



**MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND SOCIETY STUDIES**

**The effectiveness of holistic marketing as a survival tactic in a crisis economy: a case of the Zimbabwe Newspapers Group 1980 ltd Sales and Marketing Department.**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this to my family who are my pillar of strength, my sister Felistas and my father who is always watching over me.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

There are a number of people without whom this thesis might not have been written and to whom I am greatly indebted to. I would like to thank my supervisor for his good guidance and to the Media and Society Class of June 2018, congratulations team, we made it. Most of all, thanks be to God who makes all things possible.

## **CERTIFICATE OF SUPERVISION**

I hereby certify that I personally supervised this dissertation with departmental and University's general regulations. On that basis, I confirm this dissertation examinable.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study seeks to provide a solution on how media organizations can employ marketing strategies to survive the economic. With the advent of new trends in the global marketing world, this study explored the implementation of the holistic marketing concept and its effectiveness in a crisis ridden Zimbabwean economy by *Zimbabwe Newspapers (1980) Ltd.* It addresses the gap on how print media organizations can best utilize marketing to stay viable in an unstable economic environment. The continued crisis is posing serious challenges on media organizations' operations and these have put marketing departments in the spotlight as they are expected to come up with innovative ways to counter the prevailing situation. In an attempt to fully understand the phenomenon, the study takes on an exploratory approach and is guided by the holistic marketing concept and marketing mix theories. Relevant data was gathered through structured interviews, participant and nonparticipant observation as well as through archival research in order to obtain the most accurate data which fully addressed the topic study. This was then tabulated for interpretation and analysis. Findings suggested that the implementation of the Holistic Marketing concept combined with the most appropriate modifications of the marketing mix boosted revenues resulting in Zimpapers' recording a good financial year making it crucial for other media organizations to adopt the strategy. Further research may be done by critically examining each of the components of holistic marketing namely relationship marketing, internal marketing, socially responsible marketing and integrated marketing communications from a digital perspective.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Abstract .....	2
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b> .....	9
1.0 Introduction .....	9
1.1 Background Of The Study .....	9
1.2 Statement of the Problem .....	10
1.3 Research Objectives.....	10
1.4 Main Research Question.....	11
1.4.1 Sub Research Questions .....	11
1.5 Assumptions .....	11
1.6 Purpose of the Study.....	11
1.7 Delimitations .....	12
1.8 Limitations .....	12
1.9 Structure of the Study .....	12
1.10 Conclusion.....	13
<b>CHAPTER 2: .....</b>	14
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORATICAL FRAMEWORK</b> .....	14
2.0 Introduction .....	14
2.1 Literature Review .....	14
2.1.2 Holistic Marketing Concept .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
2.1.3 Survival Tactics in a Crisis Economy .....	15
2.2 Theoratical Framework.....	16
2.2.1 Marketing Mix Theory (4 P's of Marketing) .....	16
2.3 Conclusion .....	21
<b>CHAPTER 3: .....</b>	21
<b>RESEARCH METHODS AND METHODOLOGY</b> .....	21
3.0 Introduction .....	21
3.1 Methodology.....	22
3.1.1 Exploratory Research .....	22
3.1.2 Case Study .....	22
3.2 Reflexivity .....	22
3.3 Unit of Analysis .....	23
3.4 Research Population.....	23
3.5 Sampling Methods .....	23
3.5.1 Purposive Sampling .....	23
3.6 Methods of Data Collection.....	24
3.6.1 Face to Face Interviews.....	24
3.6.2 Observation .....	24
3.6.3 Archival Research.....	24

3.7 Data Analysis Methods .....	25
3.7.1 Content Analysis .....	25
3.7.2 Critical Discourse Analysis .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.7.3 Semiotic analysis .....	25
3.8 Data Presentation .....	25
3.9 Conclusion.....	26
CHAPTER 4:.....	27
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS AND POLITICAL ECONOMY</b> .....	27
4.0 Introduction .....	27
4.1 Background of Zimpapers (1980) Ltd and Political Economy .....	27
4.1.1 Discussion .....	27
4.2 <i>Zimpapers</i> organizational Structure and Political Economy .....	28
4.2.1 Sales and Marketing Department.....	30
4.2.2 Discussion .....	30
4.3 <i>Zimpapers</i> Mission, Vision, Core Values and Political Economy .....	31
4.3.1 Discussion .....	31
4.4 Funding Mechanism and Political Economy .....	32
4.5 <i>Zimpapers</i> Links with other organizations and Political Economy .....	34
4.6 Overall Discussion .....	35
4.7 Conclusion.....	36
CHAPTER 5:.....	36
<b>DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS</b> .....	36
5.0 Introduction .....	37
5.1 Overview of Findings.....	37
5.2 Holistic Marketing is the most effective Survival Strategy.....	38
5.2.1 Discussion .....	44
5.3 Modification Product Strategies .....	44
5.3.1 Discussion .....	47
5.5 Redefining Pricing Strategies.....	48
5.4.1 Discussion .....	49
5.6 Adaptation of Place (Distribution) Strategies .....	49
5.5.1 Discussion .....	50
5.6 Rethinking Promotional Strategies .....	50
5.6.1 Discussion .....	51
5.7 Overall Discussion .....	52
5.8 Conclusion.....	53
CHAPTER 6:.....	54
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION</b> .....	54

<b>6.1 Evaluations and Conclusions</b> .....	54
<b>6.2 Suggested Theory</b> .....	55
<b>6.4 Recommendations</b> .....	56
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	57
<b>APPENDIX</b> .....	62
<b>Interview Guide</b> .....	62
<b>Turnitin Report</b> .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

## **CHAPTER ONE:**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The resolution of this study is to explore the effectiveness of the ‘newest’ marketing approach and business concept, Holistic Marketing, as a survival strategy in responding to a crisis economic environment. It takes an in-depth case study approach focusing on Zimbabwe’s oldest, largest and leading integrated media organization *Zimbabwe Newspapers 1980 Ltd (Zimpapers) Sales and Marketing department*. Chapter one is an introductory chapter which presents an outline of the structure, background, problem statement, research question, justification, scope and delimitation of the study.

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

The media cannot be equated to other businesses however they are largely operated as ordinary business enterprises. They indeed operate for profit generation and maximization but this is done without them becoming less of social institutions (McQuail 1983, Grossberge et al 1998). The economic crisis has become a catalyst for marketing problems, which have deepened recently, further complicating the work of marketing managers due to the abrupt transition from a period of rapid sales growth and relatively high profits to a period of reducing demand and consumption on the relative markets. It has undoubtedly proven to be a trial for both small and large companies (Kotler and Keller, 2011) and resulted in the shutting down or dropping of the production capacity because of the limited consumer demand coupled with intensive competition in the marketplace.

It is imperative to note that economic crises do not only affect consumption economically but psychologically as well. The rise of unemployment and fall of income security results in the fall of consumer confidence thereby allowing them to radically adapt to the changed economic conditions. Therefore, changes are to be made in the general marketing and restructuring communications. Zimbabwe since the year 1999 is viewed as a country always in turmoil and the epicenter of political problems (Hondora, 2002). Currently, the country is going through cash shortages, price hikes, limits on international transactions and the controversial bond notes that do not work beyond country borders and these problems require immediate practical scholarly solutions to ensure the continuity of most industries.

Marketing provides key strength to an organization as it generates information that provides proactive and reactive strategies to avert crises (Samli, 1993). Marketing strategies are maps of how organizations promote consumption of their goods (Ferrel and Hartline, 2002). There have been various marketing strategies with the most recent being a unified system referred to as the best way of tackling an economic crisis. According to Kotler and Keller (2011),

A holistic marketing concept is based on the development, design and implementation of marketing programs, processes and activities that recognize that ‘everything matters’ with marketing and that a broad, integrated perspective is necessary to attain the best solution.

The study therefore seeks to fill the media marketing gap by exploring the concept of holistic marketing and whether it is an effective survival strategy to ensure consumption of media products in a crisis economy.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The researcher discovered that media organizations are shutting down due to hardships propagated by the continued crisis-ridden Zimbabwean economy. It is against this backdrop that the study seeks to explore whether the use of the holistic marketing concept as a survival tactic is an effective way of resuscitating and maintaining media organizations’ existence by doing a case study of *Zimpapers*. There is need to assess whether considering a full scope rather than narrowing to particular activities is the most effective concept that works in a rapidly changing marketing and economic media environment.

## **1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

This study seeks to:

- Explore the use of holistic marketing as a survival tactic in a crisis Zimbabwean economy by the *Zimpapers* sales and marketing department.
- Identify product adaptations made at *Zimpapers*.
- Identify pricing revisions employed at *Zimpapers*.
- Explore distribution (place) variations at *Zimpapers*.
- Identify promotion adaptations at *Zimpapers*.

## **1.4 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION**

- How effective is the holistic marketing concept as a survival tactic in a crisis economy for *Zimpapers*?

### **1.4.1 SUB RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- What product strategy adaptations were made in response to the economic crisis by *Zimpapers*?
- What changes were made to pricing strategies in response to the economic crisis by *Zimpapers*?
- What changes were made to distribution (place) strategies in response to the economic crisis by *Zimpapers*?
- What adaptations were made to promotional strategies in response to the economic crisis by *Zimpapers*?

## **1.5 ASSUMPTIONS**

Assumptions are defined as the most basic yet crucial elements of a study and despite being out of the researcher's control they help to validate the research (Leedy and Omrod, 2010). These are the simplest expectations of the study and researcher considered the following as the assumptions.

- Holistic marketing is the best way to tackle a crisis as it takes on an integrated approach that effectively deals with impromptu situations.
- Adapting pricing strategies is crucial in an economic crisis.
- When organizations modify their product strategy they ensure consumption in a crisis.
- Modifying distribution (place) strategies is essential in a crisis economy.
- Adapting promotional strategies to suite the environment is vital to organization's survival.

## **1.6 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The study seeks to provide a marketing oriented solution for media organizations to the economic crisis by exploring whether the use of holistic marketing and adaptations to product, price, distribution and promotion strategies ensures consumption of media products, which is vital to organizational continuity, in a crisis economy.

### **1.7 DELIMITATIONS**

Delimitations are boundaries that clearly outline the focus of the research (Harris 2003). They are boundaries set by the researcher for the study to take note of. The research is an exploratory study of the effectiveness of the practice of holistic marketing by *Zimpapers Sales and Marketing Department* as a survival strategy in a crisis ridden Zimbabwean economy. The research is based in the cities of Harare where the main office and company's headquarters are and Gweru where the researcher is located. This study is guided by the Holistic Marketing Concept and Marketing Mix Theory.

### **1.8 LIMITATIONS**

Limitations are influences beyond the researcher's control that affect the findings of the dissertation (Uzoagul, 1998). This study is an academic research and it is going to make conclusions based on one media organization's sales and marketing department's application of holistic marketing to survive the economic recession. Although the same techniques may be used in all media organizations, the study is only limited to print media. *Zimpapers* is a big fish in the industry thus it might over represent other organizations' capabilities and the findings are by no means exhaustive in the survival of media organizations. The findings from this research cannot be generalized because they are unique to the sampled population.

### **1.9 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY**

The study comprises of six chapters. Chapter 1 is the Introduction to the study consisting the background, problem statement, research question, justification, scope and delimitation of the study. Chapter 2 is on Literature Review and Theoretical Framework conceptualizing published or unpublished information relating to the study and theories propounded by scholars. Chapter 3 is on Research Methods and Methodology which explains data collection and analysis methods that were employed in the study. Chapter 4 is titled Organizational Structure and Political Economy exploring the company's history and structure. Chapter 5 is for data presentation on the findings of the study. Chapter 6 is an evaluation and conclusion of the study.

## **1.10 CONCLUSION**

This chapter was an introduction to the research and outlined the background of the study, statement of the problem, delimitations and limitations as well objectives and assumptions of the study. Having introduced and contextualized the topic, the next chapter is to be on literature review and theoretical framework guiding the study.

## **CHAPTER 2:**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is a discussion on the literature related to the study. It is structured into two parts with the first one being the literature review section and the second is on theoretical framework. Theoretical framework helps the researcher to explain, understand and comprehend reality.

#### **2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW**

Literature review is defined as an account of what has been published on a topic by accredited scholars (Cohen et al, 2011). Moreover, literature review is the systematic exploration of issues related to one's problems which have been treated differently by various authors and authorities (Baxter and Jack, 2008). In addition, it is an extraction of knowledge from published and unpublished text that is relevant to the investigation and evaluation of a research topic (Hart, 1998). The researcher is to going to go over literature on the economic crisis and the challenges on media houses, holistic marketing and survival strategies in a crisis economy.

##### **2.1.1 ECONOMIC CRISIS AND THE CHALLENGES ON MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS**

Economics is the study of how people make choices in consumption, which is how humans try to allocate their scarce resources amongst their needs and wants (Parkins et al (1997). From this notion, media economics is referred to as the study of how media industries use scarce resources to produce content that satisfies audiences' needs and wants (Albarran, 2010). It is relating economic principles, theories and laws with media operations and how allocation of resources determines what the people consume. While the definition of an economic crisis remains a bone of contention, it is defined as a significant decline in the economic activity spread across the country (NBER, 2010). These changing economic forces shape media performance, decision making processes and structures (Doyle, 2002).

The Zimbabwean economy is heavily strained by economic sanctions and is characterized by unemployment and shortages of basic and non-basic goods (Danserau, 2004). Through and through, the Zimbabwean economy has been known to be volatile, fragile and always in crisis. The economy is one of the many cases of Sub-Sahara countries wallowing in debt due to the introduction of the harsh Economic Structural Adjustment Policies (ESAPs) by the world

economic leaders (Danserau, 2004). Political schism between the ruling party Zanu PF and main opposition party MDC continue to aggravate the crisis as political figures sabotage each other at the expense of the economy and Zimbabwean citizens to gain political mileage. The economic crisis has cast its shadow on the functioning of the media by crippling the element it survives on (advertising and copy sales revenue). On record Justin Mutasa, former C.E.O of the *Zimpapers* group, states that:

The liquidity crunch has greatly affected our businesses. There is a general decline in business and that affects readership; companies are also not advertising. Buying newspapers is now a luxury. People now have to deal with bread and butter issues first. (Mambondiyani, 2014: p10)

This reveals the need for newspaper organizations to be more innovative and find means of survival as they fight the economic crisis and alternative media channels. The biggest casualty has been employment as there was serious downsizing of media personnel. In an article published by the New Zimbabwe newspaper titled “Economic hardship takes heavy toll on Zimbabwe’s media sector”, Professor Jonathan Moyo stated that, “the truth of the matter is that the environment is very harsh for the whole sector without exceptions. Only those with institutional depth, history and committed audiences are likely to survive.” This shows the need for newspaper organizations to be more innovative and find means of survival as they fight the economic crisis and alternative media channels.

### **2.1.2 SURVIVAL TACTICS IN A CRISIS ECONOMY**

Survival tactics vary in accordance to organizations’ development levels. Survival can be defined as market continuation, avoiding bankruptcy and continued ownership (Upson et al, 2012; Shaver and Flyer, 2000 & Chakrabati, 2005). Whilst there are many ways carefully planned to survive crises, there are five overall tactics that organizations can employ which are to firstly accept that Constant and Fast Change is the New Normal which means that businesses must be ready for change as the business environment goes through various transformative shifts where heightened paces of change are normal (Wiere, 2013). While change can be daunting, executives need to embrace change and accept that the future is harder to predict than ever before. Secondly, they have to understand the potential that come with existing data which can be analyzed to obtain greater business intelligence and statistical information than ever before. This data can be leveraged to improve the customer experience, product or service,

logistics, customer segmentation, pricing, customer retention, inventory management and many other factors.

In addition, there has to be constant innovation as it is fundamental to the ever-changing business environment. It is important that executives recognize that innovations can come from anywhere in the organization (Wiere, 2013). The free flow of information through open channels gives results in more innovative suggestions coming from all corners of the organization. To facilitate this change in organizational thinking, employee performance systems need to be adapted to award innovative thinking as opposed to following corporate created guidelines. Organizations need to be redesigned to be more agile that is to be able to adjust in real-time as changes occur while facing disruption head on.

Outsmarting competitors becomes an important tactic, while some institutions succumb to hardships, a golden opportunity to strategically takeover and position your organization appears thus it must always be taken. As some segments grow faster than others in crisis economies an organization should take note of these and capitalized on them (Gow, 2008). Belohlav (1996) further recommends that organizations should know how and why their products are consumed as the buying process is fueled by value addition. He further notes that improvements to products results in value addition which guarantees continued and new consumption as well as organizational productivity. Moreover, organizations can resort to banking globally because banks are diversified and large intermediaries. Global banking allows organizations flexibility so as to quickly venture into new markets and to safeguard company funds from economic downturns. In selected international thriving economies, banked money quickly accumulates profits which in turn ensure that organizational coffers do not run dry (Boone and Kurtz, 1993).

## **2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Theory serves to explain, comprehend and interpret a phenomenon and put forward propositions to why such phenomena occur in the manner they do (Williams, 2003). The study is guided by the Holistic Marketing Concept and Marketing Mix Theory.

### **2.2.1 HOLISTIC MARKETING CONCEPT**

Marketing is defined as “the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients,

partners, and society at large” (AMA, 2013). A marketing strategy is defined as a map of how the organization will use its strengths to match the needs and wants of the market (Ferrell & Hartline, 2002). It is unique and central to the company’s overall success and competitive advantage in the market. The external environment is constantly changing thus marketing serves to be on the lookout and react accordingly (Ferrel and Hartline, 2002). This therefore means that marketing strategies are not fixed but must be adapted to suit changing economic environments. Strategies have to define market segments then develop and position product offerings for the respective segments (Hooley et al, 2008).

A unified marketing system that makes a powerful strategy is the best way to tackle a crisis (Kotler and Keller, 2011). Holistic marketing is the “newest approach to marketing and the latest business concept” (MM, 2008). According to Kotler and Keller (2011)

A holistic marketing concept is based on the development, design and implementation of marketing programs, processes and activities that recognize the breadth and interdependencies. Holistic marketing recognizes that ‘everything matters’ with marketing and that a broad, integrated perspective is necessary to attain the best solution.

A holistic marketing concept has one common goal and all its activities are directed to achieving that one goal. The approach provides four key elements namely relationship marketing, integrated marketing communications, internal marketing and socially responsible marketing (Kotler and Keller, 2011). Relationship marketing focuses on customer relationship management so as to build loyalty (Gronroos, 1995). Customer loyalty is essential as it helps to ensure continued consumption in a recession. As a result of good relationship marketing, organizations are able to establish strong, emotional and lasting networks. These connections further help the business in getting repeated sales, free word of mouth marketing and more leads.

Any form of contact which the organization has existing and a potential customer is referred to as marketing communications (Englis and Solomon, 1996). This definition is in line with Day (2000) who argues that is interaction done to influence the buying decision process. This therefore becomes crucial in a crisis as it results in strong brand image creation through a seamless and unified interaction (Baack, 2000). Through integration, media contribution is enhanced (Niak and Raman, 2003). As a result of several communication tools having the same message, customers have more chances to make a favorable buying decision through continued

exposure. The carefully linked messages assist buyers by giving timely reminders and updated information that help them move comfortable through the buying decision process when presented in a planned sequence reducing the misery of choice in a complex and busy environment.

The third element is internal marketing and they argue that it involves motivating customer contact employees to provide customer satisfaction (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). Employees are vital as they are brand ambassadors and product marketers to the external clients. They must be convinced in order to perform well, the vision and mission of the organization (Christopher, 2003). Therefore, it can be said that it is whereby management motivates employees so that they create a bond with the products and services being offered, as a result they are more passionate to push products such as copy sales or advertisement space.

Socially responsible marketing is the fourth element and it deals with socially accepted ways of operation (Gummerson, 2008). These guarantees support from the society which is crucial to organization's survival. Socially responsible marketing aspect of the holistic marketing concept involves larger interests of the society as businesses are required to follow certain ethics and partnerships with philanthropic and local organizations. It encourages a positive impact on company's stakeholders and recognizes that an organization has additional responsibilities such as those involving consumerism and environmental issues.

Holistic Marketing becomes essential in empowering organizations to build distinct brands amongst competitors which are important as customer's buy brands and not products. It assists in maintaining consistency and enables efficiency as it becomes easier to tap into new opportunities and spotting threats. Through focusing on the bigger picture, a synergy is created that effectively reinforce the brand message, image and positions it uniquely in customers' minds thus guaranteeing consumption in a crisis economical environment.

### **2.2.2 MARKETING MIX THEORY (4 P'S OF MARKETING)**

The Marketing Mix theory was first coined by E. Jerome McCarthy in the 1960's and it is a set of tactics on how to influence consumption of media products. It begins with the conceptualization of a product, pricing mechanisms, places to be made available and means of promotion to be employed. This has resulted in the theory being referred to as the 4P's of Marketing (Product, Place, Price and Promotion). The theory is as a set of controllable variables that meet needs of a target market when precisely planned (Kotler, 1996).

### **i. Product**

The product constitutes the base of the business. It is a collection of features and benefits that provide the customer satisfaction Kotler and Armstrong (2010). It is a unique combination of tangible and intangible product. They postulate that a product has three levels and these are the core product which is the need satisfying the customer is buying, generic product which is the actual product and the augmented product which are the extras that come with consuming the product. Products are influenced by the law of demand and supply and in the newspaper industry; it is easier to adjust production so as to suit levels of demand in times of an economic downturn.

### **ii. Price**

Price is defined as the perceived value of a product in the consumer's mind (Baack, 2000). It is the monetary, psychological and physical cost associated with obtaining a product and its distinction is that it is the one that generates direct turnover. The price is supposed to correlate with demand and supply so as to ensure that it is not insignificant or exorbitant (Kotler & Armstrong, 1996). Ferrell & Hartline (2002) indicate that it is the variable that is most prone to and easiest to effect change and Smith (1766) states that value attached to commodities is associated with scarcity and labour used to obtain them. It can be noted that the selling price of a newspaper is expressed neither by the interaction between supply and demand nor by the relationship to production cost but is purely subjective. Consumer demand for newspapers is inelastic as a rise in prices does not necessarily result in significant decline of consumption rather external forces in the economy as a whole influences trends, prices therefore resonate with the economic conditions.

### **iii. Place**

Issues of location, distribution channels and logistics are what the place factor deals with (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). Place answers the questions of how and where will customers obtain products. Until there has been distribution and placement of newspapers and advertising space, both are of no use to the customer therefore media entities have to do thorough research to ensure the product effectively gets to the targeted market. Distribution channels can be direct whereby the organization sells straight to its customers or indirect by employing middle men. Newspapers often use various distribution channels.

### **iv. Promotion**

Promotion is also referred to as the marketing communications mix, the promotional mix are persuasive communications designed and delivered to inspire the target market into consumption (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). When media entities have segmented their market, there is need to formulate a strategic message that will grab the customers' attention and make them buy eventually (Kotler and Armstrong, 1996). The promotional mix five elements namely:

**a. Advertising**

Advertising is defined as using paid for mass media for communication (Kotler, 1972). It is "any paid form of non-personal communication about an organization, product, service or idea by an identified sponsor (AMA, 2018). It is a long-term brand building process that reaches a very wide audience. Advertising is also the most prominent element of the communication mix. Effective advertising captures the audience's attention, generates interest, fuels desire and calls them to action.

**b. Sales promotion**

According to Shultz et al (1998) sales promotion elicits the consumer to purchase that is it centered on behavioral changing tactics. It is defined as offering incentives or discounts to boost number of sales as they perceive that they will be getting more for less. It is often used to promote short-term sales as it becomes expensive to continuously incentivise a product. Sales promotion activities attract the attention of the people and supplement advertising and personal selling efforts.

**c. Personal selling**

It is any face to face communication (Kotler, 1972). There are a number of individuals or organizations directly responsible for providing information and communicating with target audiences. It helps in identifying customers' needs, generates the latest market information and gives experts advice to customers.

**d. Direct Marketing**

Kotler and Armstrong (2010) argue that it entails generating and sending messages directly to the consumer through e-mails or text messages, direct response advertising and telemarketing. It is gaining momentum with the continuous technological advancements. This has been strengthened with the advent of new media.

#### **e. Public Relations**

Public Relations is referred to as the management of relationships between organizations and stakeholders (Brunig and Ledingham, 2000). It centers on good reputation and third person non-paid for communication. It is similar to the non-personal nature of advertising. Good public relations tell the customer what they need to know, build and sustain brand support; it is proactive, measurable and builds long lasting relationships.

### **2.3 CONCLUSION**

This chapter outlined the literature related to the study and theoretical framework guiding it. The next chapter is a discussion of the research methodology.

## **CHAPTER 3:**

### **RESEARCH METHODS AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3. INTRODUCTION**

The dissertation has covered chapters 1 and 2 which focused on the introduction of the study, literature review and theoretical framework. In order to investigate the use of holistic marketing by the *Zimpapers' sales and marketing department*, the researcher employed the following methods of data gathering, analysis and presentation.

### **3.1 METHODOLOGY**

These are methods that were adopted by the researcher in the collection of data on the use and effectiveness of holistic marketing as a survival strategy in a crisis economy. De Vaus (2001) as cited in Murima (2009: p52) postulates that

The function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial questions as unambiguously as possible...a good research design prevents the manipulative use of data by taking into account possible alternative explanations and enabling comparisons and judgments between them.

The research made use of the exploratory research design.

#### **3.1.1 EXPLORATORY RESEARCH**

The study made use of an exploratory research design. Exploratory Researches are conducted when a new phenomenon is investigated and this is according to Polit et al (2001). While Holistic Marketing centered studies have been conducted internationally, not many of significant studies have been conducted on Zimbabwean organizations and let alone the print media therefore it becomes the most suitable design for the research.

#### **3.1.2 CASE STUDY**

A case study is an in-depth study of a particular research problem (De Vaus (2001). It is effective as it narrows down a broad field into one or a few practical examples thus making the research more focused and findings accurate. Kuma (2011) postulates that case studies can be in the form of individuals, groups or organizations. The study was a case study of the *Zimpapers' Sales and Marketing department*.

### **3.2 REFLEXIVITY**

The research is based on empirical research and not personal values and emotions of the researcher. The researcher respects the integrity of the study by avoiding prejudicial thinking

and writing. Ethical issues concerning the research were thoroughly observed without any compromise and sources fully acknowledged.

### **3.3 RESEARCH POPULATION**

Research population is defined as the theoretical aggregation of all units or elements that apply to a particular research. It is the populace that is the focus of the study (Powell 1997). The research population must consist of various units that possess elements important to the study (Keyton, 2001). The study is on the *Zimpapers*' Sales and Marketing Department. Research is on the holistic marketing approach and survival tactics in a crisis economy.

### **3.4 UNIT OF ANALYSIS**

The unit of analysis refers to the actual phenomenon to be analyzed (Trochim, 2006). It is as the main entity a research analyses and this may be individuals, groups, geographical units or artefacts. The study's unit of analysis is the Holistic Marketing Concept which covers internal marketing, integrated marketing, relationship marketing and socially responsible marketing and how it is being applied as a survival tactic in a crisis economy by *Zimpapers*.

### **3.5 SAMPLING METHODS**

Sampling is "the process of choosing individuals from a defined population with the intention that the samples accurately represent that population" (Leedy, 1993:180). A sample is the part of the research population that are examined in the dissertation which is randomly or systematically chosen (Jacobsen (2002). As it is a representation of the entire population, the sample must possess the most relevant characteristic of the topic study.

#### **3.5.1 PURPOSIVE SAMPLING**

The research used purposive sampling and chose interviewees and archival documents that had the accurate characteristics so as to effectively generate relevant opinions regarding the holistic marketing concept and strategies being implemented to ensure the organization's survival. Purposive sampling is argued to be "one of the most common sampling strategies, it groups participants according to preselected criteria relevant to a particular research question (Mack et al, 2005:6). It also "refers to a judgement form of sampling in which the research purposely selects certain groups or individuals for their relevance to the issue being studied" (Chawawa, 1984: 224).

### **3.6 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION**

Data collection is the process of gathering relevant information about the subject from research participants. The researcher employed qualitative methods of data collection. There was use of the following:

#### **3.6.1 FACE TO FACE INTERVIEWS**

Data was collected using face to face interviews. This was done because responses were to be immediate, it was easier to administrate and provide more access to information on the study. An interview is defined as an act of questioning and listening (Leedy, 1993). It was a very good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings and definitions of situations and constructions of reality. The face to face structured interviews enabled the researcher to obtain precise information and facilitated a close relationship between the researcher and the interviewees leading to a better understanding of the problem. The researcher interviewed the group Chief Marketing Officer, Sales & Marketing, Business Manager Marketing and Administrators to get information on the organization's use of holistic marketing as a survival strategy.

#### **3.6.2 PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION**

Participant observation was part of the data collection methods and it is a method through which the researcher watches notable trends and events as they happen. The researcher was able to carry this out doing internship in the department. Punch (1998:84) defines participant observation as a "prolonged immersion in the life of a group, community or organization in order to discern people's habits and thoughts as well as to decipher the social structure that binds them together". The disadvantages that include unsystematic gathering of data, reliance on subjective measurement and possible observer effects were supplemented by the face to face interviews and archival research.

#### **3.6.3 ARCHIVAL RESEARCH**

Archival research was done in order to obtain more background information on *Zimpapers* and its use of the holistic marketing concept as a survival strategy. It is a primary research method which seeks out and extracts evidence from old records. It is collecting data through an analysis of historical records such as report minutes, newspapers and books (Kothari, 2004). It was a

good source for obtaining information which was largely unobtrusive as there were ready sources of information.

### **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS**

It is the process of evaluating and interpreting collected data to represent findings in a logical manner that answers the topic. Data analysis refers to sifting, organizing, summarizing and synthesizing of data so as to arrive at the results and conclusions of the research (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989: 201). Therefore, data analysis is a product of all considerations and is involved in the design and planning of the research.

#### **3.7.1 CONTENT ANALYSIS**

Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid references from data (Frankel and Wallen, 1996). It was done in order to make out meaning from data in relation to the context through which it had been collected. Keyton (2001) defines content analysis as an integration of data collection and analytical techniques. Priest (1996:45) argues that “it is the collection and analysis of data about media content”. It can therefore be said that it is a form of examination that bases on categorised communication.

#### **3.7.2 SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS**

Barthes (1975) defines semiotics as the science of how signs are used in society. Ferdinand de Saussure coined the term semiotics which is the meaning making process through signs and how they work. Semiotics nowadays examines how meanings in texts are constructed through the arrangement of signs and use of cultural codes hence the sign become a basic vehicle of meaning and language use. Marketers use discourse to attract audiences for example the Protector Plus marketing campaign that had the tag “what smart guys are wearing” as they were targeting the youth. Elements of semiotics are denotative and the connotative meaning for example an advert selling a car alongside a semi-naked woman, the denotative meaning of the advert is the company is basically selling a car but on the other had the connotative meaning may be that the car attracts such women when you purchase it. McQuail (2010) argues that it increases the possibility of unveiling more of the underlined meaning of a text which is crucial in answering the topic.

### **3.8 DATA PRESENTATION**

Presentation of data was through thematic analysis and this is carried out through segmenting data into themes that answer the dissertation questions (Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003). Data of the same field was grouped together in order to be homogenously linked. The advantage of thematic analysis is that it brings together elements of ideas would be rather meaningless when viewed alone”; these themes are inter-joined to map a rather less abstract picture about the whole study (Leiniger, 1985:06).

### **3.9 CONCLUSION**

The chapter was an outline of the research methods that were employed by the researcher. The methodology was linked to the qualitative approach which enables the collection, analysis and presentation of good quality data.

## CHAPTER 4:

### ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS AND POLITICAL ECONOMY

#### 4. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a detailed description and analysis of the historical background and the political economy of the organization. There will be a discussion of the ownership and control patterns and how they influence the manner that they conduct their business, the mission and vision, structure and funding mechanism.

#### 4.1 BACKGROUND OF ZIMPAPERS (1980) LTD AND POLITICAL ECONOMY

Business Manager- Sales, Phillipa Gomo stated that the history of *Zimpapers* is the history of Zimbabwe. She related that there are similarities of the two as they were ‘born’ at the same time and share the same values of democracy and black majority governance. In 1980, both changed leadership signifying the dawn of a new era. Gomo said,

Our slogan, 1980#SofarSoGood, is self-explanatory. We are a symbol of Zimbabwe’s independence because one of the reasons for the liberation struggle was an unfair and repressive colonial press.

When Zimbabwe got its independence the government bought The Herald and other papers from the Argus group, using a US\$20 million grant from Nigeria and established the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust to operate them. Speaking on why the organization was made a public company and not privatized, Chief Marketing officer (CMO) Tapuwa Mandimutsira, said that,

The organization was made public so as to ensure that newspapers would be able to freely and fully serve our new nation as a company that is for us by us which explains why the Mass Media Trust owns 51% and the rest is owned by other Zimbabweans.

##### 4.1.1 DISCUSSION

Archival research revealed that *Zimpapers* is the oldest and largest media organization in Zimbabwe (Mararike, 1993). The Reithian philosophy on public media is that media is there to inform, educate and entertain the public. From its inception public media is characterised by governmental control as the government is the people in a democratic nation. Relating to Moyo and Chuma (2010), exclusive ownership and control of the mainstream media has been a regime obsession from pre to post-colonial Zimbabwe. Political ideologies have diluted the

general operation of the media because the media facilitate the generation and maintenance of hegemony as they are an ideological state apparatus, neglecting what is good for the nation as would have been stated in their inception.

Media operate in dual market place by selling the medium itself to advertisers and content to consumers (Albarran, 2002). This state in relation to the Zimbabwe All Media Products Survey (ZAMPS) means that *Zimpapers* is the media of choice as it provides the most access to customers for advertisers through its audiences. The circulation and readership surveys also provide insight on how the organization continues to survive when other media houses are succumbing to the economic crisis. According to DeDee and Vorhie (1998), the organization with the largest market share is most likely to survive in a crisis due to the mass nature of its clients.

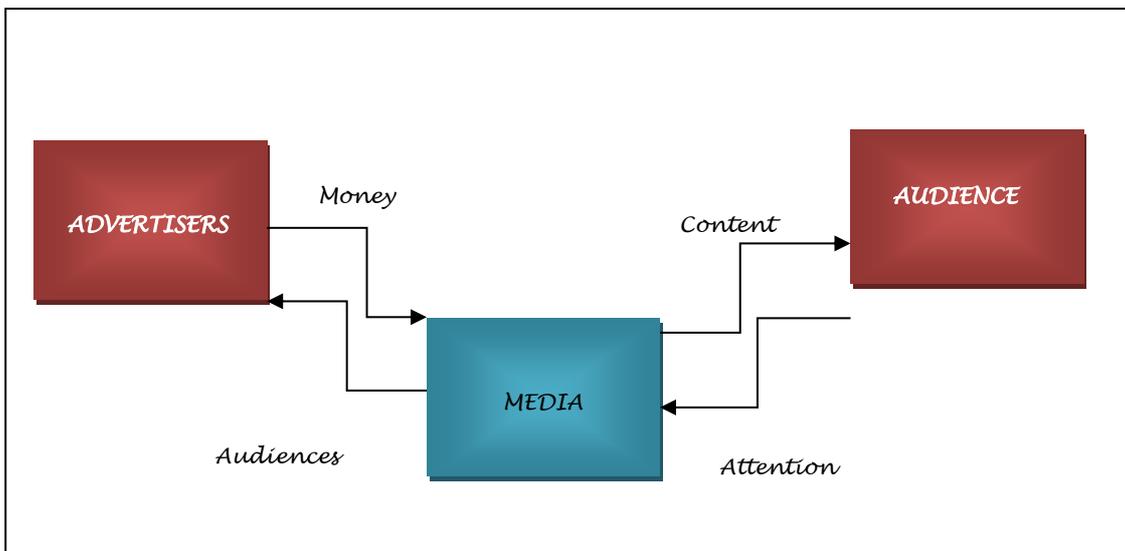


FIGURE 1 DUAL MARKETPLACE OF THE MEDIA

Source - Researcher

The diagram above is an illustration of the dual marketplace of the media. The power of a media house is in access to audience that it provides due to the reason that advertisers are agents of capitalism which is characterised by the mass production of goods equally to be matched with mass consumption. As a result, the media with the most audiences becomes the most sought after by advertisers making them susceptible to market forces (Albarran, 2002). It is imperative to note that, the history and political economy of *Zimpapers* is strongly routed in hegemonic purposes under the guise of public interests and good.

#### 4.2 ZIMPAPERS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND POLITICAL ECONOMY



FIGURE 2 GROUP ORGANOGRAM

Source - Researcher

The Group’s Board of Directors is led by Chairman, Mr D. Lupepe. The CEO is Pikirayi Deketeke and he reports directly to Board Chairman and the board of Directors. The General Manager (GM), Marks Shayamano, is responsible for managing all the activities and publications in Harare. He is the company’s signatory to partnerships made by the branch and newspaper. The newspaper division comprises of the Editorial, Technical, Production, I.T, Circulation and Sales and Marketing departments.

#### **4.2.1 SALES AND MARKETING DEPARTMENT**

The sales and marketing department is led by Munyaradzi Hatendi, who reports directly to the GM and is responsible for all departmental business. Sales and Marketing Manager, Hatendi stated that that the department is guided by the following codes:

Exceptional client relationship management, ethical work practises as regulated by government and marketing practises, highest level of discipline, attentiveness, professional maturity, transparency and teamwork.

It is the anchor of the group as it is responsible for most revenue collection. Their mission is to provide efficient and effective revenue generating activities for the group as well as providing professional advertising services to all its stakeholders. Administrator, Nyathi added that the sales and marketing department is made up of three divisions. She said,

The advertising division is responsible for all the advertisements that are run in the publications produced at the Harare Branch.

The researcher observed that sales representatives are responsible for the provision of professional advertising services to clients that are local and foreign. They are tasked with designing and drafting of booking schedules to suit clients' budgets without compromising on quality and are expected to monitor industrial trends while coming up with new ideas. Above all, they have to meet targets set by management. Furthermore, Assistant Administrator Mukwereza stated that the marketing division,

Is where all promotional activities are orchestrated and is directly under Charity Gwata. It is responsible for all events i.e. sales promotions and sponsorship. It is also responsible for carrying out research on publications, innovation of new ideas and marketing strategies.

On the classifieds division, he said that,

It is responsible for booking classified adverts in the *Zimpapers* publications. Adverts under classifieds section can either be booked through sales representatives of the division or through mobile advertising using text or Whatsapp messages.

#### **4.2.2 DISCUSSION**

Organizational structure provides the channel through which goals are met (Nelson and Quick, 2011). In as much as products such as sectors are detached on paper they have the same top

management. The various divisions are integrated and work as one which is crucial to an organization's survival (Berry et al 1976). Creation of friendly environments, according to Cornelissen (2004), makes work easier and increases productivity. The sales and marketing team's Monday morning meetings for weekly forecasts encouraged team work and productivity. They have mature staff and some have been a part of for over twenty years which is beneficial as they know all market trends and have established close lasting relationships with clients. The downside of this however is that just as technology is always changing, companies must often flexible enough to see those new markets and compete in the digital arena.

### **4.3 ZIMPAPERS MISSION, VISION, CORE VALUES AND POLITICAL ECONOMY**

The *Zimpapers* mission statement as said by the Group CMO, Mandimutsira, is:

To publish newspapers, magazines and books; produce print and packaging products as well as offer broadcasting services of the highest quality at competitive prices that add value to our stakeholders.

Mandimutsira also said that the company's vision is:

To be the leading integrated media, commercial printing and packaging company in Zimbabwe and beyond.

For the security and opulence of shareholders, employees, suppliers, clients and customers, *Zimpapers* is guided by the following core values:

Customer success and satisfaction; Equal opportunity employment; Quality products and services; Efficiency; Good Corporate Governance; Profitability and Continuous innovation." ([www.herald.co.zw](http://www.herald.co.zw))

#### **4.3.1 DISCUSSION**

In a global environment there is need for media to penetrate and break geographical barriers (Samli, 1993) in order for citizens and non-citizens to have a view of what's on the ground in their nation and this makes their digital adaptations crucial. Innovation is critical in the survival of organizations as according to Cupman (2012). *Zimpapers* now offers advertisers a full package through offering creative and design services through the Innovation and Creative Departments. In the broadcasting sector, *Zimpapers* was the first private broadcaster when it launched its vibrant and leading Star FM radio station in 2011. It also became the pioneer of

community radio stations when it opened Diamond FM (Kumakomoyo!) in the Manicaland Province (*Zimpapers* Media Kit, 2018). Furthermore, according to Quelch (2008), technological adaptations are crucial elements of an organization's innovations. *Zimpapers'* NewsHub application has a multiplatform access, multiple payment options and international audiences which allow for broader markets for advertisers and alleviation of cash shortages being caused by the economic crisis.

An employer of 'first choice' is defined as one who considers the welfare of their team (Rubinstein, 2009) and *Zimpapers* on critical lenses is living up to this. Harper (2015) states that, "remuneration is the compensation that one receives in exchange for the work or services performed". Aside from being the highest paying media organization, all the permanent staff members have an added allowance for school fees whereby the company pays half of their children's school fees. There are various contestations on how some unqualified workers have made it to top management however it is such actions of employee rewarding that is necessary for the birth of morale and organizational belonging (Rubinstein, 2009). The promotion of long serving employees basing on the merit of industrial experience is good as these workers do not need to be put on a long probation. However, Brickley et al (2002) argue that the hiring and promotion of external staff gives room for new innovation.

#### **4.4 FUNDING MECHANISM AND POLITICAL ECONOMY**

Most publics perceive that *Zimpapers* survives by capital injections from the government nonetheless in reality it finances it is through profits from its own operations. *Zimpapers* is a profit making, public limited company with trading shares at the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange (ZSE). Shareholders set aside funds for capital expenditure as well as revenue from its various subsidiaries. *Zimpapers* gains revenue from the following:

##### **i. Advertisements**

The Business Manager for Marketing operations, Gwata, stated that,

Advertising is the main source of finance for the organization. Companies and individuals who want to advertise pay for space that their adverts occupy in the paper and these vary in size and cost. Adverts are measured per column centimetre and each column width is 3.5cm. The cost of advertising depends on the size and the colour of the advert for example an A4 advert will cost \$1,267.65 without putting the cost of production.

She further added that advertisements are not only charged based on the actual size rather the date of the week and the position in the newspaper and which publication is are of paramount significance.

**ii. Subscriptions**

These are amounts paid in advance by clients or customers so that they get copies of every day's publication at their door step or office until the subscription has expired. Assistant Administrator, Mukwereza indicated that,

Clients usually place their subscriptions which cover a certain period of time over which they should be collecting and receiving various publications. Sales representatives cater for these clients that can be corporate companies, individuals and institutions.

**iii. Copy Sales on the street**

Copies of publications are also sold in the streets by the company's casually employed vendors on a commission. The commission depends on how much copies an individual has sold such that they are more eager to sell as many copies as they can. A vendor in the Gweru CBD, Maita Choga, said that:

It is a game of volumes because what you get is based on what you sell. Business has become very low because of the economic crisis and I am very lucky to be a prime area otherwise it would be the end of me.

These are the negative effects of a crisis economy and until the situation gets better, daily copy sales may keep deteriorating. There is need to push extra for subscriptions, mobile and digital news as they can be obtained with electronic money so as to supplement the prevailing shortages.

**iv. Events, Competitions and Partnerships**

*Zimpapers* organizes various business events and partnerships to enhance its funding. The Sales and Marketing Manager, Hatendi, noted that,

Events, competitions and Partnerships are part of our sources of revenue and we have quite a lot of those with the yearly ones being the Sunday Mail Jet Baby of the Year which is a project that has been running under the promotions and marketing section in partnership with Jet Stores. We also have the Sunday Mail Bride of the Year Expo

and Dinner which is Zimbabwe's Premium Bridal Competition and Expo which is done to boost copy sales of the Sunday Mail as Brides compete to be winners. There is also the Kwayedza African Woman of the Year competition awards.

#### **4.5 ZIMPAPERS LINKS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND POLITICAL ECONOMY**

As a media organization, *Zimpapers* is automatically connected to all sections of the nation. Links are managed through relationship marketing strategies such as public relations and good corporate governance. Local organizations use *Zimpapers'* media outlets to sell their goods and services. Local business constitutes three quarters of the total revenue that is generated yearly. It is the nation's official media voice and good relations with local organizations are crucial to the profitable operations of *Zimpapers* as negative feedback (flak) can result in the downfall of the media organization.

The group is among the leading and most vibrant media houses in Southern Africa. As a communications powerhouse, offering a full range of products and services right across the spectrum is *Zimpapers* ticket to the outside world. A good example of this is how the group currently has a partnership with Namibia's New Era Publication Corporation to form NamZim Newspapers which is responsible for Southern Africa's most influential paper The Southern Times which has been circulation since 2004. These links are crucial to the realization of *Zimpapers* vision as they provide the gate way to the international market.

Direct Impact Managing Consultant, Ernest Nyahanana said,

*Zimpapers'* products sustain the advertising industry. Clients always go with the *Zimpapers* media schedules without asking many questions because they know that it always rewards their efforts. However sometimes their sales representative go behind our backs and negotiate with our clients, cutting us off in the process, they forget that we are in business together and not competitors.

As an organization which is responsible for Zimbabwe's mainstream media as well as a public organisation, it is connected to all sections of the society. These links are essential to the organization as according to Fiske (1990), it is very vital for entities to create and maintain relationships built on mutually beneficial interaction with either internal or external stakeholders. Cornelissen (2004) adds that an individual's collective representation of past

images of an organization promotes loyalty and is gained by the individual over time through past experiences. This is crucial in the survival of media organizations in a crisis economy.

## **4.6 OVERALL DISCUSSION**

Political economy seeks to discuss the effects of economic structure on the media (Murdock and Golding, 1997 as cited in Curran and Gurevitch, 2005). Mosco (2006) refers to it as the study of political relations that equally constitute the production, distribution and consumption of media products. The argument is on how the profit making motives influence the manner in which media organizations are managed. Boyd-Barret (1995) adds that political economy analyses the working of the profit motive in the hunt for audiences and advertising revenue. Herman and Chomsky (1988) proposed a propaganda model to theorise the political economy of the media and it is model based on five factors that are ownership and control, funding, sources, flak and ideology.

The first filter is ownership and control and *Zimpapers* is owned by the public but is largely controlled by the government. Due to this, their manner of reporting, this policy is of high controversy as it is viewed as partisan and constantly propagating Zanu PF's hegemony in Zimbabwe. The organization is the government's mouthpiece with The Herald for example, company's flagship, always under scrutiny for being a 'lapdog' rather than a watchdog and the 4<sup>th</sup> Estate due to its pro-ZanuPF reporting and this resonates with Herman and Chomsky (1988) argument that the mass media are effective and powerful ideological institutions that carry out a system-supportive propaganda function in favour of the elite reliance on market forces, internalised assumptions, and self-censorship without obvious force.

Funding is the second filter and media organizations' obtain their most funding from advertising revenues. As a result, they have to attract and maintain high proportions of advertising to ensure profitability and continuity. This need has resulted in much power being given to advertisers and McChesney (2000) argues that "market forces also encourage monopolistic impulses in the media industry that gratifies the needs and concerns of the elite at the expense of the masses". Thus media operate to promote capitalist goods reducing citizens to mere consumers through their creation of the "buying mood". Threats of withdrawing advertisements have given advertisers the power to decide which media house survives or not. Marketing managers go to great lengths to make sure that content is sympathetic to their biggest advertisers and always bid on mending relations with them. The *Zimpapers* marketing department only has the management and one senior sales dealing with

advertising agencies which is a clear indication of the importance of funding in the survival of an organization. Unless there is an extra fee for special positioning on advertisements, the managers decide where an advert is placed in the newspapers and precedence is given to the big advertisers.

The third filter is sources where there has been a formation of unholy alliances between reporters and their sources of information. The fourth filter is flak which they define as ‘negative responses’ to media content. When there is backlash on an advertisement, it is retracted so as to ensure consumption as consumers do not buy what they do not like. The fifth filter which they stated as anti-communism ideology is now being referred to as just ideology since the defeat of communism is an epitome of Marx statement which reads that “the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas”. The media have become deeply embedded in politics as they legitimize and delegitimize contesting ideologies based on their representation (Hall, 1997).

#### **4.7 CONCLUSION**

The Chapter has outlined the organizational structure of Zimbabwe Newspapers 1980 Ltd, historical background and funding mechanism amongst many. There was a discussion of the political economy and how it influences policies. The next Chapter is on data collection and findings.

## **CHAPTER 5:**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

## 5. INTRODUCTION

The dissertation has covered the background, introduction, literature review, theoretical framework, organizational structure and political economy. This Chapter focuses on presenting and the analysis of research findings gathered during the research process. These findings seek to answer the questions raised in chapter one of the study.

### 5.1 OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

Holistic marketing is an effective survival strategy and adaptations on product, price, place (distribution) and promotional strategies are crucial in the sustenance of revenue collection. The researcher found out that there was a positive difference in revenue collection in the period before and after the employment of holistic marketing. This supports the assumption that a holistic approach is the best way to tackle a crisis-ridden economic environment. The group's overall revenue for 2017 rose by 4% from 2016's revenue (*Zimpapers Unaudited Half Year Financial Statement for the year ended on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2018*).

The figure below is a comparison of sales before and after the implementation of holistic marketing. Revenues are increasing for most of the publications which is a clear indication of the effectiveness of holistic marketing.

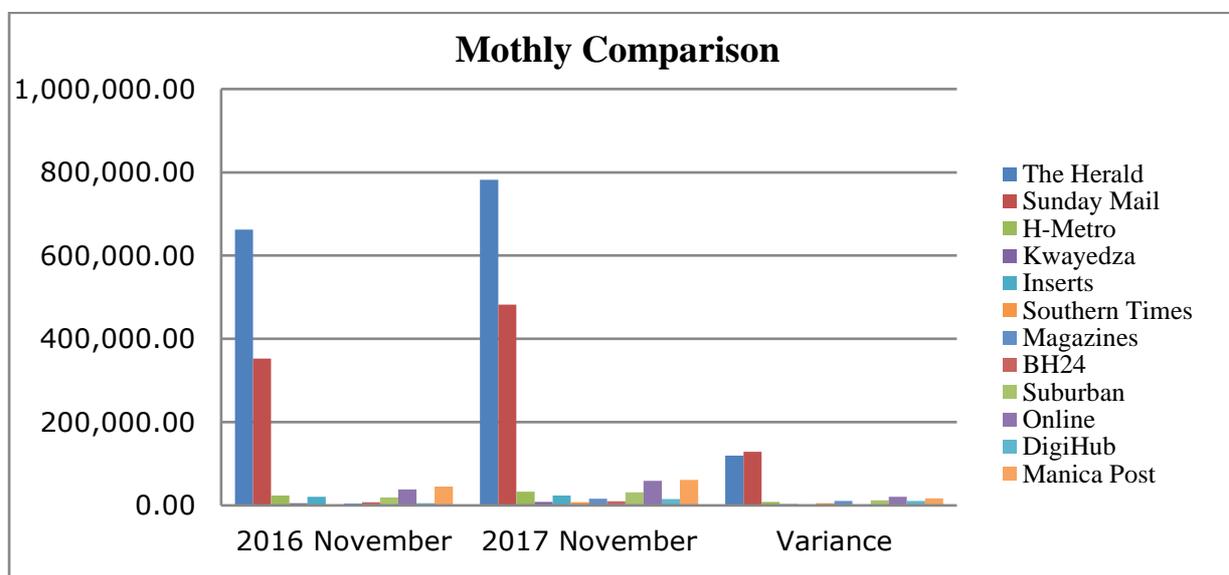
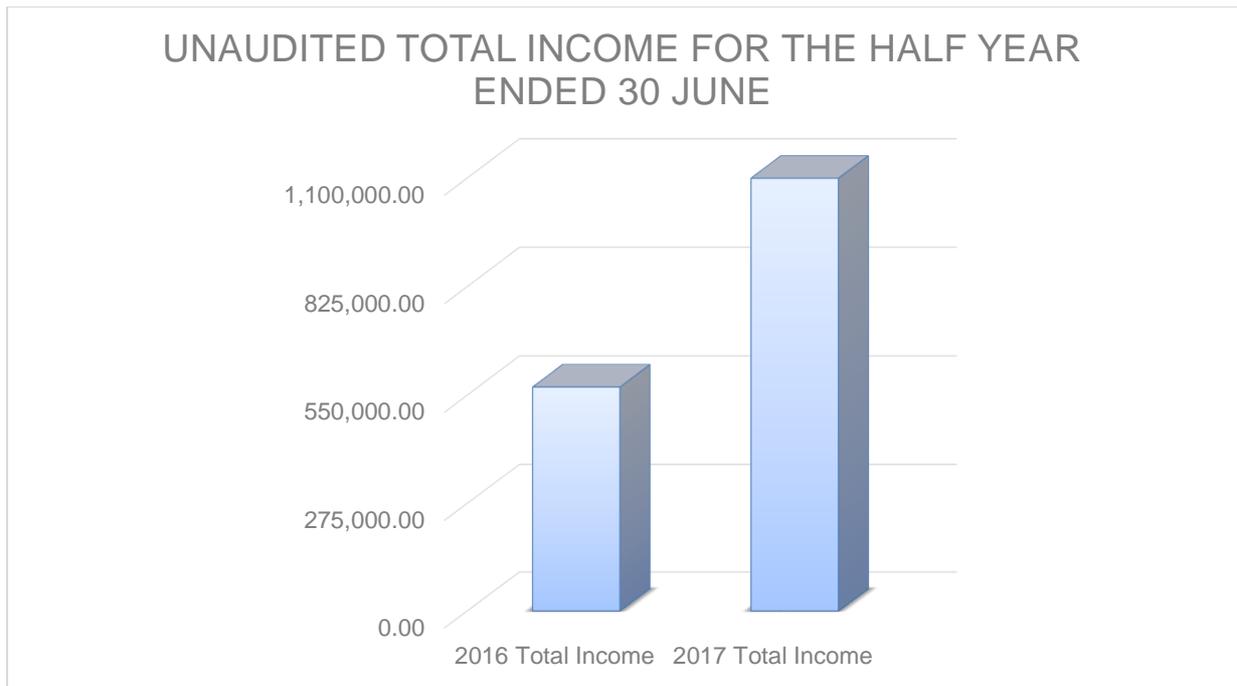
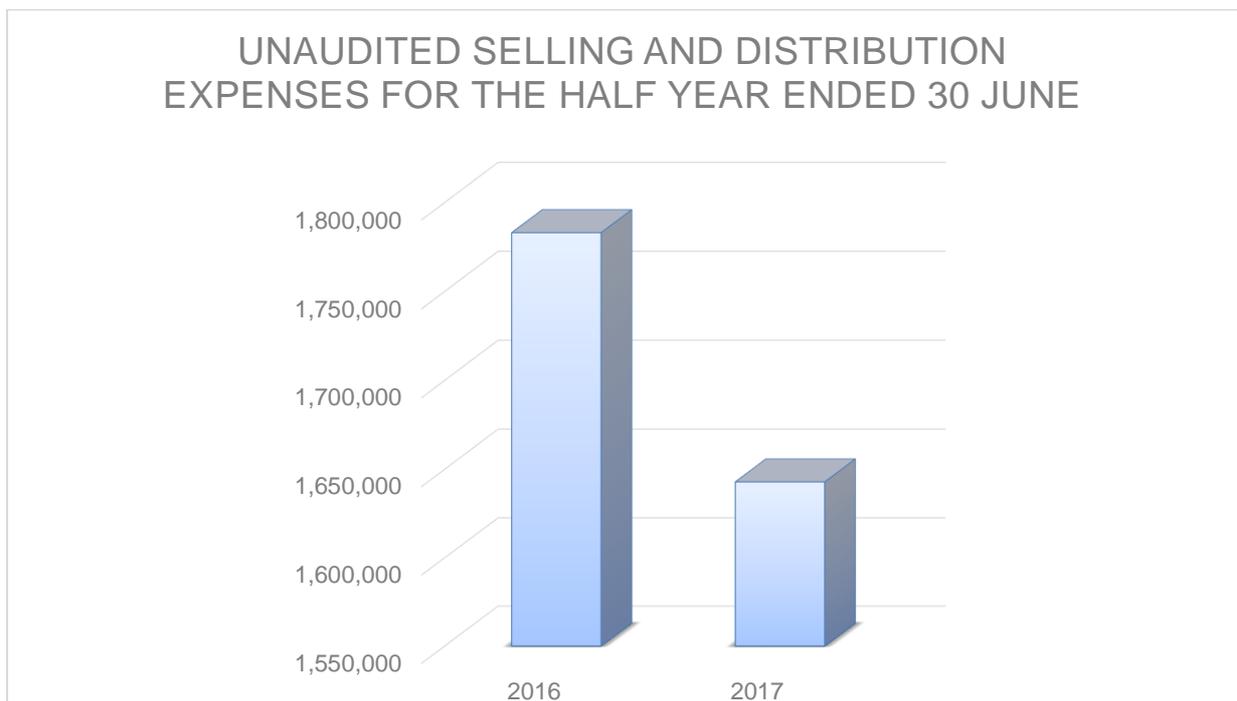


FIGURE 3 REVENUE COMPARISON

*Zimpapers* was not only able to maintain their income but surpassed it as indicated in the figure below.



*Zimpapers* was able to reduce their selling and distribution expenses which contributed heavily to their survival in the crisis.



## **5.2 HOLISTIC MARKETING AS A SURVIVAL STRATEGY**

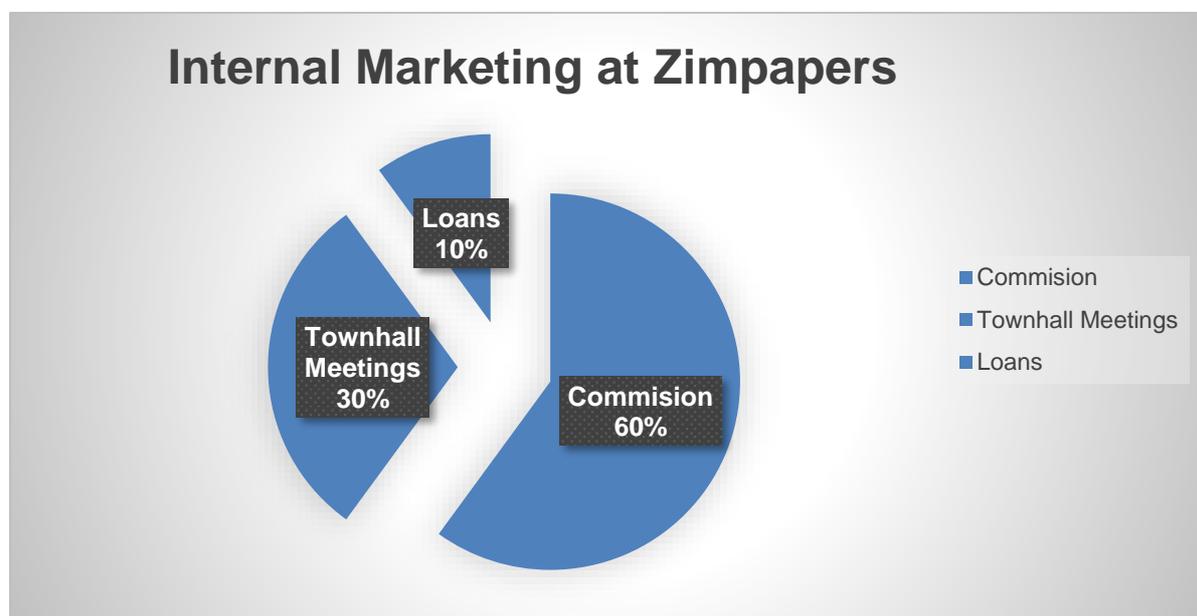
Due to the economic crisis, *Zimpapers* had to change and reconsider marketing management and budgets. The Sales and Marketing Manager, Munyaradzi Hatendi, stated that:

The economic crisis has affected us in a lot of ways. The problem with our industry is that we thrive on the good state of the economy through the mass consumption of our products. We realized that in as much as information is a need, the minute finances do not allow it one will gladly cut budgets and look for alternative ways of obtaining desired information.

The media operate as other businesses therefore their success or failure is dependent on the state of the economy. An economic crisis reduces consumers' buying power as they have to carefully select their needs from wants. Responding to how they implemented holistic marketing, Business Manager-Marketing, Gwata noted that,

Marketing strongly revolves around research so we decided to implement the concept and get the most from the least expenditure as possible. We noticed that holistic marketing meant us looking the whole picture and because these are interdependent and as a result doing one made the next easier and more attainable.

Speaking on Internal Marketing techniques employed, Gwata remarked that they did not take all of them as they would end up exhausting their tight budget. This means that organizations have to come up with the cheapest yet most efficient techniques. The chart below is a summary on the internal marketing strategies used and the effort that was dedicated to each of them.



We decided to put more emphasis on commission because sales representatives are our soldiers in this war. Motivation results in good sales so we came up with a plan based on two things; set targets and new clients that is if a sales representative surpasses set monthly targets we give them a percentage of that amount. The second scenario is

if a sales representative manages to bring new advertisers or resuscitate dormant clients with about six months business they get their commission and this would be on top of their salary. We also have employee loans so as to help in any case of emergency.

In a crisis economic environment, employees are the most affected as salaries barely go up. Giving incentives workers motivates them to put in the extra to make sure that their job and income is safe. Speaking on the third tactic, Business Manager-Marketing, Gwata said that,

We hold townhall meetings every month where the general manager gets to talk to the organization as a whole, a review of departmental reports is done, grievances aired out and outstanding employee and departmental awards are given. These have boosted morale and motivated everyone to do their best.

The townhall meetings fostered unity as workers got to socialize and have refreshments on the Fridays that these happen. This made the organization stronger and enabled them to work as a well-oiled machine. Production Assistant, Lazarus remarked that,

We all work as one unit and are happy that our organization is considering us as everyone is in need.

When departments are synced and flowing in the right direction it becomes easier to focus on external publish as the organization will not be fighting on two fronts. However, Sub-Editor, Collin Matiza, said that,

“The sales and marketing department rarely adheres to deadlines. They send last minute advertisements and we have to end up dropping some stories right before the pages go for printing.”

This goes on to show that in a crisis economy, revenue generation takes precedence over most issues. Marketers will make sure that no sale is lost and those sales targets try by all means to be met.

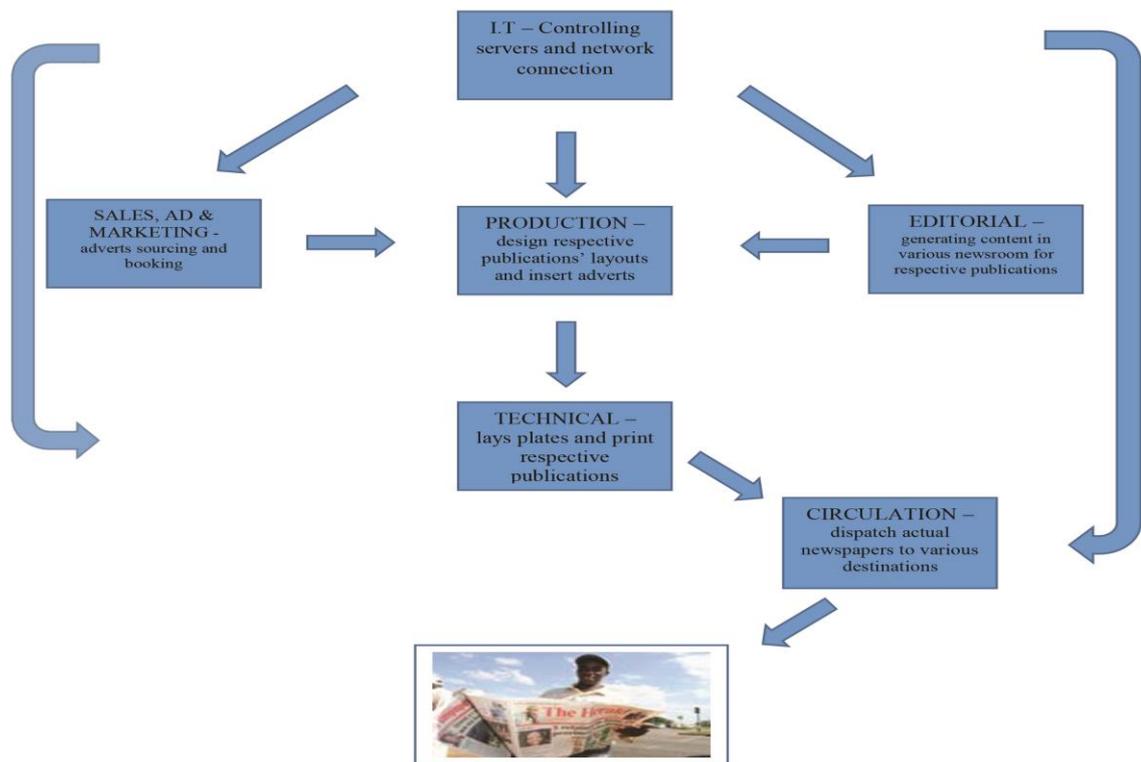


FIGURE 4 DEPARTMENTAL EFFORTS

Source - Researcher

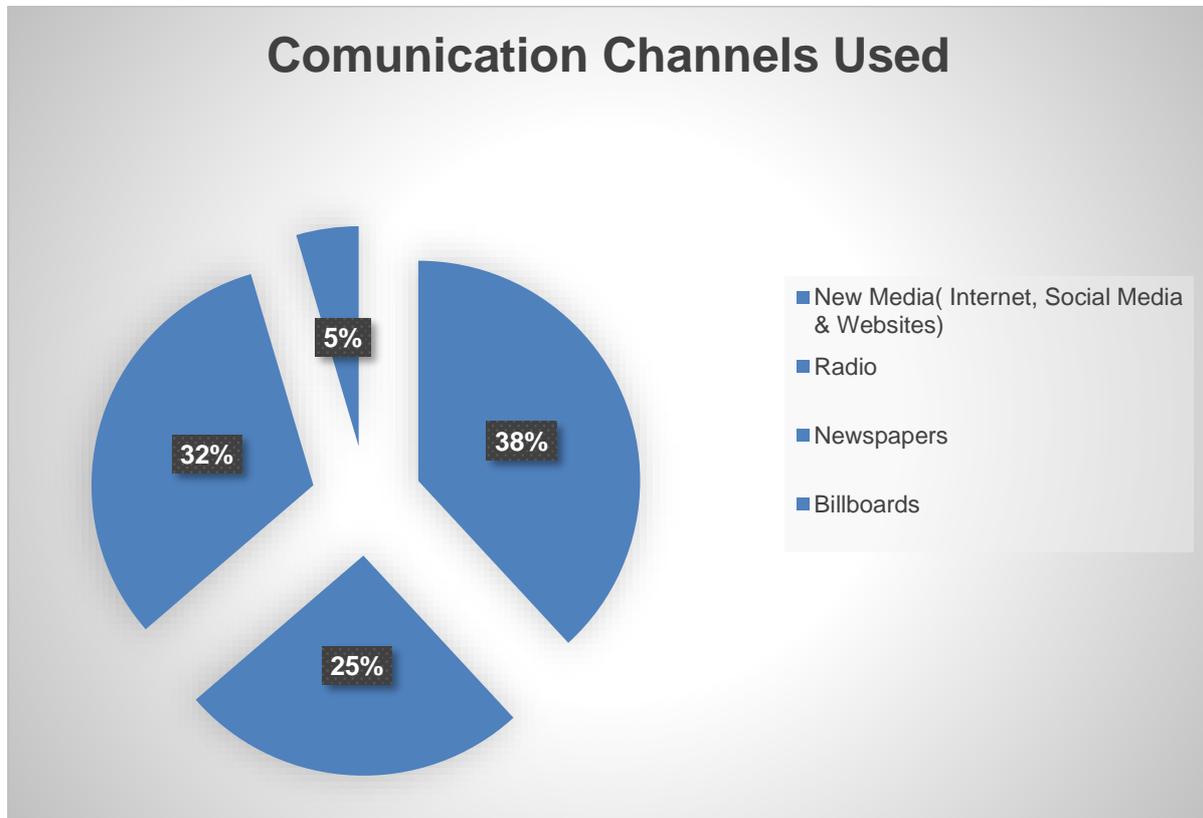
The above figure shows the manner through which all departments in the organization are integrated to work as one to ensure that a full copy of the newspaper gets to the audiences. Commenting on how they employed the second concept which is relationship marketing, BM-Marketing, Gwata stated that,

For external relationships we focused on key account management. We saw the need to retain old clients as they are the base of our business. Our sales representatives have door to door visits with their clients and managers also visit advertising agencies to ensure that there are mutual relations and get feedback. For the festive season we give out gifts to our top 5 advertising agencies and companies to show our appreciation for the continued business.

This means that big and loyal clients always have first preference on advertisement placement over once off clients however good public relations are crucial in the war of survival. Gwata also added that,

We know our targeted audience and markets so we employed multiple channels so that we could maximize our chances of reaching our advertisers and buyers. We made sure

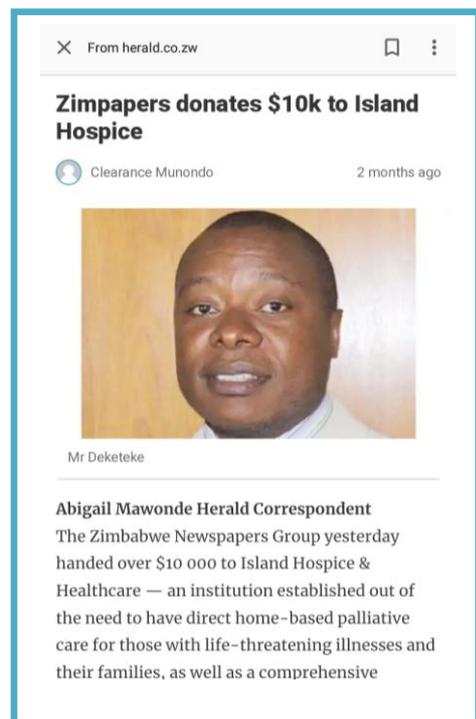
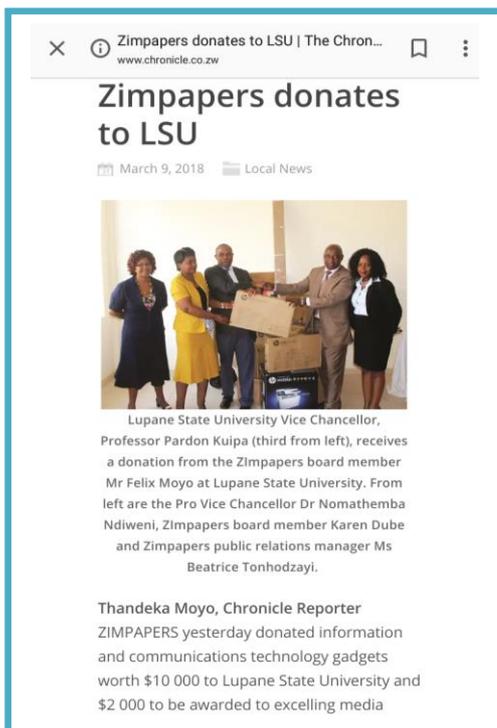
we are there everywhere, on new media, in newspapers, on radio and billboards. By doing this we were able to engage our clients and communicated our intended messages effectively which in turn boosted our revenues as they answered our call to action.



The above chart shows the number of communication channels that were used in *Zimpapers'* integrated marketing communications. In this digital era, most audiences are now found online which explains the effort they put in new media channels. Asked about socially responsible marketing, Gwata stated that *Zimpapers* always recognised their corporate social responsibilities (CSR) making it easier to apply holistic marketing as a survival strategy in a crisis economy.



The table above shows the rise in CSR campaigns over the past year when holistic marketing was adopted.



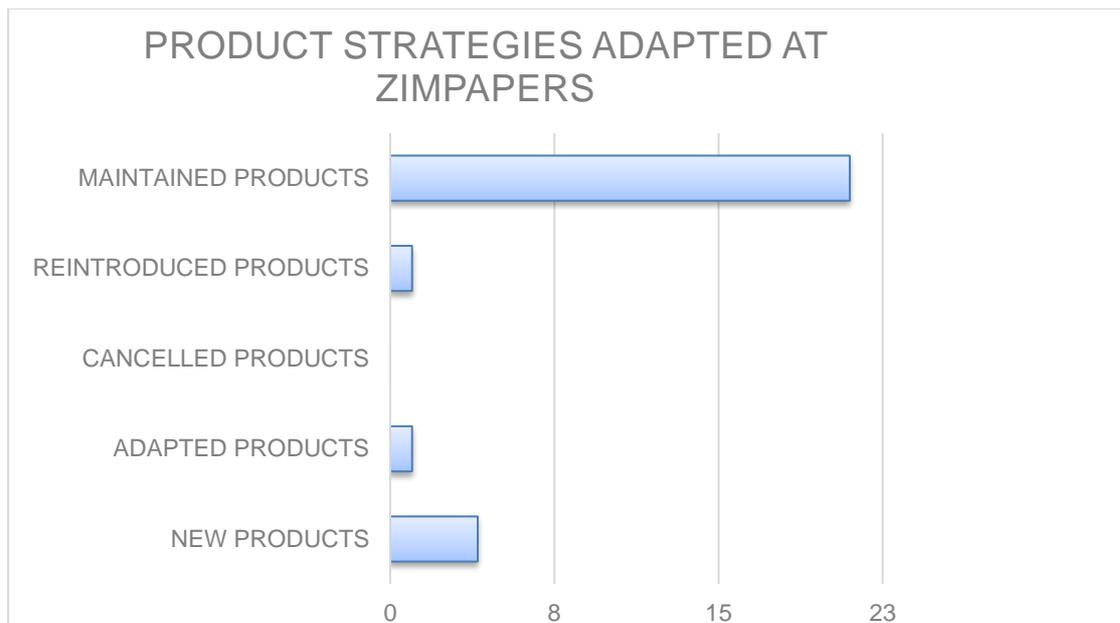
The above images are archival evidence of *Zimpapers* is partnerships with local organizations for the betterment a part of their corporate social responsibility. They recently donated to Island Hospice and Lupane State University’s media department.

### **5.2.1 DISCUSSION**

Holistic marketing is an integrated approach that uses all organizational strengths to achieve better sales and, in this case, survive a crisis economic environment (Kotler and Keller, 2011). When product information and motivation is cultivated in employees they have better chance of convincing customers' buying decisions in a crisis. *Zimpapers* was able to increase employee's effort, commitment and motivation through their internal marketing strategies that brought about job satisfaction which resulted in mutually profitable business relationships through the establishment of strong marketing networks as argued by Peters and Waterman (1982). Furthermore, customer satisfaction led to stronger relationship which resulted in customer retention guaranteeing continued business. Integrated marketing communications is on the basis of combining all tools to deliver the most efficient message to the target market and the channels chosen by the department contributed to their maximum capability and delivered authentic and influential information to the target audience as stipulated by Schultz (2001). The concept of holistic marketing has been effective as a survival tactic for the *Zimpapers* sales and marketing department.

### **5.3 MODIFICATION OF PRODUCT STRATEGIES**

BM-Marketing, Gwata, indicated that their product strategies had to be modified so as to ensure continued survival in the crisis economy. As displayed in the diagram below, they added four new products, adapted one, reintroduced one, cancelled none and maintained twenty-one. The organization managed to see opportunities that were being brought about by the crisis and capitalized on them.

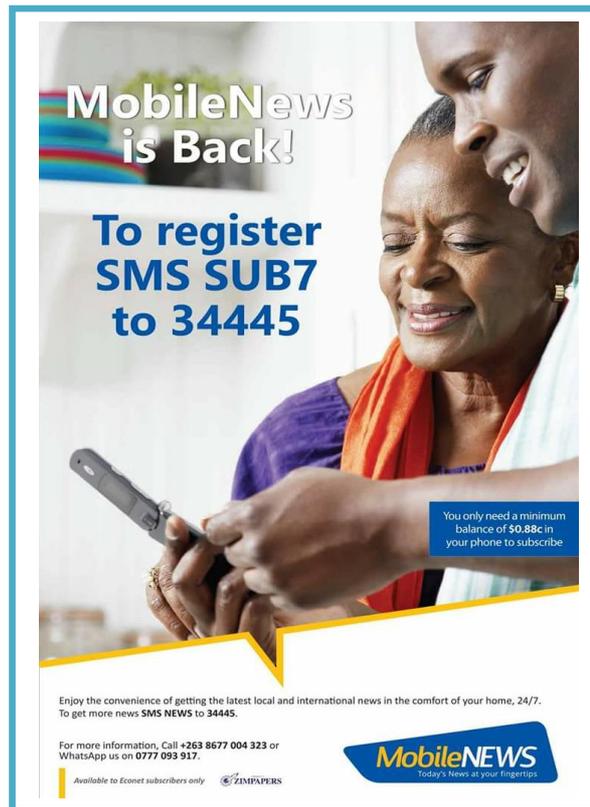


She stated that,

We had to employ product diversification whereby we introduced new products in hopes to satisfy the new needs of our targeted audience. Our market was now more focused on business issues and ways to end the economic crisis thus we launched Business Weekly newspaper and Capital FM.

Star FM's continued success in the broadcasting sector motivated the group to add three more stations to its stable. As radio is the medium for Africa, investments such as these are bound to bring more returns in the long run thus ensuring the organization's continued existence. Gwata continued saying that,

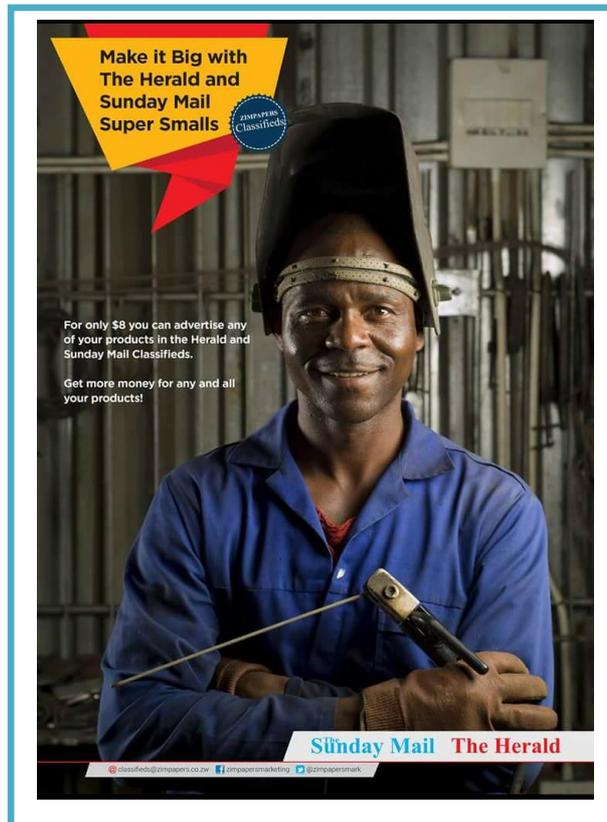
This allowed us to tap into new markets and positively influenced our overall revenue figures. So now we have to make sure that we capitalize on busy seasons so we have more space reserved for advertisements during holidays and on dark days we put house adverts so that it is not evident that advertisements are dropping and we maximize on advertising our products.



The above advert was run to reintroduce the mobile news product. Based on the choice of models, the target market is the elderly who do not have smart phones. It also appeals to the filial psychological aspects of a consumer because it is an image of a mother and her son thus encouraging consumption of the product.

*Zimpapers* has an advantage of being a large media house and as a result, it is easier for them to place advertisements for products in its sister companies. By putting house advertisements, the papers do not easily show the lack of adverts and this acts as a push factor to other organizations so that they see the need to advertise. Assistant Administrator, Mukwereza, added that,

We adapted our Classifieds product by making it smaller to cater for those with businesses that are finding it difficult and have embarked on a cost cutting campaign and this brought back hype to the classifieds.



The above figure is an advert of the ClassifiedSmalls product that was adapted to promote small business advertisements. As advertising budgets are the first ones to be cut in a crisis this a way through which old clients are retained whilst attracting new ones. The number of copies for the less busy days such as Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday were reduced to match the change in demand.

### 5.3.1 DISCUSSION

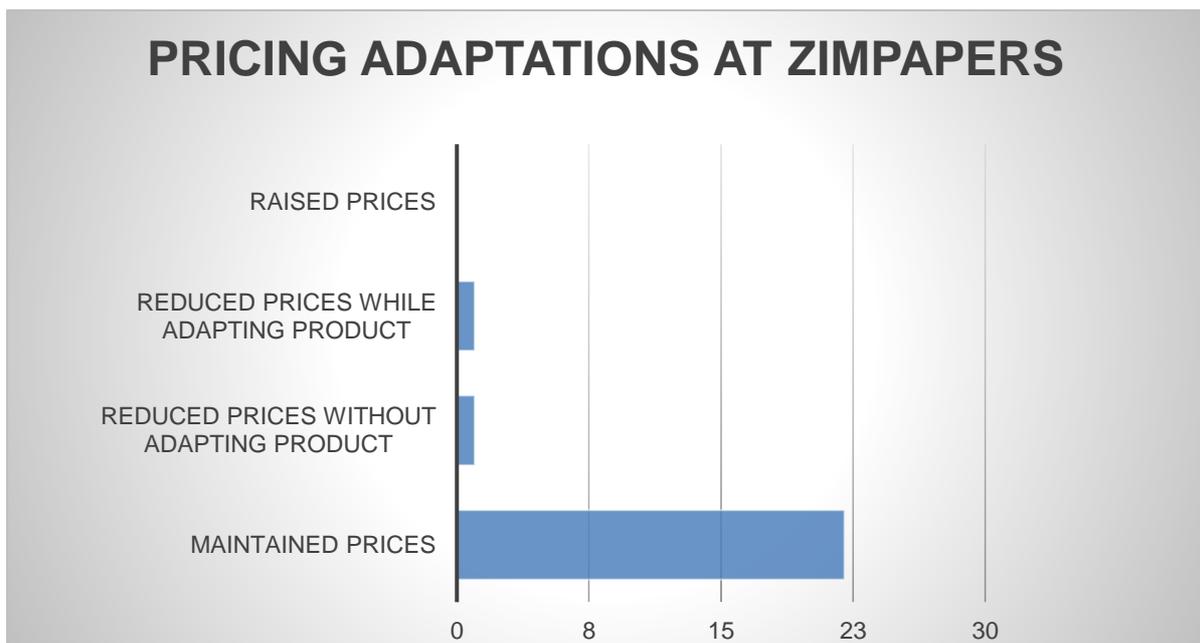
Adding extra services that enhance the attractiveness of products makes them more competitive because of their differentiation (Kotler, 2010). He adds on that offering products whose cost of delivery is transferred to the customer helps the company to reduce the selling price. *Zimpapers* was able to employ this and it positively assisted in boosting revenues. The organization did not phase out any publication rather introduced more products in order to capitalize on the new markets that were created by the crisis making offense the best defence and they did not use the most common strategy in product portfolio which is to get rid of “weak” products that do not contribute much to company revenues (Kotler and Casoline, 2009) as their products are specifically suited for various communities in Zimbabwe and have national duties.

Shama (1981) argues that consumers focus on product efficiency, reliability and functionality which *Zimpapers* employed by not compromising their products in their chosen adaptations.

Morbey and Dugal (1992) postulate that organization that invest more in research and development achieve better results than others and this applies to *Zimpapers* as they did not cut budgets but focused on ways to capitalize on the crisis. DeDee and Vorhies (1998) further argue that increasing capacity of new product development coupled with research positively results in the return on core capital that increases sales returns. Furthermore, the adaptation of “Classifieds Smalls” resonates with Doyle (2002) who states that there is a strong link between the levels of economic wealth and advertising activity. These adaptations have led to the improved performance of *Zimpapers*’ products on the market.

### 5.5 REDEFINING PRICING STRATEGIES

Price still remains one of the most important elements determining a firm’s market share and profitability. The graph below shows the overall pricing adaptations that were made at *Zimpapers*. The majority products retained their usual prices, subscription prices were lowered and the ClassifiedSmalls price was lowered to suit the revised product structure.



According to Sales and Marketing Manager, Hatendi,

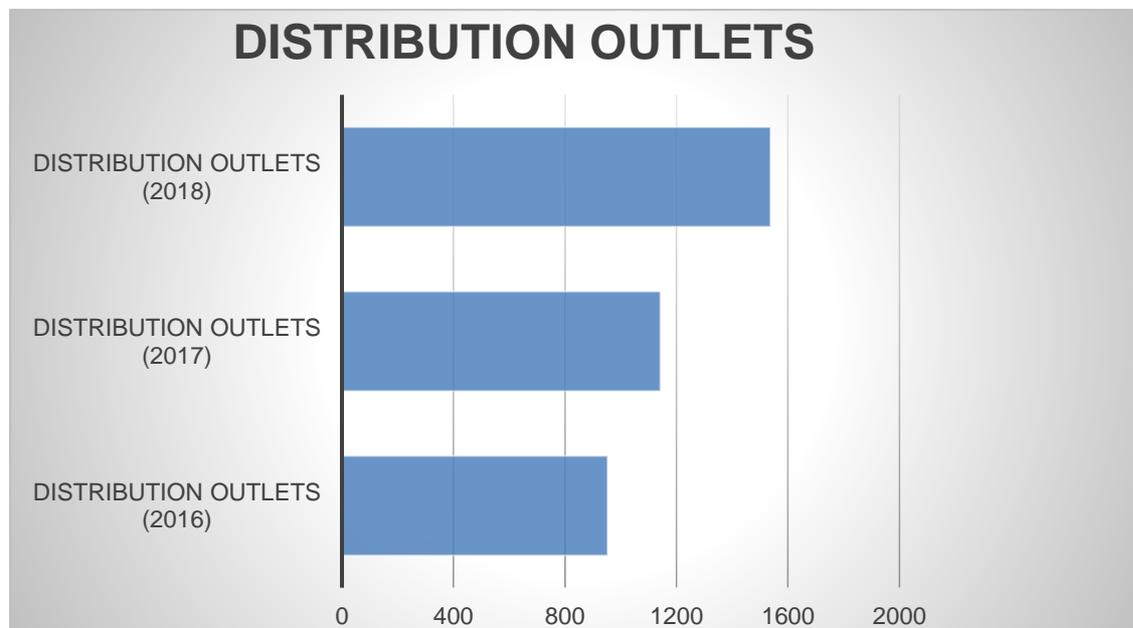
When we introduced the four new products we used the prices that had already been there in the market so as to directly compete with competitor products such as the Financial Gazette. We also employed competitor-based pricing strategy for our subscriptions and mobile news products and these strategies were very influential in gaining market share.

### 5.4.1 DISCUSSION

Pricing strategies are adapted to the reduced solvency of customers meaning that organizations price products and a service basing on their target market’s buying power. *Zimpapers* did not change their prices as recommended by Ang (2001) due to the nature of the media industry. Price is the only revenue element of the marketing mix therefore serious considerations have to be taken account of before modifying or adapting to fight a crisis. Kotler and Armstrong (2010) argue that prices can be reduced when there is declining market share and economic recession but also states that this should be done when this can be maintained and profitable in the long run. Therefore, there is no need for need for *Zimpapers* to reduce prices but rather focus on promotional methods that cater for the short period of time. They maintained existing prices mostly so as to ensure profit maximization and early cash recovery as recommended by (Ferrell & Hartline, 2002).

### 5.6 ADAPTATION OF PLACE (DISTRIBUTION) STRATEGIES

Being at the right place at the right is crucial therefore *Zimpapers* had to adapt their distribution targets in order to maximize on potential clients. The figure below shows an increase in the distribution outlets in order to increase circulation and readership.



Gwata stated that,

We do not outsource transport and this helps us to spend less money making sure that our products reach our target market. Our drivers have specified routes and we combined some routes so that we do not have many drivers delivering in one area. We also increased our distribution outlets to improve our chances of getting to the customer and to cater for the new distribution of the Business Weekly newspaper.

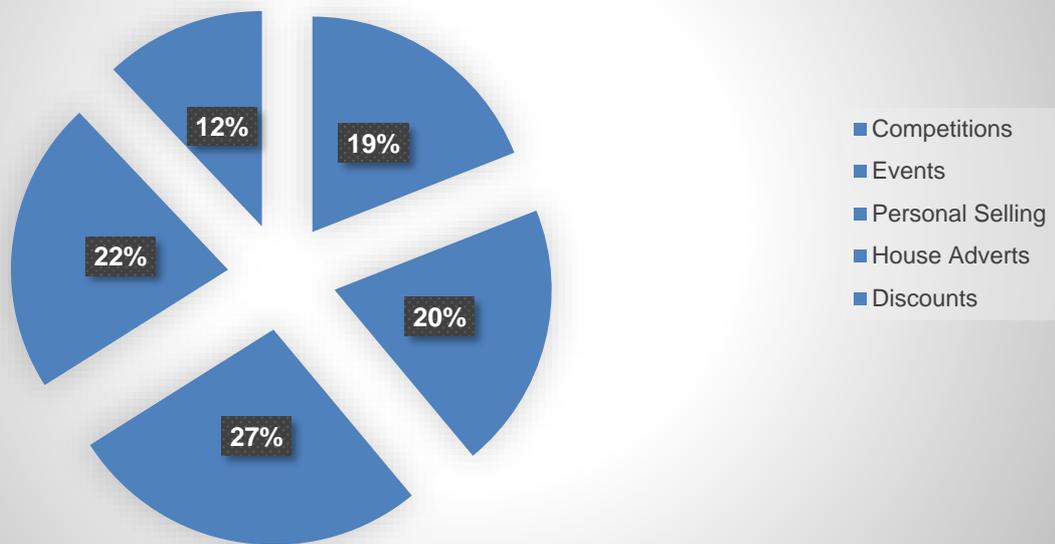
### **5.5.1 DISCUSSION**

The goal for the place factor is to minimize the costs while maximizing customer's satisfaction (Ansoff, 1957). The strategies made by the *Zimpapers* marketing department resonate with this line of thinking as they were able to reduce the number of delivery trucks without affecting the product from reaching its consumer. By employing more than one channel that can be used to distribute products the department is able to reap all benefits that come with the place factor in the marketing mix. The zero-level channel which is direct selling, according to (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010), provides them with control, low inventory costs and multi-selling opportunities which assist in the survival of an organization in a crisis-ridden economic environment. Their continued business with one level channels such as intermediaries that include Pick N Pay, they are able to move volumes in terms of newspapers. As for the advertising space, working with advertising agencies also allows for the bulk selling of advertorial space which is an advantage in a crisis economy.

### **5.6 RETHINKING PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES**

Promotions define marketing as they are vital in increasing brand awareness which in turn results in increased customer traffic leading to sales and profits. *Zimpapers* had to reinvent their strategies and focused on having direct contact with customers reducing media costs as shown in the diagram below.

## PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES USED



In their promotional adaptations, Gwata noted that there were consumer sales promotions aimed at readers and trade sales promotions with suppliers and advertisers. She said that,

We have sales representatives doing door to door visits and run competitions for our customers.

*Zimpapers* currently runs the following competitions: Sunday Mail Bride of the Year, Kwayedza African Woman of the Year, Kwayedza Nyanduri Wemandorokwati and Jet Baby of the Year. Competitions increase the number of copy sales when voting commences. Administration Assistant, Chad Mukwereza added that,

On top of the 10% discount that advertising agencies have we also give discounts for long term contracts and this has guaranteed business for up to year in some cases. We also came up with discounts for our subscribers so as to ensure long-term business.

A deduction from the published price is done so as to encourage customers to buy and usually in large volumes. Mukwereza added that they also have joint promotions with organizations such as Pick N Pay in their 'Big Bargain Bonanza' and OK in the 'Grand Challenge' which help raise brand awareness to ensure that they are in the mind of target markets and consumption of their products.

### 5.6.1 DISCUSSION

Marketing communications and media behavior of organizations is restructured in line with the economic conditions. As budgets are reduced investments are made in specific marketing tools that are not capital intensive for example internet campaigns. These promotional methods provide instant value for customers. Through direct contact, market intelligence is gathered so as to improve products and service delivery. Kim (1992), Werner (1991), DeDee and Vorhie (1998) are all for the raising or maintenance of advertising levels for higher sales volumes and market share in an economic crisis and *Zimpapers* continued to run their promotional activities as before and maximized on in house advertisements which provided them access to their target market. As according to Kotler and Armstrong (2010), the marketing department has managed to reduce sales cost, encourage brand preference, communicate relevant information, push customers, widen distribution and create a unique brand that distinguishes them from competition and helped them survive the crisis economic environment.

## **5.7 OVERALL DISCUSSION**

This was a discussion on how the holistic marketing concept is being implemented by *Zimpapers* as a survival strategy in a crisis economy and how effective it has been from January 2017 to March 2018. The research also looked at the various ways through which the 4Ps of marketing as propounded by the marketing mix theory are revised and restructured for the main reason of survival. Economic crises make companies change and reconsider budgets directed to marketing and it becomes less surprising that *Zimpapers* also had to go through various changes to survive the prevailing Zimbabwean economic crisis. Cupman (2012) states that, sales remain constant for a short period of time due to habitual customers without marketing therefore budgets have to be either maintained or raised. *Zimpapers* retained their budget and added more to cater for new products as recommended by Roberts (2003) and this had a positive influence on their revenue.

In addition, Koksall and Ozgul (2007) argues that crises create opportunities as there will not be much media presence and organizations with the most presence ends up standing out and becoming very familiar to customers creating a brand that fights off competition. *Zimpapers* was able to consolidate their brand by their continued media presence. Moreover, markets are supposed to be focused in a crisis and *Zimpapers* main focus was to retain old clients while attracting new ones and the strategies they used where guided by these principles. The research also found out that their clients were segmented when they added new products as recommended by Quelch (2008), this resulted in them gaining significant market share. Wiere

(2013) asserts that constant innovation is fundamental and *Zimpapers* is constantly innovating. The research revealed that they adapted their whole product, price, place (distribution) and promotional strategies as recommended by (Ferrell and Hartline, 2002) resulting in their continued market dominance.

## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter discussed the findings of the research. Data presented was collected from observation, interviews and archival research. An analysis was conducted to assess the applicability of theories discussed in chapter 2 namely the marketing mix, demand and supply and communication theories. The next chapter will be a conclusion of the study and will consist of the summary, recommendations and conclusions.

## CHAPTER 6:

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 6.1 EVALUATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The research was based on the use of holistic marketing as a survival strategy in a crisis economy by the *Zimpapers* marketing department. Zimbabwe Newspapers 1980 Ltd is a public media organization that is greatly influential in the circulation of information and the fostering of public spheres in the nation. The organization has continued to do well despite the economic constraints and credit for this also lies in their marketing team. The objectives of this research were to identify how *Zimpapers* employed holistic marketing as a survival strategy in a crisis economy and the various adaptations they made to their product, price, place (distribution) and promotional strategies.

The organization's combined use of legacy and new media, effectively managed internal and external customer relationships, incorporation of all marketing communications and giving back to the community have proved to be highly beneficial in maintaining their and gaining new market share as suggested by Ferrel and Hartline (2002). The study has proved that the holistic marketing concept is a powerful survival tactic as it takes an integrated approach to focus all of the organization's resources to the attainment of one ultimate goal (Kotler and Keller, 2011). The researcher found out that adapting the whole marketing mix is crucial in a crisis economy. Price adaptations that are being implemented by *Zimpapers* are enabling them to use less money for capital which reduces their expenditure which correlates the argument made by Ang et al (2000) who states that when expenditure is lowered there is reasonable generation of profit. For their place (distribution) strategy, combining routes while creating more distribution outlets enabled them to minimize costs while maximising consumer's satisfaction (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). Their head on strategy of introducing new products to capitalize on the new markets being created as a result of the crisis economy is compensating the declining consumption of already existing products. Furthermore, their focus on promotional strategies that are less capital intensive and provide instant access to consumers is also crucial in their continued dominance and relevance. By spending more on promotion as recommended by Shultz et al (1998) they were able to persuade and inspire their target markets into consuming their products thus resulting in the generation of revenue. The sales and marketing department were thoroughly guided by Quelch's (2008:pp7) statement that,

“successful companies do not abandon their marketing strategies in a recession, they adapt them”.

## **6.2 SUGGESTED THEORY**

### **“EAGLE EYE THEORY”**

The theory is based on Sun Tzu’s book *The Art of War* and is named after the accurate vision of an eagle. Crisis economies are wars that all organizations have to fight regardless of industry specifications. The book states that when organizations know the enemy (crisis) and know themselves (strengths and weaknesses) victory is certain. The first principle of the strategy is planning which is setting a blueprint of decisions to be adopted in a situation. When organizations have a good plan, they can assess their opportunities and react to situations in an orderly manner. The second principle bases on Character and the general, who is the marketing manager is supposed to be a person who commands respect, governs properly and is non-discriminatory. A good leader is able to produce the best results from his team and such a character is important in a crisis. The third principle is on Using Advantages and this revolves around the strengths and weakness of the competitors. When organizations have knowledge on a crisis and the competitors they are able to assess their strong points and what can be used as an advantage.

The fourth principle being Alliance bases on how strategic alliances are essential at war. After devising strategic plans, entering partnerships to help strengthen your position becomes the highway to success. Deception is the fifth principle and it centres on keeping organizational strategies a secret. To always have an upper hand, organizations should not publicize information to competitors. The sixth element is the use of spies and in business this means that they should always know what the competition is doing in a legal manner. When you know your competition, it is easier to devise a solution. The seventh principle is on strengths and weakness and it correlates with all the principles as it bases on knowledge and understanding your organization, the competition and the crisis.

The eighth principle is on energy and this basically means not to focus on the unattainable. Energy can be referred to as resources in business and it is when an organization realizes which endeavors are realistic and which are not. When you reserve your resources you can do better. Communication is the ninth principle which focuses on internal communication that fosters one integrated unit that does not have infighting. The tenth principle is winning whole which

means that every expedition has to be won. In business, most decisions should be correct decisions as that is the only way to survive a crisis. The above ten principles are capable of guaranteeing the success of an organization.

#### **6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

More studies should be done on the marketing and distribution tactics of media organizations as most current studies are on content and representation. There is need to explore further how the marketer markets themselves and how traditional media can stay relevant in a competitive and highly unstable business environment.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

<b>Interview section</b>	<b>Questions</b>
<b>Use of Holistic Marketing</b>	Why Holistic Marketing? How did you use it?

	<p>What changes came with holistic marketing?</p> <p>How effective was it as a survival strategy?</p>
<b>Product adaptations</b>	<p>How did you modify the product?</p> <p>What are the impacts that came with this?</p> <p>From what to what? And why?</p> <p>With what results</p>
<b>Price Adaptations</b>	<p>How did you modify the price?</p> <p>What are the impacts that came with this?</p>
<b>Place (Distribution) Adaptations</b>	<p>How did you modify the distribution patterns?</p> <p>From what to what? And why?</p> <p>What are the impacts that came with this?</p>
<b>Promotional Adaptations</b>	<p>How did you modify the promotional mix?</p> <p>From what to what? And why?</p> <p>What are the impacts that came with this?</p>