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DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT

The effects of product positioning on company performance. A case of grain marketing board.

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**SUBMITTED TO THE MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE BACHELOR OF COMMERCE
HONOURS DEGREE IN MARKETING MANAGEMENT**

(HMRK)

YEAR 2014

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

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RELEASE FORM

STUDENT REGISTRATION NO: R102089V

DISSERTATION TITLE: The effect of product positioning on company performance. A case of Grain Marketing Board Zimbabwe.

DEGREE TITLE: Bachelor of Commerce Marketing Management Honours Degree

YEAR THIS DEGREE GRANTED: 2014

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DEDICATION

This reseach is dedicated to my late parents, my young sister and my young brother, will always thank God for making your dreams come true.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My first acknowledgements goes to my supervisor who worked with me for the completion of my reseach. Also my sincere gratitude goes to Capernaum Trust who helped me a lot through financial assistance. I also offer my deepest appreciation to my little son and my husband for their consistent love, care and support. Their encouragements were of great importance this study. Lastly I would like to acknowledge all my university friends whom I shared ideas with during the course of this study.

ABSTRACT

The research was meant to assess the effects of product positioning on company performance. A case study of Grain Marketing Board Zimbabwe was used. The objectives of this study were to assess consumers brand association of the Silo products, to evaluate the impact of Silo brand communication on brand awareness and to assess if Silo brand identity matches consumer perceptions. Literature gaps were identified on the areas like the match between brand identity and consumer perceptions. There were very few scholars that did the research on this area. In this research, exploratory and descriptive research design was used. The researcher used non probability sampling techniques which were convenience sampling and judgemental sampling. Judgemental sampling was used in the administering of questionnaires to employees while convenience was used while administering questionnaires to customers. A sample of 180 respondents was used and it contains 5 management, 5 wholesalers, 19 employees, 19 retailers and 132 individual customers. Consumers have a negative perception towards the Silo brand. Responses from the questionnaires show that the Silo brand is associated with poor quality and the company relies heavily on salespeople and exhibitions to communicate the Silo brand to the market. Brand awareness of the Silo brand is poor since it was noted that customers could not distinguish the Silo brand logo from competitors. Moreover the Silo brand identity mismatches with consumer perceptions. The perceptions of the customers' shows that customers have no trust in G.M.B products and that they associate the brand with poor quality. Moreover they said the brand has no unique products and also that the products have short shelf life. Also they complained that even their unique selling proposition is not matching with consumer perceptions. The researcher recommends that G.M.B should run away from the features/attributes approach of product positioning which emphasise a lot on the unique features of products and services and should rather adopt competitor's approach of product

positioning where it deliberately compares itself to competitors as a means of gaining the competitive advantage.

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter mainly focused on introducing the study to the reader and the following key features of this study are highlighted, background of study, statement of the problem, main objective aim of the research, methodology, delimitation of the study, limitations of the study and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of study

A lot of organizations are trying to manage the positions occupied by their products and are using different positioning strategies to change consumer's perceptions of the products. For a product to be successful in the market, good quality and popularity of a brand are not enough, brand positioning focuses on the process of creating and altering perceptions of consumers about a firm's products or brands (Crawford 1985). The product must occupy a clear, distinctive, and desirable place relative to competing products in the minds of target consumers (Kotler 2010, 45).

Within the beverage sector, Coca-Cola is one of the best recognized brands since the company managed to strategically position itself in the market. By adopting strategic positioning, where the company wants to have the same image around the world, the company built a strong brand position. Consumers have come to perceive Coca-Cola as a part of their daily life where they associate the brand with joy and happiness (www.coca-colacompany.com). This perception by consumers leads to a high degree of loyalty and makes purchasing decision more automatic. Moreover O.K Zimbabwe was successful in implementing its brand position. O.K brand is

associated with quality which then enhances it to have a competitive advantage (www.okzinvestor.com).

Grain Marketing Board (G.M.B) is one organization that has been trying to change consumer's perception of its Silo products. The birth of the Silo brand in 1996 resulted in easy acceptance of the brand on the market but it also faced stiff competition from Red Seal, Blue Ribbon, and Chibataura. Silo products were known by customers as high quality products. This was further enhanced by their unique selling proposition "Silo real taste for life". The Silo brand managed to build a positive perception in the mind of consumers. The G.M.B Silo products include silo rice, silo roller meal, silo refined meal, silo ground coffee, silo coarse salt, silo fine salt, silo chunks, silo jam pagoda rice, munch chewy maputi and also stock feeds. To effectively communicate with its customers, G.M.B used aggressive advertising through newspapers. Moreover, sales representatives and marketers also played a role in making the products well known. These communication channels had a positive effect on sales performance.

Unfortunately things changed in 2005 when sales started to decline. This resulted in 50% sales reduction by the end of 2006. According to the G.M.B Annual Report(December 2006) the 50% decline was from July 2006 to December 2006. In 2007 the Silo brand performed very badly in the market and this was worsened by the economic hardships in the country. According to the annual general meeting that was held in 2011, the statistics showed that the company's market share had decreased from 40% to 10% starting from 2009. To regain its market share the company started to introduce new products. Pagoda rice was introduced in 2012 and it was to compete with quality premium rice in the market such as Mahatma Rice. In 2013 G.M.B also introduced Silo jam, Silo chunks, Dely flour and Munch chewy maputi. The products failed to perform as per the company expectations. Kotler et al (2010) postulates that the brand's positioning must serve the needs and preferences of well-defined target market. The introduction of Pagoda Rice which was positioned as G.M.B's best quality rice did not satisfy

the customers. Pagoda was priced at a slightly higher price than Silo Rice. However, consumers were not pleased to the extent that they lost their trust in G.MB's products. Customers complained that the rice did not cook well. Apart from that, their packaging quality changed to low quality as evidenced by high breakages that were returned from deliveries. Also Dely Flour which was said to be a 'self-raising flour' failed to do so. Customers complained and orders for flour declined to zero (G.M.B Mutare Coffee sales report for May 2013). Also the awareness of Silo brand by customers went down. According to the markets visits reports that are conducted by the sales representatives, they showed that many consumers are not aware of Silo brands and they also do not know that the brand belongs to G.M.B as compared to the awareness of Probrands, Red Seal and many others.

1.2. Statement of the problem

G. M.B is facing stiff competition from its competitors and also a continuous decline in its sales performance. G.M.B Silo products were known to be of high quality and it occupied 40% of market share in 2009. However the market share decreased to 10% in 2011. Customers complained that the packaging quality changed to poor quality since there seem to be a lot of breakages. Moreover, customers complained that the rice does not cook well and also the self-raising flour was not raising. What should G.M.B do to maintain its positioning for high quality?

1.3. Objectives

- To assess consumers' brand association of the Silo products.
- To evaluate the impact of Silo brand communication on brand awareness.
- To explore if Silo brand identity matches consumer perceptions.

1.4 Research questions

- Does brand association affect Silo products?
- What are the effects of brand communication on brand awareness?
- Does Silo brand identity matches consumer perceptions?

1.5 Assumptions

The researcher assumed that:

- Customers' perceptions to the silo brand would remain the same during the period of the study.
- The respondents would be a true reflection of the population under study.
- The respondents would be honest and faithful in providing the data.
- The researcher would get maximum cooperation from Grain Marketing Board employees, management and customers.

1.6 Significance of study

1.6.1 To the company

This area of study might help the organization to improve on its overall performance through implementation of good brand positioning. The results will also provide in with some brand positioning strategies and how these strategies would improve the company's competitive advantage in the market.

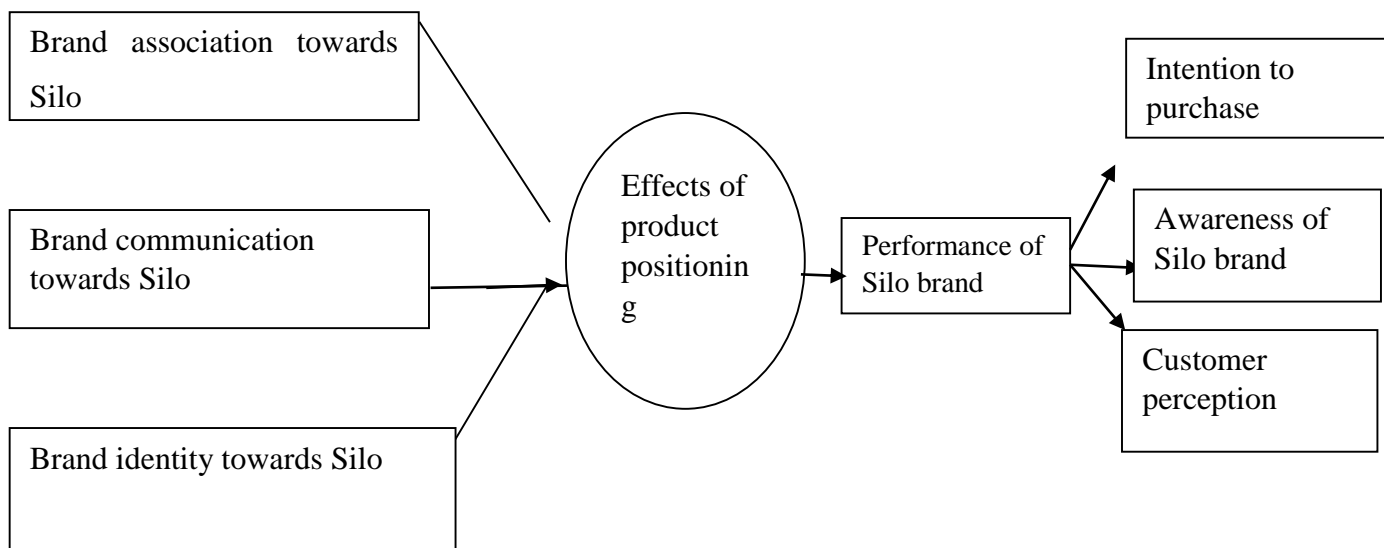
1.6.2 To the researcher

The study will help the researcher to broaden knowledge on the area of the study .Also at the end of the study the researcher will have knowledge on how to carry out a reseach and would be able to research in future.

1.7 Delimitations

- The research considered respondents from Mutare region.
- The research focused on product positioning strategies to be implemented.
- The data used for this research range from 2011 to 2014.

1.8 Conceptual Framework



1.9 Limitations

- The management was not disclosing all the information that they felt was sensitive although the researcher emphasised that the data was strictly for academic purpose only.

- The researcher also faced challenges due to the shortage of time however the researcher worked with the sample that could give accurate results.

1.10 Definition of terms and Abbreviations

The terms used in this study should be understood within the context below

- **G.M.B**-Grain Marketing Board of Zimbabwe.
- **Product positioning**-designing of company products or services and image based on consumers perceptions relative to those of competitors.

1.11 Summary

Looking at the general introduction of the company while describing the research problem of the company, the chapter had also laid the foundation of the entire study by stating the objectives of the research. Limitations, delimitations and general assumptions, of the study were also laid. Reviewing of literature from different scholars was done in the next chapter so as to gain some insights of what product positioning is all about and how it can help an organisation to improve its sales performance.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher aim was to provide literature that is relevant to the problem, Literature was critically evaluated and comparisons and evaluations of where the scholars and authorities differ was carried out. In this chapter the researcher will also go on further to contextualise literature, making it relevant to the problem, summarise major findings and trends ,establish gaps in knowledge and state the role of current research.

2.1 Brief history of product positioning

In the historical development of marketing communications, product positioning is perceived by other researchers as the final stage after product and image stages. (Karadeniz 2009).The scholar further reviews that in the 1950's and early 1960's the product life cycle was more considered however as a result of changes in the environment the basic features of that stage become less competitive and each product was seen as almost a discovery where unique sales proposal (U.S.P) had dominated the market. Product features and benefits become the most important staff in communication themes after the late 1950's and earl 1960's.The period where product features and benefits become more considered resulted when "me too products" were produced and being the duplicates of the powerful brands that were leading in the market. (Karadeniz 2009)

2.2 To assess consumers' brand association of Silo products.

Till et al (2011) propose that being generated to save the brand image and create meaning for consumers, brand image can be unintentional or intentional. The scholars also added that by using these brand associations managers are able to differentiate the brand from competitors and also to position their brands without resulting in problems. In addition, the scholars proposes that in order to positive influence consumer attitudes and purchase intentions it is accepted that management of brand equity should demand associations that need to be carefully selected, created and also maintained.

This is supported by Ergin et al (2006) who postulates that when consumers positively associate with a particular brand, they accept, favour and desire that brand and this will eventually affects their repurchase decisions. Ergin et al (2006) further expresses that it is therefore crucial for companies to put a great effort in creating strong, unique, one -of-a-kind associations with their brands. By doing so, they will be able to leave an imprint, a distinct position in the minds of their consumers. Several theorists put forward that a web of associations assist to place a brand in consumer's memory and help them to remember (Till et al 2011).

Ugla (2005) postulates that brand associations may be referred to as corporate brand association where corporate brand association is the links that a brand establishes to internal and external partner associations such as brands, persons, places, product categories and institutions and these associations add or subtract to end consumer image and equity derived from the corporate brand. This is supported by scholar Dean (2004), who notes that anything linked in a memory in relation to a brand is what is called brand associations. Dean (2004) further expresses that brand associations that are positive provide marketers with the ways to direct future product development, create advertising that appeals and also to secure and develop market share. The scholar proposes that before considering how positive brand associations can be made by marketers, organisations should first consider what they are doing,

the reason for them to pay attention to brand association in designing marketing strategies. An analysis of the above scholars views reviews that for a customer to have intention to purchase, brand association contributes a lot. This is because ability of a customer to associate a brand with either personal experience or any other linkage will then enhance a customer to quickly make a decision.

Brand associations if handled properly can create good brand image hence contributes to customer intention to purchase. This was reviewed by the empirical evidence study by Cass and Lim (2002) to find whether the consumer's perceptions held by young consumers in Singapore consisted of the non-product-related associations and also whether the associations were related to consumers purchase intention and brand preference. The results showed that non product related associations (personality, feelings, image congruency, perceptions and price) affect customer's intention to purchase. Dean (2004), goes on to say favourable opinions (preference and intention to purchase) will be heard by consumers to brands that have:

- Affordability and also value for money to its target market.
- A brand-user-imaginary that is congruent with the self-image of the consumers in the brand's target market.
- Feelings attached to it by consumers are positive.
- Positive valuation of the brand personality traits by the consumers target market.

If the association is favoured by consumers, the good things about the association may be carried over to a brand and hence drive to purchase intention. This is supported by Hyun Um (2013), when he reviewed that consumers build an associative link between two nodes, such as celebrity and the brand he or she endorses. However, the scholar also looked at the bad side of this. He reviewed that when scandal or bad press occurs, the associative link forged through the celebrity endorsement process will affect the evaluation of the celebrity endorser, the brand,

and purchase intention. This means that negative publicity about the celebrity endorser that is being associated with the brand will negatively affect the purchase intention of the brand.

2.3 Features of Brand Associations and their effect on intention to purchase

Till et al (2011) proposes five features of brand associations that are strength, favourability/valence, uniqueness, relevance and number.

2.3.1 Strength

Till et al (2011) reviews that the intensity of the connection between the brand node and the association is what is defined as the strength of association. According to the scholar, associations have different strengths that is they are characterised by stronger or weaker connections to the brand node. The more accessibility of the brand via spreading activation is enhanced by the stronger the association is. This is also supported by James (2005) in his view that brands with a very strong positioning based on intangible association have an advantage over brands with a more practical or market positioning that is associations with feelings, impressions and images.

2.3.2 Favourability

Till et al (2011), also reviews that favourability is the degree to which association is perceived to be positive or negative feature for a brand. They added that marketers actually fight to create more favourable associations since some associations are seen as more negative or positive than others. Thus for the association to be well favoured by consumers, companies need to use associations that are applicable to the marketed product. Thus for example if a company choses to associate their brand with the celebrity, that celebrity should be popular and well favoured by people. If the association is favoured, this will improve chances of intention to purchase.

2.3.3 Uniqueness

Till et al (2011), reviews uniqueness association as the degree to which the association is perceived as a distinct and different brand feature within the product category. They argue that some associations are more unique than others and this means that some associations may be shared with many competing brands and be typical for a product category while others may be unique to just one or a smaller number of brands.

2.3.4 Relevance

The relevance of the association is viewed as the number of people who perceive the association as valuable, important and purchase decision driving feature for a brand within the product category (Till et al 2011). In their addition to that, Till et al (2011) proposes that some brand associations are more relevant to consumers than others and they gave an example of Coca-Cola where the colour red is typically strongly associated with Coca-Cola.

2.3.5 Number

Till at al (2011), postulates that number is the number of associations in the consumer's associative network for a brand. However French and Smith (2013) argued that the number of associations is insufficient to measure brand association strength. French and Smith (2013), further express that the number of associations is important but so too is the structure (number of first order, second order and tertiary associations) and how these associations are linked together.

2.4Types of Brand Associations

James (2005) in his research notes that there are types of brand associations and they fall into 4 broad categories namely usage situations, product categories, product attributes and customer benefits. According to Uggla (2006), brand association types are put under the word partner associations. Uggla (2006) postulates that Partner associations are defined here as

associations secondary to the identity and more immediate territory of the corporate brand. The author further expresses that associations are linked to the corporate brand and these partner associations can be components, product categories, persons or even places with desirable reputation and high levels of brand awareness. Uggla (2006) further subdivides these partner associations into four broad categories that are brands products, places, product categories and institutions. Summing up both Uggla's and James's types of brand associations, Kwon and Lennon (2011) in their research come up with different types of brand associations where they postulates that consumers associate brands in accordance with self-relevance, service, merchandise and store environment.

2.4.1 Self-Relevance

Kwon and Lennon (2011), postulates that self-relevance associations include factors like user imaginary, self-image congruency, institutional factors, uniqueness, overall brand impression and popularity. The scholars further express that by user imaginary the consumer evaluate types of consumers that may buy and use the brand's merchandise, by self-image congruency consumers evaluate whether the brand's image fits his or her self-image or life style, by institutional factors consumers evaluate how unique or similar the brand is in comparison with other brands and lastly the social recognition of the brand.

2.4.2 Service

Kwon and Lennon (2011), postulates that by service associations' consumers take into consideration elements like sales people service, ease of return, service general and promotion or advertising. Consumers will be evaluating sales people's service performance, return and refund policies, overall service evaluation and specific aspects of the brand's advertisement.

2.4.3 Merchandise

Kwon and Lennon (2011), postulates that by merchandise associations' consumers also consider factors like merchandise style, price, merchandise quality, assortment variety, usage occasion and also value for money. Here consumers evaluate styling and fashion ability of merchandise, merchandise price range, material or construction quality of merchandise, level of merchandise assortment variety, merchandise price and value comparison and lastly times, places and occasions where the company's merchandise may be used.

2.4.4 Store environment

Kwon and Lennon (2011),also notes that consumers associations on store environment also include factors like experience and preference where consumers will be evaluating level of experience with the brand and liking or disliking of the brand.

However Ergin et al (2006), reveals types of brand associations as linked to most effective factors on brand associations which are the logo of the brand, the colour of the brand, country that the brand belongs to, the cingle of the brand and the slogan of the brand.

2.5 Purpose for brand Associations and their contribution on intention to purchase

Dean (2004), notes 3 main purpose for brand associations which are differentiation, generating positive brand attitudes and aiding consumer information retrieval.

2.5.1 Differentiation

Dean (2004) reviews that brand associations are able to differentiate the brands from competitors since they give a certain brand an identity that is unique. The scholar postulates that such differentiation is necessary and useful if the brand is to be defined and secure the sales by promoting it. The scholar further expresses that differentiation can come from different associations that include both positive and negative and also from those that are tangible and intangible. However, there is need for marketers to understand the attributes of their brand that

sets it apart from competitors and also to believe that the attributes will enhance positive difference.

2.5.2 Generation of positive brand attitudes

According to Dean (2004), the consumer's attitude to the brand is a function of how the consumer reacts to what he or she sees as the most important associations. Thus associating a brand to certain links can generate in building up positive brand attitudes to the consumers and when positive attitudes are build there are high chances of customers to want to purchase the brand. In this study, the researcher seems to know whether the associations attached to Silo brand are generating positive brand attitudes and also their effect on intention to purchase. However Dean (2004), further express that different associations have different impacts on the consumer and organisations should take note of that for example may be less significant than the consumer's experience of the product.

2.5.3 Aiding consumer Information retrieval

Dean (2004) review that consumer information about a brand is inconsistent and incomplete. He proposes that the consumer's ability to recall is assisted by the existence of positive brand associations-“it's the one in the big green box” or “Peter Kay does the advertising” and, as already, noted some associations are far more important, stronger than others. Consumers of course has some information about brands but for them to quickly remember they need to associate the brand with something. When a consumer is able to retrieve information about a brand its more likely that the consumer will have a high chance of intention to purchase than a consumer who can't even remember and have no information about that brand.

2.6 To evaluate the impact of brand communication on brand awareness

Marketing communication which is the strategy that organisations are using to persuade consumers to buy their products is contained in the marketing communication programme or

promotional mix. Sagar et al (2011), states that effectiveness of brand communication is based on identification of the right communication mix, media planning and the right impact on the customer. Situma (2012), reviews that the communication mix consists of a set of tools that could be used in different combinations and different degrees of intensity in order to communicate with the target audience. These marketing communication tools include advertising, personal selling, direct marketing, sales promotion, corporate social responsibility and public relations. Effective implementation of these communication tools will then result brand awareness.

Sagar et al (2011), note that there are 3 factors that determines overall awareness of a brand and these are brand recall, top of the mind awareness and brand recognition. The scholars further express that brand recognition is when the consumer is able to recognise the brand by knowing their slogans, mascots, logos, ambassadors, symbols, jingles and many others. Also they move on to say brand recall includes unaided and aided recall. Recalling a brand is the ability of a consumer to list the brands in a particular product category. Top of the mind awareness is higher position of the brand in the consumers mind and the consumer has the highest chances of purchasing that brand if want to make a purchase in that product category. In contradiction of that, Rudolf Esch et al (2006) review that brand awareness is important, but a limited measure of success. Sawant (2012), postulates that brand awareness is when a buyer is aware of the existence of the brand but the knowledge about it is limited and obviously has no particular emotional attachment to it as a result he may or may not think of purchasing the brand. In analysing Sawant's and Sagar et al views of brand awareness, they seem to agree that when a consumer is aware of the brand there is an element of knowledge about that brand. However Sawant fail to express the degree of awareness which is to what level is the consumer knowledge of the brand. Therefore the researcher prefers Sagar et al views of brand awareness.

2.6.1 Effects of Social media activities on brand awareness

Hutter et al (2013), on their research on how social media networks affect brand awareness review that social media is a relevant marketing communication for brands. They further express that the growing importance of applications like Facebook, YouTube and others in consumers' lives has an increasing influence on their communication habits. With consumers spending more and more time in the social media realm, an increasing share of communication occurs within these new social network environments. In respect to marketing communication, this means that brand related interactions and exposure to marketing campaigns increasingly take place within social media thus social media networks are now contributing a lot to brand awareness. This is because we are now operating in a new technological environment where everyone is spending most of time on these social media networks. Organisations should therefore take advantage of that to aggressively market their brands on these social media. By doing so there are high chances that every person who tends to use that social media will come across the brand that is being marketed hence increase brand awareness. However Hutter et al (2013), reviews that for social media to be effective companies should not engage in them because other companies are doing it or because it is thought to be improvement for modern and open image of brands. They further proposes that management should realise that social media is a vibrant instrument of marketing which if applied correctly can build brand awareness of the company

2.6.2 Effects of corporate social responsibility on brand awareness.

Scharf et al (2012), in their study to find out if organisations can achieve brand awareness through marketing efforts like corporate social responsibility, in their study to analyse Bradesco bank's corporate social responsibility advertising as a contributor to brand awareness, results showed that corporate social responsibility advertising can get results without using commercial appeals. Bradesco has done corporate social responsibility specific advertising

with no commercial appeal, and has achieved significant brand awareness results. Evidence showed that corporate social responsibility communication can be more effective when performed without the use of commercial appeals. Moreover the study also reviews that organisations belonging to segments that already have negative corporate images have no impediment to build brand awareness through corporate social responsibility advertising. Thus corporate social responsibility can be a success strategy to communicate the brand and enhance brand awareness. This is because in this market environment consumers seem to favour brands that are known by cooperating in their lives, community and many others (Scharf et al 2012).

2.6.3 Effects of advertising on brand awareness

It is argued that since brands are coming increasingly, every organisation's need is the confidence to deliver by none other than advertising which forms a vast superstructure with an autonomous existence and an immense influence (Sawat 2012). The current business market full of brands imitations, it is genuine that brand awareness becomes the main objective of advertising. Advertising is the communication link between the seller and the buyer and it does not simply provide information about the products and services but is an active attempt to influencing people to action (Sawat 2012). Advertising enhances a brand to be easily recognised since consumers will now be aware of that brand. Jean (2011), notes an advertising communication strategy that can be used to improve brand awareness. Jean (2011), expresses that brand parody can be used and it is mainly used to attack the competitors. Parody in advertising is mostly linked to a well-known character, a book, an event, a movie, television series. A competitor can be given permission to do brand parody in advertising.

2.6.4 Empirical evidence of the effect of brand parody on brand awareness.

In July 2006, Sony U.K authorised Tango to parody its bravia television spot. Indeed it was the same scenario (different coloured balls, representing the pixels of an LCD screen, hurtle down the streets of San Francisco). Tango a maker of fruit juices, simply transformed the balls into

fruits and used the same set and music. This authorised parody was perhaps linked to Sony's desire to appear in as many media as possible during the football world cup and to demonstrate to competitors that only the best are copied (Jean 2011). The main aim of parody is to bring a message that has the power to evoke laughter and this will improve the awareness of a specific brand and inspire prescribed position towards it. Experiences are showing that remembrance of advertisements is at its highest level when people are disclosed to humour. Thus when consumers are able to remember the brands because they have seen it being advertised, the results then is brand awareness (Jean 2011). However the scholar argued that parody is effective if the audience targeted is aware of the original brand which is parodied.

2.6.5 Effects of Trade shows and exhibitions on brand awareness

Trade shows and exhibition are another communication tools that organisations can use to market their products hence increase in brand awareness. It is when organisations are given chance to display their products at a chosen area and have the opportunity to market their brands to potential and existing customers and as a result this will increase brand awareness even to those who were not familiar of the brand. Situma (2012) review that trade shows provided the right environment through which exhibitors could advertise their products and services. The scholar proposes that trade shows and exhibitions are the right place where personal selling is put into place and customers who were not aware of the product will be aware. However Situma (2012) postulates that the choice of trade show as marketing method is often influenced by the organisation's marketing objectives. The scholar put forward that there different reasons for organisations to participate in trade shows and they include building brand awareness, introducing new products, reach customers cost effectively, generate additional sales and gain information about competitors.

2.6.6 Effects of Sponsorship on brand awareness

Sponsorship is also another communication strategy which organisations can use to gain awareness. By sponsorship organisations choose to offer help or to donate activities. This can be done by means of money or the organisation can offer its products so that they can be consumed at the event. Companies usually offer to sponsor sports activities since there will be a lot of people gathered hence brand awareness is enhanced. Tanvir and Shahid (2012), reviewed that in today's environment sports sponsorship plays a very wonderful function towards consumers and people give a lot of value. Thus sports sponsorship plays a wonderful function on establishing more prominent brand image which leads to brand awareness hence more purchase intention. Tanvir and Shahid (2012), postulated that the companies that are sponsoring the sports can influence the demand of purchasing products more effectively as compared to other modes of promoting tools. This is because when an organisation chooses to sponsor an event e.g. by offering its products, there are high chances that not all of the audience at the event were aware of the product maybe in terms of its taste, function etc. As a result those people that were not aware of the brand will be hence increased awareness to the brand.

Ghodeswar (2008), postulates that companies need to position their brands in the minds of consumers. To achieve desired goals of their communication strategy, companies have to break the clutter by evolving innovative ways to attract the attention of the target audience. Alongside the traditional media channels like newspapers, magazines, television, hoardings, public relations, etc., new media vehicles such as Internet, outdoor communications, sponsoring events, etc. offer opportunities for consumer involvement. Such innovative approaches can enable managers to minimize the impact of competition on their brands. Integrated brand communications and creative repetition through various types of media is a key to success in brand communications. Use of emotions in advertising appeals to the hearts and minds of the

consumers. A brand image should be created to establish an emotional relationship with the target audience (Ghodeswar 2008).

2.7 To explore if Silo brand identity matches consumer perceptions

Srivastava (2010), postulated that brand identity are unique set of associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain. It is the way the organisation aspires to present itself to consumers. The scholar further expressed that those associations represent what the brand stands for and imply a promise to customers for the organisation. Srivastava (2010), also reviewed that it is important that the unique selling proposition of a company's product should match with the unique customer perception. Srivastava (2010), further reviewed that the difference between company realness and consumer perceptual experience has to be reduced or rejected. Therefore marketers should play a big role so make sure that the identity of their brands does not go out of control.

In support of the above views, Ghodeswar (2008) reveals that brand identity is a unique set of brand associations implying a promise to customers and includes a core and extended identity. The scholars seem to agree on the notion that brand identity involves the associations and these associations tend to portray what it want to be perceived as by consumers. However Ghodeswar (2008), divided brand identity into core and extended identity where core identity is the central, timeless essence of the brand that remains constant as the brand moves to new markets and new products. Core identity broadly focuses on product attributes, service, user, profile, and store ambiance and product performance. Extended identity is woven around brand identity elements organised into cohesive and meaningful groups that that provide brand texture and completeness, and focuses on brand personality, relationship and strong symbol association (Ghodeswar 2008).

In addition to that, Linderberg et al (2012), states that brand identity is a set of distinct characteristics, applied in brand communication, making the brand meaningful and unique. In their thesis on how brand identity and brand image are connected and gaps that can occur between them, they proposed that it is important for a company's brand identity to match their customers' brand image. Brand managements must continually monitor the relationship between them, otherwise communication gaps can occur. Linderberg et al (2012), come up with a conceptual model which divides brand identity into four concepts which are personality, positioning, vision and culture and relationship. The gaps found in those elements can affect the brand identity negatively. Overall, the gaps found in personality can negatively influence customers' brand perception and affect the customers' benefit evaluation regarding the brand, the gaps found in positioning can eventually affect customers' brand perception and memorization of the brand and also disturb the customers' evaluation of the brand, the gaps found in Vision & Culture could provide unfavourable associations to the brand and also the gaps found in relationship could lead to negative effect on the differentiating factors and indicates that the company has not managed to add value to their brand. It could also stagnate innovation and success for the brand and have negative effects for profits (Linderberg et al 2012).

Brand identity is the company's definition of itself. The identity structure has different levels of identity associations the company wants to be attached to the brand that possess different importance depending on the context. The brand identity structure includes the notion of brand personality. As persons, brands have their roots in some origin that is most likely to affect their personality (Valin 2012). Even though the brand identity provides a deeper understanding about a brand, the brand image needs to be taken into considerations as well as it represents the way consumers perceive the brand. None of the brand identity elements matter if these are not communicated to the consumers and they will not associate these to the brand. A brand has

value only if consumers acknowledge its existence and associate the correct elements to it, in other words, only if consumers' brand image matches the brand identity defined by the corporation (Valin 2012). According to Viot (2011), brand identity warrants closer consideration. Different conceptualizations of the construct prevail and essentially reflect the various associations a marketer will generate for a brand in order to project a specific meaning and differentiate it from rival offerings.

An analysis of the above views of brand identity shows that the scholars were talking the same thing but only that they expressed it in different ways. In simple words brand identity is the opposite of brand image, it is what the brand is, its communication to the market and what it wishes the consumers to perceive it.

2.7.1 Empirical evidence on impact of brand identity on consumer perceptions. A case of Cinthol soap brand.

Cinthol is a contemporary brand and was launched by positioning itself as a masculine soap with unique selling proposition of "protection from bad odour". However soon the company realised that it had to experiment by trying out new things and coming out with different variants to be in tune with the changing consumer trends, the fast changing times and the growing power of today's women, Cinthol was repositioned to appeal to women. Cinthol has flip-flopped between the macho male, the bubbly flesh family and confident "women-about-town", resulting in a confused brand identity of the soap (Srivastava 2010)(Cinthol report 2006)

2.7.2 Benefits of brand identity that matches with consumer perceptions.

A strong brand identity that is well understood and experienced by the customers helps in developing trust which, in turn, results in differentiating the brand from competition Ghodeswar (2008). Moreover, by having a clear outward expression, companies can add perceived value to the brand, which can affect customers' evaluation process positively. It

could also make the brand stronger and more unique, considering more positive associations would be connected to the brand Linderberg et al (2012). When brand identity is well understood by consumers they tend to have a favourable perception to the brand and this could lead to a positive influence over other messages related to the brand. Well managed brand identity which matches with consumer perceptions can be useful when a company decides to introduce new products or to do product extensions. Viot (2011), postulates that through attributes linked to its personal or social dimensions, brand identity enables greater accuracy in estimating how a new product fits the parent brand. Additionally Viot (2011) believes that brand identity helps to better predict which extensions will be accepted. However Viot (2011), also reviews that negative impact on parent brand equity is possible even with extensions that are coherent with brand identity. One suggestion here is that certain brands become too “widely stretched”, resulting in extensions that are distant from original categories.

2.8 Summary

This chapter searched for literature related to the research topic and that has been derived by different scholars and authors. Areas covered include brand communication, brand association, brand identity and their contributions to brand awareness and consumer perceptions. However literature gaps were identified on the areas like the match between brand identity and consumer perceptions. There were very few scholars that did the research on this area. The next chapter stresses on the procedures, processes and methods of collecting data.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher give information and explanation on how the research was conducted. In this way the chapter looked at the research methodology and the design of the research. The population and sampling methods are explained along with the data collection techniques, the data analysis plan and finally the summary.

3.1 Research Methodology

The researcher used both qualitative and quantitative research. The researcher choose to employ qualitative reseach since it enables the researcher to reveal the target audience's range of behaviour and perceptions towards the Silo brand. Moreover by employing qualitative reseach, the researcher was able to observe, record and interpret nonverbal communication during the course of carrying out interviews. Quantitative research was also used by the researcher since the researcher used some structured closed questionnaires for both customers and employees.

3.2 Research Design

Basically there are three types of research designs which are exploratory research, descriptive research and causal research. In this reseach, the researcher used both exploratory and descriptive reseach. The researcher chose to employ exploratory reseach as it enabled the researcher to interview those who have knowledge and also a deep understanding of the Silo brand in terms of its association, awareness and also its identity. Moreover the researcher chose to employ exploratory reseach since there is flexibility and the researcher was not forced to set of questions.

Descriptive research design was selected by the researcher because during the interviews to employees, customers and management there were some questions that requires to know whether the respondents are aware of what really Silo is, about how they came to know about the Silo, what marketing strategies are being used by G.M.B to achieve awareness. The descriptive design allows the researcher to quantify the responses.

3.3 Population

The population for this research is made up of G.M.B management, employees and also its customers. However the target population for this research is management and employees from G.M.B Mutare Coffee and also the G.M.B customers (retailers, wholesalers and individual customers) based in Mutare. The targeted population amounted to 250 (5 management, 20 employees, 5 wholesalers, 20 retailers and 200 individual customers). The researcher decided to include employees in the target population since they are the ones who seem to have much of interaction with customers during service delivery and they might be aware of some customer perceptions towards Silo brand. Moreover, research objectives like evaluation of Silo brand communication can be better answered by employees especially those in the marketing department since they are the ones who are responsible for the implementation of marketing strategies. Also management was included in case of questions that are a little bit complicated and that employees cannot understand. Questions about the brand identity required the management to attempt to them since they are the ones who are well versed with the company vision, mission and objectives. Customers were chosen since they were going to contribute a lot to the research results. Researcher's objectives like assessment of the Silo brand awareness and customer perceptions needed the views of the customers hence gave the researcher the position to know the performance of the Silo brand.

3.4 Sampling

During the primary research, the researcher dealt with problems presented by large populations of study units especially when the researcher was dealing with customers. The researcher used non-probability sampling that is convenience and judgmental sampling methods.

3.4.1 Sample Frame

The whole management was sampled by the researcher and employees were chosen from the marketing department, sales department and production department since they were the departments that contain knowledge of how the Silo brand is performing. The production department was chosen since they are the ones who are responsible for all the production process and also delivering of orders.

3.4.2 Sampling procedure and Technique

3.4.2.1 Selection of management

Since the population of the management was small and also since the management were drawn from different sections that is production department, marketing department and also the human resource department, the researcher used census that is all the management were sampled.

3.4.2.2 Selection of employees

The researcher used judgmental sampling to choose various employees from various departments that is sales department, marketing department and production department so that they would answer the questionnaires. This method was selected by the researcher because it enabled the researcher to select only those who are more likely to give detailed information required on the purpose of assessing the Silo brand performance.

3.4.2.3 Selection of customers

The researcher used convenience sampling on the selection of individual customers and retailers. The researcher visited retailers that were convenient in terms of accessibility. Also while the visited retailers were responding to the questionnaires the researcher was busy giving questionnaires to individual customers in that particular retailer. However in the selection of wholesalers the researcher used census sampling since there were few wholesalers hence all of them were given questionnaires. The researcher also gave questionnaires to retailers who would have come to order their goods in an in a particular wholesaler thus convenient sampling was employed.

3.4.3 The Sample size

With the use of Krejcie and Morgan model (1970) of sample size determination, a total sample of 180 respondents was used by the researcher.

Table 3.1: Sample Composition

Respondents	Sample Size Selected
Management	5
Employees	19
Wholesalers	5
Retailers	19
Individual Customers	132
Total sample units	180

3.5 Sources of Data

Primary and secondary data was used by the researcher.

3.5.1 Secondary data

The researcher also collected data from market visits reports, order book, sales reports and annual reports so as to evaluate the Silo brand performance in terms of different variables which are related to the reseach objectives.

3.5.2 Primary data

Primary sources included G.M.B customers, management and employees. Primary data was obtained from employees and management at G.M.B Mutare Coffee with the means of a survey that was be conducted through questionnaires to employees and face to face interviews with management. Primary data was also used to add up to secondary data. Primary data was chosen by the researcher because of its more reliability, more accuracy and also gave the actual information required by the researcher.

3.6 Reseach Instruments.

The researcher used questionnaire, interviews and document analysis.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires were used by the researcher because they enable the employees to answer the questions at their free time hence less chances of mistakes to be made. Also by leaving the questionnaires, employees were able to fully understand the questions without rushing. However in the case of customers, questionnaires were used since they enable the researcher to ask closed ended questions that customers can easily understand hence easy analysis of data by the researcher. Distribution of questionnaires was done to G.M.B customers and employees at G.M.B Mutare Coffee. Closed ended questions was used by the researcher in the collection of data. The corded structured questionnaire were targeting the employees and customers and

they were asked to make one choice from a list of possible responses. Information that was collected using questionnaire include customers and employees perceptions towards the Silo products, the customers awareness of the Silo products, the association of customers and employees with Silo products and the employees communication of their brand. This information enabled the researcher to evaluate the performance of the Silo brand.

3.6.2 Interview

The researcher chose to interview G.M.B management since it then allows them to express their views and perceptions in relation to the Silo brand. Information of the Silo brand identity was also be collected through interviewing management. This enabled the researcher to have feedback regarding the performance of the Silo brand. Interviews to the management were chosen by the researcher since the management seemed to have less time to attend to questionnaires. In asking the questions, the researcher was guided by the set of questions which were written down and responses from management were noted in a note book.

3.6.3 Document Analysis

An analysis of market visit reports, sales reports, order book and annual reports will be done by the researcher. In the order book the researcher wanted to see whether there are new customers especially retailers and wholesalers who has joined to place their orders at G.M.B and the researcher was able to evaluate the Silo brand communication. In the market visit reports the researcher was looking for customers' views and perceptions hence was also able to evaluate the consumers Silo brand association. Also by analysing the sales reports and annual reports the researcher was looking for whether sales are increasing or decreasing hence be able to evaluate the performance of the Silo brand.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

To enable the researcher to conduct the research without some hindering factors, a letter from the faculty was granted to the researcher so that it can be used for introductory purpose. After collecting the letter, appointments were made by the researcher at G.M.B so as to avoid inconveniences. This was be done by use of telephone. While approaching the organisation, the researcher gave the faculty letter and his own letter to the receptionist who then proceeded to the G.M.B top management. Questionnaires were first revised by the management before distributed to other employees and after that they were distributed to the employees and management was then interviewed. The researcher left the questionnaires so that employees would attend them at their free time. After 2 days the researcher came back to collect the questionnaires, this was also applied to retailers and wholesalers but as for the individual customers the researcher waited for the customer to respond to the questionnaire. Interviews of management took 3 days since they have different appointment days. The whole data collection procedure took 10 days.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

The questions were designed in such a way that they were able to answer reseach objectives so as to enhance their validity to the reseach. By the implementation of questionnaires to customers and employees and conducting interviews G.M.B management, the data that was gathered was reliable.

3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation

After the process of gathering data, the data was presented with the use of tables and graphs. For qualitative data the researcher is recorded what the management says and where necessary quotations of what they say was be made. As for quantitative data the researcher used SPSS version 22 to analyse the data.

3.10 Summary

This chapter highlighted the methods used by the researcher in the reseach process. It shows the research design, population and the sampling procedure attempted. The next chapter is about the data presentation, analysis and interpretation of data.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter concentrate on the results that were obtained from the reseach using the selected research design, the research instruments, and the data collection procedures. The raw data was sorted, grouped, analysed and was also translated to give meaning to it. The analysis was done with the use of SPSS. This conclusions about the research findings were obtained by the researcher.

4.1 Response rate

The reseach response rate for both questionnaires and interviews was high as indicated in the tables below.

Table 4.1 Questionnaire response rate

Category	Questionnaires given to respondents	Questionnaires returned from respondents	% of total questionnaires returned
Employees	19	15	78.95
Wholesalers	5	5	100
Retailers	19	15	78.95
Individual customers	132	100	75.76
Total	175	135	83.415

Source: Primary data

Since most of the respondents were cooperative the researcher managed to get 83.415 response rate from questionnaires. The researcher distributed a total of 175 questionnaires to G.M.B employees and customers. From employees, 19 questionnaires were distributed and only 15 employees managed to answer the questionnaire correctly thus 4 of them were spoiled. As for retailers, 19 questionnaires were distributed and only 15 were taken back by the researcher, this is because 4 of those retailers were closed when the researcher went back to collect questionnaires. However wholesalers' questionnaires were all answered without any mistakes thus giving 100% response rate. Although the researcher waited for customers while answering questionnaires, out of 132 distributed only 100 were retrieved back by the researcher. 20 customers did not answer the questionnaire correctly and 10 of them went away with the questionnaire while the researcher was attending to other customers.

Table 4.2 Interview response rate

Category	Number of management	Interviewed management	% of total interviews
Management	5	5	100%
Total	5	5	100%

Source: Primary data

The researcher was able to interview all the management and a 100% response rate was obtained. This is because the researcher had previously made appointments with the management.

4.3 Respondents Demographics

The findings from the research showed that the overall responses that was obtained from individual customers was mainly dominated by more females than males. The findings are represented by the table below.

Table 4.3 Demographic sex for individual customers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	35	35.0	35.0	35.0
	Female	65	65.0	65.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

The above table showed that 65% of the respondents were females and 35% were males. This showed that more women tends to be more familiar with the Silo brand since they are the ones who did the cooking.

However between the males and females, the findings showed that 33% are of 15-25 years, 40% is of 25-40 years and 27% is of above 40 years. Thus the sample contains respondents from various age groups hence reduced bias.

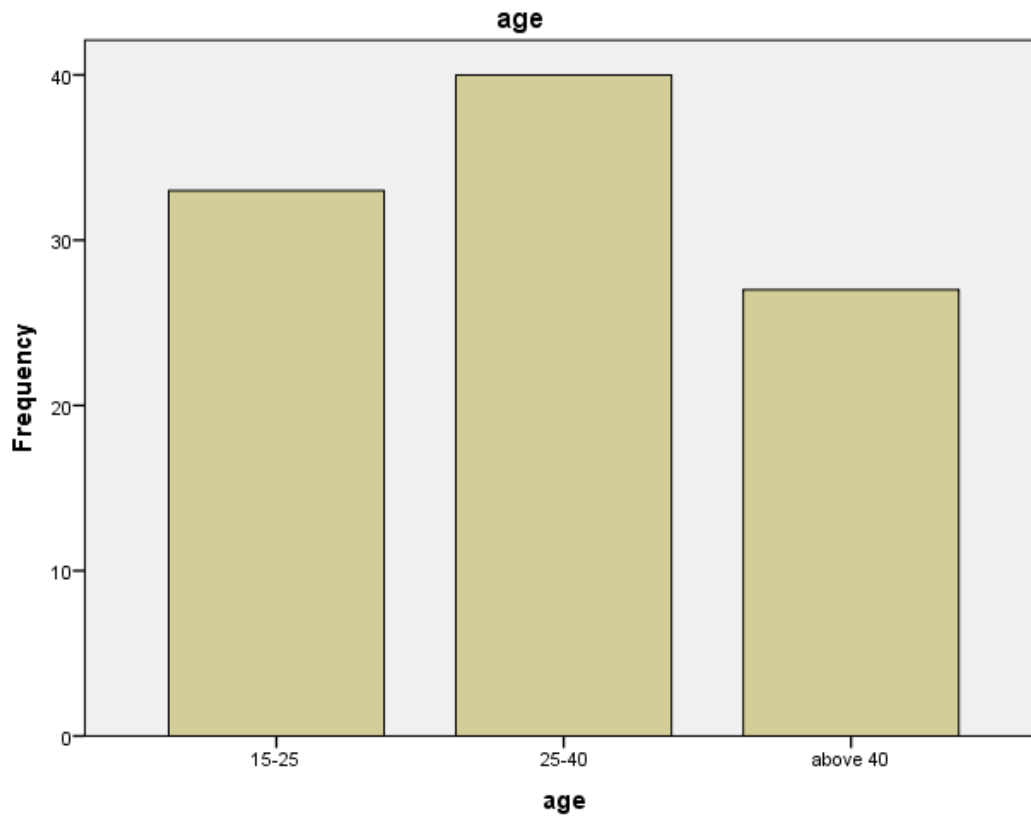


Figure4.1 Age groups for individual customers.

Moreover the response rate for employees in terms of their period of working in G.M.B shows that many of them have been working in G.M.B for long time. This is represented by the table below.

Table 4.4 Employees period of working at G.M.B

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 yr.	2	13.3	13.3	13.3
3 yrs.	2	13.3	13.3	26.7
above 6yrs	11	73.3	73.3	100.0
Total	15	100.0	100.0	

The findings showed that 13.3% have been working in G.M.B for 1 year, 13.3% have been also working in G.M.B for 3years and the larger percent which is 73.3% have been working in G.M.B for more than 6 years. This gives the accurate data since the large respondents who were responding have been working in G.M.B for long time hence they know much about the Silo brand.

4.4 Consumers brand association of the Silo products.

Brand association of the Silo brand was overall measured in terms of quality, shelf life and uniqueness. From the overall findings, the reseach showed that customers associate Silo brand with bad performance in relation to quality, shelf life and uniqueness. While answering questionnaires customers were saying the Silo brand is of poor quality since their rice does not cook well and also their self-rising flour does not raise. This is represented by the table below.

Table 4.5 Silo brand association for Individual customers

		Quality	Uniqueness	Shelf
N	Valid	100	100	100
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		2.8300	2.7100	2.8200
Median		3.0000	3.0000	3.0000
Mode		3.00	2.00	3.00

The above table shows that out of the 100 respondents from individual customers the mean response from the added response of 1 strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree is 2.8300 for quality, 2.7100 for Silo products uniqueness and 2.8200 for shelf life. Thus on average the customers tends to disagree with Silo brand’s association to good performance in terms of

quality, unique products and long shelf life as shown by the means. Moreover this is also supported by the responses derived from retailers who said the brand has a short shelf life as evidenced by large breakages, weaves in Silo rice. This is represented by the showed table below.

Table 4.6 Silo brand association for retailers.

		Sell	Unique	Poor
N	Valid	15	15	15
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		2.0000	1.9333	3.6667
Median		2.0000	2.0000	4.0000
Mode		2.00	2.00	5.00

The above table shows responses from retailers in relation to the Silo brand association. Out of the 15 responses from retailers, they showed that the mean for those that were saying Silo brand sells fast is 2, those that were saying it has unique products were 1.9333 and those that were saying it has poor quality products was 3.667 and it's the highest from the other means implying that retailers also associate the Silo brand with poor quality. Moreover the responses that were obtained from wholesalers were also in support of the individual customers and retailers. The responses for wholesalers in relation to the Silo brand association is represented by the table below on the next page.

Table 4.7 Silo brand association for wholesalers.

		Sale	Unique	Poor
N	Valid	5	5	5
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		1.6000	1.6000	2.0000
Median		2.0000	1.0000	2.0000
Mode		2.00	1.00	2.00

The table also shows that the mean responses from the added response of 1 strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree is 1.600 for the quick sell of the Silo brand, 1.6000 for the uniqueness of the Silo products and 2.000 for the poor quality of the Silo brand. Overall, the mean for the quick sell of Silo products and uniqueness showed a greater extent that wholesalers were disagreeing that the brand sell quickly than its competitors and also that it has unique products. The mean for poor quality shows the extent that wholesalers were agreeing that the Silo brand is a poor quality brand.

4.4.3.1 Silo brand is a quality brand

To evaluate the consumers brand association of Silo brand, quality was also used to measure and below are the findings.

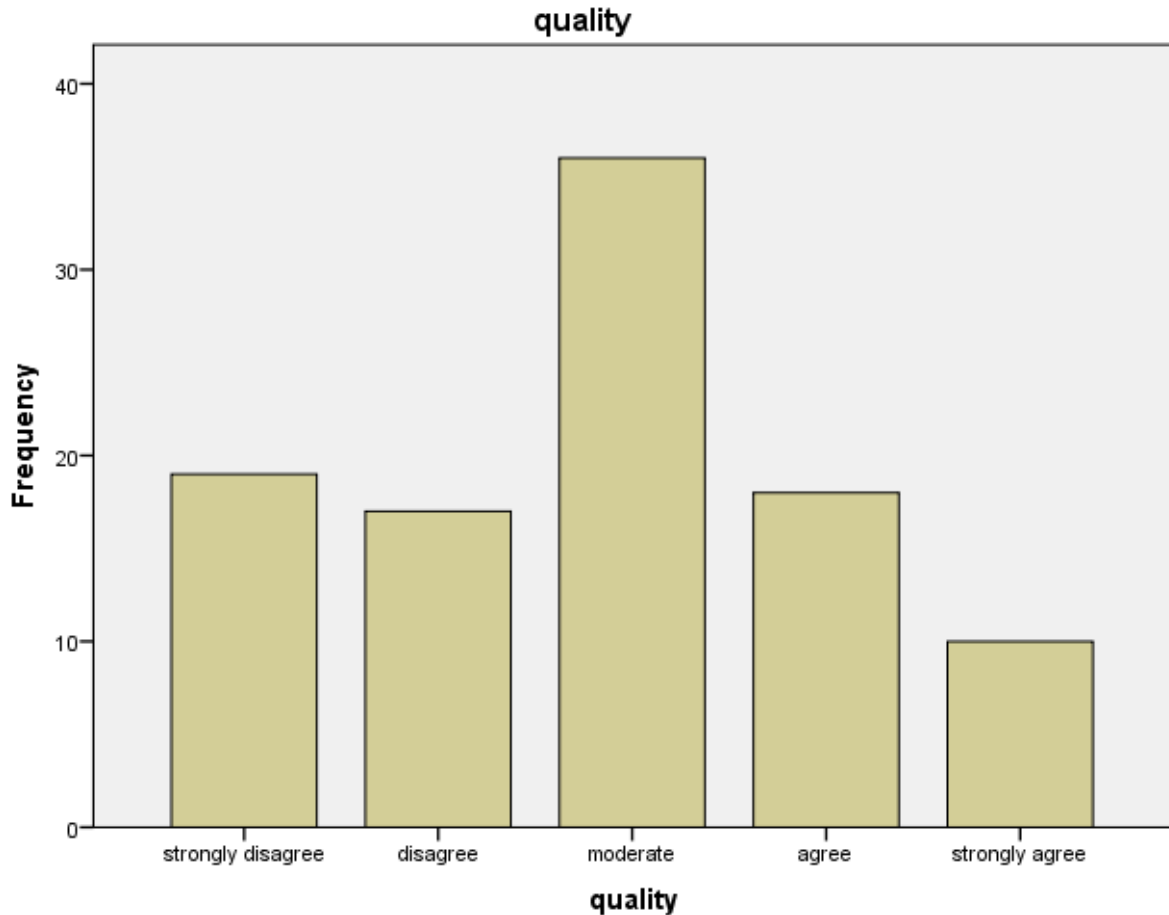


Figure 4.2 Individual customer Silo brand association on quality

The above information from individual customers showed that 19% strongly disagree that Silo brand is a quality brand, 17% also disagree that Silo brand is a quality brand. The total percentage of customers that were not supporting that Silo brand is a quality brand is 36%. 10% strongly agree that Silo is a quality brand and 18% also agree that it is a quality brand and they add up to 28% and 36% are saying the quality for Silo brand is on moderate. The research findings also showed that those that agreed that Silo brand is a quality brand were those above 40 years who used to know Silo as a quality brand and they still perceive it as quality brand. However comparing those that agree and those that disagree, the large percentage tends to disagree that Silo is a quality brand.

From the employee’s perspective, the findings showed that even the employees were not supporting the question that Silo brand is a quality brand. The table below represent responses from employees.

Table 4.8 Employees Silo brand association on quality

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	2	13.3	13.3	13.3
Disagree	6	40.0	40.0	53.3
Moderate	5	33.3	33.3	86.7
Agree	1	6.7	6.7	93.3
strongly agree	1	6.7	6.7	100.0
Total	15	100.0	100.0	

The above table shows that 13.3% strongly disagree that Silo brand is a quality brand while 40% disagree giving a total percentage of 53.3. Employees that agree were 6.7% while 6.7% also strongly agree giving a total of 13.4. However 33.3% said the brand is on moderate in terms of quality. Employees were saying this is not the Silo brand that they used to know and they were saying they are now receiving more customer complaints pertaining to the quality than in the past. Moreover the employees from the production department were saying they are also experiencing large sales returns of breakages. Moreover when management were interviewed, they said their customers associate their brand with quality. However one manager is quoted as saying “the quality has deteriorated”. Moreover the researcher also interviewed the management on the reasons for customers to buy their products rather than competitors. The

management were saying the brand has been in the market for a long time and customers has become loyal to the brand. This implies that management know that some customers don't buy their products because of good quality but because they have been loyal to the brand.

4.4.3.2 Silo brand has unique products

Uniqueness was also used to measure the consumers brand association and the following findings were obtained.

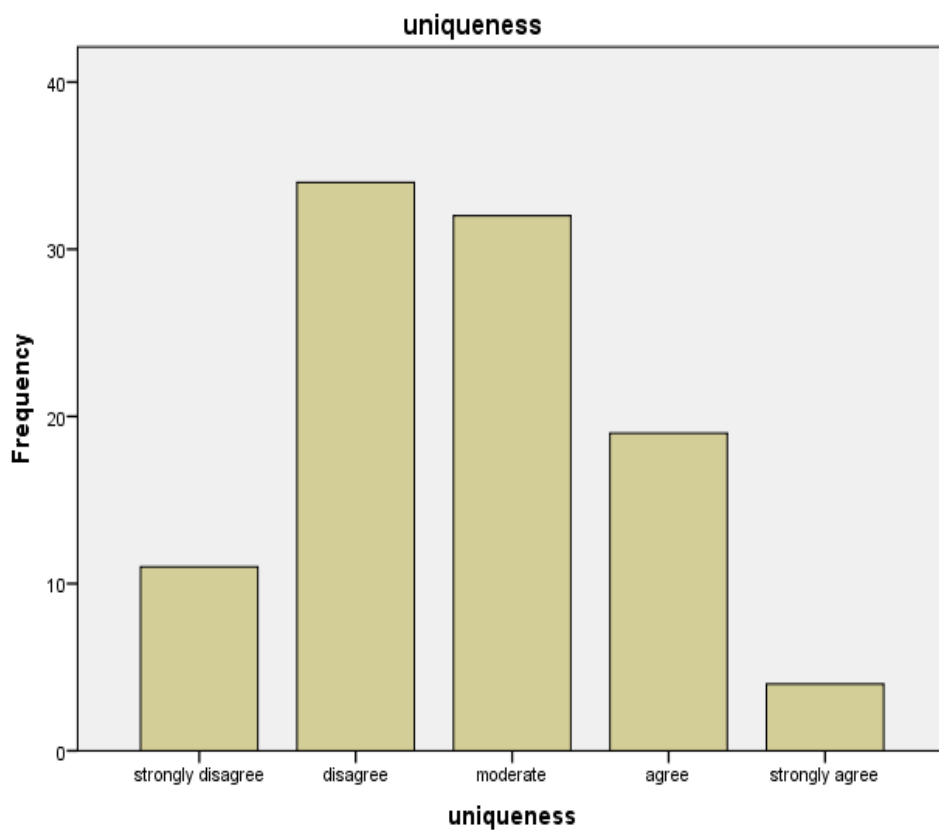


Figure 4.3 Consumers Silo brand association on uniqueness of the products.

The above data which was obtained from customers showed that 11% strongly disagree that Silo brand has unique products, 34% disagree that Silo brand has unique products, 32 % are at moderate, 19 % agree and 4% strongly agree. Overall the responses shows that Silo brand does

not have unique products. This was also supported by the employee's responses on whether the Silo brand has unique products which is shown in the table below.

Table 4.9 Employees Silo brand association on uniqueness of the products.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	1	6.7	6.7	6.7
Disagree	5	33.3	33.3	40.0
Moderate	7	46.7	46.7	86.7
Agree	2	13.3	13.3	100.0
Total	15	100.0	100.0	

Findings on the measurement of whether Silo brand has unique products reviewed that many employees were disagreeing.6.7% strongly disagree and 33.3% disagree and gives a total of 40%.However 13.3% agreed that Silo brand contains unique products but its far less to those who disagree.46.7 said Silo products are on moderate in terms of uniqueness. In support of the above data, through the analysis of the secondary source(order book) by the researcher , the researcher noted that there are no new customers who have joined to order their goods at G.M.B rather the existing customers are even lowering the quality of order they used to take. This implies that the G.M.B products are not unique since they are even failing to attract new customers.

4.4.3.3 Long shelf life

Also in trying to find out what exactly does customer associate Silo brand with, its shelf life was also used.

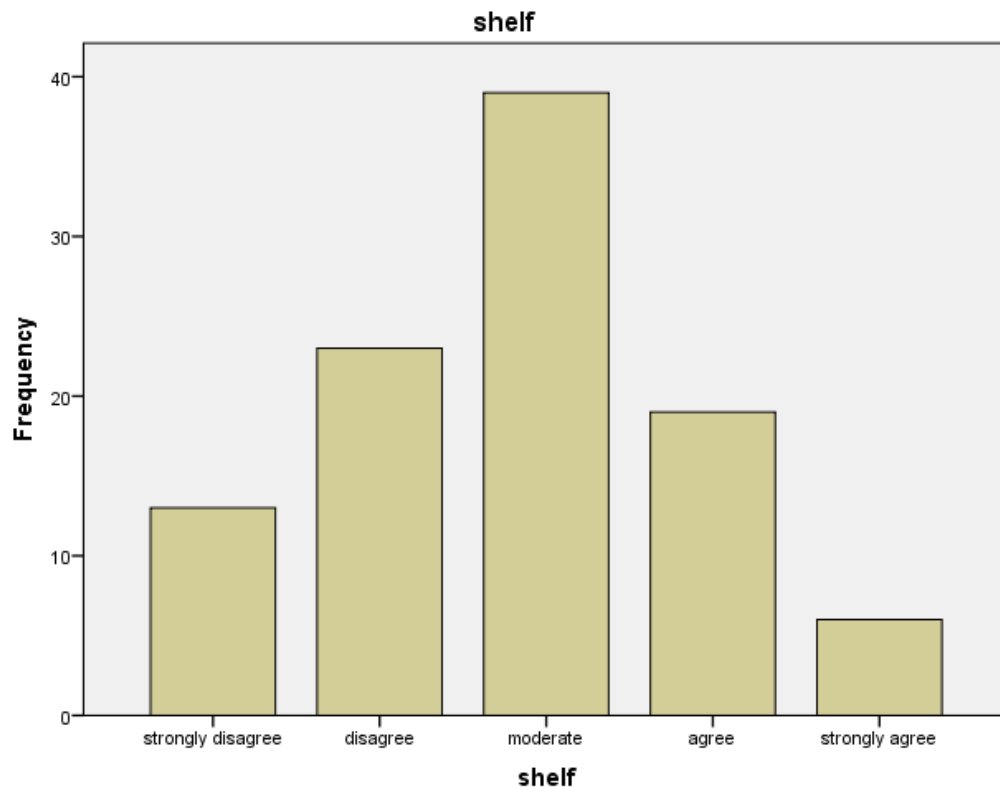


Figure 4.4 Individual customers Silo brand association on shelf life

The above data which was obtained from customers showed that 13% strongly disagree that Silo products has a long shelf life, 23% disagree that Silo products has a long shelf life, 39% were at moderate, 19% agree that it has a long shelf life and 6% strongly agree. An analysis of the above responses showed that a larger percentage seem to disagree that Silo products has a long shelf life. This implies that maybe the packaging is poor or maybe the products themselves are not of high quality that they quickly get infested. This was also supported by the responses from wholesalers.

Moreover in trying to find out the consumers associations of Silo brand in terms of whether they associate the brand with positive things or anything good, a question on whether the Silo brand sell quickly was asked to retailers and wholesalers. The responses that are shown on the diagram below are for wholesalers.

Table 4.10 Wholesalers Silo brand association on Positive perceptions.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	2	40.0	40.0	40.0
Disagree	3	60.0	60.0	100.0
Total	5	100.0	100.0	

The above findings shows that 40% strongly disagreed that Silo products sells quickly and 60% also disagree with that. Overall there is no even a small percentage that supported that the Silo products sells quickly and this implies that customers tends to purchase the Silo products after long periods. This may also because customers already associate the Silo products with negative perceptions and they seem to avoid purchasing the brand. This was also supported by the responses from retailers as seen by the responses below.

Table 4.11 Retailers Silo brand association on Positive perceptions.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	3	20.0	20.0	20.0
Disagree	9	60.0	60.0	80.0
Moderate	3	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	15	100.0	100.0	

The findings shows that 20% of retailers were strongly disagreeing that the Silo products sell quickly, 60% also disagree and 20% were saying the rate at which the Silo brand is sold is on moderate. Another retailer while returning the questionnaire to the researcher was commenting that when a customer comes and want to purchase rice, if there is only Silo rice left the customer would move to other retailer searching for a different brand. This implies that customers already associate the brand with poor quality.

4.5 Impact of Silo brand communication on brand awareness.

The impact of Silo brand communication on brand awareness was measured in terms of the media of advertising that is used by G.M.B to make the customers aware of the products, ability of the customers to distinguish the Silo brand logo from others and also the top of mind brand awareness which is measured by the customers first choice of Silo brand in purchase decisions. The overall results showed that customers are not well aware of the Silo brand as thought by the company. This is shown by the results below.

Table 4.12 Individual customer Silo brand awareness

		Salespersons	Exhibitions	Logo	Choice
N	Valid	100	100	100	100
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.8600	3.7600	2.8600	2.2000
Median		4.0000	4.0000	3.0000	2.0000
Mode		5.00	4.00	3.00	2.00

The table shows that the mean for customers who get to know about Silo through sales persons is 3.8600 and through exhibitions is 3.7600. This implies that G.M.B is only using sales persons and exhibitions to make their products to be known by customers and the mean showed that the two media are trying in terms of their performance to make the Silo brand awareness. However the data also showed that the mean for those who are able to distinguish Silo brand logo from competitors is 2.8600 which implies that on average people are not able to distinguish the brand logo from competitors and the mean for those that first search for Silo when want to make a purchase is 2.2000 which also implies that on average the rate at which customers will first search for Silo brand is very low. This implies that on average, customers are not able to distinguish the logo from competitors and also their first choice is not the Silo brand when purchasing. This is caused by methods of brand communication that is being used by G.M.B is not effective since they are not enhancing brand recognition, top of the mind awareness and brand recall as postulated by Sagar et al (2011), when they said brand awareness is characterise by the customers' ability to recognise the brand by their logos, jingles, symbols, slogans, mascots, ambassadors and many others.

4.5.1 Sales Persons

The results from customers showed that those who strongly agree that they get to know about Silo through sales persons were 38%, 20% also agree that they get to know about Silo brand through sales persons, 32% were on moderate and 10% disagree that they get to know about Silo through sales people. The percentages showed that G.M.B is effective in its sales persons though its awareness is still poor. This means that maybe the sales people are not well explaining the real Silo brand to customers. The graph below represent the responses from customers.

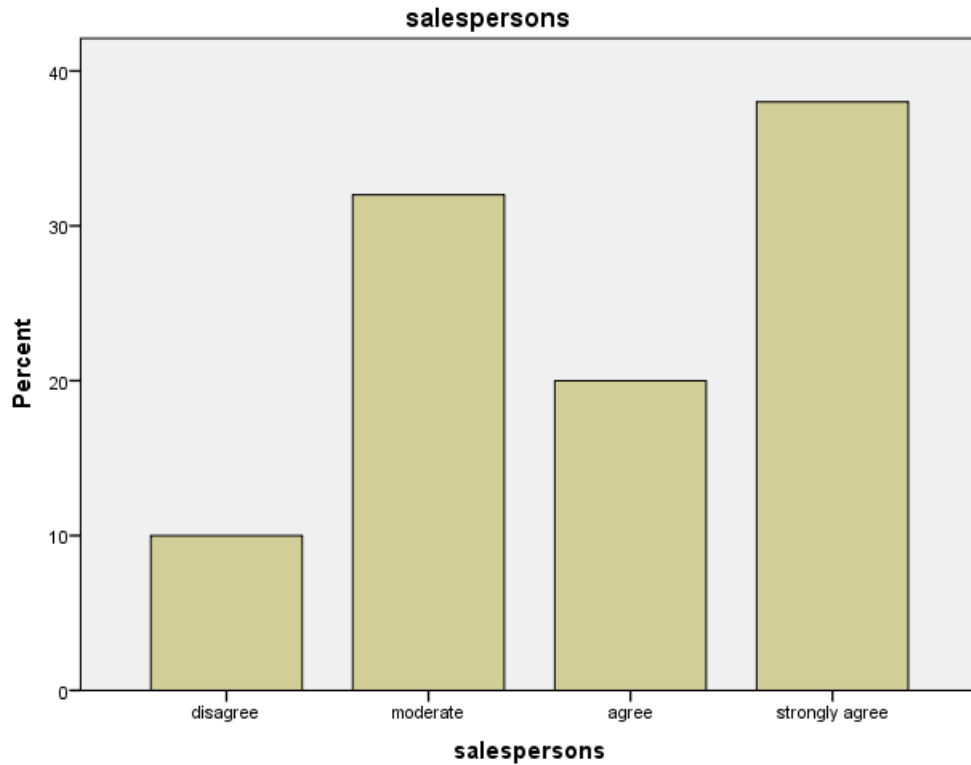


Figure4.5 Individual customer Silo brand awareness through sales persons.

This is also supported by responses from employees who in their responses indicate that they are heavily using Sales people and exhibitions in communicating their brand. This was also previously seen by the customer’s responses on how they come up to know about the Silo brand. The diagram below shows the employees responses on their ways of communicating their brand.

Table 4.13 Company brand communication through sales persons.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Moderate	5	33.3	33.3	33.3
Agree	5	33.3	33.3	66.7
strongly agree	5	33.3	33.3	100.0
Total	15	100.0	100.0	

The above findings shows that 33.3% of the employees strongly agree that they communicate their brand through sales persons, Again 33.3% agree and 33.3% are on moderate.

4.5.2Exhibitions

Exhibitions is also playing a major role in making a brand awareness to the customers. This is evidenced by the high percentages of customers who agree that they also get to know about Silo through exhibitions. This is shown by the table below.

Table 4.14 Individual customer silo brand awareness through exhibitions.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	3	3.0	3.0	3.0
Disagree	7	7.0	7.0	10.0
Moderate	26	26.0	26.0	36.0
Agree	39	39.0	39.0	75.0
strongly agree	25	25.0	25.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

4.5.3 Logo

In trying to find whether the customers were aware of the Silo brand, question that asked whether customers are able to differentiate Silo brand logo from others was asked in questionnaires. Below are the responses that were obtained from individual customers.

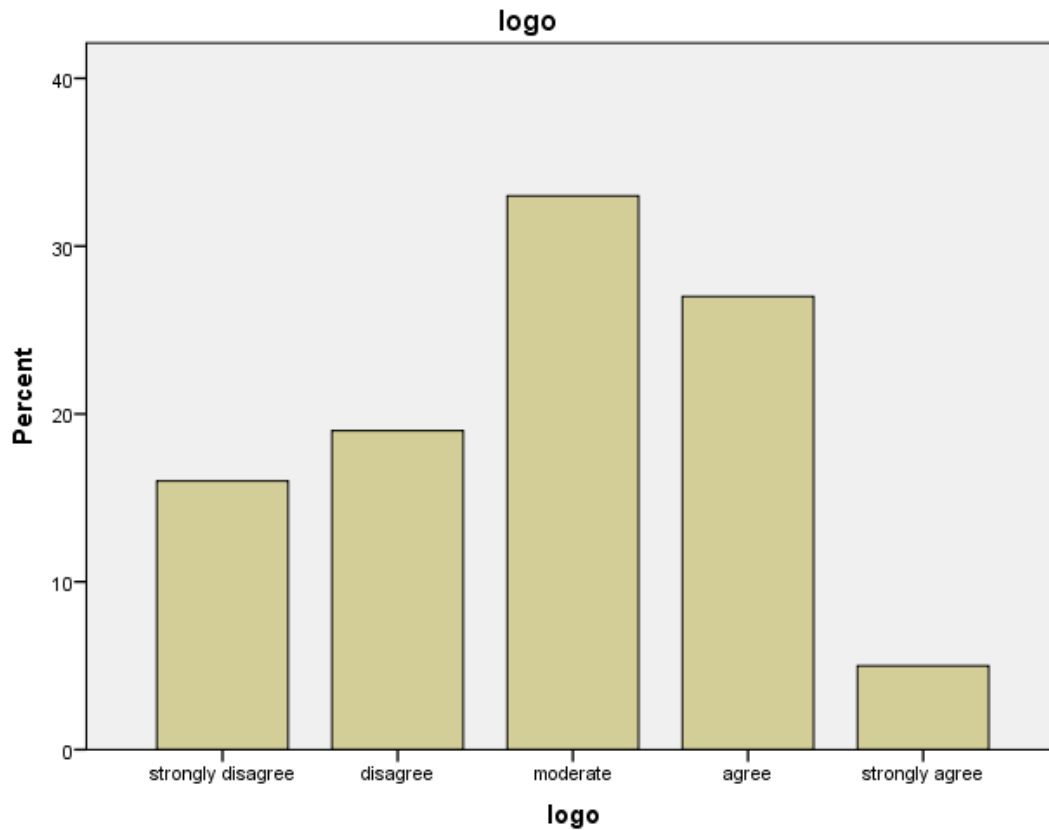


Figure 4.6 Individual customer's ability to differentiate Silo brand logo from competitors.

The diagram findings shows that 16% strongly disagree that they are able to distinguish Silo brand logo from competitors, 19% also disagree while 33% is on moderate. However 27% agree that they can be able to distinguish Silo brand logo from other brands while 5% strongly agree. The percentages of those who said they are able to distinguish silo brand logo from competitors is less than those who said they can implying that customers are not aware of the Logo. During the interviews with the management, the researcher asked the management on how customers were able to differentiate their brand from competitors and it seems that were not sure and one manager is quoted saying think it's our packaging but lam not sure". The researcher also asked the management on how their logo look like and it seems that they were facing difficulties to express what their logo looks like. This implies that maybe the logo is not designed in a way that even customers can easily recall it.

4.5.4 Choice

In trying to measure top of mind brand awareness that states that when a customer is aware of the brand, the position of the brand in the consumers mind is high and the consumer has the highest chances of purchasing that brand if want to make a purchase in that product category, a question that evaluate whether the customers has high chances of purchasing the Silo brand was asked. Below are the responses that were obtained.

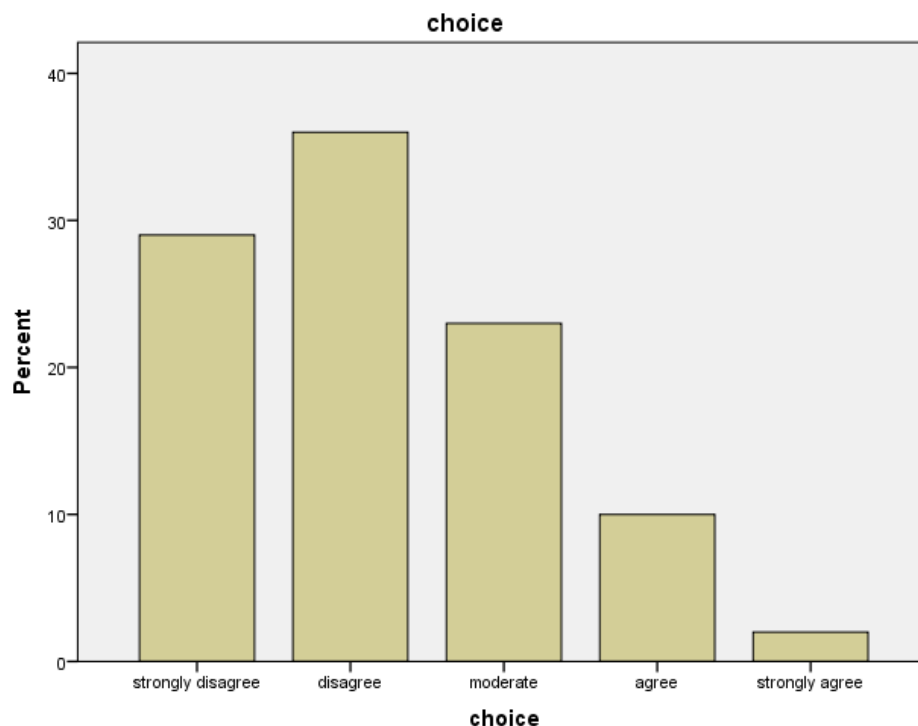


Figure 4.7 Customers first choice for Silo brand.

The researcher found that 29% strongly disagree that their first choice is the Silo brand whenever they want to make a purchase in food category, 36% also disagree, 23% moderate, 10% agree and 2% strongly agree. The overall high percentage rate showed that many customers prefer to purchase other brand as compared to Silo brand. This shows they are not aware of the brand.

4.6 Silo brand identity matches consumer perceptions.

The researcher's results on if Silo brand identity matches with consumer perception reviewed that they mismatch. Overall what G.M.B want it to be seen by customers is different from what customers are seeing from G.M.B. Below is the table that shows the results.

Table 4.15 Silo brand identity match with consumerperceptions.

		Search	Taste	Expectations
N	Valid	100	100	100
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		2.3400	2.1800	2.2300
Median		2.0000	2.0000	2.0000
Mode		2.00	2.00	2.00

The table shows the means for elements that were asked so as to find whether Silo brand identity is matching with its brand image. On average the results showed that the mean for customers to first search for Silo brand in their purchase decisions is 2.3400 which is very low and this implies that customers maybe has a negative perception of the Silo brand and this is not matching with its brand identity. Also the mean for customers who said that the Silo products taste better than its competitors was 2.1800 which is also low and it seem not to match with the company's unique selling proposition "Silo real taste for life". Srivastava (2010), postulates that it is important that the unique selling proposition of a company's product should match with the unique customer perception. Moreover the mean for customers who said the products that are introduced by G.M.B are meeting their expectations is represented by 2.2300 which is also very low.

4.6.1 Search for Silo brand

The table below shows the responses from individual customers when the researcher was measuring the perceptions that they have in relation to the brand hence an evaluation of if they are matching with brand identity.

Table 4.16 Individual customer’s perceptions towards Silo brand.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	23	23.0	23.0	23.0
Disagree	37	37.0	37.0	60.0
Moderate	26	26.0	26.0	86.0
Agree	11	11.0	11.0	97.0
strongly agree	3	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

The responses shows that 23% strongly disagree that they first search for the Silo brand when want to make a purchase in food category, 37% also disagree, 26% are on moderate, 11% agree and 3% strongly disagree. The responses implies that consumers have negative perception of the Silo brand as shown by the large percent that was disagreeing and this does not match with its brand identity. This is also supported by the employees’ responses when they were asked if their customers have trust in Silo brand. The diagram below shows the response from employees.

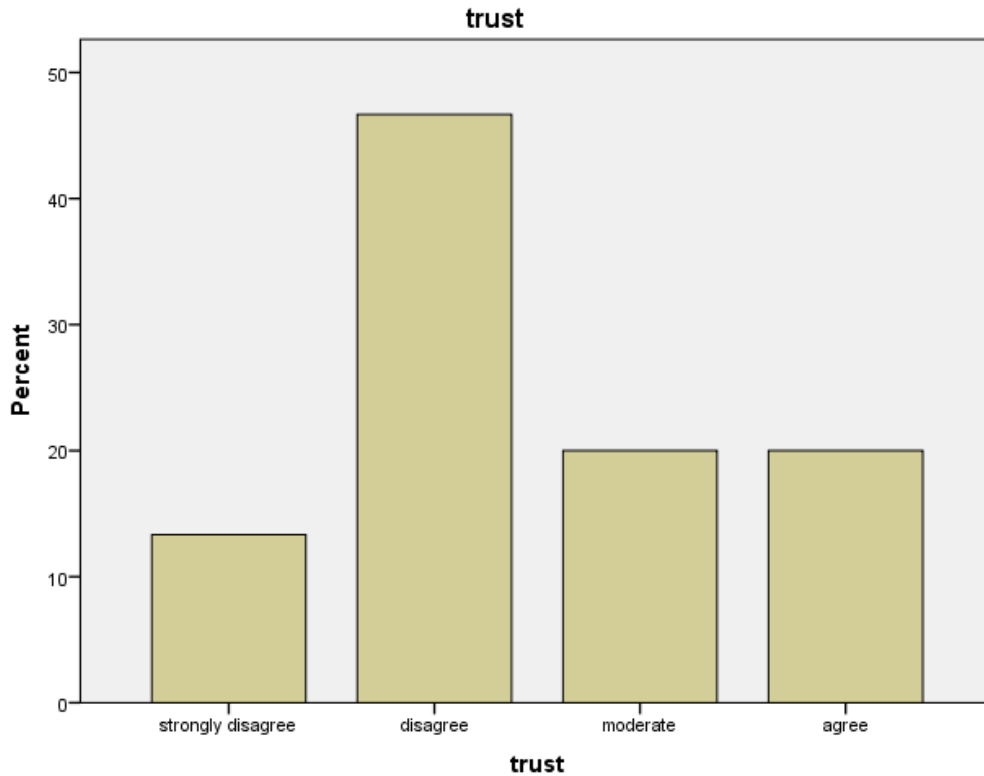


Figure 4.8 Customers trust in Silo products.

The findings shows that 13.3% of the employees strongly disagree that their customers have trust in Silo brand, 46.7% also disagree, 20% are on moderate and 20% agree that their customers have trust in their brand. An analysis of the responses shows that many of the employee disagree that their customers have trust in the Silo brand as shown by the large percentages. Employees were commenting that when new products are introduced they are facing difficulties to convince customers to try the new products especially the wholesalers as they will be saying they fear that the product will perform badly in terms of sales.

The element of whether all the products that are introduced by the by G.M.B are meeting customers' expectations was asked by the researcher and the following table shows the responses that were obtained from customers.

Table 4.17 G.M.B new products meeting of customer expectations.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	24	24.0	24.0	24.0
Disagree	39	39.0	39.0	63.0
Moderate	27	27.0	27.0	90.0
Agree	10	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

The findings shows that 24% strongly disagree that all the introduced Silo products are meeting their expectations, 39% disagree, 27% is on moderate and only 10% agree. Customers were commenting that they now even fear to purchase new product of G.M.B as the want to avoid disappointment from bad performance of the product.

The above data is also supported by the responses from the retailers when they were asked if get customer complains pertaining to the Silo brand. Below is the presentation of the data that was obtained

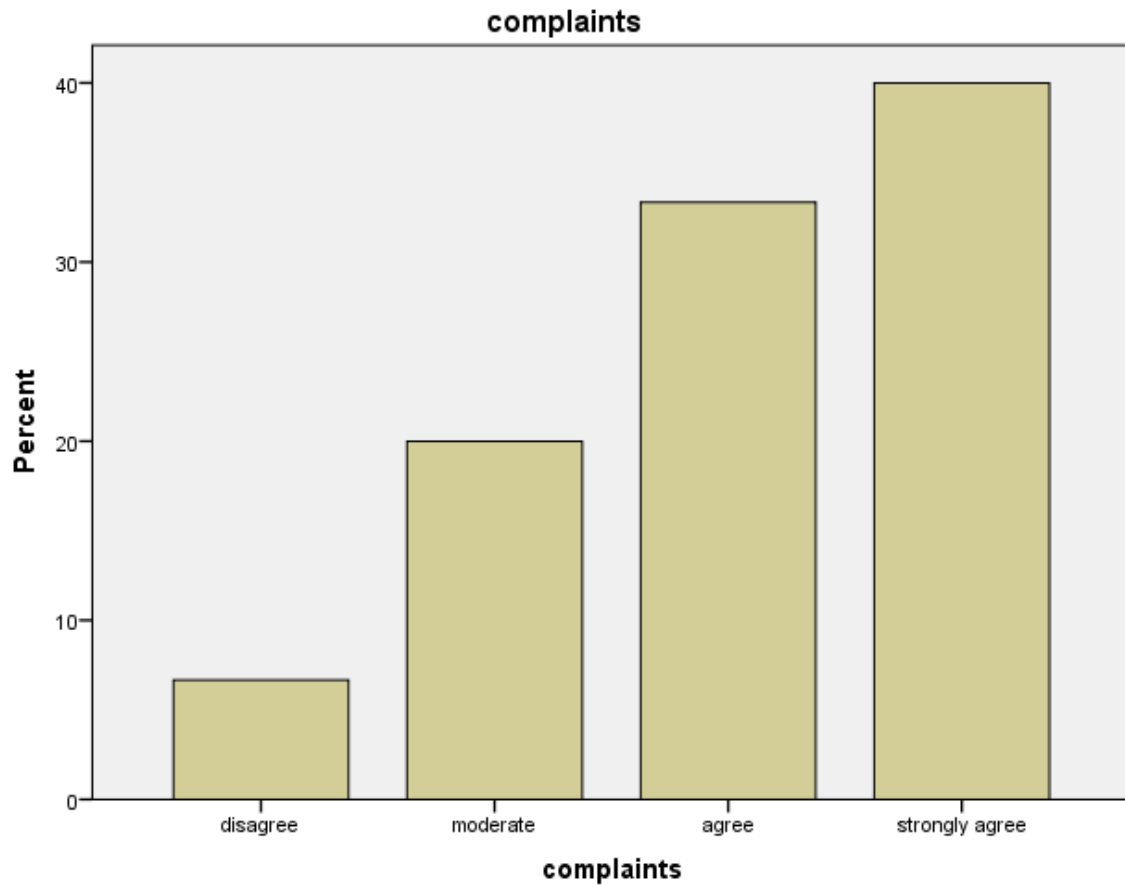


Figure 4.9 Retailer’s customer complains of the Silo brand.

4.7 Summary

The chapter looked at the data presentation, analysis and interpretation of the responses that were obtained from the reseach. Tables and bar graphs were used to present the data while SPSS version 22 was used to analyse the data. The next chapter focuses on summary, conclusions and recommendations for the study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Summary

The previous chapter looked on the findings which the researcher obtained and were analysed and presented using tables, pie charts and bar graphs. This chapter outlines the conclusions coming from the research as well as the recommendations that the researcher feels will be appropriate and can help improve the performance of their brand. However the researcher found it necessary to revisit the research objectives while concluding. The objectives of this study were to assess consumers brand association of the Silo products, to evaluate the impact of Silo brand communication on brand awareness and to assess if Silo brand identity matches consumer perceptions. Secondly the research sought to effectively answer the research questions in relation to the effect of product positioning on company performance, a research was carried out at G.M.B Mutare Coffee and to customers based in Mutare through the use of questionnaires and interviews.

Product positioning has been found to be the important factor that enhances company performance. Organisations need to invest and embark on product positioning strategies that enhance good company performance. Product positioning in this study is more or less the same as brand positioning with the following elements brand identity, brand image, brand association and brand communication. Basically, this research sought to determine the effect of product positioning on company performance by evaluating the contribution of the consumers brand association of the Silo brand looking on the elements like quality, product shelf life and uniqueness, evaluating the impact of brand communication on brand awareness and identifying the contribution of brand identity that matches with brand image on company performance. The researcher therefore conducted surveys with G.M.B employees, management and

customers to find the effects of product positioning element on the company performance. On whether management understand the concept of product positioning, the researcher discovered that management still believes that in terms of quality they are still performing like what they used to do in the past hence this gave them the thought that consumers still associate their brand with quality which is different from the customers view. Moreover, in terms of the brand communication, the company thinks it is performing up to the best through the use of sales people and exhibitions and they are very sure that the market is aware of the Silo brand which is different from the customer's side. Additionally the questions that were asked to customers by the researcher so as to find out whether Silo brand identity matches with consumer's perceptions showed that consumers have built a negative perception towards the Silo brand.

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 Consumers brand association of the Silo brand.

Consumers have a negative perception towards the Silo brand. Responses from the questionnaires show that the Silo brand is associated with poor quality as shown by 53.3% of employees who disagreed that customers associate their brand with quality and even the management confirmed that the quality has deteriorated.

5.2.2 Impact of Silo brand communication on brand awareness.

- G.M.B relies heavily on salespeople and exhibitions to communicate the Silo brand to the market. This was supported by 66.6 % of employees who agree that they are using sales people and 64% of customers who said they get to know about the Silo brand through exhibitions.
- Brand awareness of the Silo brand is poor since 88% of the customers noted that they could not distinguish the Silo brand logo from competitors.

5.2.3 If Silo brand identity matches consumer perceptions.

It is concluded that the Silo brand identity mismatches with consumer perceptions. The perceptions of the customer's shows that customers have no trust in G.M.B products, that they associate the brand with poor quality, they said the brand has no unique products, the products have short shelf life and that even their unique selling proposition is not matching with consumer perceptions. This is shown by 45% of customers who disagree that the Silo brand has unique products and 32 % said the products are on moderate while the remainder disagree. Also 80% of wholesalers disagree that the Silo products sell much faster than its competitors implying that customers don't buy because they have a negative perception of the Silo brand which does not match with their brand identity.

5.3 Recommendations

G.M.B should run away from the features/attributes approach of product positioning which emphasise a lot on the unique features of products and services. The company unique selling proposition "Silo real taste for life", G.M.B is actual the opposite of the customer's perceptions and the quality of the product is poor. G.M.B should rather adopt competitor's approach of product positioning where it deliberately compares itself to competitors as a means of gaining the desired position for their product in the mind of the consumer. Moreover, the company can adopt price and quality approach of product positioning which are the dimensions used by consumers in evaluating alternative brands.

5.3.2 Consumers brand association of the Silo brand.

The findings from the reseach showed that brand association contributes a lot to company performance. The researcher recommends the G.M.B to focus on improving the product quality and durability so that the customers can have strong attribute to associate the brand.

5.3.3 Impact of brand communication on brand awareness.

The findings gave a proof that brand communication has a large impact on the brand awareness which also affect company performance. The researcher recommend that G.M.B to uses marketing strategies that are able to communicate their brand to a large audience. The findings showed that despite the company use of sales people and exhibitions and yet customers are not aware of the Silo brand. The researcher recommend G.M.B to use bill boards, social media advertising, engage in social responsibility programmes and also sponsor events to improve their brand awareness. The researcher also recommend G.M.B TO also celebrity endorsement advertisement so as to improve its brand association. Moreover the company need to further train their sales people so that they can be able to well communicate their brand to customers. In addition to that, the company can also give free samples to consumers. This will increase brand awareness.

5.3.4 Recommendation on assessment of if Silo brand identity matches consumer perceptions.

The findings shows that Silo brand identity does not match with consumer perceptions. To maintain their identity that they are known for producing quality products, the researcher recommend the company to revisit their quality control measures. Also the researcher recommend the company that before they introduce their new products they should benchmark with those of competitors so that they can be able to come up with unique products thus matching the consumers perceptions with their brand identity.

5.4Areas for further research.

The reseach could be extended to a private milling company .A parastatal like G.M.B usually has management decision challenges.

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR G.M.B EMPLOYEES

I am carrying out a study on the effects of product positioning on company performance. Please may you help by responding to the questions below? Your opinions, ideas, beliefs and suggestions are of great importance to this research; and they will be used for academic purposes only.

Section A: Demographics

Tick the appropriate boxes or responses below.

1) Gender.

Male (1)

Female (2)

2) Period of employment.

1year (1)

3years (2)

more than 6six years (3)

3) Department deploys.

Production (1)

Marketing (2)

Sales (3)

Accounting (4)

Rating scale for the following questions: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=moderate, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree

Section B: Silo brand association

SDA SA

4) Our customers think the Silo brand is a quality brand.

1 2 3 4 5

5) Our customers think the Silo brand has a long shelf life. 1 2 3 4 5

6) Our customers think the Silo brand has unique products. 1 2 3 4 5

Section C: Silo brand image.

7) Our customers have trust in Silo products. 1 2 3 4 5

8) Our customers know that the Silo products taste good. 1 2 3 4 5

9) Silo brand sales are high in the market. 1 2 3 4 5

Section D: Silo brand awareness

10) We advertise through: national media	(1)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exhibitions	(2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Road shows	(3)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct marketing	(4)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bill boards	(5)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Celebrity endorser	(6)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social responsibility	(7)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sponsorship	(8)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sales people	(9)	<input type="checkbox"/>

11) Our packaging is distinct. 1 2 3 4 5

YOUR COOPERATION IS WELL APPRECIATED.

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMERS

I am carrying out a study on the effects of product positioning on company performance.

Please may you help by answering the questions below? Your opinions, ideas, beliefs and suggestions are of great importance to this research; and they will be used for academic purposes only. Feel free and confident to express your views.

Section A: Demographics

Tick the appropriate boxes or responses below.

1) Gender.

Male (1)

Female (2)

2) Age.

(1) 15-25years (2) 25-40years (3) 40years and above

Rating scale for the following questions: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=moderate, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree

Section B: Silo brand association

SDA SA

3) Silo brand is a quality brand. 1 2 3 4 5

4) Silo brand has unique products. 1 2 3 4 5

5) Silo products have a long shelf life. 1 2 3 4 5

Section C: Silo brand image

6) I will always first search for Silo brand whenever I want to make a purchase in food category.

1 2 3 4 5

7) Silo products tastes better than its competitors.

1 2 3 4 5

8) All the products that are introduced by G.M.B are meeting our expectations. 1 2 3 4 5

Section D: Silo brand awareness

I came to know of Silo brand through: national media (1)

Exhibitions (2)

Road shows (3)

Direct marketing (4)

Bill boards (5)

Celebrity endorser (6)

Social responsibility (7)

Sponsorship (8)

Sales people (9)

9) I am able to distinguish Silo brand logo from other brands.

1 2 3 4 5

10) Whenever I want to make a purchase in the food category my first choice is the Silo brand.

1 2 3 4 5

YOUR COOPERATION IS WELL APPRECIATED.

APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RETAILERS AND WHOLESALERS.

I am carrying out a study on the effects of product positioning on company performance. Please may you help by answering the questions below? Your opinions, ideas, beliefs and suggestions are of great importance to this research; and they will be used for academic purposes only. Feel free and confident to express your views

Section A: Demographics

Tick the appropriate boxes or responses below

1) Type of business.

Retailer (1)

Wholesaler (2)

2) Period of operation.

5-10 years (1)

10-20 years (2)

20-40 years (3)

40 and above (4)

3) Period of doing business with G.M.B.

5-10 years (1)

10-20 years (2)

20-40 years (3)

40 and above (4)

Rating scale for the following questions: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=moderate, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree

Section B: Silo brand association

SDA SA

3) Silo products sell quickly 1 2 3 4 5

4) Silo brand has unique products. 1 2 3 4 5

5) Silo brand has poor quality products. 1 2 3 4 5

Section C: Silo brand image

6) Silo products sell much faster than its competitors. 1 2 3 4 5

7) Whenever we want to order food products that are found within the Silo brand, we always prefer to order the Silo brand. 1 2 3 4 5

8) We get customer complains pertaining to the Silo Brand. 1 2 3 4 5

Section D: Silo brand awareness

9) We have come to know Silo brand through: National media (1)

Exhibitions (2)

Road shows (3)

Direct marketing (4)

Bill boards (5)

Celebrity endorser (6)

Social responsibility (7)

Sponsorship (8)

Sales people (9)

10) Silo brand packaging is attractive.

1 2 3 4 5

YOUR COOPERATION IS WELL APPRECIATED.

APPEDIX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MANAGEMENT

I am carrying out a study on the effects of product positioning on company performance.

Please may you help by responding to the questions below? Your opinions, ideas, beliefs and suggestions are of great importance to this research; and they will be used for academic purposes only.

- 1) In your own opinion what do you think customers associate your brand with? Give reasons.
- 2) What do you think are customer's reasons of buying your products instead of your competitors?
- 3) How do customers differentiate your brand from competitors?
- 4) Do you ever come across customers complains of the Silo products.
- 5) Do you think Silo brand is well liked in the market? Give reasons
- 6) What are the sales volumes for Silo products like on the market?
- 7) What message are you trying to communicate to the consumers in relation to the Silo products?
- 8) Do you think the market is aware of the Silo brand?

YOUR COOPERATION IS WELL APPRECIATED.

