

**PRODUCT DIFFERENTIATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS :
A CASE OF AMSTUS POLYMER PACKAGING LIMITED, NAMANVE**

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September, 2025



DECLARATION

I HIGAYE DOUGLAS ENOCK, declare that this report is my original work and has never been presented to any other institution for any award

Signature:



HIGAYE DOUGLAS ENOCK

Reg no: J24B05/037

Date: 20th/09/2025

APPROVAL

This research work is original done by Higaye Douglas Enock under my supervision and has never been submitted to any institution. It's now ready for submission to the School of Business for examination under my approval

Signature.



Date. 28/07/2015

Mr. KABANDA MARTIN

(Supervisor)

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to His Grace' wisdom and strength which I depended on throughout my academic life. It is because of him that I have learned, grown and achieved this milestone, overcoming the challenges that were put before me.

This work is also dedicated to my beloved parents who have made countless sacrifices on my behalf while encouraging and praying for me to become a better person. Your love and support gives me courage to do what am supposed to do.

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at posing the distinguishing relationship between product differentiation and organizational competitiveness. We used Amstus polymer packaging limited located in Namanve as our case study. When we dig deep in the highly competitive polymer sector, we see very many businesses coming up so to be able to take over the rivals in the market. Being guided the Porter's Generic Strategies of cost leadership, focus and differentiation, the conducted study enabled the researcher to know how the different attributes of differentiation such as quality, branding and also the customer image influence the Organizational Competitiveness estimated in terms of market growth, brand recognition and also customer loyalty.

A descriptive study method was employed where 90 questionnaires were issued out and got response of 73 questionnaires. This information was gathered through structured questionnaires and complemented it with thematic analysis for qualitative responses.

The end results of the survey showed that the increased customer loyalty bridges a gap between the product uniqueness and the increased Organizational competitiveness. The different aspects of the product uniqueness measured in terms of innovative packaging, quality assurance and branding significantly create a positive relationship to achieve the competitiveness in terms of market share and sales growth. Moreover the product differentiation created more firm's resilience and adaptability in response to the pressure of rivals and the change in tastes and needs of the customers.

The survey ended that product uniqueness incorporated with strong customer loyalty is a critical driver of sustainable competitive advantage to the firm. It recommends the continuous product innovations so as to be able to be at the top of the market dynamics and be at the top of their rivals.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

This study examines the relationship between product differentiation and organizational competitiveness with regard to Amstus Polymer Packaging Limited as our case study. In the dynamic landscape of the packaging industry, product differentiation has emerged as the strategy for companies to seek competitive advantage so Amstus Polymer Packaging Limited one of the producers in this sector uses the different strategies of uniqueness so as to win the competitive advantage. This chapter comprises of the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives, research question, scope as well as significance of the study

1.2 Background

In the contemporary landscape comprised of the too much competition and emerging consumer demands, companies continuously seek for the different ways of earning the competitive urge. Companies need to keep coming with fresh ideas to stay ahead of the game and keep their spot in the market. In this situation, making important features to make a product stand out is super important for strategy product differentiation for a company so consumers are well versed of your product or service and are willing to pay attention to it. Uniqueness can come from the top notch quality, new tech, strong branding or awesome constant customer service. When a company nails this strategy, its gives it a higher chance of staying ahead and keeping the competition at bay hence this is a way to see how a company performs compared to the rivals especially when it comes to making money, creating bigger market and also staying strong for longer period in the industry.

"Product differentiation," according to Edward Chamberlin (1933), is the idea that customers view several products from the same industry as being distinct from one another. This makes it possible for a lot of businesses to set themselves apart from one another with their products based on different attributes. It is the primary business technique that allows companies to get a competitive edge by making their products seem special to a certain market group, according to Michael Porter

(1980). There is a strong connection between how the company makes its products unique and how competitive it is. According to Michael Porters generic strategies framework (1985) says, being unique is the key way of beating competition with same rivals. When companies make the products which the consumers are adoptive to, and bring out the worth, it can dodge price wars and get a large crowd of loyal customers. Looking at the Resource Base View (RBV) of the firm, the idea is that a company's last edge comes from its special worthwhile, scarce, and hard-to-copy stuff and skills. In the plastic packaging business, these skills could mean making products in a special way that they aren't identical to the fellow producers in the same sector or similar service hence this keeps them ahead of fellow producers for a longer period of time

The plastic business in Uganda was a great example of how the features work in a competitive field with a ton of players, from big manufacturers to smaller, medium-sized businesses. In this kind of market, trying to beat the fellow competitor in price is like a never ending race to the bottom. The market caters for different users like the drink makers, food producers, and the farming companies and hence all have their own unique and changing requirements, also the industry has got tighter environmental rules and more folks wanting environmental friendly packaging which opens up new ways to stand out.

This study looks a lot at Amstus polymer packaging limited to see how things work out. Amstus is a Ugandan company owned by investors from Pakistan that makes plastic products and they are up to high competition. Not of how they stand out but they are definitely playing the game to stay ahead of both local and global competition. The company's business model is probably like others in the business making a bunch of different stuff for all sorts of clients. Hence this study will look into how Amstus uses various elements of differentiation such as quality, services and brand image so as to create a unique spot in the market and boost its standings.

1.3 Problem statement

While carrying out our study, we looked into the theory of product differentiation which focuses on how the firms create unique product attributes

to distinguish themselves from competitors. This helped us understand how businesses strategically use product differentiation to influence competitive advantage. On the other hand, we focused on the Porters Generic Strategies which points out differentiation as one of the three primary strategies of achieving the sole competitive advantage.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study will be to assess the role of product differentiation and how it affects the organizational competitiveness in the surrounding community of Amstus Polymer Packaging Limited. The study seeks to determine the extent to which the different strategies and features of differentiation such as quality, brand image and customer service influence the rate of competition measured as market growth, profitability and sales growth. Through this entirely empirical analysis, the study aimed to provide a basis to contribute to the existing bodies of knowledge on strategic management in the developing economies and render evidence practical recommendations to the management of Amstus.

1.5 Objectives of the study

- (i) To assess the mediating role of customer loyalty in the relationship between product differentiation strategies and competitiveness
- (ii) To analyze the extent to which differentiated products features contribute to sustainable sales growth and market shares of a firm.
- (iii) To examine how product differentiation enhances the firm's resilience and adaptability in the competitive market.

1.6 Research Question

- (i) How does customer loyalty influence the relationship between product differentiation competitiveness?
- (ii) In what ways do product differentiated products features contribute to sustainable sales growth and market share of a firm?

(iii) How does product differentiation enhance the firm's resilience and adaptability in the competitive market?

1.7 Scope of the study

The study will be on the polymer products of Amstus Polymer Packaging Limited, to focus on selected users of the items. The respondents shall be residents of Seeta, Nantabulirwa and also Bweyogerere.

18. Significance of the study

The research findings help the Organization managers and other decision makers in creating the insights about the full meaning of the company brand can have on market, provide room for customers to select their product. The companies should also establish their existence in different ways rather than having only products on market.

The study will act as a reference to the people related in the same field of research

1.9 Conceptual frame-work

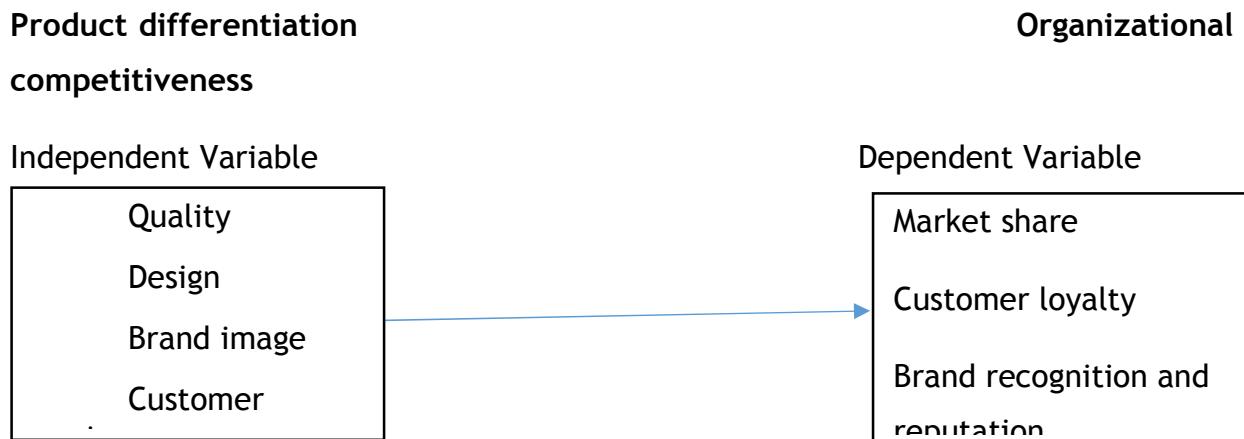


Figure 1.1. Conceptual framework for product differentiation and organizational competitiveness

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the dynamic and highly competitive landscape of modern business, product differentiation and organizational competitiveness are core elements that determine a firm's competitive advantage and market success. The growing importance of packaging, quality, branding and many others especially in the context of manufacturing and fast-moving consumer goods has redefined how companies distinguish themselves in crowded markets. This literature review explores the concepts of product differentiation and organizational competitiveness, highlighting the essential role that packaging plays in linking the two, particularly in Uganda's manufacturing sector through the lens of Amstus Polymer Packaging Limited.

This chapter offers the critical analysis of academic and applied literature on product differentiation and organizational competitiveness. It also situates around the Amstus polymer packaging limited one of the producers of the polymer products in the Uganda's packaging industry. The aim of this review is to assess the theoretical, conceptual and empirical evidence and also identify gaps in the study which require present data.

2.1.1 Concept of Product Differentiation

Product differentiation refers to the deliberate process by which a firm makes its product or service distinct from those offered by competitors in order to attract and retain customers. It involves creating unique attributes whether tangible such as design, quality, features, packaging or intangible such as brand image, reputation, or customer service that influence consumer preference.

According to Porter (1985), differentiation is one of the fundamental competitive strategies that organizations can adopt to gain a market advantage. By offering products that stand out in the eyes of consumers, firms can reduce price sensitivity, command premium prices, and build strong customer loyalty. Differentiation can be

horizontal differences in style or variety, without clear superiority, vertical differences in quality or performance where consumers rank options, or a combination of both.

In practice, product differentiation is not limited to physical modifications of a product but extends to the entire customer experience, including after-sales services, warranties, distribution channels, and even digital presence. When implemented effectively, it enables organizations to protect themselves from competitive rivalry and establish a sustainable position in the market.

2.1.2 Concept of Organizational Competitiveness

Organizational competitiveness refers to the capacity of a firm to consistently deliver superior value to customers and outperform its rivals in the marketplace. It is reflected in the organization's ability to maintain or increase market share, achieve profitability, enhance customer loyalty, and sustain long-term growth. Barney (1991) defines competitiveness as the advantage that results from deploying resources and capabilities that competitors cannot easily imitate or substitute. Competitiveness is therefore not only about low cost or pricing but also about innovation, branding, efficiency, and the ability to anticipate and respond to market changes.

Competitiveness manifests in both internal efficiency such as productivity, innovation, and skilled human capital and external effectiveness such as brand positioning, market penetration, and customer satisfaction. Firms that are highly competitive adapt quickly to environmental changes, leverage technology, and continuously improve their products and processes to meet evolving consumer demands.

2.1.3 The relationship between the two variables of product differentiation and organizational competitiveness

The connection between the two aspects is vital in strategic management theory. Product differentiation is a key strategy for achieving and maintaining competitive advantage in the organization. (Porter, 1985). By creating a product or service that is seen as unique as and more valuable than what competitors offer, a firm can

secure a strong market position and outperform rivals (Besanko et al., 2010). The relationship is not just a simple link but it's a strategic process that provides various competitive advantages. A firm that successfully differentiates its products can establish a strong and defensible position in the market, which strengthens its overall competitiveness.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical review helps to provide reference points upon which research studies are drawn. They specify the entire logical connection between study variables and guide the interpretation of findings. The product differentiation fell under four theoretical categories such as quality, design, brand image as well as the customer service. The dependent variable; Organizational competitiveness, was measured through market share, customer loyalty and also the brand recognition dimensions using the different measure of brand reputation and customer satisfaction. In a bid to describe the relationship between these variables, the study was grounded on the Porter's Generic Competitive Theory to best utilize how uniqueness fuels competitiveness.

Porter's Generic Competitive Theory

Porter (1985) suggested that organizations gain competitive advantage through cost leadership, differentiation, and focus strategies. Differentiation means offering products seen as unique and valuable by customers. The theory was chosen because it offers the best description and emphasis of how products are perceived as unique. Differentiation according to Porter, can be done through superior quality, distinctive design, brand reputation or improved customer service. Through exercising this, it allows the firm command the necessary premium prices for the produced goods, increase customer loyalty and also be able to strengthen the brand recognition. The assumptions of this theory are customer value uniqueness, uniqueness can be attained in different aspects, differentiation creates barriers to competition and also costs of differentiation are known and justified.

2.3 Conceptual Review

2.3.1 Product differentiation Amstus polymer packaging ltd

Product differentiation is a phenomenon that explains how a company establishes itself as distinct from others through the different attributes possessed. Hence literature indicates the different dimensions in which it's portrayed;

Packaging design; Amstus can offer creative, unique and customized designs that help clients to get noticed in their respective markets. A case in point branded food and beverage businesses make the client more exposed while making Amstus more competitive.

Quality; by guaranteeing the reliability, safety and durability of packaging, Amstus can position itself as an incredible supplier. Quality packaging saves products from damages therefore in high demand by industries.

Branding and Image; A business can build strong brand awareness as a trusted packaging partner. Good brand image for the business in Uganda argues credibility and customer loyalty

Customer service; offering suitable delivery times, after sales services and customized customers services also places Amstus beyond the fellow rivals in the market regarding the issue of the customers.

2.3.2 Organizational Competitiveness

Organizational competitiveness reveals the ability of Amstus to be greater in all aspects compared to competitor firms. This can deeply be understood as follows;

Market shares; competitiveness is quantified in the ways how Amstus behaves in the market. This can be through the different rivals in the same polymer marketing business so as to be ahead of competition

Customer loyalty; this is seen through which the situated consumers continue with the ongoing positive relationship where a customer repeatedly chooses a specific brand of a firm compared to the rivals in the same field of operation. This is driven

to by the continuous customer satisfaction and positive experiences from the adopted brand.

2.4 Empirical Review

The empirical literature on the product uniqueness and the competition of the Organization reveals a continued interest among scholars and practitioners in ascertaining the impact of differentiation on the firm performance in the competitive markets. What follows is a more extensive review of some of these studies and the relevance of their contributions to the operation of the firm. This can be viewed as;

Kariuki (2015) conducted a comprehensive study on product differentiation in Kenya's manufacturing firms, and his study was based on those firms that produced fast-moving consumer goods. His study identified that firms which invested in differentiated product attributes such as packaging, brands, and quality assurance were capable of attaining increased competitiveness relative to firms which specialized in undifferentiated products. Of particular interest, the study highlights packaging design as one of the drivers, more specifically in the aspect of customer quality perception. Customers would associate innovative packaging with safety, freshness, and a higher overall value. These findings are particularly insightful for Amstus Polymer Packaging Limited. Since packaging is also a marketing tool and not merely a container, Amstus can develop its competitive advantage by designing packaging that is not only functional but also visually appealing and aligned with consumer aspirations. For example, bright colors, strong, and specially crafted packaging shapes can differentiate Amstus' products from the products of local competitors. The study also pointed out the importance of consistency businesses that maintained differentiation over the years fared better than those that launched fleeting innovations. It implies that Amstus must make differentiation a long-term strategy and not a one-time promotional activity.

Aching and Otieno (2019) investigated how SMEs in Nairobi have used packaging differentiation to build competitiveness in the food and beverage industry. Their study revealed that SMEs that used eco-friendly materials, customer-specific

customization, and innovative shapes and sizes recorded higher consumer loyalty and repeat buying. Additionally, the use of eco-friendly packaging was found to enhance brand image, particularly among the youth and environmentally conscious consumers. These findings from research have high applicability to the business of Amstus. Being a polymer packaging business, Amstus has the opportunity of sustainability since plastic packaging is perceived negatively as a cause of environmental degradation. Amstus can invest in recyclable plastic packaging or biodegradable polymers to leverage the growing demand for sustainable products. Furthermore, the provision of customization services such as printing customer-specific logos, barcodes, or brands on packages will give Amstus a competitive advantage compared to competitors who sell generic products. However, the study also observed that sustainable innovations tend to come with higher production costs, which sometimes discourage SMEs. In Amstus' case, then, while competitiveness can be increased through differentiation via sustainability, it must be carried out carefully to avoid overpricing, especially for a price-conscious Ugandan market.

Michael and Kamukama (2021), examined the interaction between environmental product differentiation and competitiveness for Ugandan manufacturing firms. What they discovered was that firms that employed biodegradable packaging, reduced the use of single-use plastics, or concentrated on recyclable designs were perceived positively by consumers. This perception took the form of increased customer loyalty, reputations, and, for some, increased access to foreign markets with high environmental regulations. For Amstus Polymer Packaging Limited, these findings are directly relevant. Uganda, like many other countries, is experiencing growing consciousness of environmental sustainability, and government campaigns are discouraging the use of excessive plastic. By aligning its differentiation strategy with such environmental policies, Amstus is not only likely to attract environmentally conscious consumers but also reduce potential legal or regulatory risks that may emanate from non-compliance. At the same time, Michael and Kamukama noted that the expense of investing in eco-innovations limited most Ugandan SMEs from engaging fully with such measures. For Amstus, this is a double-edged sword: on the

one hand, eco-friendly differentiation may open up new markets and improve competitiveness, but on the other hand, it may require heavy up-front investment in new raw materials and technologies. Strategic partnerships or government subsidies may be needed to ease this financial burden.

Tumwine (2022), in his study of Ugandan SMEs, Tumwine carried out an exploration of the long-term sustainability of differentiation as a strategy for competitiveness. The study concluded that while differentiation strategies such as branding, quality enhancement, and innovation enhance competitiveness in the short term, they are difficult to sustain. Issues raised were copying by competitors, rising production costs, and the challenge of retaining customers' interest in the long term. Most firms experienced diminishing returns after competitors had emulated their differentiated features or customers had shifted preferences. There is a valuable lesson for Amstus from this study. The firm must recognize that product differentiation is not a goal but a process that must be continuously innovated. If, for instance, Amstus comes up with a new polymer packaging design today, competitors could replicate it in months. To remain ahead, Amstus will need to invest in R&D, continually seek out new materials, and establish intellectual property protections such as trademarks or design patents. Tumwine's study suggests that without an explicit strategy for sustainability, differentiation will lead to short-term gains instead of competitiveness in the long term.

Porter and Heppelmann (2014), at the international level, Porter and Heppelmann conducted research on how technology was driving product differentiation, specifically within the packaging industry. Their study demonstrated how smart packaging technologies QR codes, NFC chips, and interactive labels helped companies in Europe and North America improve competitiveness. These technologies helped companies not only differentiate products but also engage with customers through traceability, product information, and digital interactions. Although Amstus is located in Uganda, where the adoption of high-tech may be more gradual, these findings indicate untapped potential. Even basic smart packaging ideas, such as QR codes to product or company websites, would create differentiation in the local market. Such efforts would reinforce Amstus' reputation

as an innovative company and attract tech-savvy consumers and international clients who demand product traceability. However, adopting such innovations would require investment in technology along with investment in educating the consumers to make the buyers value addition of such packaging.

Chinomona and Sandada (2018), Chinomona and Sandada presented a different perspective in their study of South African SMEs. They found that differentiation strategies are not always responsible for competitiveness if customers do not perceive real value in the differentiated offerings. Where differentiation only led to higher prices without visible functional or emotional value, customers changed to cheaper options. This indicates that it is important to connect differentiation to customer expectations and value perceptions. For Amstus, this discovery has a practical lesson. As much as it might be enticing to come up with very innovative or high-end packaging solutions, the Ugandan market is still predominantly price-sensitive. Too differentiated packaging that adds a lot of cost to products could fail to achieve acceptance. Hence, Amstus should make sure any differentiation strategy it implements whether eco-friendly packaging, innovative designs, or intelligent packaging provides concrete value customers can identify with and cherish. In the absence of such alignment, differentiation can become a cost burden rather than a means of competitiveness.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology used in this study. It describes the research steps the researcher adopted in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data on the effect of product differentiation on competitiveness in Amstus Polymer Packaging Limited. Specifically, the chapter discusses the research design, study population, sampling design and procedures, determination of sample size, data sources, collection procedures, validity and reliability concerns, data analysis techniques, ethical concerns, and limitations of the research approach. By detailing these methodological choices, the chapter is made clear and provides reasons for the procedures adopted to produce valid and trustworthy research results.

This study endeavors to investigate the intricate relationship between product differentiation strategies and organizational competitiveness. To effectively explore this phenomenon, a positivist research philosophy will underpin this study. This stance assumes an objective reality that can be observed, measured and analyzed to establish causal relationship between variables.

3.1 Research Design

Research design refers to the general plan that determines how the research is carried out to provide answers to the above research queries (Kothari, 2014). This seeks to quantify the two variables relating to our study using the numerical data collected through our questionnaires. For this research, a descriptive and correlational study design was used. The descriptive approach was utilized because the study sought to describe the current state of product differentiation strategy and how the firms implement it. For the case of correlational design, this was used so as to implement the interconnectedness or relationship between product differentiation and organizational competitiveness.

3.2 Study Population

Study population refers to the total of people or objects from which data is to be collected (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The study population included employees and management staff at Amstus Polymer Packaging Limited and sampled customers in direct contact with the company's products. The categories of the study population were: Senior managers, Middle-level staff, Operations staff, Customers for example engaged wholesalers and retailers purchasing packaging solutions from Amstus.

This categorization enabled the study to obtain perceptions of decision-makers, implementers, and users of the differentiated product. The total population of study was around 100 individuals.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Methods

As it is generally not practical to survey the whole population because of time and budget limitations, sampling was utilized.

3.3.1 Sample Size

$$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$$

Where:

n = sample size

N = size of population (90)

e = margin of error (0.05 at 95% confidence level)

$$n = 90 / (1 + 90 * 0.05^2)$$

$$n = 73$$

Therefore, the research focused on 73 respondents. This number was deemed sufficient to cover the population and still ensure reliability of findings.

3.3.2 Sampling Techniques

Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used. Stratified random sampling was used among the employees, whereby respondents were grouped into strata based on their job categories such as senior managers, middle-level staff, and operational staff. Respondents were randomly sampled from every stratum to ensure representation. Purposive sampling was used in the selection of customer respondents since they are the only direct business contact individuals with Amstus Polymer Packaging Ltd were involved.

3.4 Sources of Data

The research employed both primary and secondary sources of data.

Primary Data: It was gathered directly from the respondents using questionnaires and interviews. It took firsthand information on the association between product differentiation and organizational competitiveness.

Secondary Data: It was gathered from company reports and journals of the company on product differentiation, packaging, and competitiveness. Secondary data added context, theory, and a point of comparison with primary data.

3.5 Data Collection Methods and Tools

The study used both primary and secondary data collection procedures. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaires were structured and closed questions about the variables under study. Detailed questions using a Likert scale was used to obtain the primary data seeking views of the respondents. The views were summarized into descriptive statistics and used to get recommendations. Secondary data was collected through review of the relevant reports and other literature.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

Structured questionnaires acted as the main data collection tool for employees. Questionnaires contained closed-ended and open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions allowed easy quantification of responses, whereas open-ended questions

provided qualitative data about experiences and perceptions of differentiation strategies. The questionnaires were divided into three sections

Section A: Demographics Information

Section B: Product Differentiation Attributes such as design, quality, packaging and branding

Section C: Organizational Competitiveness Patterns

Section D: Open Ended Questions

3.5.2 Interview Guide

The employees within the periphery of the organization were chosen in order to gather reliable data. This was chosen because it allows the researcher gather detailed information about the cause in order to work upon the needs of people. (Amin 2005)

3.6 Validity and Reliability

3.6.1 Validity

Validity is how well an instrument measures what it is intended to calculate. (Creswell, 2014). The content validity of the instruments was ensured by consulting research supervisors and business administration scholars for opinion on the questionnaire items.

3.6.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to consistency of measurement of a concept by an instrument (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Internal consistency of questionnaire items was verified using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, and 0.7 as cut-off was considered acceptable. The tools that failed to reach this during pre-testing were adjusted.

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative as well as qualitative data was gathered. Quantitative Data: Responses of the closed-ended questions were coded and measured with Statistical Package for

Social Sciences (SPSS). Percentages, and frequencies were computed to describe the data. Inferential statistics such as tabulations, were utilized in determining competitiveness and product differentiation's relationship.

Qualitative Data: The responses to the open-ended questions and interview data were coded thematically. Salient themes and trends were coded and presented narratively to accompany the quantitative results.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues were monitored closely in the research process. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study and given informed consent before they participated.

Confidentiality was maintained through the coding of replies and avoidance of the use of names while presenting findings.

The research was also ethical according to Uganda Christian University's policy on research ethics through voluntary participation, non-maleficence, and integrity during data collection and analysis.

3.9 Limitations of the Methodology

Despite careful design, the adopted methodology had some shortcomings. These included;

Reliance on self-report data may have generated response bias where some of the respondents provided socially desirable answers.

Case study approach, which provided depth at the cost of findings' generalizability beyond Amstus Polymer Packaging Ltd.

Resource and time constraints constrained data scope for collection. Nevertheless, these drawbacks were compensated by data sources triangulation, anonymity retention, and methodological stringency.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter portrays and interprets data collected in the field providing the analysis of the product differentiation factors and Organizational competitiveness. The study is conducted basing on the objectives which opted to analyze the relationship between product differentiation and organizational competitiveness.

The information obtained from the questionnaires has been analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics to summarize the views and the opinions of the respondents and establish the necessary relationship between the existing variables.

4.1 Response rate

A total of 90 questionnaires were issued out to different respondents at the firm, of which the total number of 73 questionnaires were returned making a total of 81.1%. The response rate was termed adequate for analysis because it went above the minimum rate of 50 - 60% as recommended by Mugenda & Mugenda (2003)

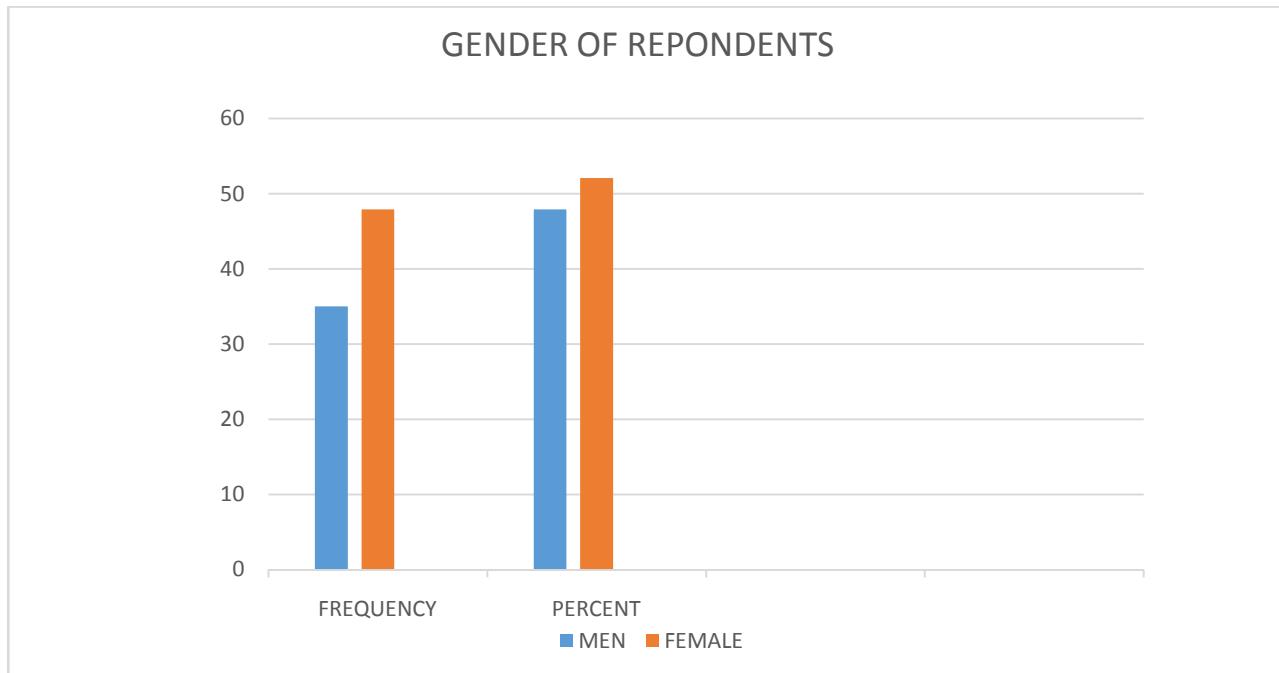
4.2 Demographic profile of respondents

This section outline the key traits of the different study participants in the study. The purpose is to provide enough context for the findings and be able to demonstrate the representatives of the sample.

Table 1: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency(N)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative percentage (%)
Male	35	47.9	47.9
Female	38	52.1	100
Total	73	100	

Figure 1: Gender of respondents

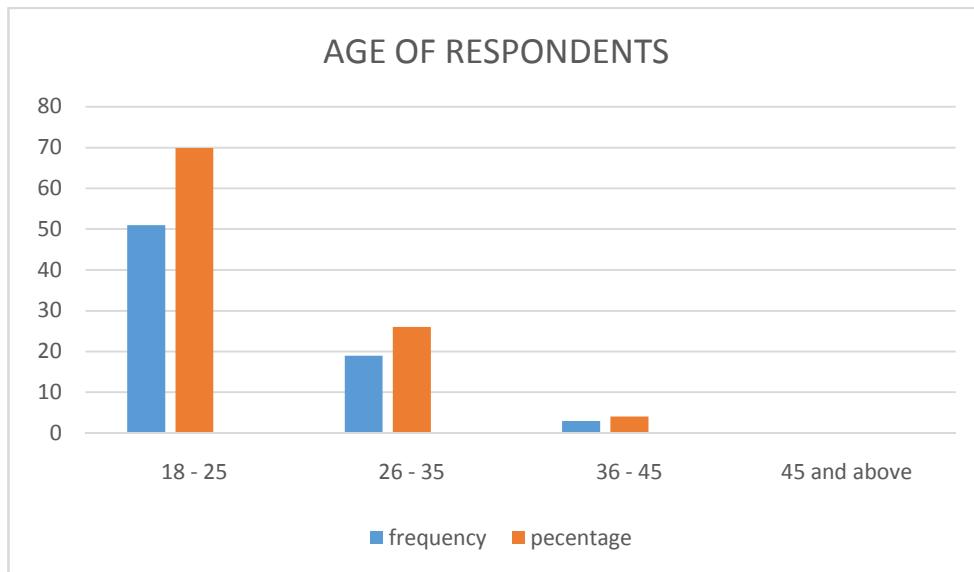


From our table and figure above, this balance shows that product uniqueness and attributed competition are at least equally distributed to all genders, reducing high risks of bias and giving a more holistic approach of how both the male and female respondents perceive the different organizational strategies

Table 2: Age of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
18-25	51	69.9	69.9
26-35	19	26	95.9
36-45	3	4.1	100
45 and above	0	0	

Figure 2: Age of respondents

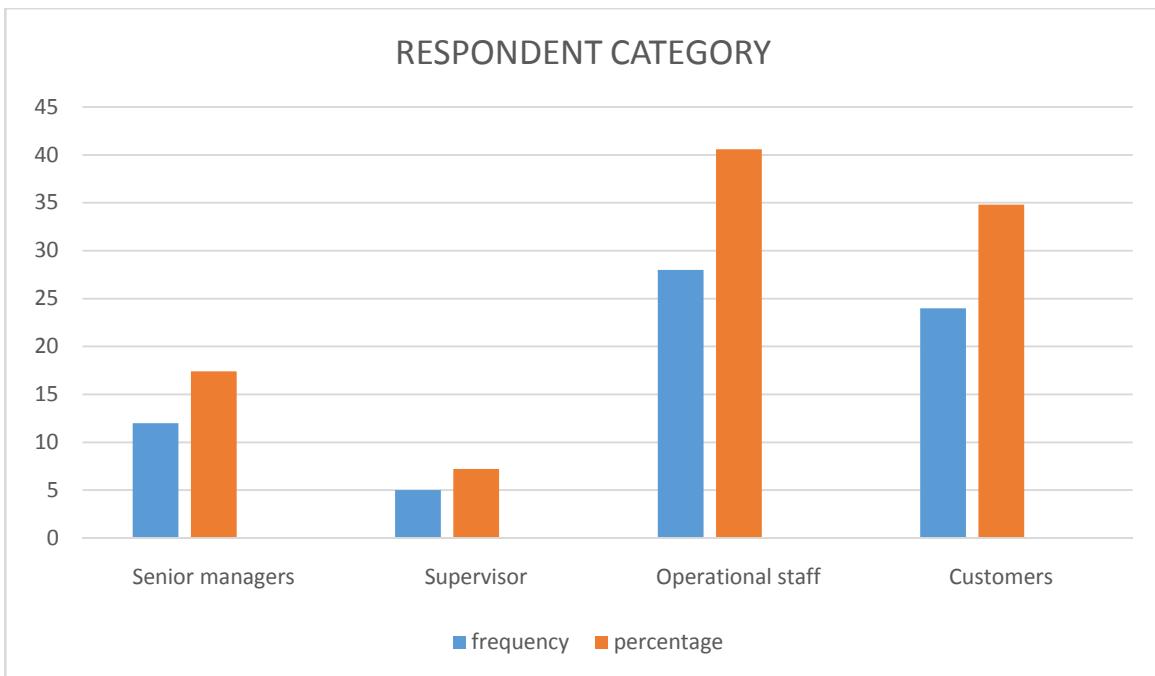


The table and figure above indicate a diverse representation across various age groups, showcasing a range of experiences and perspectives within the surveyed Amstus polymer packaging limited. The highest frequency and percentage are observed in the 18 - 25 years age group, suggesting that this age category is more prominently represented among the survey. This interpretation provides a snapshot of the age distribution among respondents, offering insights into the demographic composition of the study

Table 3: Respondent Category

Respondent Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative percentage (%)
Senior Managers	12	17.4	17.4
Supervisor	5	7.2	24.6
Operational staff	28	40.6	65.2
Customers	24	34.8	100
Total	73	100	

Figure 3: Respondent category

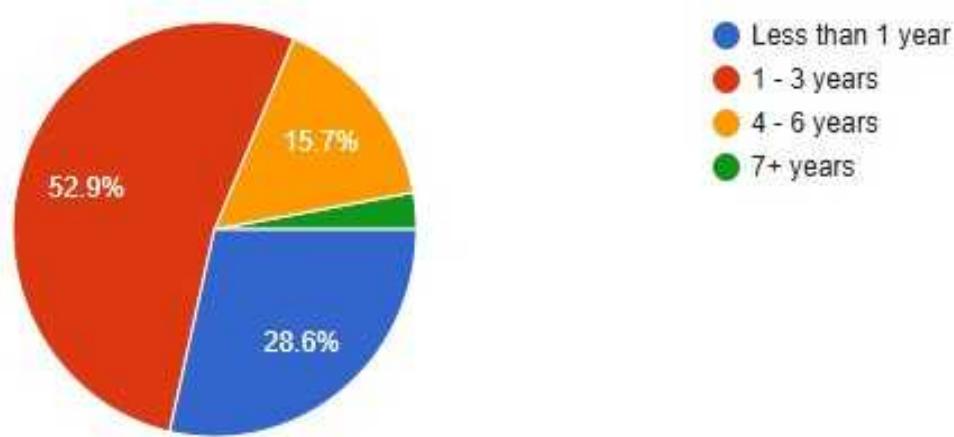


The sample is heavily weighted towards operational staff (40.6%) and customers (34.8%) constituting a total of 75.4% of respondents whereas the senior managers and supervisors combined constitute 24.6% providing room for supplementary view point. The study shows that diverse range of stakeholders provided their view but emphasis was only on the operational staffs and customer experience

Table 4: Work experience

Respondent Work Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Less than 1 year	20	28.6	28.6
1 - 3 years	37	52.9	81.5
4 - 6 years	11	15.7	97.2
7+ years	2	2.9	100

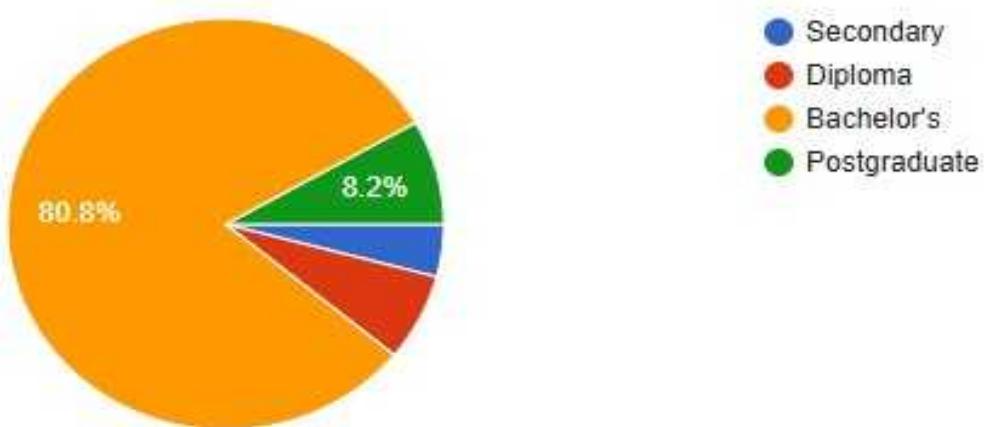
Figure 4: work experience



From table four, it shows that the sample population is made up of mostly junior staff with less than three years of experience at the places of work which acts as the important trait. This skew must be the main way to look at the research results since it has a bigger impact on our study concerning the Organization.

Table 5: Education Level

Respondent Level	Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Secondary		3	4.1	4.1
Diploma		5	6.8	10.9
Bachelor's		59	80.8	91.7
Post graduate		6	8.2	100

Figure 5: Education level

Diploma 5(6.8%)

Secondary 3(4.1%)

The data presented indicates the distribution of academic qualifications among respondents in the survey conducted Amstus Polymer packaging limited. The majority of respondents in Amstus have academic qualifications at the Bachelor's levels, with a smaller percentage holding diploma and postgraduate. This distribution provides insights into the educational background of individuals

participating in the survey and can be considered when analyzing the overall findings related to the product differentiation and organizational competitiveness.

4.3 Presentation of the findings

Statements	1 SD	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	M	S d
To assess the mediating role of consumer loyalty in the relationship between product differentiation strategies and organizational competitiveness							
Product differentiation has increased customer loyalty	4 5.5	2 2.7	9 12.3	42 57.5	16 21.9	3.8 7	0.85
Loyalty customers frequently recommend products to others	17 23.3	5 6.8	11 15.1	39 52.7	17 23.3	3.9 4	0.88
Customers prefer Amstus over competitors due to unique features	3 4.1	3 4.1	22 30.1	29 39.7	16 21.9	3.8 3	0.83
Differentiation strategies encourage repeat purchase	3 4.1	4 5.5	12 16.4	38 52.1	16 21.9	3.9 7	0.82
The firm has a stronger competitive advantage than the rivals in the market	0 6.9	5 20.8	15 48.6	35 23.6	17 9	3.8 9	0.87
Differentiated strategies have increased brand reputation	0 2.7	2 12.3	9 72.6	53 12.3	9 5	3.9 5	0.69
The firm responds quickly and effectively to competition through unique products	0 2.8	2 22.2	16 47.2	34 27.8	20 0	4.0 0	0.78
Differentiation ensures that firms remain sustainable in a competitive market	1 1.4	4 5.6	6 8.3	42 58.3	1 1.45	3.7 0	0.82

The tabulation indicates that mean scores for all the availed information in the table are consistently higher ranging from 3.70 to 4.00 on a scale. This indicates that the feedback from the respondents agrees or strongly agrees that the product

differentiation strategies contribute largely in the enhancement of Organizational competitiveness. The highest mean score was 4.00 indicating that the firm responds urgently and more efficient through the unique products hence are able to see this as the strongest mediator between differentiation and organizational competitiveness.

The standard deviation for the statements are low inbetween 0.69 - 0.88. A smaller standard deviation shows that the responses are tightly incorporated to the mean hence a high level of consensus among the respondents. The lowest standard deviation of 0.69 for the statement concerning brand reputation shows a strong argument on this point. The highest standard deviation of 0.88 concerning the loyalty customers frequently recommend products to others show a broad aspect about this matter though the overall agreementremains high.

Statements	1 SD %	2 D %	3 N %	4 A %	5 SA %	M	Sd
To analyze the extent to which differentiated products features contribute to sustainable sales growth and market shares of a firm.							
Products are easily identified through their branding	3 4.1	1 1.4	5 6.8	30 40.5	35 47.3	4.34	0.81
The firms introduces unique packaging designs that stand out in the market	3 4.1	0	13 17.6	37 50	21 28.4	4.29	0.81
Packaging materials used meet industry quality standards	3 4.1	0	8 10.8	45 60.8	18 24.3	4.29	0.83
Packaging differentiation influences my decision to buy products	0	5 6.8	18 24.7	29 39.7	21 28.8	4.19	0.82
The company's label or logo reflect quality and reliability	1 1.4	1 1.4	10 13.7	37 50.7	24 32.9	3.88	0.86
Branding has increased customer loyalty	0	4 5.4	11 14.9	35 47.3	24 32.4	4.10	0.88
Product labels provide clear and useful	0	1	7	32	34	4.24	0.83

product information		1.4	9.5	43.2	45.9		
Firms ensure consistency in the quality of its packaging products	0 4.1	3 8.2	6 58.9	43 28.8	21	4.17	0.88
Customers perceive products as superior to competitors	1 1.4	3 4.1	20 27	32 43.2	18 24.3	4.09	0.87
High quality products have increased reputation in the market	2 2.7	2 2.7	16 21.6	34 45.9	20 27	4.11	0.89
Quality differentiation helps to retain customers	0 2.7	2 14.9	11 50%	37 32.4	24	4.15	0.85
Products differentiation contributes to increased sales	0 4.1%	3 19.2	14 61.6	45 15.1	11	4.07	0.85
The firm has gained more customers due to differentiated products	2 2.8	2 2.8	11 15.3	39 54.2	18 25	4.10	0.86
Product differentiation enhances the firm's market share in Uganda	13 17.8	6 8.2	10 13.7	43 58.9	13 17.8	4.10	0.86
Unique products features have led to sustainable business growth	23 31.5	3 4.1	9 12.3	37 50.7	23 31.5	4.60	0.75

The survey feedback presents a clear and overwhelming consensus on the roles of branding, quality and distinguishing in a business context. The mean score above 4.0 indicates that respondents generally agreed or strongly agreed with the information availed to them. The relatively small deviations mostly below 1.0 showed a strong agreement between respondents showing less knowledge about variations in their opinions

Statements related to product features and branding received highest mean scores showing high perception. The highest mean of 4.34 indicated the strong belief that a products inherits qualities that ensure primary drivers to its success. The mean for branding increasing customer loyalty is 4.24 indicating that branding has a critical role in recognition and customer satisfaction. The most notable aspect is the statement of

product differentiation enhancing the firm's market share with the mean of 3.73 and highest standard deviation of 1.13.

The higher variability indicates a greater diversity of opinions on this specific topic hence the responses indicated the positive view of the strategic importance of branding, quality and product differentiation.

Statements	1 SD %	2 D %	3 N %	4 A %	5 SA %	M	sd
To examine how product differentiation enhances the firm's resilience and adaptability in the competitive market.							
The firm has a stronger competitive advantage than the rivals in the market	0 5 6.9	15 20.8	35 48.6	17 23. 6	4.09	0.88	
Differentiated strategies have increased brand reputation	0 2 2.7	9 12.3	53 72.6	9 12. 3	4.06	0.82	
The firm responds quickly and effectively to competition through unique products	0 2 2.8	16 22.2	34 47.2	20 27. 8	4.13	0.85	
Differentiation ensures that the firm remains sustainable in a competitive market	1 1.4	4 5.6	6 8.3	42 58.3	19 26. 4	4.14	0.87

The computation shows a positive and strong consistency among respondents regarding the role of product uniqueness in enhancing the firm's resilience and adaptability. All the statements have a mean score of over 4.0 which corresponds to a strong agree response on the scale hence indicating a clear consensus. The standard deviation are consistently low below 0.9 providing an overview that the responses

were clustered over the mean. This level of findings suggest that the information was robust and reliable.

The results portray a high concept that product differentiation is a strong tool for achieving competitive advantage. The firm's competitive advantage had a mean of 4.09 and differentiated strategies had 4.06. This demonstrated that respondents use critical outcomes to see a direct link between product uniqueness. Concerning adaptability and sustainability, the statements with the high mean score (4.13) respond to competition and ensure sustainability (4.14). This suggests that customers don't see distinguishing as an immobile advantage but a static strategy that helps firms adapt and thrive in competent situations. The high scores in this cause show that distinction is viewed as a key to long term survival and agility.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of our survey findings, conclusions drawn and possible recommendations concerning our study. Our main reason was to examine how product differentiation influences organizational competitiveness. This provides the in-depth interaction between the two variables in a defined market.

5.2 Summary of findings

5.2.1. To assess the mediating role of customer loyalty in the relationship between product differentiation strategies and competitiveness

The survey found out that customer loyalty significantly plays a crucial role in influencing the tied relationship between product differentiation and organizational competitiveness. Circulating on the different attributes differentiation were shown and played a key role in the customer perception of the firm. However it's through the longing and enticing loyalty of the customers that turns in competitiveness. It was also found that the loyal customers are not only the regular repeat buyers but also the advocates who enhance the product qualities to others by the word of mouth to mouth. This shows that without the trust in the repeated buyers, this implies that efforts may yield short terms perspectives for the business. The results produced that loyalty of customers is the bridge through which differentiation translates into sustainable competitiveness.

5.2.2. To analyze the extent to which differentiated products features contribute to sustainable sales growth and market shares of a firm.

The study revealed that distinguished product features strongly contribute to sustainable sales and market growth in a defined market. Unique features such as quality, brand image and design were profound to be the central pivot in attracting and retaining customers especially in the most competitive firms where they go into

struggle for same offerings. Respondents emphasized paying an agreed price for the commodities which they see unique and superior. Differentiation doesn't not only increase firm's revenue but also help in protecting and growing the market share of the firms. This can be done by ensuring that they discourage substitution in the same field.

A case in point unique products tend to establish a sense of exclusivity that attracts niche markets while high quality builds reliability that appeals to mainstream markets. Over the years, these attributes incorporate into sustainable sales growth, hence able to put the firm at the peak of the industry in that particular sector.

5.2.3. To examine how product differentiation enhances the firm's resilience and adaptability in the competitive market.

The survey showed that product uniqueness enhances organizational resilience and adaptability ion more competitive dynamic of the market. Firms with well distinguished products were in greater position to be at the top for example the new entrants, changes in customer choices and economic misfortunes. Differentiation was shown by creating a much portion of loyal customers who continuously support the business even in the hard times. It also gives chance and opportunity to the different firms to adapt to the different trends within the market. In this view, firms consistently create new designs which are in relation to when the tastes and preference of the customers change. In this aspect, differentiation is not only a marketing strategy but also a long term survival mechanism.

5.3 Conclusions

As a mediator, customer loyalty is indispensable in creating a bound between product differentiation and organizational competitiveness. Firms get a chance to distinguish their products but fail to cultivate loyalty risks losing customers to rivals who may copy their strategies. Loyalty ensures that differentiation yield the benefits which last for a long period of time with gains in terms of repeated purchase, brand defense and advocacy.

Differentiation as a driver of sales and market growth, unique product features such as superior quality and eye catching designs contribute significantly to sales growth and market share. Firms that invest in creating differentiated offerings get the ability to get a competitive urge, attract customers and reduce the tendency of substitution. Product uniqueness is not all about differentiation but also about market expansion and long term financial sustainability.

Differentiation enhances resilience and adaptability, differentiation equips firms with urge to survive rival pressure and be able to adjust to shifting market dynamics. Firms with unique products enjoy stronger brand identification, higher customer satisfaction and greater adjustments where need arises.

5.4 Recommendations

Continuous product innovation, firms should ensure that product uniqueness is seen as the ongoing process but not as the one- time effort. The continuous adjustments in the aspects of the product ensure that differentiation remains relevant in the dynamic market.

Integration of the customer feedback, this intends the firms to adopt the modernized systematic mechanisms for obtaining information from their esteemed customers and ensure that they are in line with the needs of the customers for the business.

Strengthening customer loyalty, the firms should ensure that they stick on the different aspects that help to keep the customers neared to the business. This can be done through the reward schemes, offering the necessary after sale services and also the improved customer service hence loyal customers protect the firm against the rival treats

Protect intellectual property rights, stronger policies are needed so as to create safety and uniqueness of the different products offered on the market. These rights will help the firms be able to spend in meaningful differentiations.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

PRODUCT DIFFERENTIATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS

A CASE STUDY AT AMSTUS POLYMER PACKAGING LIMITED

Dear respondent,

I am called HIGAYE DOUGLAS ENOCK a student at Uganda Christian University pursuing a bachelor's in business administration majoring in Management. I am conducting a study on "Product differentiation and Organizational competitiveness at Amstus Polymer Packaging Limited.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data from individuals so as to help how product differentiation influences organizational competitiveness in the market. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential and used only for academic purposes. Kindly respond honestly and thanks for your participation.

1. SECTION A (Demographic Information)

GENDER

Mark only one oval.

Male

Female

2. AGE

Mark only one oval.

- 18 - 25
- 26 - 35
- 36-45
- 46 and above

3. EDUCATION LEVEL

Mark only one oval.

- Secondary
- Diploma
- Bachelor's
- Postgraduate

4. POSITION/ROLE

Mark only one oval.

- Senior Manager
- Supervisor
- Operational staff
- Customer

5. WORK EXPERIENCE

Mark only one oval.

- Less than 1 year
- 1 - 3 years
- 4 - 6 years
- 7+ years

Skip to question 6

SECTION B (Product Differentiation Strategies)

Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

6. B1. Packaging Innovation

The firm introduces unique packaging designs that standout in the market

Mark only one oval.

- strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

7. Packaging materials used meet industry quality standards

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

8. Packaging innovation has improved customer recognition

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

9. Packaging differentiation influences my decision to buy products

Mark only one oval.

- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

10. **B2. Branding and labelling**

Products are easily identified through their branding *Mark only*

one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

11. **The company's label and logo reflect quality and reliability**

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

12. Branding has increased customer loyalty

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

13. Product labels provide clear and useful product information

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

14. B3. Quality Differentiation

The firm ensures consistency in the quality of its packaging products

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

15. **Customers perceive products as superior to competitors**

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

16. **High quality products offered have increased reputation in the market**

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

17. **Quality differentiation helps to retain customers**

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

SECTION C (ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS)

C1. Customer loyalty

18. Product differentiation has increased customer loyalty

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

19. Customers prefer Amstus over competitors due to unique features
Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

20. Loyalty customers frequently recommend products to others

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

21. Differentiation strategies encourage repeat purchases

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

C2. Sales Growth and Market Share

Products differentiation contributes to increased sales

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

22. The firm has gained more customers due to differentiated products

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

23. Product differentiation enhances the firm's market share in Uganda

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

24. Unique product features have led to sustainable business growth

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

25. **C3. Competitive Advantage**

The firm has a stronger competitive advantage than the rivals in the market

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

26. **Differentiated strategies have increased brand reputation**

Mark only one oval.

-
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
-

27. The firm responds quickly and effectively to competition through unique products

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

28. Differentiation ensures the firm remains sustainable in a competitive market

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

29. SECTION D

What suggestions do you have for Amstus so as to increase its competitiveness?