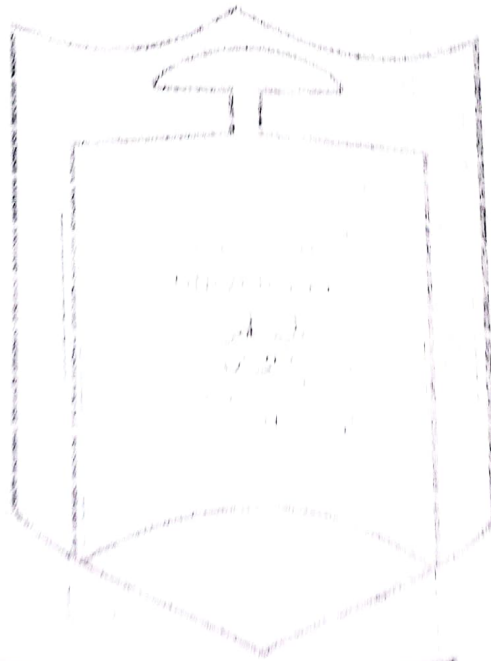




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Coopetition in Small Business: A Strategic Option for Down Stream Photo Industry in Kwara State.

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Abstract

As a way of managing risk and maintaining stable income most micro and small enterprises have engaged in forward and backward diversification as well as joint ventures and mergers. This has introduced other dimensions to the relationships that earlier exists among companies. Hence, micro and small enterprises In Nigeria are largely becoming multifaceted in approach and relationships. Hence, this study examined the relationships that exist among companies in the downstream photo industries in Kwara State with a view to proffering implementable relationship among the firms. Exploratory research method is applied to gain better insight into the multi-faceted relationships among micro and small enterprises in the photo industries. It is observed that acquisition of equipment, expansion/diversification machine breakdown often results into multifaceted relationship. The study also finds out that supportive networking approach works better than strict competition. It is also revealed that buyers/suppliers in direct competition as well as partners in competition are the commonest multifaceted relationships among the down streams photo industries. The study recommends further studies into the management of the multifaceted relationships that exists among the MSMEs in Nigeria.

Introduction

New enterprises are usually not welcomed with open hands by existing enterprises producing the same product/service. They are often treated as one that has come to reduce their market share. Indeed, both new and existing enterprises have cut-throat competition for competitive advantage. Enterprises are literally out to cut each other's throat in order to gain competitive advantage. The rivalry often results from competition for limited resources as well as efforts to gain the favor of the same set of customers. These, they do by price undercutting, staff snatching, market share capturing and other stiffer but sometimes criminal techniques. Bressler (2012) highlighted competition among small firms producing the same product at the same level. It is on the basis of this understanding that most of the theories on competitive advantage are formulated.

The Traditional competitive environment for both manufacturing and service companies is characterized with intense rivalry and attempts to outplay competitors. Hence, companies develop innovative products, services and business procedures to compete and survive. In most cases Information Technology has been a ready tool often applied to gain significant

competitive advantage. Ability to deliver products or services to customers since the mid 90's in both the manufacturing and service industries encountered stiffer competition. This result in attempt at offering high quality products at lower prices and at shorter time period (faster). Therefore, today's companies demand better or different competitive arrangement. At a point, this competitive approach became counter-productive for the individual competitors and indeed for the industry as a whole at the local level. Therefore, it was no longer enough for a company to have cost, quality and product capacities to survive and prosper but also to have good competitive arrangement as well. There is therefore, a need for a paradigm-shift in competitive arrangement of firms. This made different companies to adopt various strategies in managing the different enterprises to ensure improved profitability. These strategies have introduced some complexities to the relationships that hitherto exist among the different companies. Companies needed to identify the appropriate or required relationship that is needed with her buyers and suppliers to be able to survive in the business space. Hence, this study attempts to identify the form of relationship that exists among buyers-suppliers in the downstream photo industry with a view to identifying what works and what does not work. This is done to engender further research with a view to developing hypothesis and drawing conclusions.

Literature Review

Relationships that can easily been identified among companies in the literatures includes; buyer/supplier, competitive and multifaceted relationships.

Characteristics of Competitive Buyer/Supplier Relationship

Most literatures including porter (2008) Mahdi et al (2015), Wen-Cheng et al (2011) portrays the relationship that exists between competitors as that of rivalry and enmity. This is described in above. However, relationships that exist among the micro and small enterprises are currently multifaceted.

The following distinct features among others can be identified in the relationship between buyers and suppliers in the traditional competitive practice: businesses are conducted at arm's length with buyer trying to negotiate the best possible price for the supplies it needs; businesses thrive on competition and not collaboration. Other features include assumption that interaction with competitors is a zero-sum game or win-lose proposition; customer is different from competitor. There is a distinction between buyers and suppliers (Buyers are usually different from suppliers) as well as business is seen as a non-ending series of games, each of which has a winner and a loser. In other words, one party walks away feeling bad while the other is happy.

However, the modern-day business can no longer be classified into a water tight compartment of buyers and suppliers. Sometimes a buyer at one time could turn to be supplier at another time. Hence, they have multifaceted relationship.

Coopetition Relationship

Some authors such as Carling et al (1998) as figuratively describe coopetition as 'sleeping with the enemy' Realistically, it refers to relationship that involves simultaneous cooperation and competition. (Cygler et al 2018, Bengtsson & Kock 2000, & Dagino 2009). The fulcrum

on attempt to which coopetition relationship thrives include; trust, commitment, personal involvement, frequent communication understanding as well as communality of interests (Cygler et al 2018 and Dagino 2009).

Several benefits are derivable in coopetition relationships. Such benefits include, assisting companies to operate efficiently in the face of negative competitive environment. It leads to achievement of economic, social and environmental benefits and consequently in the survival and sustainability of companies. In addition, coopetition assists companies in enjoying complementary resources especially, the non-tangible ones such as exchange of knowledge and experiences. It also leads to the achievement of economies of scale as well as helps to increase entry barriers for potential new entrants Cygler, et al 2018, Dagino, 2009 and Bengtsson & Kock 2000).

Coopetition, however, has a number of drawbacks such as rise in opportunistic and unethical behaviors. Coopetition often results in companies breaking rules of the market game such as price undercutting and tender conspiracy. It also leads to uncontrolled leakage of information by partners or economic espionage. It also limits organizational independence or freedom in decision-making. Similarly, it weakens existing sources of competitive advantages and key competencies as well as generates above average operational costs such as agreement costs. There is tendency for the stronger units to take over the weaker units. On the whole if the relationship is not well managed, it could results into zero-sum game (Cygler et al 2018, and Bradenburger & Naleburff 1996).

Multifaceted Relationship

This refers to when a supplier, customer or partner is also a competitor. Jack Welch, chairman of General Electric calls the problem the modern "Riddle of sphinx and asks" who is my customer in the morning, my rival in the afternoon and my supplier in the evening. These features are now common in the business landscape (Carlin et al 1998, Dowling, 1996 & Morsy, 2017).

As the economies are becoming increasingly global, industry boundaries become blurred and technology keeps redefining markets, the instances, when a competitor is also a supplier, customer, or a partner will continue to increase. Such relationships are undoubtedly uncomfortable and seem to violate traditional business practices but also present opportunities for new forms of profitable business alliances. By impulse companies might avoid multifaceted relationship. However, companies that learn to live with and even benefit from them will clearly be better positioned for the future (Morsy & Ibrahim, 2014).

Companies especially micro and small enterprises now have multiple products and services to manage the company's risks and ensure stable income. This makes a company to have multiple relationships with a given customer. Such relationships include being both supplier and buyer to given company. Therefore, modern business requires different management approaches to manage the new inter personal and company relationship created. Indeed, companies are increasingly becoming multifaceted in their relationships (Vieira et al 2013).

Methodology

Exploratory research methodology is applied in this study. This method is adopted to assist the researcher to satisfy his curiosity as well as the desire to gain better insight into multifaceted relationship in business. This is achieved by reviewing available but related literatures on companies that had the experience of multifaceted relationship. Hence, detailed data/information is collected on multifaceted companies. The downstream photo industry is chosen for this study because of its high susceptibility to hyper-competition especially in pricing which often results in lower profitability. This study places emphasis on conceptual analysis and theory. In addition, both informal discussions and formal qualitative interviews were conducted with consumers, employees, management and competitors. These techniques were mostly applied through focus groups interview and discussions. Exploratory research methodology as adopted by the study is capable of providing creative but quality and insightful information about the study of photo industry and indeed micro and small enterprises.

Theoretical Framework/Concept

Inter-firm relationships can be explained through two major theoretical concepts. These concepts are; competitive strategy and games theory. A critical success factor for enterprises is developing an enduring competitive advantage as well as in-depth analysis of competitors. Competitive strategy involves positioning of firm's strength against competitors' weaknesses. Hence, Strategist requires the knowledge of competitors' strength and weaknesses. However, this is a daunting and time-consuming task because it requires access to classified data. Hence, many organizations do not collect information in a systematic manner but act on the basis of informal impressions, conjectures etc.

The reason for competitor analysis includes; profiling of nature of success, likely strategy changes each competitor may take likely strategic responses by other firms to every feasible strategic move. The four diagnostic components to competitor analysis include; competitors' future goals to ascertain level of satisfaction, present position and current strategy, assumptions and capabilities. Adequate understandings of these four components enable accurate prediction of competitors' responses. The firm that is carrying out a self-analysis should include; its future goals and assumptions. These driving forces are hard to observe but yet they determine competitors' responses. It is necessary to state here that for an efficient competitors' analysis there is need to define which competitor needs to be analyzed. This includes both existing and even potential competitors. Potential competitors include firms that; could overcome entry barriers cheaply, has obvious synergy from being in the industry and competing is an obvious extension of corporate strategy.

It will also be necessary to predict probable mergers and acquisitions that may occur among the existing competitors and or involving outsiders. Different strategies may threaten different competitors differently. Hence, a strategy may threaten a competitor more than the other.

In game theory, competitive relationships are treated as positive game which gives all players opportunity to benefit as it leads to win-win situation, unlike the competitive strategy that leads to win-lose or lose-win situation. It is a game in which all the interests of the players

partially overlap. It also uses the principles of reciprocity in the action of players. Coopetition leads to a win-win situation as it generates a synergy of joint resources. Companies with complementary resources also benefit in coopetition (Adebayo et al 2010, Anderson et al 2009 and Charlseworth 2017).

Competitive strategies

Competitive strategies include; Cost leadership, Differentiation, Focused low cost and Focused differentiation strategies.

Competitive advantage	Unique competences	Low-cost competence
Narrow market scope	Focus differentiation strategy	Focus low-cost strategy
Broad market scope	Differentiation strategy	Cost leadership strategy

Source: adapted from Haag S&M. Cummings (2013)

Cost leadership strategy assumes that customers will always buy on the basis of lower price. Hence, a strategist sets its prices very low that competitor cannot meet or cause consumers' swing for goods and services. This strategy can assist in gaining market share resulting on high profit or returns on sales. This strategy is delicate to implement because it may reduce the profit margin in the long run and ones it has started it must continue. This strategy might be counter-productive in the long run (Bressler 2012 and Box & Miller 2001).

Differentiation strategy refers to production of products that meets the needs of customers. For a strategist to adopt this strategy he needs to understand the psychology, needs and emotions of most customers. This will make the firm to produce goods and services to meet needs and emotions that no one is meeting. Sometimes the firm may charge higher prices for such products. Such products may increase the product range, quality, product embellishment/enhancement or offering services other companies are not providing (Dirisu et al 2013).

Focused low-cost strategy. This approach offers low cost to a particular segment of the market rather than covering the entire market. This is similar to cost leadership except that it is directed at a given segment of the market (Eben & Johnson 2005).

Focused differentiation strategy seeks to offer a different product to a particular segment of the market. It attempts to offer a unique product to a segment of the market which other firms are not addressing their needs (Dirisu et al 2013). Other authors including Bressler (2012) identified other methods to include other marketing mix such as place, promotion and people.

Place- a firm can leverage on place component of marketing mix to have competitive advantage through superior location or marketing network or cost saving technology.

Promotion- adoption of efficient and well-coordinated publicity programmes.

People including your employees may be a linchpin for implementation of elements. For instance, people can link you to a sustainable market while your employee can influence customers' satisfaction.

Other school of thought including Mahdi et al 2015 looked at competitive advantage in terms of innovation, integration and diversification as well as mergers and joint ventures.

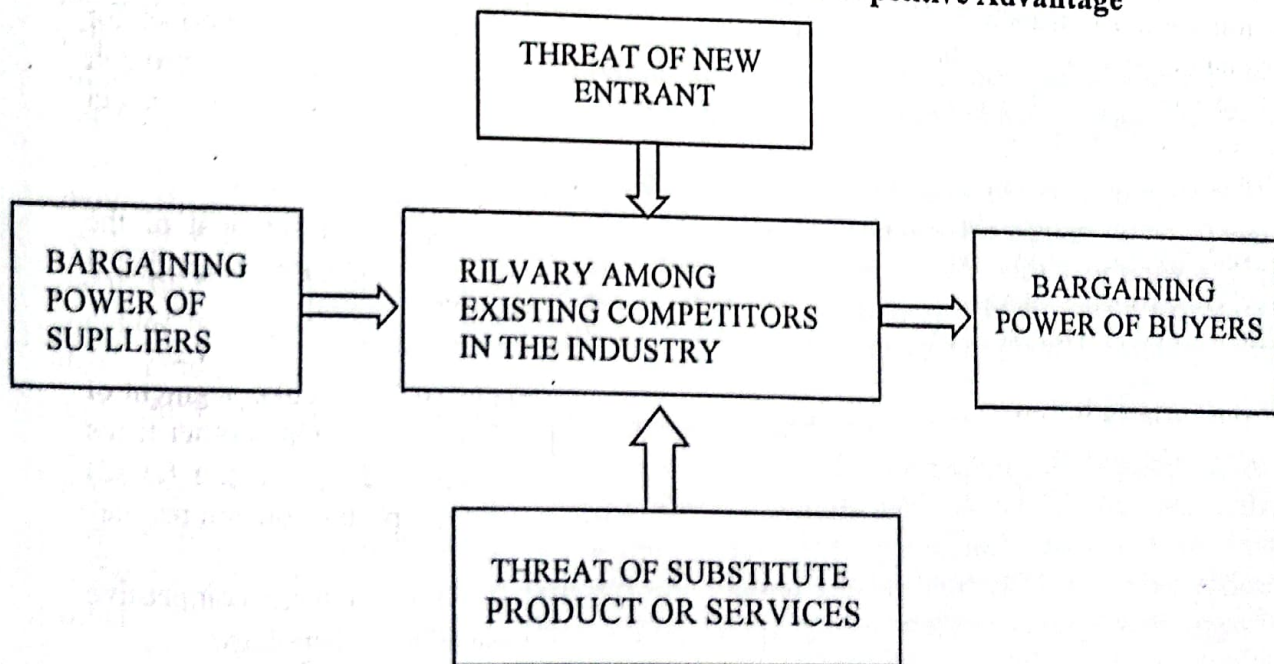
Horizontal integration is the process of acquiring or merging of competitors to achieve competitive advantage. This strategy allows for growth, economies of scale, cost savings, reduction in duplications, offering wide range of products, increase value creation, assist in managing rivalry by reducing number of players in the industry (Porter 2005).

Vertical integration means that a company produces its own inputs or disposing its own outputs which often referred to as backward and forward integration respectively.

Joint Ventures involves two or more parties coming together to undertake related or unrelated economic activities. This approach can make multi-nationals to benefit from a local partners knowledge, sharing costs and risks, minimize risk of losing control over technology. However, it does not give the company tight control over different subsidiaries (Wen-Cheng et al 2011).

Innovation is the process by which organizations use their skills and resources to create new technologies or goods and services so that it can change or better respond to needs of customers (Whitney & Hasan, 1996).

Graphical Representation of Porter's Five Forces of Competitive Advantage



Source: Adapted from Haag S & M. Cummings (2013)

Haag & Cummings identified five forces in porter (2008) competitive advantages. This includes buyer's power, supplier's power, threat of substitute and rivalry among existing competitors.

Buyers' power: when buyer has many choices where they can buy from their power are high. Conversely when buyers have little or no choices their powers are low. Hence, suppliers of products and services often wish to reduce the powers of buyers. This is in attempt to make buyers to buy from them rather than their competitors.

Suppliers' power: Suppliers' powers are high when buyers have few or no choices from where to buy. The reverse is also true i.e. suppliers' power is low when buyers have many choices. Supplier organizations want buyers' power to be low while suppliers' power to be high.

Threat of substitute products or services. When the number of substitute products or services is high the power of supplier will be low. Conversely, when the alternatives are low the power of supplier will be low. Hence, supplier organizations want the buyer to have few or no alternative. However, this is hardly possible in the long run. Hence, organization has to create a competitive advantage for its products or services.

Threat of new entrants. The threat is high when entry condition is easy. However, if entry condition is stringent then the threat is low.

Rivalry among Existing competitor. The rivalry is fierce when the competition is stiff. On the other hand, when the competition is docile or less tensed, then the rivalry will be low.

Downstream of photo industry involves processes of using required equipment to produce still pictures. The closer any activity is to the consumers the further down-stream will the activity be. These activities include distribution of papers, chemicals, printing of pictures and taking or snapping of pictures. People that engage in these activities are distributors of photo materials, (wholesalers and retailers), photographers as well as photo laboratory owners.

Some Features of the Down-Stream photo Industry

A number of features could be discerned in the down-stream photo industry. This includes; backward integration: distributing photo materials such as papers and chemicals; forward integration: some laboratories acquire photo finishing equipment such as photo book as well as having photo studios; acquisition – buying smaller laboratories; having offices in other states of the federation; laboratories having photo studios; having well organized buyer group(s).

This type of complexities is not the common basis for the formulation of theory of competition. Hence, the conventional theories of competitive advantage may not work adequately for them (Morris et al 2007).

Background information on photo industry in Kwara state

Photography business has paid its tolls for technological development or advancement. For instance, photography started with the black and white photography when each photographer carries out all the processes of printing their pictures. By the late 70s to late 80s the technology improved to produce colored pictures. This led to photographers only snapping pictures and doing the printing through analog technology in photo laboratories. This technology created another layer of service provider in the photo industry. This was the colored photo laboratories. During this period the only colored laboratories in Kwara State were Olu Professional Photo, Foto Tech and later Bob Sege Photo. With time, the analog coloured photo gradually gave way to the digital coloured photo printing. This time witness the coming to lime light of Bob-Shege Photo who was a professional photographer. Hence, he then had the monopoly of producing analog and digital photo printing in Kwara state. Bob-Shege Photo was then making abnormal or excessive profit. It was at this time that other entrepreneurs such as Plannet Lab, Photo Base, Chiz and BITTYFEM Photo Laboratories were attracted to compete away the excess profit in the Coloured photo printing business. This, no doubt reduced the abnormal profit made by Bob-Shege Photo. By year 2007 many photo laboratories have been established in Ilorin, the Kwara State capital. Initially, the laboratories were located in the State capital. Later people started locating photo Laboratories in the Local Government Areas, Headquarters such as Offa, Omuaran, Share etc. By 2017, there were seventeen (17) photo laboratories in Kwara State.

Mobile phones technology further affected the photo industry. With mobile phones, people could take good pictures with their phones. These pictures can be sent on-line to different destinations at very little cost and time. The technology enables people to see their pictures almost immediately as the picture are snapped. This trend tends to reduce the need for photographers and indeed coloured photo laboratories. Hence, competition among photographers and colored photo laboratories became tensed or stiffer. This made various colored photo laboratories to start to device various means of gaining competitive advantages. This includes, reduction in prices, award of trip to Mecca/ Jerusalem to some of the association officials, given the association some infrastructures such as buses and assistance in building secretariat for some zones of the photographers' associations. Indeed, before any photo Laboratory could successfully open, it must visit or attend some zonal meetings of photographers' association around its location with some gifts.

Classes of Photographers

Three major classes of photographers can be identified, namely; high class, artisan photographers and freelance otherwise known as "pa papa". Technology has created a group called freelance photographers. This group is made up of people that did not take any course in photography nor observe any period of apprenticeship in photography. Most of them become photographers because of unemployment or students in search of means of making money. This kind of people charge low rates for their services. In addition, they offer very quick services. In most cases this class of photographers consists of more educated members than the artisan professional photographers. This class of photographers is commonly referred to as "Pa-pa-pa" meaning "fast fast".

High class photographers are another group of photographers. This group is made up of privileged photographers with contacts in high places. They service important organizations like Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) etc. This group usually put relatively high investment into photography business. Charges of this class of photographers are usually very high. They equally provide higher quality services. Hence, they will only patronize laboratories that produce high quality pictures

Artisan Professional Photographers are those that are mainly with low level of education. This group constitutes about 80 per cent of photographers. They are mainly ladies that invest less than N100,000 into the business. As a result of the low level of investment in the business coupled with the tenses competition, most of this class takes photography as additional enterprise. For example, some ladies among them sell wares, fruits etc,

Before the introduction of colored photo, the artisan photographers were operating individually and competing among themselves. The coming of Coloured laboratories brought with it the need for photographers to speak and act in a united manner. Hence, the formation of Professional photographers' association called Nigerian Professional Photographers and Video Association (NPPVA). The association is organized into zones. A zone is made up of at least thirty photographers. For instance, Ilorin town alone has about forty zones. This association became so powerful to confront the seller market that hitherto the colored Photo Laboratories were operating then. This association became so powerful so much so that the associations dictate the rate at which the coloured Photo laboratories will charge for their services. Sometimes, the rate that they dictate is below the cost price for the Coloured photo laboratories. They went to the extent of dictating facilities and staff that must be in a photo laboratory. The photographers' associations prescribed and enforced punishment or sanctions on erring coloured photo laboratories. Hence, Coloured photo laboratory owners dreaded going against photographers' associations' wishes. Sanctions for erring colored photo Laboratories include among others; fines, temporary closure, writing of apology letters etc. The major source of Power of the Photographers includes their ability to dictate Laboratories that their members patronized.

Classes of Colored Photo Laboratories

The coloured photo laboratory owners enter the business for varied purposes and at different levels. A group of Laboratory owners are people that are in a regular paying job. For such owners their wives or relations or trusted allies are saddled with the responsibilities of managing the business. This group do not earn their living from Coloured photo laboratory business. They raise their capital from accumulation from their daily/regular jobs. The other group of coloured Photo laboratory owners is people that earn their living from Photo printing business. Indeed, there are others that sees the business as their family business. This type of people that earns their living from the business raise their capital from borrowing or personal/family savings. As a result of differences in goals and backgrounds, the Coloured photo laboratory owners are often not united. The absentee Coloured photo laboratory owners often feel that the business is not their meal ticket. However, the other group believes the business is their only means of livelihood as they depended on proceeds from the coloured photo laboratory business. Hence, they believe they must succeed in the business in order to survive. There are those that feel that photo business is their family business and also believe

that others in the business merely joined the business overnight. Therefore, they will also rush out of the business when the time is ripe.

As a result of the excessive powers wielded by the photographers' association, the colored photo laboratories came together to form Coloured Photo Lab Owners Association in Nigeria (CPLOAN). The main objective of the photo laboratories association among others though not expressly stated was to counter the excesses of photographers' associations. Hence, the different coloured photo laboratories that were hitherto in constant price war among themselves and snatching of staff from each other came together to present a common front and one voice.

As a result of the intense competition among the Colored Photo Laboratories entrepreneurs engage in other enterprises such as selling photo printing consumables, working as professional photographers, printing of photo books and others have gone into Charcoal business etc.

Photo Materials Sellers

One of the important value chains in the photo industry is sales of photo materials such as chemicals, papers of different sizes and other photo finishing materials. Some of the enterprises in this value chain in Kwara State are; Oyoyo Photo, Favour Photo Shop. Most of these retailers buy their wares from major distributors from Lagos or Ilorin, Kwara State especially BITTYFEM Photo Lab and Large Format.

Causes of Multifaceted Relationship

Carlin et al (1998) identified some causes of multifaceted relationships. This includes; regulation, technology, globalization, prestige, size and structure, product characteristics as well as culture and leadership.

Regulation:

It may be a requirement for the company to do business with competitor. In some cases, a regulator organization may have to establish a standard business for the training of competitors. For instance, the Centre for Management Development (CMD) is saddle with the responsibility of certifying regulating management training institutions in Nigeria and itself is a training institution.

Technology/Equipment

Sometimes a competitor may possess a technology to produce an important part(s) of a production process. For example, Intel has cutting edge technology to produce microchips such as new Pentium chips. This chip is patented.

Globalization and Expansion

Some companies found it easier to do business overseas by partnering or having some form of relationship with local but diversified companies. For example, General Electric expanded globally by having relationships with Toshiba in Japan and Hyundai in Korea hence. As a result of globalization multifaceted relationships such as buyer-supplier are created among companies.

Prestige/ image

Desire to improve image may be a driving force for establishing multifaceted relationship. Some companies may be willing to be key supplier to a bigger company even when they are competitors in certain market(s). Hence, the relationships with the larger company will assist in enhancing the reputation of the small company.

Size and structure

As a result of growing, a company may go into diversification. Therefore, such companies will enter into multifaceted relationship because such companies will be exposed to different markets.

Products Characteristics

Companies producing products that are used by different companies for different purposes are predisposed to multifaceted relationships. Hence, companies in telecommunication, computer and financial services are often involved in multifaceted relationships.

Outsourcing:

To ensure efficiency, many companies adopt outsourcing strategies. Therefore, they are predisposed to multifaceted relationship in the process of outsourcing.

Culture and leadership

Companies that supports inter firm cooperation are likely to form multifaceted relationship. Leaders or business chief executives who are adaptive are more likely to survive more in such a variety and uncertainty inherent in such environment. Some causes of multifaceted relationships among small enterprises especially the downstream photo industry in Kwara State include amongst others.

1. Acquisition of special equipment and skills such as photo-book printing and processing. Only a few photo laboratories in Kwara State purchased photo finishing equipment such as photo-book equipment. This may not be unconnected with the small market for the product/Service. Hence, many photo laboratories and photographers have to patronize the few laboratories that have the equipment. Laboratories that has their equipment include; Confidence Corporate pictures and Fotobest imagery.
2. Occasional excess capacity demand or request for services from prime customers. Customers seldom request for services that are time bound which the capacity of the enterprise cannot meet. In order not to disappoint the customer part of such services can be outsourced from another similar enterprise. The enterprise providing the outsourced services will provide the services at a discounted rate.
3. Machine breakdown often occurs in enterprises. At such times in order for the enterprise not to lose customers when the machine is fixed the enterprise will take it upon itself to do the job from a competitor outside. However, such competitor will charge a discounted rate.
4. Another cause of multifaceted relationship is forward or backward integration for instance some photo laboratories also establish photo studio as part of their ancillary services while others distribute photo materials.
5. Some big laboratories such as Bob Shege and Mufu laboratories have many branch laboratories within Kwara State and other States of Nigeria where the different products

command different prices. This made it possible for such laboratories to operate at a loss at a particular branch but make up for the loss from profit of a profitable branch. This is done to send some laboratories out of business.

Types of Multifaceted Relationship

Three types of multifaceted relationship were identified, the commonest being, buyer-supplier in direct competition with each other. Another common one is, partners in competition and buyer-supplier in indirect competition.

Buyer-Suppliers in direct competition

This is a situation in which two or more enterprises that were buyers and suppliers at one time and at other times in competition. This is what happened in Intel-IBM relationship where in spite of IBM efforts to manufacture its own microprocessor Intel is still the highest supplier of micro-processors to IBM. Another example is the IBM Apple alliance to stem the rising dominance of Microsoft in software and operating system development in Kwara State. For instance, Bittyfem, a photo laboratory is also a major distribution of fuji products including chemicals and different sizes of paper. It sells to other laboratories and retailers of photo products. Other example is when a photo lab has facilities to print photo book. Other photo laboratories that do not have the facilities engage their services in photo-book printing and processing.

Partners in competition

This often results when two partners pool resources together to form joint venture to provide major services or products for their firms. This includes provision of research efforts and other facilities. It may sometimes be away to counter competitive threat as well as diversification to manage risks. This could also occur by accident. For instance, a major player in photo industry in Kwara is Bob-Shege photo Lab. It has many branches in and outside Kwara State of Nigeria. Before the demise of proprietor of Bob-Shege Photo Lab chief Segun Salami virtually all his children are into photo business. However, the demise of Chief Salami the children took up Bob-Shege photo Lab as a common heritage and manage it as such. Hence, they maintain and run their individual photo laboratories as well as jointly manage their common patrimony. Hence, they are individually competing with their common heritage business (Whitney & Hassan, 1996).

Buyer-Supplier in Indirect Competition

The current tendencies of firms to compete in market space through lobbying for political (legislation) and regulatory advantages to the benefit or detriment of one or more companies.

Risks of Multifaceted Relationship

Gathering and dissemination of information about supplier competitor requires experience, patience and tolerance for risks. Unlike collaboration between buyers and suppliers the collaborative arrangements between suppliers-competitor runs the risk of crossing the line between cagey negotiation and unethical behavior (Cygler et al 2018). The form the negotiations take depends on how much power each firm holds in relation to the other.

Beneficiaries from Multifaceted Relationship

The level of benefits derived from multifaceted relationship depends on structure, management style and disposition of companies. Companies with tolerance for risks, a culture that understand collaboration, a corporate strategy that emphasis opportunities and leadership that is flexible will likely managed multifaceted relationships by centralizing information

Highly bureaucratic firm that emphasizes competition as a zero game will better off avoiding them altogether or when they are unavoidable, treating each transaction separately. Firm that emphasizes cost efficiency and technical superiority could go either way depending on a number of factors. Multifaceted relationship may guarantee quality supply or at best price but it may not be worth additional resources needed to share information.

Managing Multifaceted Relationship

To manage multifaceted relationships in big companies four approaches are recommended. This includes; avoidance, divide and conquer, centralize intelligence as well as use of task force.

- Complete avoidance or stay away or get out
- Divide and conquer- separating interactions with the competitor. This can be achieved by having different departments or divisions interacting with competitor company for different types of transactions
- Centralized intelligence- centralized management is designed to increase the benefits of multifaceted relationships at the same time manage the risks of coordination and control. This can be achieved by information sharing among the departments involved. This approach provides for better understanding of the relationships.
- Another approach is to create a task-force committee to manage the relationships and assist managers to make collaborative decisions in the best interest of the company. Since this committee is to receive information from all divisions or departments, its decisions are relatively free from departmental partisanship.

Micro and Small enterprises such as what exists in the down-stream photo industry enterprises may find it difficult to adopt the approaches highlighted above.

Strategies for Managing Multifaceted Relationship in the Down-Stream Photo Business in Kwara State

Perhaps it is germane to state here that Micro and small enterprises including down-stream photo industry compete mainly for prices and market share. Initial approaches that were adopted by the down-stream photo industry, in Kwara State depend on whether the enterprise is new or existing. The newly established photo laboratories start their competition by snatching printers that are well known and can attract customers from existing photo laboratories.

On the other hands the existing photo laboratories open their new branch offices very close to the new ones. In the same vein the established laboratories charge lower prices sometimes below their cost price; all these are attempts to stifle the new laboratories at existence.

Similarly, the existing laboratories compete by introducing virus to any memory card or flash drive that is used in their laboratories. If such card or drive is used in another laboratory the virus has the effect of crashing the server if it does not have strong anti-virus programme. When it was discovered that most of the approaches were not yielding the desired results the photo laboratories formed an association called Colored Photo Lab Association of Nigeria (CPLOAN). The formation of the association was initiated from Kwara State to stem the undue powers of the photographers' association. CPLOAN became a forum where prices of services are determined and monitored. The association sanctions any erring members. CPLOAN also give technical, financial and counseling assistance to their members. Another approach that CPLOAN adopted could be described as supportive networking.

Supportive networking involves giving discount to competitors that has machine break down or have excess capacity request. Similarly, the major distributor of photo materials does some sort of supportive networking by charging segregating or discriminating prices for retailers and final consumers. The prices are such that the retailers will have some profit margin and also have lower costs than buying from Lagos as well as competitive in the market. The distributor is by this also able to expand its market share and income by taking their products to the nook and cranny of the state.

Conclusions and Recommendation

From the foregoing the coopetition and multifaceted relationships have become a common inter-firm relation and indeed a key success factor for companies. These relationships lead to achievement of economic, social and environmental benefits. From the above it can be safely said that a near perfect competitive buyer market can confront an almost monopolistic supplier market. Similarly, a coopetition relationship leads to supportive networking which works better than competition in the down-stream photo business. Hitherto, the down-stream photo engages in price warfare rather than price segregation. Therefore, the competition in the down-stream photo industry is mainly in pricing. This is partly because most of the final consumers of photo products/services do not know or mind so much quality products/services. Considering the numerous benefits of coopetition and multifaceted relationships we like to recommend that the down-stream photo firms adopt the coopetition or the multifaceted relationships. In view of the fact that not much work has been done on these forms of inter-firm relationships in this part of the world there is the need for more researches to be carried out on multifaceted and coopetition relationships in businesses especially in micro and small enterprises in Nigeria.

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