

Marketing Performance of Quantity Surveying Consultancy Firms

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Abstract The enormity of changes and the intensity of competition that are being experienced in the construction industry coupled with the quest for growth, profitability and survival of firms in such a fast changing highly competitive business environment have made the adoption and implementation of marketing in the management of construction business/enterprise indispensable. However, the *ad hoc* nature that characterizes the industry's approach to marketing has resulted in an uphill struggle for effective marketing performance with little or no success. This paper is aimed at investigating the aspects of marketing function that can ensure desirable outcomes. The objectives were to examine the importance of marketing planning, organisation of marketing functions and marketing resources in the management of Quantity Surveying Consulting firms (QSCF) marketing programme in Ghana. After a thorough review of extant literature, a questionnaire survey of 48 QSCF which were reached through snowball sampling technique was undertaken to investigate the three dimensions. The survey results indicate that the firms are realising the importance of marketing in the management of a construction business with marketing planning being the most important function followed by organisation of marketing functions and marketing resources. It is however noted that recruiting marketing professionals is not considered as important activity by the firms. The need therefore exists for a better understanding of the ways by which marketing performance can be improved in the construction industry especially the consulting aspects of construction business.

Keywords Marketing, Principal Component Analysis (PCA), Quantity Surveying, Ghana

1. Introduction

The operating environment of construction consulting businesses is experiencing enormous changes which have given rise to intense competition. The situation is threatening the growth, profitability and survival of Quantity Surveying Consulting Firms (QSCF) that are operating in such business environment. However, marketing is identified as a tool for dealing with such situations. For instance, [6] noted that marketing is an activity with a potential for increasing sales. In line with this opinion, [1] described marketing as an 'investment for creating a competitive edge and empowerment for competitive advantage'. Similarly, [19] pointed out that the most successful US firms were characterized by a common dedication to marketing. Surprisingly, the same cannot be said about marketing in relation to the construction industry especially the consulting aspects of the industry where quantity surveying firms are a major part.

Several construction marketing researchers ([11]; [13]; [12]; [18]; [17]; [22]) have made observations that appear

contrary to the role marketing has played in the operations of industries other than construction. As indicated by [11], marketing management has not yet been applied to any greater extent in the construction industry. In the same vein [13] also stated that marketing is less developed in the professional industry and often performed in most firms in an *ad hoc* basis. According to [12], marketing within the professional sector is considered at worst as an alien concept, and at best as a new development that is viewed with skepticism.

Similarly, [18] observed that marketing has attracted only little attention among professionals, a situation which is in direct contrast to the role of marketing in the consumer goods industry [7], where marketing is accepted as one of the cornerstones of servicing the needs of clients and customers. Furthermore [17], indicated that some consulting firms are still struggling to understand and implement effective marketing programmes and this in the view of [22], suggests that QSCF are still clinging to an outdated, bull market philosophy: 'As long as we do good work we will always have plenty of work'. This philosophy can be a factor that is preventing the (QSCF) from achieving sustainable growth in that lack of an effective marketing programme has the tendency to result in a mismatch of created offering by the firm and the needs of clients. These reports confirm the assertion by [23] that the construction industry has

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performed very poorly in marketing its services.

Regarding the application of marketing in construction, very little research exists. Notable amongst such research relevant to this study are the works of [23], [1], [19] and [20]. The last three works focused on the application of the modified marketing mix theory applicable to construction without regard to other marketing functions that are considered as prerequisite (marketing planning, Organization of marketing functions and marketing resources) for the effective implementation of a marketing programme. In the work of [23], these functions were examined. However, of the range of firms in the built environment that were surveyed (Contractors, architectural service firms, civil engineering firms and structural engineering firms), QSCF were not considered.

Again, an extensive search of leading electronic journal databases, including EBSCOHost, Emerald, Google Scholar and Science Direct suggest that little to nothing is known regarding the importance of these marketing functions (Marketing planning, Organization of marketing functions and Marketing resources) to the management of QSCF in general and Ghana in particular. This condition has resulted in the dearth of information regarding marketing function practices in QSCF.

It is against this background, that this study was undertaken in an attempt to find the importance that is attached to marketing functions (QSCF) in Ghana. More specifically, this research has three objectives:

- 1) To ascertain marketing planning activities undertaken by QSCF
- 2) To examine marketing organisation activities undertaken by QSCF
- 3) To ascertain marketing resources that are devoted to marketing function of QSCF

The unit of analysis is Quantity Surveying Consultancy firms in Ghana that are self-employed in consultancy business rather than an individual Quantity Surveyor who is in a paid up employment.

This article reports part of a larger study that was undertaken to investigate certain marketing elements that were measurable within QSCF, in an effort to assess the extent to which the marketing concept has been adopted and implemented. The rest of the article is structured as follows: First, a review of extant literature relevant to marketing performance practices or activities is undertaken. This is followed by a description of the research methods and procedures used in the study. The results of the enquiry are then discussed. Finally, implications, limitations and directions for future research are offered.

2. Literature Review

Strategic Perspectives of Marketing Culture

A structured marketing approach formulated in line with the organization's aims and objectives provide the basis for successful marketing programme. A strategic approach to

marketing entails marketing planning, organization of the marketing functions and allocation of resources before execution of the marketing activities. The assertion by [24] is that, knowledge about the way of carrying out marketing activities in a firm is necessary for assessing the extent to which marketing is implemented in a firm. Existence of marketing department, the number of people working in the department, status of the head of marketing in the organization and the existence of an independent sales department besides the marketing department are some of the criteria that are used for such assessment. Again, specific marketing activities such as marketing research, marketing planning, advertising, public relations, in-house marketing education and marketing intelligence also add to such criteria of assessment [3]. To classify these factors, [23] sorted out all the above and added more to those criteria and categorized them into three issues as follows: marketing planning, organization for marketing functions and marketing resources.

Marketing Planning

As noted by [23], the central objective of marketing planning is to ensure effective allocation of the firms' resources to the marketing programme. This allocation must be in line with the marketing plan that has been formulated to achieve specific organizational aims. The allocation, in the view of [10], requires careful consideration of the firm's strength, an assessment of the market place, definition of long-term goals, identification of particular marketing opportunities, and the implementation of measurable programs for exploiting these opportunities. Marketing planning is described as thinking systematically about the future and making current decisions on that basis [6]. Marketing planning, according to [6], is a continuous process because changes in construction industry and in general business environment are continuous. It has been stressed, therefore, that effective marketing begins with planning and proper planning begins with long-range view of the entire business [6].

It is noted by [23] that for every organization there should be a natural hierarchy of business activities that moves from an external focus through to internal action and control. This means that the extent of formal marketing planning has influence on the overall success of the marketing program. An outline of factors by [23] gives some important aspect of a marketing plan and argues that the absence of that will affect its success. The factors included the level of management where the responsibility for marketing programs lay and that was linked to the importance the firm attaches to it. The time ingredient which provides the marketing participants with a schedule for reaching various levels of accomplishment was also highlighted in that same outline.

Organization of Marketing Function

The way marketing function is managed is crucial to its success. It has been argued by [23] that the degrees or level to which marketing is seen as a priority by top management,

the marketing organization through structure, line of authority and responsibility, and the monitoring of marketing programs are key ingredients to the overall success of the marketing program.

Marketing Resources

As stated by [2], the composition of marketing budget of many construction firms in the past were wages, sales expenses, product literature, and limited public-relations activities. In recent times, both professionals and practitioners have been seen to be engaged in other marketing activities that include professional activities designed to influence the market place, market research; cooperate identity programs and other marketing aids, such as the use of information services [23].

Furthermore, [23] identified marketing resources and categorized them as manpower, skills and budget. The authors argue that, the resource in terms of manpower, skills and budget available for marketing activities must be adequate enough to accomplish its objective. A system where there exist adequate numbers of employees whose responsibilities are solely dedicated to marketing functions is highly recommended [23]. The employments of marketing professionals, comprising individuals who have professional qualification in marketing and the allocation of adequate funds from annual turnover to support annual expenditure of marketing were also highlighted as necessary ingredients for the overall success of the marketing programme [23].

3. Methodology

This study is entrenched in the positivist philosophy which assumes that social phenomenon obeys natural laws and can therefore be subjected to quantitative logic [4]. By adopting positivism as the philosophy underpinning this study coupled with the deductive approach to scientific enquiry, the axiological, ontological and epistemological assumption underpinning the study dictated that the use of survey is the most appropriate option amongst the other quantitative data collection tools for the study [15]. This is illustrated in figure 1.

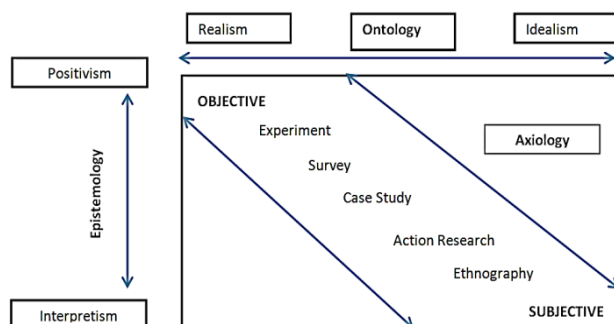


Figure 1. Influence of research philosophy on choice of research instrument. Source: Adopted [15]

Informed by the foregoing, a survey questionnaire was designed as the research instrument and administered to the

respondents as in the similar studies carried out by several other researchers ([12]; [14]; [22]; [1]; [23]; [13]). The content of the questionnaire was drafted after an extensive review of literature and discussions with marketing managers and academic peers. In order to ascertain the validity and reliability of the instrument, a pilot study was conducted and the feedback from the pilot study was incorporated into the drafted questionnaire to fine tune the outcome of the consultation.

The final questionnaire covered the demographic background of the respondents and the firms, especially the aspects that were likely to influence the ratings of the marketing parameters. Question 1-3 records the general characteristics of the respondent firms such as, the size of firm (i.e. number of employees), experience of the firm (i.e. years of existence) and the component of education and training of the respondent.

Questions 4, 5 and 6 are the crux of the research and represent the independents variables used in the study. Firms' characteristics including age, size and education and training, from questions 1 to 3 forms the control variables and those were used to understand trends in marketing functions amongst various QSCF groups. The independent variables include the three marketing function parameters; namely marketing planning, organization of marketing functions and marketing resources. As seen in the first column of tables 2, 3 and 4, the marketing parameters and their constituents were based on the information presented in the preceding section. All items on this part of the questionnaire were scored on a 5 point Likert scale or various levels of importance (i.e., 1 = not important, 2 = less important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = important and 5 = very important).

The census study consisted of QSCF that are duly registered with the Ghana Institution of Surveyors (GhIS). As a result, a list of QSCF, which was 48 in number, was obtained from the GhIS for the purpose of identifying the firms and their locations. To reach the QSCF, snowball sampling technique was used. This approach involved initially engaging with QSCF which were most visible and subsequently accessing their networks to signpost additional participants. This process continued until the total number of firms that corresponds with the number of QSCF on the list obtained from the GhIS, which is 48 firms were reached. Through that means, a 100% coverage of questionnaire distribution to the targeted respondents was achieved. The study focused on firms but not individual Quantity Surveyors who are in paid employment.

The respondent QSCF were classified into various groups:

- 1) Years of experience (i.e. up to ten years and above ten years of existence)
- 2) Size of firm in terms of number of employees (i.e. up to 25 employees and above 25 employees)
- 3) Educational background of respondents

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was used to find the weight of marketing activities in each marketing parameters (i.e. marketing planning, organization of marketing functions

and marketing resources). The use of PCA was informed by its ability as a statistical technique that linearly transforms an original set of variables into a smaller set of uncorrelated variables that represents most of the information in the original variable [9]. Again, the nature of the three parameters (i.e. marketing planning, organization of marketing functions and marketing resources) are factors that cannot be measured directly. A factor is described by [4] as a type of latent construct in that a construct is an amalgamation of variables and is latent because it cannot be observed (and measured) directly but only through the constituent variables.

The value of the i^{th} marketing parameter (principal component) can be calculated using the following expression [5]:

$$PC_i = \sum_{j=1}^p a_{ij} X_j \\ = a_{i1}X_1 + a_{i2}X_2 + a_{i3}X_3 + \dots + a_{ip}X_p \quad (1)$$

Where a_{ij} = factor scores and X_j = ratings received for marketing activities. In this expression, $i = 1, \dots, 3$ represents each of the three marketing parameter, and $j = 1, \dots, p$ represents the marketing activities within each marketing parameter. By definition, factor scores have a mean of "0" and a standard deviation equal to "1".

An index is calculated by normalizing the factor scores in order to determine the weights of the different marketing activities in each marketing parameter. The weight of the j^{th} marketing activity in the i^{th} marketing parameter (i.e. principal component) is calculated as follows [21]:

$$W_{ij} = \frac{a_{ij}}{\sum_{j=1}^p a_{ij}} \quad (2)$$

Only one principal component was extracted using the statistical package SPSS in the form presented in equation 1 as the goal was to calculate the weights of marketing activities in each marketing parameter. The weights of the marketing activities were calculated using the factor scores such as in equation 2. The factor scores calculated using the statistical package SPSS, the weights of each marketing activity, their average importance scores, and the weighted importance scores of the three marketing parameter are presented in table 2, table 3 and 4.

4. Findings

Of the 48 questionnaires administered, the researcher retrieved 45 fully completed questionnaires suitable for subsequent analysis. This high response rate of 93.75% is an indication of the industry's interest in the subject area. Table 1 summarizes respondent characteristics based on experience of firm by years of operation, size of firm by number of employees and education background of respondents.

A total of 42.2% were less than ten years old, and about 40.0% of them were 10 – 20 years old. Of the remainder, 17.8% have a history of over 20 years of existence. This

indicates that a total of 82.2% of the firms are less than 20 years in existence. In terms of size, 24.4% can be considered as small size firm (i.e. having employees in the range of 1 – 10. Majority of the remaining firms are largely medium size (62.2%), and the large size firms stood at 17.8% (i.e. firms having employees of 10 – 25 and over 25).

Table 1. Background Characteristics of Respondents

| Characteristic of respondents | Percentage of respondents |
|--|---------------------------|
| Experience by years of operation | |
| Below 10 | 42.2% |
| 10 - 20 | 40.0% |
| Above 20 | 17.8% |
| Size of firm by number of employees | |
| Less than 10 (small) | 24.4% |
| 10 – 25 (medium) | 62.2% |
| More than 25 (large) | 13.3% |
| Background of respondents | |
| Management related | 18% |
| Highly technical | 82% |

Source: Field Data, 2013

Looking at the educational background of respondents reveals that only 18% have education and training that are management related. The remaining 82% of the respondents had technical training. This revelation was expected in that, many researchers' report of the nature of education and training as one that is narrowed down to the production of highly qualified technical professions with little or no management training ([8]; [16]).

The firms were grouped according to their background characteristics (i.e. below 10 years and above 10 years), sizes of firm (number of employees below 25 and above 25) and education background of respondents (i.e. management - related and highly technical).

The three key areas of marketing management covered in this survey were marketing planning, organization of marketing functions and marketing resources. The three areas are now discussed in detail. The result of the Principal Component Analysis (CPA) carried out on the three key areas defined earlier is given in tables 2, 3 and 4. The Tables show the importance that QSCF attach to each of the three key areas of marketing management practices. They show that marketing planning is of paramount importance to the firms and this is very encouraging because effective marketing begins with planning [6]. On the other hand, organization of marketing functions ranks next behind marketing planning and marketing resources is next in that order of descending importance. The high score obtained for marketing planning and organization of marketing function may be a reflection of the distribution of respondents.

Majority of the firms (82%) have technical persons responsible for marketing in addition to their core functions.

In an industry where production is more important than management [16] a situation where more attention is paid to the technical/core functions leaving the organization of the marketing functions to suffer is expected. Also, about 86.6% of the firms is of small to medium size and this can limit their resources in terms of manpower, skills and budget for marketing.

The resource constraints of these firms compel them to focus more on production efficiency than marketing aspects. This also explains the reason why the majority (82%) of those responsible for marketing activities is technical persons who manages marketing functions in addition to their core functions. The firms are not able to employ marketing professional due to limited budget and the skill of those in charge of marketing activities is low due to the nature of education and training of the Quantity Surveyors.

4.1. Marketing Planning

In order to understand what planning is done in the firms for the marketing programme, the question was asked: To what extent do the following factors affect the effective implementation of the marketing programme in your firm? Table 2 is a summary of the responses.

The results are intended to shed light on the main planning activities that are done by the firm and what goes into the planning processes. The top two factors that are seen to be important are Long range view of the entire business and careful consideration of the firm's strength (see Table 2).

This indicates that the planning is done with particular focus of the firm such as its strength which is an internal factor. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that Assessment of the marketplace ranks closely behind that. This indicates that although there is a recognition that to be successful, planning should focus on firms strength, it has to be done to meet external marketplace factors such as identification of particular marketing opportunities. Surprisingly, Formal approach to marketing planning came as the least important factor (see Table 2) and this may be a reflection of the distribution of the respondents as 82% are technical persons (see Table 1) who may not see the need for the formal planning. The next least important activity is Level of management responsible for marketing programs. This may also be as a result of the distribution of respondents. Interestingly, all the items had a rating of greater than "3" indicating that they are all considered as important ("moderately important =3 and important =4") activities.

4.2. Organization of Marketing Functions

This question was intended to elicit from respondents the way marketing is managed in terms of the organization of marketing functions in their firms. As to the Table 3 shows the responses to the question: To what extent do the following factors enhance effective organisation of marketing functions and activities in your firm?

Table three indicates that Top management's perceived level of priority of marketing plans and Priority given to marketing in the business strategy of the firm (see Table 3) are the key factors in the organisation of the marketing function in their firms. This is encouraging since issues that are a priority in an organisation often gets done than others that are not. That notwithstanding, it is interesting to note that Systematic monitoring and evaluating of marketing programs ranks close behind. The indication is that being on a priority list is important but achieving the set target for the purpose of effectiveness of the marketing program will require systematic monitoring and evaluation as a form of quality control.

Unsurprisingly, the results show that 'Head of marketing is responsible solely for marketing functions' (see Table 3) is considered as a least important item. Again, this may be a reflection of the distribution of the respondents as 86.6% (see Table 1) of the firms have less than 25 employees (Small to medium size firms). Due to the shortage of manpower in these firms, the marketing responsibilities are given to a person in addition to his own core responsibilities. In an organization where such is the practice, the above response should be expected. That also explains why 82% (see Table 1) of the firms have technical persons instead of marketing professionals in charge of marketing activities. Looking at the sizes of the majority of the firms, limited budget can also be a contributory factor as the firm may want to use the limited funds to improve production efficiency which is their core business than to employ the services of marketing professionals. This finding is similar to those in other studies ([16]; [23]). All items received ratings above "moderately important".

4.3. Marketing Resources

To understand what resources are necessary for effective implementation of a marketing programme the question was asked: To what extent do the following resources and related factors affect effective implementation of the marketing programme in your firm? The responses are summarized in table 4 below.

The two top factors that are clearly seen are Accessibility of funds for marketing activities and Availability of funds for marketing activities (see Table 4). It is noteworthy that accessibility and availability of funds are the major resources needed because looking at the sizes of the firms (predominantly small to medium) and their years of operation (82.2 % less than 20 years) such results were not surprising. Having funds (availability) and having access to use the funds (accessibility) are two distinct issues. It is possible that the firms' spending is towards where they consider important. In a firm where production is more important than management [16], then much of the funds available will be accessible to the production related issues but not marketing which is a mainly management issue.

Table 2. Weighted Importance Ranking of the Marketing Planning Activities by QSCF

| Marketing Planning (MP) Parameter | Component Matrix of (MP) Activities | Factor Score of (MP) Activities | Weights of (MP) Activities (%) | Average Ratings of (MP) activities | Std. Dev. |
|--|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--------------|
| Marketing Planning | | | | | |
| Long range view of the entire business | .503 | .039 | 9.31 | 4.20 | .919 |
| Careful Consideration of the firm's Strength | .587 | .045 | 10.85 | 4.11 | 1.049 |
| Assessment of the marketplace | .349 | .027 | 6.46 | 4.07 | .863 |
| Definition of long term goals | .679 | .053 | 12.56 | 4.02 | .988 |
| Identification of particular marketing opportunities | .527 | .041 | 9.75 | 3.89 | 1.027 |
| Planning to achieve a measurable programs | .426 | .033 | 7.88 | 3.89 | 1.049 |
| Time length/period/coverage of marketing plans | .599 | .046 | 11.07 | 3.84 | .928 |
| Must be a continuous process | .666 | .052 | 12.31 | 3.80 | .894 |
| Level of management responsible for marketing programs | .621 | .048 | 11.49 | 3.78 | .927 |
| Formal approach to marketing planning | .450 | .035 | 8.32 | 3.73 | .915 |
| Overall Statistics | | | | 3.93 | .718 |

*Source: Field Data, 2013***Table 3.** Weighted Importance Ranking of the Marketing Organisation Activities by QSCF

| Marketing Organization (MO) Parameter | Component Matrix of (MO) Activities | Factor Score of (MO) Activities | Weights of (MO) Activities (%) | Average Ratings of (MO) activities | Std. Dev. |
|--|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------|
| Organization of Marketing functions | | | | | |
| Top management's perceived level of priority of marketing plans | .568 | .044 | 11.849 | 3.91 | .848 |
| Priority given to marketing in the business strategy of the firm | .576 | .045 | 12.022 | 3.62 | 1.134 |
| Systematic monitoring and evaluating of marketing programs | .681 | .053 | 14.202 | 3.47 | .991 |
| Structured marketing department | .802 | .062 | 16.709 | 3.22 | .927 |
| Director/board member as the head of marketing department | .624 | .048 | 13.006 | 3.18 | 1.093 |
| Formal marketing organization | .769 | .060 | 16.036 | 3.18 | 1.072 |
| Head of marketing is responsible solely for marketing functions | .775 | .060 | 16.152 | 3.16 | 1.147 |
| Overall Statistics | | | | 3.31 | .787 |

*Source: Field Data, 2013***Table 4.** Weighted Importance Ranking of the Marketing Resources Activities by QSCF

| Marketing Resources (MR) Parameter | Component Matrix of (MR) Activities | Factor Score of (MR) Activities | Weights of (MR) Activities (%) | Average Ratings of (MR) activities | Std. Dev. |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------|
| Marketing resources | | | | | |
| Accessibility of funds for marketing activities | .722 | .056 | 16.77 | 3.64 | 1.171 |
| Availability of funds for marketing activities | .725 | .056 | 16.85 | 3.42 | 1.076 |
| The number of employees solely responsible for marketing | .423 | .033 | 9.82 | 3.36 | .883 |
| Expertise of the marketing professionals | .751 | .058 | 17.45 | 3.24 | 1.026 |
| Adequacy of funds allocated for marketing activities | .597 | .046 | 13.88 | 3.24 | 1.111 |
| Employment of marketing professionals | .771 | .060 | 17.91 | 3.11 | 1.112 |
| Use of external marketing agencies | .315 | .024 | 7.32 | 3.07 | 1.176 |
| Overall Statistics | | | | 3.29 | .917 |

Source: Field Data, 2013

The items that rank close to this are ‘the number of employees solely responsible for marketing’ and ‘expertise of the marketing professionals’. This indicates that the firms recognise the need for funds yet they believe that effectiveness will be achieved by the number of the employees solely responsible for marketing and that such employees must also have some expertise as marketing professionals.

However, there is a paradox in the sense that the firms acknowledge the need for marketing professionals who have the expertise to deliver yet the firms sees that as least but one important item (see Table 4). It is possible the firms believe the employment of marketing professionals could be expensive on the firms operational cost and therefore do not want to recruit such category of employees. The least important score recorded for the item ‘use of external marketing agencies’ could be a reflection of the culture in the industry that frowns on advertising and other such related activities. In all the responses are positive as all the items received importance rating above “moderately important”.

5. Discussions

The common theme running through the available construction marketing literature is that the construction industry has performed poorly in marketing its services and products. The marketing performance of firms in the built environment especially the consulting industry has come under serious criticism. Within the consulting industry, marketing is at best performed in an *ad hoc* manner and at worst not performed at all.

This study has examined the marketing management functions that are considered as necessary prerequisites towards a successful marketing management program. The study examined these functions in the built environment consulting industry where marketing is viewed as inappropriate or not applicable. This study contributes to construction marketing literature by demonstrating the importance of marketing functions relevant for the successful adoption and implementation of a firms’ marketing programme.

5.1. Summary of Findings

The study has shown that marketing planning is of paramount importance (mean score =3.93, Table 2) to the QSCF and that is very encouraging in that effective marketing begins with planning [6]. Organization of marketing functions follows next before marketing resources in that order of descending importance (mean score = 3.31 and 3.29, Table 3 and Table 4 respectively). Majority of the firms (82%) have technical persons responsible for marketing in addition to their core functions. In an industry where production is more important than management [16], more attention is paid to the technical/core functions leaving the organization of the marketing functions to suffer is expected. Also, about 86.6% of the firms fall within small to

medium size and at the same time 82.2% of the firms are still at their infant stages of business development (less than 20 years in operation) as shown in Table 1. These circumstances can limit the firm’s resources in terms of manpower, skills and budget for marketing management functions. This has led to the non-recruitment of marketing professionals in the firms even though they admit that marketing professionals are necessary for the success of a marketing programme.

The resource constraints of these firms compel them to focus more on production efficiency than marketing aspects. This also explains the reason why majority (82%) of those responsible for marketing activities is technical persons who manage marketing functions in addition to their core functions. The firms are not able to employ marketing professional due to limited budget and the skill of those in charge of marketing activities is low due to the nature of education and training of the Quantity Surveyors. These circumstances confronting the QSCF can be blamed on the ad hoc manner in which marketing management issues are approached in the QSCF.

Again, the firms do not accept it as necessary where the head of marketing is solely responsible for marketing functions apparently, because the norm in the industry is that the marketing function is added to the responsibilities of an employee to manage it in addition to his own core responsibilities as a technical person in the firm. The priority given to marketing in the firms’ business strategy and the priority given to it by top management were also ranked as key elements in the organisation of marketing functions QSCF.

5.2. Managerial Implications

This study indicates that, successful execution of marketing activities depends to a large extent on marketing planning, organisation of marketing functions and the availability and accessibility of the required resources. This call for employment of marketing professionals (individuals with professional training in marketing) to manage a marketing department set up with adequate professional staff depending on the size of firm and the range of business activities that the firm engages in. The marketing department should be headed solely by the marketing professional. The marketing department must allocate adequate funds to carry out its operations.

Whilst dealing with the above issues, management must also work to achieve the following;

- ❖ training of all customer contact staff in the fundamental advocacy of marketing in satisfying customer needs;
- ❖ recognizing the need for an integrated marketing approach using grounded market intelligence on which optimal decisions should be based;
- ❖ demonstration of consolidated commitment to marketing by top management and partners;
- ❖ active involvement at all hierarchical levels in the formulation of marketing plans so that successful implementation can be enhanced.

Achievement of these could mark the beginning of successful marketing performance of the firm.

5.3. Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Although the sample size was deemed acceptable, a larger sample could have allowed for more powerful analysis. The sample constraint did not allow for measurement of non-response bias. Again, an extremely large percent of the sample (82.2%) were within the bracket of small to medium size enterprises (SME's). As a result, the findings could be more applicable to SME's than large firms.

Future research should focus on large firms to test the validity of the results of this study on larger firms in Ghana as well as other geographical regions. It is also important that there should be a further research work on this subject to examine the effect of other demographic factors based on contract type, annual revenues and success in getting new contract award on the marketing functions of such firms.

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