resources to compete on equal level with either market leaders or followers. Niche companies identify small market segment which they can satisfy profitably without confronting competitors (Aaker, 2008). Market nichers are likely to engage in lot of research and development in order to discover gaps in the ways opponents allocate resources to satisfy the customers.

Marketing mix strategy

Marketing mix strategy is a planned mix of the controllable elements of a product's marketing plan commonly termed 4ps – product, price, place and promotion. Chai (2009) explained that marketing mix was offered by McCarthy in 1964 as a conceptual framework that identifies the principal decisions making managers make in configuring their products or services to satisfy consumers' needs. The tools are used to develop long term strategies and short term tactical programmes. Popvic (2006) proposed that a firm adopting marketing mix strategy must create a mix of right product at the right place and sold at the right price using suitable promotions. According to Moller (2006), the definition or justification of 'right' is viewed in the customers' responses to the product or service. To create the right mix therefore, firms have to meet the following conditions according to Popovic (2006): The product has to have the right features, the price must be right, the goods must be at the right place at the right time, and the target group needs to be made aware of the existence of the product through promotions.

The marketing mix strategy of United Cement embraced the 4ps and even more, that is, it integrates 4c (customer solution, cost to the customer, convenience and communication). The reason is to convert product into customers' solution, price into cost to the customer, place into convenience and promotion into communication to make the strategy more customer focused.

Innovative marketing strategy

Innovative marketing strategy is utilized to keep organization on cutting-edge technology and new business practices. Boley (2011) defined innovative marketing strategy as action plan made by an organization to encourage advancement in technology or services by investing in research and development. In Chesbrough and Appleyard (2007), innovative strategies – pioneers early and late followers. United Cement has over the years engaged in both product and market innovation, increasing the interior and exterior quality of UniCem cement. While improving on the performance of their product, they are expanding their market through research and development. Today, innovative strategy includes direct mail campaigns, editorial write-ups in newspapers, third party newsletters and out-of-home advertising (Chesbrough&Appleyard, 2007).

Market development and expansion strategies

Market development and expansion strategies correspond to what is known in literature as growth strategy. The strategy is centered round company's growth. According to Boyle

(2011), it focused on increasing sales in existing market by targeting loyal customers. Information gathered from loyal customers' buying history can help to determine ways in which firms can drive market expansion or growth. Four categories of market expansion strategies have been identified in Anyanwu (1999) and they include horizontal, vertical integration, diversification and intensification growth strategies. The horizontal integration strives to increase market power, reduce cost of trade, share product resources, and sell more of the same product. Vertical integration helps to reduce transportation costs, grasp upstream and downstream profit margins, and access downstream distribution channels. Diversification consists of internal development of new products, firm acquisition, partnership and new product licensing. Intensification growth strategy penetrates the market to increase customers' loyalty, and creates promising incentives that targets the current customer-based.

Corporate social responsibility strategy

Corporate social responsibility strategy is one of the key marketing strategies of United Cement Company Ltd. The company uses this strategy to strategically build good corporate image for itself. Over the years, the firm has accomplished giant strides in its corporate social responsibilities performances especially in its host communities in Calabar. Babalola (2012) defined corporate social responsibilities of firms as market strategy deliberately adopted by firms to promote their image by selling themselves to customers, host communities and staff (stakeholders) through execution of viable projects that do not directly add to profit. Some writers argued that performing corporate responsibilities amount to distributing firm's profits among non-stakeholders but plethora of researchers have found that effective corporate social responsibility performance is a veritable tool for corporate performance (Ndifon, Echua & Nkang, 2007).

Impact of marketing strategies on consumers' satisfaction

The marketing strategies a firm adopts have correlation with customers' satisfaction, studies have revealed (Shaw, 2012). However, the direction of the satisfaction depends on how effective the firm has utilized the strategies. Customer satisfaction is the overall essence of the impression about the supplier by the customers. This impression which a customer makes regarding supplier is the sum total of all the processes the customer goes through communicating the supplier before doing any marketing, product manufacturing, quality of products and services and responses to customers' complaints and queries to post delivery services. It therefore behooves on the supplier or marketing firms to choose their strategies carefully so as attract the customers rather than scare them.

According to Homburg, Sabine and Harley (2009), a well developed and implemented market strategy may result in additional revenue to the organization. If this has to be, it must create customer satisfaction. Therefore, the extent of customer satisfaction for any product or service depends on the proper use of organization's strategies (Anderson, 2007).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey research design which led to the utilization of structured questionnaire that provided primary data which were analyzed statistically. The study was carried out in Calabar and its environs consisting of Calabar Municipal, Calabar South, Odukpani and Akamkpa local government areas. The population of the study amounted to 714,591. This population is a superset of the total number of staff and consumers of United Cement Company in Calabar. However, the sampling techniques adopted in this study were random sampling and convenience sampling. The random technique was applied to the staff population of United Cement while convenience was applied to select a sample of United Cement distributors in Calabar. The number of workers of United Cement as at the time of this survey was 287 out of which 167 workers were randomly selected using Taro Yamane approach. We used convenience sampling method to select the 15 distributors because the distributors are scattered all over Nigeria. The total sample size of the study was 182 consisting of 167 UniCem workers and 15 UniCem distributors.

Data used in this investigation were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. While, validity and reliability of the research instrument were carried out, it was discovered that the result of our test-retest reliability revealed correlation coefficient ranging from 0.74 to 0.89. The data collected were screened, sorted and presented in tables. The ordinary least square regression and analysis of variance were adopted as data analysis technique. The technique was considered appropriate because it sought to establish relationship between the regression parameters – marketing strategies and United Cement consumers' satisfaction.

The technique was capable of assessing whether there exists relationship between the explanatory and response variables, the effect and extent of the relationship as well as provides general description of the data structure. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is suitable in regression analysis requiring various test of significance, and evaluation of whether the test of significance can be attributable to chance. Thus, while the ANOVA compared means between and within groups, the regression element has the potential for predicting changes in the dependent variable (consumer satisfaction) occasioned by changes in the independent variable (marketing strategies).

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Presentation of data

One hundred and eighty-two (182) copies of research questionnaire were distributed to the sampled respondents, out of which 179 copies of the research instrument were completed, returned and used accordingly. Item 1 in table 4.1 below presents the respondents' responses to the extent United Cement marketing strategies have positively impacted on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar. The data shows that 62 respondents representing 34.64 per cent ticked very significant extent, 81 (45.25 percent) ticked significant extent, 19 (10.61 percent) ticked less significant extent while 17 (9.5 percent) expressed their opinion by ticking very less significant extent. The distribution revealed that 143 (about 80 percent) respondents out

of 179 indicated that UniCem marketing strategies have significant positive impact on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar. This huge affirmation may be as a result of the respondents understanding of the marketing strategies of United Cement Company in Calabar market.

Item 2, above shows respondents' responses to the extent United Cement marketing mix strategy has positively affected consumers' satisfaction in Calabar. The data shows that 46 respondents ticked very significant extent, 102 respondents ticked significant extent, 17 respondents ticked less significant extent while 14 respondents ticked very less significant extent. Based on the views expressed by the respondents, it is likely that United Cement marketing mix strategy to a significant extent affects consumers' satisfaction positively. This decision or opinion may have been influenced by the price and packaging of UniCem product which customers described as satisfactory.

TABLE 4.1: Marketing Strategies and Customer Satisfaction

QUESTION	Very significant extent	Significant extent	Less significant extent	Very less significant extent	Total
1. Analysis of frequency of customers' complaints over United Cement Company's product in Calabar	62 34.6%	81 45.25%	19 10.61%	17 9.50%	179 100%
2. Analysis of the effect of United Cement marketing mix strategy on consumers' satisfaction	46 25.70%	102 56.99%	17 9.50%	14 7.81%	179 100%
Analysis of the extent to which United Cement market development and expansion strategy has positively affected consumers' satisfaction in Calabar	53 29.61%	86 48.04%	25 13.97%	15 8.38%	179 100%
3. Analysis of the effect of extent to which United Cement product innovation strategy has positively affected consumers' satisfaction in Calabar	68 37.99%	83 46.37%	21 11.73%	7 3.91%	179 100%
4. Analysis of the extent to which United Cement corporate social responsibility strategy has positively impacted on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar	63 35.20%	89 49.72%	16 8.94%	11 6.14%	179 100%

Source: Field survey, 2013

Item 3, presents research data on the extent to which United Cement market development and expansion strategy has positively affected customers' satisfaction in Calabar. The data shows that 53 respondents ticked very significant extent, 86 (48.04 percent) respondents ticked significant extent, 25 (13.97 percent) respondents ticked less significant extent while 15 (8.38 percent) respondents indicated very less significant extent. From the foregoing, it can be seen that about 77 per cent of respondents are of the opinion that market development and expansion strategy of United Cement has significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction against 23 per cent that indicated otherwise. This distribution is indicative of acceptance of UniCem market development and expansion strategy by customers though few have expressed fear that expanding the market may lead to reduction in product quality since demand may stretch production capacity.

Item 4 in table 4.1 above presents respondents' data on the extent United Cement product innovation strategy has positively affected consumers' satisfaction in Calabar. The presentation shows that 68 (37.99 percent) respondents ticked very significant extent, 83 (46.37 percent) respondents ticked significant extent, 21 (11.73 percent) respondents ticked less significant extent, and seven respondents ticked very less significant extent. The distribution revealed that United Cement customers are satisfied with the company's product innovation strategy as indicated by 84 per cent of the respondents. This is surprising as UniCem has taken time to differentiate its product that now wears new look.

Item 5, above present respondents' responses on the extent United Cement corporate social responsibility strategy has positively impacted on consumers' satisfaction. The data shows that 63 respondents representing 35.20 per cent ticked very significant extent, 89 (49.72 percent) respondents ticked significant extent while 16 and 11 respondents ticked less significant and very less significant extent respectively. The distribution revealed that large number of respondents is satisfied with the level of UniCem corporate social responsibility which is one of the main marketing strategies of the company. The massive affirmation from respondent is not surprising because the company has engaged in provision of several social and basic infrastructures in its host communities as part of its marketing strategies.

Test of hypotheses

Each hypothesis was restated in both the null and alternate forms, and their variables identified. Then the analysis of variance statistical technique was employed to test the hypotheses, and the results analyzed. The decision rule was to accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate if the calculated f-value is less than the critical f-value at 0.05 significance level and vice versa.

Hypothesis one

- H₀: Cement marketing strategies of United Cement Company have no significant positive impact on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar.
- H₁: Cement marketing strategies of United Cement Company have significant positive impact on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar.

Data computed on item 1 were used to test hypothesis one. Analysis of variance was used to test the hypothesis. Below are the parameter estimates of the computation:

Source of variance	Sum of square	DF	Mean of square
F_{cal}			
Between groups	126.42	1	126.42
11.05			
Within groups	2024.06	178	11.44
Total	2350.48	179	
Significant $p < 0.05$;	$df_1 = 1$	$df_2 = 178$	$F_{crit.} = 6.64$

Source: SPSS output

From the above analysis, it can be seen that the calculated f-value of 11.05 is significantly greater than the critical f-value of 6.64 needed for significance at 0.05 alpha level with $df_1 = 1$ and $df_2 = 178$. With this result, the null hypothesis which stated that Cement marketing strategies of United Cement Company have no significant positive impact on consumers' satisfaction was rejected. Consequently, the alternate hypothesis was accepted and conclusion reached that United Cement marketing strategies have significant positive impact on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar.

Hypothesis two

H_0 : Cement marketing mix strategy of United Cement Company has no significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar

H_1 : Cement marketing mix strategy of United Cement Company has significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar

Data computed on item 2 were used to test hypothesis two. Below are the parameter estimates of the computation:

Source of variance	Sum of square	DF	Mean of square
F_{cal}			
Between groups	201.74	1	201.74
11.94			
Within groups	3006.19	178	16.89
Total	3207.93	179	
Significant $p < 0.05$;	$df_1 = 1$	$df_2 = 178$	$F_{crit.} = 6.64$

Source: SPSS output

From the presentation above, it can be observed that the calculated f-value of 11.94 is higher than the critical f-value of 6.64 at 1 and 178 degrees of freedom and 0.05 significant level. Since the calculated f-value is greater than the critical f-value, the null hypothesis which stated that cement marketing strategy of United Cement Company has no significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted and conclusion reached that United Cement marketing mix strategy has significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar.

Hypothesis three

H₀: Cement market development and expansion strategy of United Cement Company has no significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar

H₁: Cement market development and expansion strategy of United Cement Company has significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar

Data computed on item 3 were used to test hypothesis three. The SPSS result of the test showed the following estimates:

Source of variance	Sum of square	DF	Mean of square
F_{cal}			
Between groups	142.54	1	142.54
7.42			
Within groups	3421.67	178	19.22
Total	3564.21	179	
Significant $p < 0.05$;	$df_1 = 1$	$df_2 = 178$	$F_{crit.} = 6.64$

Source: SPSS output

From the analysis shown above, the calculated f-ratio was 7.42 against the critical f-value of 6.64 at $df_1 = 1$ and $df_2 = 178$ and 0.05 significant level. Since the calculated f-value is higher than the critical f-value, null hypothesis which stated that United Cement Company market development and expansion strategy has no significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted and conclusion reached that United Cement market development and expansion strategy has significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar.

Hypothesis four

H₀: Cement innovation strategy of United Cement Company has no significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar

H₁: Cement innovation strategy of United Cement Company has significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar

Data computed on item 4 were used to test hypothesis three. The SPSS result of the test showed the following estimates:

Source of variance	Sum of square	DF	Mean of square
F_{cal}			
Between groups	163.07	1	163.07
13.59			
Within groups	2135.82	178	12.0
Total	2298.89	179	
Significant $p < 0.05$;	$df_1 = 1$	$df_2 = 178$	$F_{crit.} = 6.64$

Source: SPSS output

The test of hypothesis four revealed a calculated f-ratio was 13.59 against the critical f-value of 6.64 at $df_1 = 1$ and $df_2 = 178$ and 0.05 significant level. Since the critical f-value is less

than the calculated f-value, null hypothesis which stated that cement innovation strategy of United Cement Company has no significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted and conclusion reached that cement innovation strategy of United Cement has significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar.

Hypothesis five

H₀: Corporate social responsibility strategy of United Cement Company has no significant positive impact on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar

H₁: Corporate social responsibility strategy of United Cement Company has significant positive impact on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar

Data computed on item 5 were used to test hypothesis three. The SPSS result of the test showed the following estimates:

Source of variance	Sum of square	DF	Mean of square
F_{cal}			
Between groups 1.37	118.90	1	118.90
Within groups	1861.44	178	10.46
Total	1980.34	179	
Significant $p < 0.05$;	$df_1 = 1$	$df_2 = 178$	$F_{crit.} = 6.64$

Source: SPSS output

From the estimates above, it can be seen that the calculated f-value was 11.37 greater than the critical f-value of 6.64 at $df_1 = 1$ and $df_2 = 178$ and 0.05 significant level. Since the calculated f-value is greater than the critical f-value, null hypothesis which stated that corporate social responsibility strategy of United Cement Company has no significant positive impact on consumers' satisfaction was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted and conclusion reached that corporate social responsibility strategy of United Cement has significant positive impact on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Based on the data computed on item 1 in table 4.1 and the test of hypothesis one, the critical f-value of 6.64 was significantly less than the calculated f-value of 11.05. This led to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis at the expense of the null hypothesis. Consequently, it was concluded that cement marketing strategies of United Cement Company Limited have significant positive impact on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar. A plethora of studies into consumers' satisfaction have shown that carefully designed and implemented marketing strategies have significant influences on consumers' satisfaction (Shaw, 2012). From the data computation on item 2 in table 4.1 and the test of hypothesis two thereof, the calculated f-value was significantly greater than the critical table value of 6.64. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative hypothesis and conclusion reached that United Cement marketing mix strategy has significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction in

Calabar. In fact, the computation showed a significant deviation in favour of United Cement marketing mix on consumers' satisfaction. It therefore implies that United Cement has successfully used its marketing mix strategy effectively as indicated in the rate of acceptance of the respondents. This finding did not deviate from the finding of Kurtz (2012) and Popovic (2006) that right product at the right place and sold at the right price using the most suitable promotion is the key to consumers' satisfaction.

Data computed on item 3 in table 4.1 and test of hypothesis three revealed a calculated f-value of 7.42 compare to the critical f-value of 6.64. Though the gap of significant was close, it was significance enough to reject the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative hypothesis. It was therefore found that United Cement Company market development and expansion strategy has significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar. It is necessary to clarify that market development and expansion strategy of UniCem was not just expansion into new market but even the development of new segment in the existing market and satisfying them with improved products quality. The finding that market development and expansion strategy of UniCem has positive effect on consumers' satisfaction supports Boyle (2011) finding that customers are satisfied to see the company they associate with grow and expand. In Chesbrough and Appleyard (2007), company growth translates to improved products and services delivery.

The test of hypothesis four from data presented on item 4 in table 4.1 revealed a calculated f-ratio of 13.59 against 6.64 critical f-values. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, and consequently the adoption of the alternate hypothesis. It was therefore found that United Cement product innovation strategy has significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar. This finding shows empirical evidence in support of UniCem product innovation. The respondents were aware of the various innovative efforts of UniCem and were quite pleased with the performance of the product as revealed in the survey. This finding was in line with Chai (2009) that product innovation is necessary to retain consumers' satisfaction. From the test of hypothesis five from data computed on item 5 in table 4.1, the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative that corporate social responsibility of United Cement has significant impact on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar. This finding is significant because corporate social responsibility is not seen by many firms as marketing strategy as such, not many organisations accept it. To some it is too expensive. United Cement however adopted this strategy not only to buy into the life and culture of the host communities but to create household image for itself, and in the process increase volume of sales. This finding was upheld in Babalola (2012); Ndifon, Echua and Nkang (2007).

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of findings

The study examined United Cement Company marketing strategies on cement consumers' satisfaction in Calabar. The Company has evolved some marketing strategies including marketing mix strategy, market development and expansion strategy, product innovation and total quality management and corporate social responsibility strategies among others. Each of

these marketing strategies was tested for significance and found to have contributed significantly to consumers' satisfaction in Calabar.

Consumers were optimistic that growth or expansion through market development and expansion strategy of UniCem would translate to improved service delivery and quality product contents. They were excited to be associated with such growth. Customers also saw product innovation as UniCem's effort to increase their level of satisfaction by serving them better but UniCem consciously innovates as a strategy to sustain existing customers while strategizing to buy over new consumers. Of course corporate social responsibility strategy was not left out by United Cement Company which invariably leads to consumers' satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the investigation, it was concluded that the marketing strategies of United Cement Company have significant positive impact on its consumers in Calabar. That the marketing mix strategy of UniCem has significant positive effect on consumer satisfaction in Calabar. Also, it was concluded that UniCem market development and expansion strategy has significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction such that consumers were positive that it will result in increased benefits to them. Equally, product innovation strategy of United Cement Company has significant positive effect on consumers' satisfaction such that the more the company innovates the better its chances of sustaining its customers and winning over new ones. Lastly, United Cement corporate social responsibility strategy has significant positive impact on consumers' satisfaction in Calabar.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings made and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations were proffered: United Cement Company Limited should retain its current cement marketing strategies in Calabar because they have significant positive influences on consumers' satisfaction. This is an indication that the strategies are working in Calabar. However, UniCem should investigate to find out whether the strategies are also effective in other markets outside Calabar.

United Cement should evolve other marketing strategies such as total quality management to maintain its cement quality, trade and cash discounts to increase and sustain customers' loyalty and other customer friendly marketing strategies to increase consumers' satisfaction. United Cement should review its marketing mix strategy to place more emphasis on its customers instead of product. This is not to say that the concept of 4Ps should be downplayed rather customer solution, cost to the customer, convenience and communication (4Cs) should be amplified. The current market development and expansion strategy of United Cement is laudable, it should be pursued vigorously but UniCem must ensure that its product quality does not dwindle rather the overall value per unit of the product should increase.

Product innovation is very necessary if the product is to stay relevant and attract new users therefore, United Cement should do more to innovate not only existing product but new products and processes. Also, corporate social responsibility is a very important long term approach to marketing thus, United Cement should be prudent in their choice of projects for social corporate responsibility. Only projects that directly affect and benefits present and would be consumers should be selected and executed. It will also be expedient if United Cement open distribution outlets in Calabar where small retailers and consumers can directly purchase their cement from the company to enjoy some incentives from time to time. Also, UniCem should embark on massive promotion campaign to create lasting impression on household to create household name for itself.

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