

**Marketing Policy
And Competitiveness In
The Manufacturing Sector
In Uganda: A Case of
Uganda Clays Ltd.**

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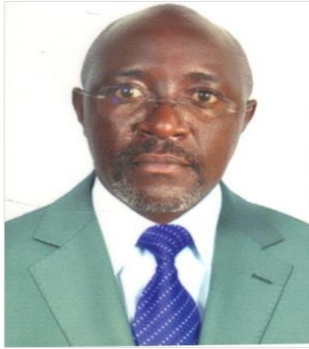
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ABSTRACT

The current study set out to analyse the effect of Marketing Policy on Competitiveness in the manufacturing sector with specific reference to Uganda Clays Ltd. In order to achieve the above purpose the study objective was; To measure the contribution of Marketing Policy to Competitiveness in the manufacturing sector in Uganda. The current study applied the post-positivist paradigm and employed a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. The main Approach used was Quantitative but Qualitative method and/or approach was also employed on limited Scale. The findings revealed that Marketing Policy had a strong positive significant relationship with Competitiveness ($r=(160).547, P<0.01$), which meant marketing Policy has an impact on Competitiveness. However the Competitiveness referred to only applied to the current environment which did not promise continued Survival into the future. Given that fact the study has proposed the SUPMAP

Model which guarantees not only competitiveness but also sustainability. This therefore means that if the new Model is adopted the company can be Competitive for many years to come. The SUPMAP Model is henceforth the study contribution to Knowledge.

Key Words: Marketing Policy, Competitiveness, SUPMAP Model

1. INTRODUCTION

Policy is a blueprint of the organizational activities which are a routine in nature Ellis (2018), and ought not to be befuddled with Strategy which is to a greater extent concerned with those organisational decisions that have not been tackled or faced before in same form. In contrast to marketing Policies, the policy guidelines are in general, made by the top management Surbhi (2015) and it is clearly clarified Surbhi (2015) that policies are always framed by the top management where as sub-strategies are formulated at the middle level. Academic Scholars and Practitioners need to recognise policy as a description of governing to make sense of the activity of governing Colebatch (2010). Policies generally assist in subjective decision making by senior management with decisions that must consider the relative merits of a number of factors before making decisions (Nakamura, 1987). The current study defines a Marketing policy as a framework that is broad and vague to allow operational decisions to be made to regulate the overall direction in which the company should move for the purpose of business continuity in fiercely competitive environments. The current study further affirms that a marketing policy enables the organisation to stay on track pertaining the strict following of set procedures and strategies in meeting the organisation's goals. The major aim of coming up with a marketing policy at UCL was therefore based on the expectation that it would present enormous benefits which included among others improving its competitiveness by 45% in the ten years (*Uganda Clays annual reports 2001*).

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In introducing the marketing Policy it was deemed that Uganda Clays Ltd would become competitive (*UCL Marketing report 2016*). However, UCL Competitiveness increased by only 12 % (from 20% to 32%) in the 10th year instead of the desired 45% raise (from 20% to 65%) leaving a big crevice of 33% not achieved (*UCL marketing Reports, 2011*) and despite interventions there has remained complaints. This seems to indicate that Uganda Clays is not as competitive as was expected and the unmet levels of competitiveness left a performance gap in terms of the existing marketing policy. Considering the unmet Competitiveness levels made by Uganda Clays Ltd the current study as a result sought to ascertain the contribution of a Marketing policy to Competitiveness.

1.2 THE CURRENT STUDY CONSIDERED THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES

To measure the contribution of Marketing Policy to Competitiveness in the manufacturing sector in Uganda. The study aimed at generating a marketing policy model to enhance Competitiveness.

1.3 STUDY HYPOTHESIS

H_0^1 There seems to be no significant relationship between Marketing Policy and Competiveness in the Manufacturing Sector.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The current study is significant in many ways:

Policy Formulation and Implementation

The study may be of great importance to policy makers in regard to formulation of regulatory frameworks governing Marketing Policy in the Manufacturing Sector.

Body of Knowledge

This study may also add to the already existing information in the academics world in the field of marketing Policy at particular universities and colleges as well as serve as a basis for further research.

Benefit to researchers

The current study was also intended to widen the knowledge in the field of marketing policy and Competitiveness for the researcher's to benefit.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 THEORETICAL REVIEW

Uganda Clays Ltd is challenged with the dilemma of competitiveness (*UCL marketing Reports 2011*). The Board of Directors and Management wanted to enhance the level of Competitiveness and believe that a marketing policy would play a critical role in achieving this goal. To analyse this predicament, some theories have been identified to offer an apt theoretical prism through which to consider the contribution of marketing Policy to Competitiveness in the manufacturing sector.

In the current study, the theory of the Blue Ocean theory which was developed by globally pre-eminent thinkers Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne in 2005 offers an apt theoretical prism through which to consider the Marketing Policy and Competitiveness in the manufacturing sector and thus was relied on as this theory postulates a number of factors that may be important to this study.

2.2 BLUE OCEAN THEORY

Looking at the current study and given the importance of Marketing Policy in the manufacturing Sector the Blue Ocean theory which was developed by globally pre-eminent thinkers (Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne, 2005) seems to explain the meaning, nature, and challenges associated with Competitiveness. The concept described in the Blue Ocean Theory is as easy as it is interesting. The theory is about creating and capturing uncontested market space, thereby making the competition irrelevant (Kim, 2008). The blue ocean theory meshes well with the offerings of Uganda Clays Ltd, which fall into the Manufacturing sector category. Uganda

Clays Ltd asserts in its Vision statement that it wants **to be the preferred provider of building products** competitiveness (*UCL marketing Reports 2011*), as a result, uncontested market space will play an important role. The Blue Ocean theory is therefore more relevant to the current study.

It should be stressed that the theory selected in this study is a representative sampling of key theories of marketing in general and marketing policy in particular but in no way should be construed to be an exhaustive list.

2.3 CONTRIBUTION OF MARKETING POLICY TO COMPETITIVENESS

Organisations that adopt a customer oriented perspective for managing competitive advantage successfully rely on the fortitude of needs and wants of target markets and the provision of satisfaction to the markets more effectively and efficiently than competitors (Kotler, 1998). Nevertheless exclusive reliance on the consumer is narrow-minded in consideration of the current marketing environment (Polonsky 1996, Kimery and Rinehart, 1998). The current marketing environment gives due consideration to the society in addition to profits and benefits for Shareholders (Abratt and Sacks 1988). As a result, successful marketing activities of any particular firm may impact negatively on society or any other stakeholders in a not premeditated manner. However, corporate social responsibility literature scrutinises the concerns of shareholder benefits largely (Carroll 1993) even though processes by which any paucities in corporate activities can be addressed is not scrutinised (Clarkson 1991, Kraft and Jaunch, 1992). Important to note also is the limited examination of the use of macro marketing in setting corporate strategic direction (Hunt and Burnett, 1982). The few firms that have examined the use macro-type issues to enhance corporate strategy (Osterhus, 1997), have not inevitably considered the impact on macro-groups or other stakeholders (Wood and Jones, 1995). Whereas addressing the interests of society may not necessarily improve corporate performance macro marketing scrutinises how marketers intermingle and transform society.

The objective of the current study is to describe situations the marketing policy can cater for the unintentional effects which may occur for a range of stakeholders but there is already reason to that some organisations still deem the marketing and societal marketing concepts as a narrow transactional marketing approach, between the organisation and the customer (Grönroos, 1991; Rowley, 1997). As such, this study endeavors to put forward mechanisms to evaluate these multifaceted interactions. The principles follow the logic of value based processes described by (Webster, 1997). Each of these principles seems so obvious as not to require stating. However, recognition of these principles and their application can revolutionise how organisations respond to, and interact with, the customers.

Conversely, the ongoing study views competitiveness in a way, as a call to constant action since creativity and innovation do not have limits in any respect especially in a market environment. This is because there is always need to acquire new clients and retain old ones consequently igniting competitiveness. The World Economic

Forum Report (2016) elucidated that competitiveness is the ability of one enterprise to do as well as, or outperform, another company or group of companies while taking into account the framework conditions in the country. The variations of competitiveness create an avenue for creativity in the performance of a given organisation informed by various theoretical benchmarks. Scholars (Audretsch and Keilbach, 2004; Huggins, 2003) elucidate competitiveness as increasingly concerned with creativity, knowledge, and environmental conditions, rather than being purely based on accumulated wealth .

The current study was conducted in Uganda country a developing country which has undertaken deliberate actions to enhance competitiveness in the dynamic environment. The government has instituted the Competitiveness and Enterprise Development Project (CEDP) to make it certain that the country becomes competitive to be able to attract local, regional and international organisations to invest and conduct business (Kasemiire, 2018). On the other hand it is argued that there are a lot of delays in the implementation of reforms Kyewalabye (2018) which subsequently affects the country's competitiveness. The current study thus brings to light the realisation that with such faulty systems at an organisation and country level the formulation of marketing policies has greatly been affected in the guidance of organisations in a competitive market environment.

While academic researchers and managers in marketing have been obsessed over the last decade or so with understanding what being market oriented means (how to measure it and how to build it), a revolution has been taking place in the field of Marketing Policy as a form of strategic Marketing. The dominant view of strategy in the 1980s had been that propounded by, among others, Michael Porter of the Harvard Business School (Porter, 1980, 1985). Under this view the key to strategy was deemed to lie in industry dynamics and characteristics. Porter suggested that some industries were inherently more attractive than others, and that the factors driving industry competition were the key determinants of profitability. Under the new approach, however, the focus for explaining performance differences shifted from outside the firm (the industries in which it operated) to within the firm itself. Still (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990; Wernerfelt, 1984) suggested that performance was essentially driven by the resource profile of the organisation, and that the source of superior performance lay in the possession and deployment of distinctive, hard to imitate or protected resources.

Current views on Marketing Policy suggest that these two approaches can be combined to the benefit of both (Hooley et al., 1998), however, throw into severe relief the different approaches to strategy in general and marketing policy in particular still evident in many organisations today. However, Whereas the developed models may provide new solutions and appear to be the Magic bullets in a competitive market place organisations should aim to create a marketing policy that enhances customer loyalty by satisfying the customers which occurs when customers continue to prefer a particular organisation even when there is evidence of attractive benefits at other organisations but often continue to remain committed so long as nothing

breaks the loyalty. Hence forth small improvements, such as avoiding an argument with a staff member which is all it can take to make the customer move to a competitor are within the reach of a manager as it may not require colossal sums of money but reorganization and behavioural change.

There is Limited Research on the impact of a marketing Policy that is market oriented to improve the organisations business performance hence becoming more competitive. Marketing orientation as the best solution for improved market performance has been discussed by both academicians and marketing managers for more than 50years (Kotler, 1984; Kotler and Andreasen, 1987; Levitt 1960; Webster, 1988). The current study sought to develop a valid measure of marketing policy and analyse its effect on Competitiveness in Uganda’s manufacturing Sector.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The field research was carried out in greater Kampala and Wakiso Districts. These areas are considered appropriate because most of the clay Products Manufacturing Factories including Uganda Clays Ltd are situated in this area and major and reliable Customers can be traced in these areas as well as other important respondents. These areas also account for 70% of UCL’s market share.

The total number of respondents was 162 but the response rate was 160. The sample was determined using the formulae for (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970). So the sample of 160 respondents including Staff (Field Sales Staff, Marketing & Customer Service staff, Managing Director and Heads of department in Company Customer contact points or Outlets in Wakiso and Kampala and selected customers was considered sufficient for this study. All these respondents were aware of the Uganda clays activities.

A cross sectional survey design adopted by this study required one to use more than one data collection method. In that regard a survey was the primary method. A specially designed Questionnaire was administered to 160 respondents. The respondents had to provide answers in a predetermined order. The instruments had three sections; demographics, Quality of Products and Competitiveness.

The Questionnaire as the main tool in the study employed 52 items. Apart from items on the demographics characteristics of the respondents, the rest of the items were on the likert scale type. This scale served as a measurement for the relationships between Quality of Products and Competitiveness. The likert Scale was (i) Strongly Agree = 5, (ii) Agree = 4, (iii) Neutral =3, (iv) Disagree =2, (v) Strongly Disagree =1. The main approach used was Quantitative

Table: 1: Categories of respondents

No	Category of respondents	Population	Sample size
1.	Commercial/Institutional Customers	150	88
2.	Retail Customers	100	56

3.	Heads of Department	06	06
4.	Staff/Employees	22	10
5.	Top Management	02	02
	Total	280	162

Source: field data (2016)

Validity

The Validity of the items on the Questionnaire was determined using the Content Validity Index .The questions were rated as very relevant, relevant, irrelevant, and very irrelevant. The proportion of the very relevant and relevant questions over the total questions was computed using the following formulae;

$$CVI = \frac{\text{Total Very Relevant Questions} + \text{Relevant Questions}}{\text{Total Questions}}$$

Therefore:

$$CVI = \frac{40 + 29}{69 + 8 = 77} = CVI = \frac{69}{77}$$

$$CVI = 0.9$$

The content Validity Index is supposed to be above 0.7 as recommended by Amin (2005) for the questionnaire to be considered Valid. Therefore, the value of 0.9 indicated that the questions in instrument were highly valid.

Reliability of the instrument

Reliability is the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results (Cozby, 2001). Reliability was determined using the internal consistency method that is estimated using Cronbach’s alpha (Cronbach, 1951, 2004; Nunnally, 1978; hull and Nie, 1981). Typically, reliability coefficients of 0.70 or higher are considered adequate (Cronbach, 1951, 2004; Nunnally, 1978). Nunnally (1978) further states that permissible alpha values can be slightly lower (0.60) for newer scales.

Table.2: Reliability Test Using Cronbach’s Alpha

Variable	Cronbach’s Alpha Based on Standardized Items	Number of Items
Marketing policy	.872	17
Competitiveness	.817	9
Average Cronbach’s Alpha Based on Standardized Items	0.844	

Initially, the consistency levels of the items/questions were examined using Cronbach’s alpha. The Cronbach’s alpha measure of reliability was marketing Policy 0.872and Competitiveness 0.817, all these commonly recommended values have an average Cronbach’s Alpha Based on Standardized Items 0.844 which is in the acceptable range. This showed that all the items in the instrument were consistent and acceptable.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 THE CONCEPT OF MARKETING POLICY AT UCL

Uganda Clays Limited as a clay manufacturing company approved a marketing policy as a framework for promoting the company’s competitiveness (UCL Marketing Report, 2001). UCL’s perspective of marketing policy was set to implement professional consultation through a Culture of investing more time into individual clients by dedicating genuine attention to every sale throughout the entire process. The perception of UCL’s marketing policy was geared towards providing customers with all the information needed and understanding what was needed then and in the future.

Table 3 Level of Academic Qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Certificate	45	28.1	28.1	28.1
	Diploma	43	26.9	26.9	55.0
	Undergraduate	39	24.4	24.4	79.4
	Post graduate	33	20.6	20.6	100.0
	Total	160	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data (2018)

The findings table 3 revealed that most of the respondents are certificate holders at 28% followed by Diploma Holders at 27% and undergraduates at 24% which means the main buyers of Uganda Clays products are not very highly educated they account for 79% in totality.

When the informants were asked about the level of education in almost all areas, the following responses came out:

“I am a certificate holder... others are diploma holders, first degree holders, but majority of us are certificate and diploma people in the construction business who buy materials from UCLs”...(Key Informants Interview, 2018).

Semi-skilled customers: the medium skilled clientele are the majority of UCLs customers that commonly buy products from Uganda Clays Ltd.

The findings in table.3 closely relate with the above responses from the key informant interview. This is because several people that buy UCLs products are certificate and diploma holders that form the semi-skilled clientele.

Basing on the above critical analysis of findings from Qualitative findings, the study reveals that the local Masons, Carpenters, Roofers and /or Trained Masons who have qualified through technical schools (or Universities) with Certificates and Diplomas in Building and Construction do the practical work in all major sites and are therefore a key in purchase decisions. The owners rely on them because of the Practical expertise and experience to take decisions for which construction materials to use. The qualified Engineers and Architects only play a supervisory and guiding role. Hence forth UCL marketing Policy should devise strategies of tapping into this Market segment.

Table 4: Descriptive for Competitiveness

Item	M	SD	Description
UCL enjoys the biggest market share in the industry	4.21	.99	Very High
UCL offers the best price on the market	3.11	1.41	Moderate
Grand mean and SD	3.84	1.09	High

- 1.79 (very low), 1.80 – 2.59 (low), 2.60 – 3.19 (moderate), 3.20 – 4.19 (high), 4.20 – 5.00 (very high)

The results from table.4revealed the mean for level of Competitiveness is high with a grand mean score of 3.84 but the issue of Uganda clays Ltd enjoying the biggest Market share in the Industry is ranked very highly (4.21). This evidently means it plays an important role in Competitiveness. However it is manifest that the UCL does not offer the best price on the market with a mean score of 3.11. This is a critical issue for Management because the Ugandan Market is price sensitive but Uganda clays Ltd can justify the Prices by maintaining the highest Quality standards. Still they should try to control costs such that they may not shift the burden of costs to the customer through pricing because Uganda Clays Ltd or any other manufacturing companies should not take the risk of donating customers to competition because of high prices.

In response to the question of the interview guide about the level of competitiveness considered at UCL, some informants apparently stated that;

All my projects have been supplied by UCL products... Uganda clays products are very expensive...may consider buying from competition if they have the same Quality....I like UCL product features and looks but they are very expensive....most big construction companies buy from Uganda Clays... I only buy Roofing tiles from UCL which have not been matched but the rest I buy from others who are cheaper with the same Quality (Key Informant Interview, 2018).

In analysing the documents marketing reports and order books the evidence available showed some customers had cancelled their orders and other prospected customers had not bought because of pricing. In addition some customers had opted for cheaper Alternatives.

Price sensitivity: as a major theme that emerged from the above key interview and document review was fundamental in explaining the crucial areas for competitiveness. In this perspective, pricing effectiveness is critical for advancing Competitiveness.

In response to another question of the interview guide about the impact of the marketing Policy on emerging themes in Marketing at UCL, some Key informants candidly stressed that;

I am becoming more concerned and aware about the natural environment... extraction of our major raw material Clay from swamps... and sometimes worried what happens after clearing all swamps around Lake Victoria... I have adjusted my purchasing behaviour on clay products due to environmental rationale...My key financiers will not fund the project if the products are not environmentally friendly... I have not seen UCL participating in projects that concern the community surrounding it unless it has a direct benefit... UCL funds social investments that support the community projects. However, the act of helping community members is not embraced in the marketing policy hence UCL engages on very limited scale in activities that have positive effects on the environment, society or promote

public welfare because the company is driven by short term profits and fear that such activities will have a negative effect on the bottom line (Key Informant Interview, 2018).

The major key themes that emerged from the above data are environment conservation and corporate social responsibility.

Environment conservation: The major concern of environmental conservation is a major challenge of UCL business clay as raw material is used, yet is exhausting clay leaves environmental concerns.

Corporate social responsibility: This is a central activity that is mandatory for the business organization to return services to the community member.

On scrutinising the UCL marketing Policy in the current form under the Document review there is no consideration for this demand change of environment concerns as well as corporate social responsibility as an opportunity to be exploited (UCL marketing Policy, 2001). This study assumes that organisations marketing Products should adopt Marketing Policies with environmental characteristics in order to gain a competitive advantage over organisations marketing non-environmentally conscientious substitutes. This therefore means that long term competitiveness at UCL has a question mark.

This study realises that in the current business perspective sustainability issues like environment concerns and Corporate Social Responsibility play a critical role in marketing. Nearly all the governments around the world have concerns about green marketing activities hence have attempted to control environment issues. In actual fact in Uganda an organisation NEMA (National Environment Management Authority) has been established by an act of Parliament to manage this great Concern. As conservation stance, rather than a consumption stance, is adopted ecologically friendly marketers are left with no choice but to choose the true environmental costs of all the decisions.

Table.5: Correlations for Marketing Policy and Competitiveness

Correlations			
		Marketing Policy	Competitiveness
Marketing Policy	Pearson Correlation	1	.547**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	160	160
Competitiveness	Pearson Correlation	.547**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	160	160
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Correlations explanations for Marketing Policy and Competitiveness

The test of Pearson’s Correlation had results in Table 5 which indicated that overall, there was a very strong positive significant relationship between Marketing policy and Competitiveness ($r(160) = .547, P < 0.01$). These findings imply that a good marketing policy could enhance competitiveness at UCL. This also indicated that marketing Policy was the guide for UCL in enhancing the level of competitiveness.

Table 6: Coefficients for Marketing Policy and Competitiveness

Model		Coefficients ^a			t	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients			
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.285	.316		4.072	.000
	Marketing Policy	.610	.074	.547	8.206	.000

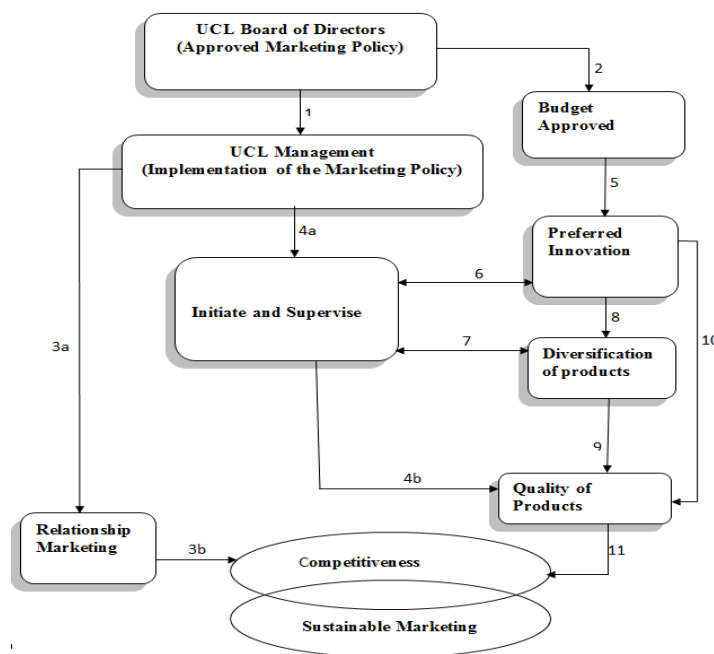
a. Dependent Variable: Competitiveness

The regression explanation for Coefficients for Marketing Policy and competitiveness

The regression results in Table 6 shows that Marketing Policy the predictor variable and Competitiveness the criterion variables are statistically significantly related (Beta.547, P<0.01). This statistic revealed that the null hypothesis (H_0^1) which stated that “there would be no significant relationship between Marketing Policy and Competitiveness” was rejected and instead the alternative hypothesis (H_a^1) that “there would be significant relationship between Marketing Policy and Competitiveness” was supported.

In spite of the current strategic focus on marketing policy and competitiveness there was still need to improve the whole spectrum and hence the current study initiated the following new Model to enable companies remain sustainably competitive.

Fig.1 Sustainable Preference Marketing Model (SUPMAP MODEL)



Key concepts and Operationalisation of the SupMap Model

- **Approved Marketing Policy: (AMP):** For a marketing policy to be successful it must be approved by the Board of Directors.

- **Implementation of the marketing policy:** The first (1st) arrow shows that after approval of the Marketing policy the Board passes it on to Management for Implementation.
- **Approved Budget (AB):** The second (2nd) Arrow shows that the board approves a budget to provide a financial framework for the decision making process and that the Marketing policy implementation has been planned for.
- **Relationship Marketing (RM):** The third (3rd) arrow is composed of two arrows (3a and 3b) which clearly shows that implementation of the Marketing Policy alongside Relationship marketing Strategy leads to Competitiveness.
- **Initiation and Supervision:** The fourth (4th) arrow is composed of two arrows (4a and 4b) which show that good quality of products is achieved through Initiating & supervising Holistic organisational Systems.
- **Preferred Innovation:** The fifth (5th) arrow shows that preferred Innovation will take place where a specific allocation of the approved budget will cater for it.
- **The sixth (6th) arrow** shows that management initiates and supervises preferred innovation and that it is a continuous process.
- **Diversification of Products:** The Seventh (7th) arrow shows that the process of expanding business opportunities through additional market potential of an existing product is initiated and supervised by company Leadership and is continuous.
- **The eighth (8th) Arrow** shows that preferred Innovation is connected to Diversification of products and all must have a budget approved.
- **Product Quality (PQ):** The ninth (9th) Arrow shows that diversification of products is intended to improve the Quality of products.
- **The tenth Arrow (10th)** shows that preferred Innovation is intended to improve the Quality of products.
- **Competitiveness (C):** The eleventh (11th) arrow shows that Quality of products leads to Competitiveness and that there is a link between all the other arrows which all aim to augment Quality of products to enhance Competitiveness save for the third arrow which has a direct link to Competitiveness.
- **Sustainable Marketing (SM):** the last relationship in the new model Shows that competitiveness is interconnected to Sustainable marketing and that all other relationships should work together to achieve sustainable Marketing that will stand the test of time.

5. CONCLUSION

In a nutshell the proposed SUPMAP Model clearly indicates the interaction between marketing Policy approval and implementation in consonant with relationship marketing strategy and the approved budget, preferred innovation, diversification products that lead to quality of product will achieve competitiveness hence

facilitating sustainable marketing. Sustainability has therefore become an important issue in company marketing policies because customers welcome information on sustainable lifestyles.

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