MANAGING MARKETING COMPETENCIES: A framework for understanding antecedents of marketing capability and its relation to the company's core competencies

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Introduction

Core competencies are the crown jewels of a company and, therefore, should be carefully identified, nurtured and developed. Based on the *resource based theory,* this study explores how core competence can lead to firms' competitive advantage, and how a *marketing firm* can identify its core competence in the sector to attain competitive advantage.

Keywords – capability; competence; emotional assets; cultural and intangible assets; resources.

Background to marketing capability

During the last two decades the theory of core competence has attracted substantial attention from the researchers and practitioners (Hafeez et al. 2002a&b; Ljungquist, 2013). The theory declares that the corporate and business strategies must be constructed upon the strengths of the core competencies of a firm (Hamel and Prahalad, 1990) to strengthen competition in market place. Core competence is frequently acknowledged in the arrangement of tangible and intangible assets (Hafeez and Essmail, 2007; Ljungquist, 2013). In some researchers' view core competences can be recognised from firm-specific, dynamic capabilities (Drejer, 2000).

According to Wang (2013) the development of the knowledge economy has changed the main value perception of businesses from traditional physical tangible assets to intellectual and emotional intangible assets. There are two types of intangible assets

– intellectual assets – that can be divided into internal, external and human assets, and – emotional - assets where the consumer perceives emotional value of the organization such as trust and commitment. Within the competitive market organizations should acquire and utilise intellectual assets to produce profitable innovations (Bismuth and Tojo, 2008). Intellectual assets are significant through capabilities of human resources, organizational power, leadership, technology know-how, and reputational, knowledge, trust, and perceived quality brand power (Sumita, 2008). However, Cohen (2010) states that physical and tangible *assets* are a valuable strategic resource that can significantly affect financial and organizational outcomes by performing the assets functional role., examples of such assets include visual identity (logo, name, colour, design etc.) physical environmental design, its components (physical structure/spatial layout and functionality, physical stimuli/ambient conditions, and symbolic artefacts/decor and artefacts) and digital technology.

Technological advances can also influence the core competence of firms, that are taking initiatives to promote the creating and implementation of the place's digital infrastructure, however, such initiatives will need to emphasis on providing the favourable assets for the organization (Hafeez, et al., 2016). It is fair to say that technology can have direct impacts on company's marketing capability. *Marketing capability* highlight a superior method of utilising company knowledge and resources in order to reply successfully to shifting market requirements (Gupta et al., 2016). Greater marketing capability combined with company's assets and resources such as technology allowing companies to employ a more innovative orientation and at the same time influence performance of the business (Fahy, et al., 2000). It is important to realise the importance of the core competence valuation progression and how organizational intangible assets composite in with tangible assets to develop a core competence at the organizational level (Hafeez et al., 2002a). Also, organizations should have more concerns on organization's cultural and intangible asset which can be described as the knowledge that internal stakeholders perceived from the company (Grasenick and Low, 2004), which are applied to the business through cultural background and intangible assets. According to Hofstede (1991) culture is often conceptualized as a collective programming of the companies are important to employment growth, disseminate innovation, and throughout the economy also creates economic enforcement in local areas (Anyadike-Danes et al., 2009).

Earlier authors have recognised the importance of resource based theory in marketing area explaining related terminologies (Kozlenkova, 2014). However, most of the efforts are faded with trying to explain terminologies and no systematic procedures are forwarded that in order to benefit marketing organisations, how to identify marketing capabilities and core competence. In this paper, we summarised salient features of the recent marketing and management theories to answer the following questions: what are the factors that make up the key marketing assets (i) intellectual and emotional assets, (ii) physical/tangible assets, and (iii) cultural/intangible assets?, what are the key components of organisations' marketing capability?, what is the nature of the relationships of organization's marketing assets with organizations' marketing capability?, how to isolate competencies from marketing capabilities by evaluating the 'collectiveness' and 'unique' attributes of marketing capabilities?, and how to further determine core competencies by evaluating the 'strategic flexibility' of competencies?

There is a body of marketing literature espouses the related concepts such as company's assets (Kozlenkova et al., 2014), intellectual and emotional assets (Bismuth and Tojo, 2008; Cohen, 2010) physical/tangible assets (REF), and cultural/intangible (Bick et al., 2003; Cornelissen and Harris, 1999), marketing capability (Day 1994; Gupta et al., 2016; O'Cass and Weerawardena 2009), competence (Sanford, 1989), and core competence (Hamel, 1994). However, this all provide a confusing picture for academics and practitioners alike, as little attempts are made to understand and delineate how organizational intangible assets weaved in with tangible assets to develop marketing capabilities; and how these capabilities can turn into company's competences and core competence. Therefore, this leave managers and marketers without any understanding of when and how a company can create a favourable marketing capability which can impact on company's performance.

This article contributes to the growing research on employee-company relationships by proffering the notion of marketing capability management as the primary psychological substrate for the kind of deep, committed, and meaningful relationships that marketers are increasingly seeking to build with their employees. Moreover, it draws on theories of resource-based view (Barney, 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984), a resource-conscious view (Kumar, 2015), and resource-advantage theory (Hunt and Morgan, 1995) intending to demonstrate a new approach to the dynamics of competition (Rossi and Mafud, 2014) to provide a coherent, comprehensive articulation of the bundle of assets and capabilities in creating competitive advantage for a firm.

Adopting earlier concepts proposed how to evaluate core competence (Hafeez, et al. 2002a) we propose a linking mechanism specific to marketing domain that develops a relationship in between assets, resources, marketing capabilities, marketing competences, and core competence. This paper helps marketing and branding managers to make more informed strategic management decision regarding capability development, outsourcing, focusing, or diversification, with regards to new products, services, or markets. The developed framework is generic in nature and is applicable to benchmark a business, public, or service sector organization. The research will conclude with an argument of the managerial and customer implications for SME's.

Background and propositions development

Understanding the factors of superior firm's performance is a theme of consistent discussion and of significant interest to both researchers and practitioners (Fahy et al., 2000; Tsai and Shih, 2004; Vorhies and Morgan, 2005). The view of core competence was presented by Hamel and Prahalad (1990) as what the company can do particularly well. However, an earlier paper by Ansoff (1965) who portrays core competence in a rich argument of its meaning which known as 'common thread' (p.105). Ansoff (1965) signifies the business competencies as "a relationship between present and future product markets which would enable outsiders to perceive where the firm is heading, and the inside management to give it guidance" (p.105). Previous findings presented by Prahalad and Hamel (1990) illustrated core competence as the core system that “provides nourishment, sustenance, and stability” (p.82).

Marketing capabilities employ a substantial and optimistic result on internal and external stakeholders’ satisfaction, which eventually indicate to superior organizational performance in terms of sales, profit and competence (Santos-Vijande et al., 2012). In order to guide the following discussion, Figure 1 demonstrates the research conceptual framework which recognises the key research constructs. The model has developed in this study to scrutinize a number of relationships that are identified in the literature and qualitative study. Generating an organizational-level conceptual framework established on resource-based and resource-advantage theory demonstrates: (i) the relationship between the organizations’ marketing capability concept and its elements that foster or discourage; (2) its benefits or outcomes for corporations; and (3) the associations between other theoretically and empirically identified variables. The literature discussed below determines that organization resources are embodiment of three assets, namely, (1) intellectual and emotional assets, (2) physical/tangible assets, and (3) cultural/intangible assets. In addition, to identify organization’s core competitiveness, the organization’s needs to identify and nurture six types of marketing capability, viz. market-sensing, corporate/brand identity management, customer relationship, social media/communication, design/innovation management, and performance management capability. This paper deliberates the antecedents and consequences of organizations’ marketing capability and develops propositions based on the literature and the qualitative field.

<<<Insert Figure 1: Conceptual Framework>>>

Antecedents to marketing capability

Hafeez et al. (2002a and b) define organization resource as the essential input to make up organizational capability. Also, organization resources are made up of three different type of assets; (intellectual and emotional assets, physical/tangible assets, and cultural/intangible assets). This study first explores four antecedents to marketing intellectual and emotional assets, five antecedents to marketing physical assets and five antecedents to marketing cultural assets.

Intellectual and Emotional Assets

We identify four antecedents to marketing intellectual and emotional (intangible) assets as described in the following subsection.

Corporate Reputation → Intellectual and Emotional Assets

The first set of factors, which is positively related and influences intellectual and emotional asset pertains to corporate reputation. *Corporate reputation* is a subjective and collective opinion (Van Der Merwe and Puth, 2014) and overall evaluation (Foroudi et al., 2014, 2016) based on the stakeholder's direct experiences with the company (Gotsi et al., 2001). Corporate reputation is the representation of a company's past actions and future prospects (Alniacik et al., 2012) consists of the knowledge and the emotions held by individuals. Based on resource-based view, corporate reputation is the key element of intellectual and emotional assets and as a mechanism to maintain competitive advantage (Abratt and Kleyn, 2012). However, company reputation is categorised as wise use of assets, quality of management and value as a long-term investment (Sur and Sirsly, 2013). Literature (Flatt and Kowalczyk, 2008) suggests that corporate reputation emerge from multiple constituent groups or stakeholders, when compared to other rivals describe overall appeal to all of its stakeholders and constituent. Firm's reputation is a key element of intangible resources of many SME's and is an intangible asset that contributes to SME's competitive advantage and performance (Hall, 1992, 1993; Flatt and Kowalczyk, 2008).

According to resource based view and resource advantage theory, corporate reputation is categorised as intangible asset - unobservable and thus difficult to imitate (Flatt and Kowalczyk, 2008; Hunt and Morgan, 1995). However, Fombrun (2000) states that reputation is just of many intangible assets to which stakeholders impute value creation. Intangible resources are classified as creation of capability or assets (Hall, 1992). Corporate reputation asset has strong characteristics of belongingness (Hall, 1992). Hall (1993) argues that reputation represents emotions held by people about product and services range. Fombrun (2000) asserts that people possess feeling, the emotional appeal towards firms. However, human asset has ability to cause supportive behaviour on corporate reputation. Corporate reputations are strategic assets build on distinctiveness, focus, consistency, identity and transparency (Fombrun, 2000). Accordingly, the following proposition is incorporated into framework:

P1a: The higher the level of company's corporate reputation, the higher the level of company's intellectual and emotional assets.

Knowledge and skills→ Intellectual and Emotional Assets

A second element of intellectual and emotional asset relate to knowledge and skills. Knowledge is defined as a set of organised statements of facts or ideas, and complex process which build through continuous learning (Hafeez et al., 2006). It can be transmitted to others through some communication medium and create value that is sustainable over time. Knowledge and skills as experience, information or expertise are essential ingredient for developing individual and corporate competences (Hafeez et al., 2007), and is a way for organizational development (Shulagna, 2013) to generate performance. According to Moustaghfir (2009) knowledge include organizational intellectual asset, employee's skills and know how. However, knowledge is a result of interaction between people and groups (Hafeez and Hamdy, 2003; Knight, 1999). Intellectual capital can be defined as knowledge, people intelligence and their actions. However, knowledge is the major asset for SME's and driver to remain competitive in the market. Therefore, SME's rely on intellectual capital to generate revenues (Kavida and Sivakoumar, 2009). Knowledge has been recognised as intellectual asset and refers as intangible resources, which are difficult to imitate. Though, Kavida and Sivakoumur (2009) agree broadly with previous studies (Bismuth and Tojo, 2008; Huggins and Weir, 2007; Knight, 1999), that knowledge is attribute of human capital and their distinctive features are ‘tacit’ subjective and ‘explicit’ objective knowledge. Knowledge is acquired from employees, which are part of human capital of SME’s. However, intellectual capital is one of the characteristics of human capital. According to Kavida and Sivakoumar (2009) human asset include work related knowledge and competencies. Knowledge is recognised as potential value enhancer, however, knowledge does not directly impact profitability or confer competitive advantage. Although, knowledge is seen as intangible resource or stock controlled by organization, which support its competences. Therefore, based on the above discussion that highlights the importance of knowledge and skills, its ambiguous relationship with intellectual and emotional asset research, we propose:

P1b: The higher the level of knowledge and skills, the higher the level of company’s intellectual and emotional assets.

Trust → Intellectual and Emotional Assets

Trust has very strong links with intellectual and emotional capital and it is regarded as subjective attitude, belief and optimistic expectation the emotional bond that stakeholders feel towards an organization taking morally correct decisions and actions (Van Der Merwe and Puth, 2014) works to establish a company’s reputation or image (Kim et al., 2015). Suciu et al. (2012) state that the key part of the relational capital is trust that is established between SME’s and its stakeholders. Trust is intangible asset build, maintained, sustained, broken and restored between people through communication. Suciu et al. (2012) also assert that trust is a liaison between organizational and social capital, which is form of intangible asset such as culture, rules, norms, which in turn form organizational competencies. Trust has become more and more important as a means of sustainability between people relationship (Savolainen and Lopez-Frenso, 2013).

It plays multiple roles in SME’s for relationship – interpersonal interactions between individuals, and within groups and SME’s (Allee, 2008). However, trust is embedded in classification of intellectual capital (Allee, 2008; Ikonen, 2012; Savolainen and Häkkinen, 2011; Savolainen and Lopez-Frenso, 2013). According to Allee (2008) trust is a part of social capital both within SME's and externally as reputation and brand. It is seen as skills in human capital and intangible asset within structural capital. Thus, it is important to know that trust generate and renew intangible capital (Savolainen and Lopez-Frenso, 2013; Allee, 2008; Ikonen, 2012; Savolainen and Häkkinen, 2011).

Ikonen (2012) believes that trust exist in interpersonal relations and is a key element of corporation and communication within SME's. However, it is classified as Intellectual capital building leadership skills within Human capital. There is a fair degree of consensus amongst researchers that trust is important as an intangible asset for building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders and provide vitality of competitiveness (Ikonen, 2012; Savolainen and Häkkinen, 2011; Savolainen and Lopez-Frenso, 2013). Emotional asset – although not recognised by all SME's - is categorised as commitment and trust. This means that trust build emotional and intellectual asset. However, SME's, which are rich in emotional intelligence rise their organizations trust, enthusiasm, positive attitude and quality relationship with stakeholders (Yadav, 2014). Therefore, based on the above discussion we formulate the following proposition:

P1c: The higher the level of trust, the higher the level of company's intellectual and emotional assets.

Perceived Quality→ Intellectual and Emotional Assets

The last element investigated in the current study related to intellectual and emotional asset is perceived quality. The literature on the subject suggest that quality is a key factor of competitiveness and capabilities of human capital (Çolakoğlu, and Ayrancı 2013; Huggins and Weir, 2007; Olmedo-Cifuentes and Martínez-León, 2015; Hafeez et al. 2006). In addition, it is an evaluation of the strength of buyer-seller relationship an investment and improvement degree of excellence of the product judgement about a product's superiority results from a combination of expectations regarding the information (Hussain and Hafeez, 2013) perception of reliability or durability attitude toward a brand can directly affect corporate performance. However, according to Çolakoğlu, and Ayrancı (2013) perceived quality has strong links with human capital. In addition, the characteristics of human capital are made of quality and commitment of employees (Çolakoğlu, and Ayrancı, 2013). Human capital in SME's represents knowledge and competences (Hafeez and Hamdy, 2003). That is why intellectual capital has an effect on SME's customer perception. In service organization customer interact with employees, who plays crucial role in delivering exceptional service quality (Olmedo-Cifuentes and Martínez-León, 2015).

In essence, customer perceived quality refers to service quality provided by employees – human capital of an organization or reliability or durability of products (Olmedo-Cifuentes and Martínez-León, 2015). The asset of SME's has been proactively exploiting its quality of products and services (Huggins and Weir, 2007). Interestingly, Steenkamp and Kashyap (2010) perceive quality as the most valuable driver for value creation. Sumita (2008) also embrace concept of emotional asset because of its high importance on enhancing the overall quality of service or work or interpersonal relationships, which are based on trust. Employees with greater emotional asset are referred as having more solid quality in relationship (Kavida and Sivakoumar, 2009). Development, maintaining and sustaining that quality relationship are associated with emotional asset – employees and their abilities to provide high quality customer service (Kavida and Sivakoumar, 2009; Hafeez et al; 2006; Hafeez and Aburawi, 2013). In the light of above we propose that all of the antecedents of intellectual and emotional asset are engaged in creation of perceived quality, and therefore we postulate:

P1d: The higher the level of perceived quality, the higher the level of company's intellectual and emotional assets.

PHYSICAL ASSETS

This study has identified five antecedents to marketing physical (tangible) assets as described in the following subsection.

Corporate Visual Identity → Physical (Tangible Assets)

Corporate visual identity (known as corporate design) is a term used to define the vast amount of visual cues which are linked with a specific organization. This corporate visual identity system is created by five elements, namely, organization's name, symbol/logotype, slogan, typography and colour (Dowling, 1994; Melewar and Saunders, 1998; Topalian, 1984). Corporate visual identity has received the attention of marketing researchers (Henderson et al., 2004; Foroudi et al., 2014, 2016; Tavassoli, 2001; Childers and Jass, 2002) who feel that it is part of organization's physical and tangible assets which impacts on a core competence at the organizational level. In addition, the intangibility of services exacerbates the need for management of visual components. The visibility and consistency should emphasise the physical dimensions of service delivery (Bharadwaj et al. 1993), which impacts on the corporate identity. For instance, staff appearance, colour and logo are essential to the brand awareness and transmitted image in the service context (Berry, 2000). Visual identity management has significant business implications (Schmitt et al., 1995). According to Bitner (1990) in a service encounter context, the physical environment can have an influence on how consumers perceive service failure. Corporate visual identity uses tangible clues to differentiate services (Onkvisit and Shaw, 1989).

P2a: The higher the level of corporate visual identity, the higher the level of company's physical (tangible) assets.

Physical Structure/Spatial layout and Functionality → Physical/Tangible Assets

Physical structure/spatial layout and functionality as the second components of organization's physical and tangible assets, can be defined as the architectural design and physical placement of furnishings in a building, the arrangement of objects (e.g. arrangement of the layout, machinery, furniture and equipment), the spatial relationships among them, physical location and physical appearance of the workplace which are particularly pertinent to the service industry (Bitner, 1992; Han and Ryu, 2009; McElroy and Morrow, 2010; Nguyen, 2006). Spatial layout influences or regulates social interaction (Davis, 1984, p. 272), intend to affect perceptions of culture (McElroy and Morrow, 2010, p. 614), and influences customer satisfaction (Brennan et al., 2002, p. 288; Han and Ryu, 2009, p. 505; Fischer et al., 2004, p. 132;

Oldham and Brass, 1979, p. 282), productivity (Ayoko et al., 2003, p. 386; Kamarulzaman et al., 2011, p. 265) and motivation (Oldham and Brass, 1979, p. 282). Moreover, the structure of an organization can affect the behaviour of organizational members and employees' comfort (Davis, 1984, p. 273). Comfort, overall layout, table/seating arrangements are the main elements of physical structure (Han and Ryu, 2009, p. 496). The physical structure of a workplace is expected by managers to impact on how people behave and interact (Davis, 1984, p. 272). The physical structure is essential in service settings, and is the purposeful environment that exists to aid the work of employees' and fulfil customers' specific needs and wants (Bitner, 1992; Han and Ryu, 2009; Nguyen, 2006). Physical structure/spatial layout and functionality is one of the best tool where firm's possessed (physical and tangible asset) is transmitted/processed in order to gain organizational competences.

P2b: The higher the level of physical structure/spatial layout and functionality, the higher the level of company's physical and tangible assets.

Physical Stimuli/Ambient Conditions → Physical/Tangible Assets

Ambient conditions/physical stimuli are those aspects of the physical setting which are intangible background characteristics that intrude into the managers' or organization members' awareness and are likely to have a pervasive effect on his/her behaviour (Davis, 1984, p. 274). The physical stimuli are the important factors of physical and tangible asset (Bitner, 1992). Environmental psychology research suggests that employees need to have the opportunity to control task-relevant dimensions of their workplace environment (Elsbach and Pratt, 2007, p. 196) because employees spend long hours in their workplace (Bitner, 1992). The physical stimuli have a direct influence on employees' attitudes, behaviours, satisfaction (Brennan et al., 2002) that, in turn, improve job performance (Brennan et al., 2002; Elsbach and Pratt, 2007; Kamarulzaman et al., 2011) and productivity (Parish et al., 2008, p. 222).

In addition, ambient conditions may need to be a major priority for many managers (Davis, 1984). Managers regularly introduce ambient conditions into the workplace environment to counteract negative influence as well as to remind themselves “of what needs to be accomplished” (Davis, 1984, p. 275). Ambient conditions/physical stimuli as a tangible hints impact on physiological reactions, which can cause comfort or discomfort during the service encounter (Bitner, 1992; Nguyen, 2006). Furthermore, corporate architecture can be used as a communication asset (Van den Bosch et al., 2006) and for serious business faces (Karaosmanoglu and Melewar, 2006). Importantly, managers need to be aware of employee’s preferences must be balanced against customers’ and employee’s needs (Bitner, 1992).

P2c: The higher the level of physical stimuli/ambient conditions, the higher the level of company’s physical and tangible assets.

Symbolic Artefacts/Decor and Artefacts → Physical/Tangible Assets

Symbolic artefacts as a valuable component of company’s physical asset can be defined as “aspects of the physical setting that individually or collectively guide the interpretation of the social setting” (Davis, 1984, p. 279) which particularly contribute to the attractiveness of the physical environment (Han and Ryu, 2009). Symbolic artefacts can be related to the aesthetics of the environment, which are intended to affect perceptions of culture (McElroy and Morrow) as well as have an effect on customer satisfaction (Han and Ryu, 2009). According to some authors (Han and Ryu, 2009; Wakefield and Blodgett, 1994) symbolic artefacts/decor and artefacts not only contribute to the attractiveness of the physical environment but also affect customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Han and Ryu, 2009). Furthermore, physical artefacts impact professional creative identities and personalities (Elsbach, 2009, p. 1065) and develop a complex representation of workplace identity (Elsbach, 2004, p. 99). However, there has been limited research on “how employees perceive to specific dimensions of workplace identities in work environments that limit the display of personal identity markers” (Elsbach, 2003, p. 623).

Corporations try to communicate status differentiation between employees by assigning higher ranked individuals better offices than their colleagues (McElroy and Morrow, 2010, p. 619). Employees feel a loss of workplace identity because of their restricted ability to show uniqueness and status through the display of their personal artefacts (Varlander, 2012). Furthermore, employees build their own alternative means of signalling status through other physical markers, for instance, the number of personal artefacts shows the different levels of managers (Elsbach, 2003, p. 262). Employees personally select and display artefacts even though they are not related to work, however, these types of uniqueness categorisations are essential to an employee's core sense of self (Elsbach, 2003, p. 235). According to Elsbach (2004) a variety of “physical artefacts are examined and compared to specific managerial exemplars to develop a complex representation of workplace identity” (p. 99). Symbolic artefacts are “aspects of the physical setting that individually or collectively guide the interpretation of the social setting” (Davis, 1984, p. 276) which is mainly relevant to the service industry (Han and Ryu, 2009). Furthermore, decor and artefacts influence, “the degree of overall customer satisfaction and subsequent customer behaviour” (Han and Ryu, 2009, p. 489). It is essential to understand the core competence valuation progression and how organizational physical and tangible assets develop a core competence at the organizational level (Hafeez et al., 2002).

P2d: The higher the level of symbolic artefacts/decor and artefacts, the higher the level of company’s physical and tangible assets.

Digital Technology → Physical/Tangible Assets

Digital technology effectively adapted by tangible/intangible assets contribute to information quality and service convenience which leads to the company’s core competence. Digital technology enhances learning and it is one of the most critical elements of design innovation. Digital technology focus on developing new products and market segments, it plays an important role in marketing department where constant interaction and exchange of information with customers are fed back to the design department (Setia et al., 2013). Digital technology and devices provide entree to innovative information (Hendrix, 2014). As claimed by Dewett (2003) technologies deliver workers straight entree to original information by permitting them to link up with acquaintance repositories and with information experts (Hussain and Hafeez 2008a).

Service convenience links to the speed and ease with which consumers could obtain appropriate information as well as identify and select the products or services. Information quality relates to the quality of information that are valuable for business customers, significant for decision making, and easy-to-understand (Gorla et al., 2010; Mahmood and Hafeez, 2013). The literature in view of competence adoption deliver an understanding of how dynamic processes including digital technology, tangible/intangible assets and marketing capability could help firms to enhance the ability to achieve core competence in the market. The firm's capability to learn and acquire knowledge will prepare them for advance steps of competence, which ultimately determines whether the firm is able to progress to the next stage of development. In particular, this links to knowledge of management capabilities and technology (Hafeez et al., 2010). According to Fruhling and Siau (2007) the human capital accessible within the organization is likely to be a fundamental factor in core competence. Consequently, management strengths should be focused toward nurturing and exploiting these strategic resources (Wernerfelt, 1984).

Technology can also influence the core competence of firms, who are already taking initiatives to promote the creating and implementation of the place's digital infrastructure, however, such initiatives will need to emphasis on providing the favourable assets for the organization, delivering relevant training courses. Marketing capability highlight a superior method of utilising company knowledge and recourses in order to reply successfully to shifting market requirements (Gupta et al., 2016). Greater marketing capability combined with technology allowing companies to employ a more innovative orientation and at the same time influence the performance of the business (Fahy, et al., 2000). Digital technology is one of the best technique/tool where firm's possessed knowledge (intangible asset) is transmitted/ processed in order to gain organizational competences. A firm's assets strongly focus on developing new product and market segments, by monitoring market trends and seeking market opportunities. In addition, firms with stronger tangible/intangible assets capability will be able to originate, relative to firms with lesser tangible/intangible assets capability.

P2e: The higher the level of digital technology, the higher the level of company's intellectual and emotional assets.

CULTURAL ASSETS

Five antecedents have recognized to marketing cultural (intangible) assets as described in the following subsection.

Vision, Mission, and Values → Cultural

Many researchers have identified a strong relationship between vision, mission, values and cultural (intangible) assets (Bick et al., 2003; Cornelissen and Harris, 1999; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). The vision, mission, and values are the key components of company's corporate strategy that help organizations to realise how to react in terms of differentiation and positioning in the market (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). Corporate mission is defined as the reason for the existence of a company (De Witt and Meyer, 1998). According to Abratt (1989) corporate mission is the most important part of the corporate philosophy that defines company purpose and paves the way to differentiate against all other organizations. According to Melewar (2003) the corporate mission summarises the basic points of the start. On the other hand, the corporate vision summarises the desired future which the organization hopes to achieve. Corporate values can be described as the beliefs and moral principles held behind company's culture. In addition, Van Riel and Balmer (1997) defined "corporate values as dominant systems of beliefs within an organization that comprise everyday language, ideologies and rituals of personnel and form the corporate identity" (Melewar, 2003, p. 203). Vision, mission, values of a company are the cultural and intangible assets which are controlled resources which subsidize towards potential benefits of the firm and make enormous contribution in the business success (Hussain and Hafeez, 2008a).

P3a: The stronger company's vision, mission, and values, the stronger the impact of company's cultural assets.

Corporate guidelines/leadership → Cultural Assets

Corporate guidelines are a key component of cultural assets in articulation and interpretation of corporate principles for individual areas of business activity and functions that guide the behaviour of individuals in an organization (Fritz, 1999; Melewar, 2003). These play an important role in communicating and reinforcing the company's values (Oliveira and Roth, 2012). Previous research has stated that leaders must cultivate an internal culture of honesty and integrity in order to avoid uncontrolled communication (Moingeon and Ramanantsoa, 1997). A relationship between culture and communication must be recognised as positive communication by leadership help attaining employee commitment of core corporate values (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). Corporate guidelines and leadership also help to design and innovate management capability. Corporate guidelines can change management strategies as it enables business to find areas for improvement.

P3b: The stronger company's corporate guideline/leadership, the stronger the impact of company's cultural assets

Corporate history → Cultural Assets

Corporate history - object the history of a corporate body is a corporation in its broadest sense. The corporate history, not only in the passive sense of having a past, or its members having memories (Delahaye et al., 2009), or a source of memory for reproducing useful activities (Booth and Rowlinson, 2006; Walsh and Ungson, 1991). The relationship between corporate history and culture in undeniable, as culture progresses through individual's interactions over time (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). Moingeon and Ramanantsoa (1997) suggested that although history is contributory in defining corporate identity, the identity itself is contributory in guiding history by its influence to the development of cultural norms mentioned in perceptions and member's actions. Studies argue that there is a strong link between the national culture from which organization originated and its corporate identity (Check-Teck and Lowe, 1999; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006; Rowlinson and Procter, 1999; Varey and Lewis, 2000). Many researchers posit that a company as an amalgamation of subcultures (Balmer and Wilson, 1998; Deal and Kennedy, 1982). This is because corporate culture is vastly inter-meshed with behavioural and historical characteristics of the company and its employees, and the point that each employee interpret management communication and history differently, the progression of unitary corporate culture is almost impossible.

P3c: The stronger the company's corporate history, the stronger the impact of company's cultural assets

Country of origin and sub culture→ Cultural Assets

Country of origin can be defined as 'the picture, the reputation, and the stereotype that employees and consumers attach to products of a specific country' (Piron, 2000, p. 308). When a national emphasis brings benefits, companies often promote their national identities together with their corporate identities. Furthermore, country of origin is the picture, reputation and the stereotype that consumers attach to products of a specific country (Melewar, 2003; Varey, 1999). Cultural and other intangible assets particularly employee know-how and organizational knowledge, are repeatedly regarded as the most significant component of the core competence. Management capabilities highlight the importance of cultural and intangible assets which enhance firms to obtain core competence. Assets are resource endowments that a firm has accrued over time, and that can be deployed for forming a competitive advantage (Amit and Schoemaker, 1993; Day, 1994; Fahy and Smithee, 1999; Grant, 1991).

Balmer (1995) argued that an organization is a combination of multiple cultures and refers to the different cultures belonging to different divisions or departments in an organization (Melewar, 2003; Van Maanen, 1991). Therefore, according to different perspectives, consensus, instead of being organization wide, happens only within the limitations of a subculture. As an example the study of Disneyland by Van Maanen (1991) and Balmer (1995) where groups of staff were found to identify with precise groups rather than the whole organization. This precise groups or subcultures were related to different roles and levels of organizational status, class and gender. This discussion leads to propose:

P3d: The stronger the company's country's origin effect, the stronger the impact of company's cultural assets

P3e: The higher the level of company's sub-culture, the stronger the impact of company's cultural assets

Intellectual and Emotional Asset and Marketing Capability

Intellectual and emotional asset include organizational philosophy and system of leveraging the SME's capability (Kavida and Sivakoumar, 2009). Commonly referred as intellectual capital or knowledge capital (Kavida and Sivakoumar, 2009) is referred to as output, in an intangible form (Kavida and Sivakoumar, 2009), when legally protected, become intellectual property (Kavida and Sivakoumar, 2009) are those knowledge-based items diverse components (Kavida and Sivakoumar, 2009) includes things such as the organization's image (Kavida and Sivakoumar, 2009) brand, reputation, trademarks, software, research and development, patent, staff skills, strategy, process quality, supplier and customer relationships (Bismuth and Tojo, 2008) such as R&D, human capita which have the capacity to produce a future stream of benefits for the organization (Bismuth and Tojo, 2008). Marketing Capability may be defined as complex skill and accumulated knowledge, which through organizational process coordinate activities and make use of organizational asset including tangible and intangible resources.

Capability is a dynamic mix of tangible and intangible assets (Hafeez et al., 2007). Thus, marketing capabilities are firm specific activities and provide market- sensing, corporate brand identity management and customer relationship. Marketing capability is the process of integrating company's resources and capabilities for marketing operation (Jia-Sheng et al., 2010) that comprises knowledge, experience, skills and resources of the organization (Mohammed et al., 2014). Organizations make use of their tangible and intangible resources and capabilities of brand, sales, channel, product and services (Jia-Sheng et al., 2010) to meet the needs of customers and build a market opportunity better than competitors. Marketing capability has become the major asset in modern world for SME's which help to retain competitiveness. Marketing capabilities are transformed into company's competences to produce goods or services or ensure its renewal and development (Hou and Chien, 2010).

P4: The higher the value added of intellectual and emotional asset in company's portfolio, the more likely the chance that it will qualify as company's marketing capability

Physical/tangible assets → Marketing capability

Physical and tangible assets are conceivable foundation of competitive advantage (Argote and Ingram, 2000, Dyer and Singh, 1998 and Flamholtz and Hua, 2003). Since, the company's assets' impact on competitive advantage is much more critical and influential (Hafeez and Abdelmeguid, 2003), therefore the organization's must focus on their physical and tangible assets such as company's logo and brands to build competitive advantage. Rossen (2011) underlined a few groupings of tangible (trademarks, trade names, service marks, certification marks, internet domain), customer-related intangible assets (customer lists, order or production backlog, customer contracts and the related customer relationships), contract-based intangible assets (licensing, royalty, management, service or supply contracts, lease agreements, franchise agreements, broadcast rights), technology-based intangible assets (patented technology and unpatented technology, software, databases, trade secrets such as formula and processes). These are the best example of where marketing capability holds these items in order to deny other parties access to them (Wang and Feng, 2012).

Assets are resource endowments that a firm has accrued over time, and that can be deployed for forming a competitive advantage (Amit and Schoemaker, 1993; Day, 1994; Fahy and Smithee, 1999; Grant, 1991). If marketing capabilities including (customer relationship capabilities) and assets are successfully deployed to build greater customer value, then competitive advantage is formed (Fahy and Smithee, 1999). Hooley et al. (2005) emphasised that building customer satisfaction and loyalty enrich superior market performance. The customer relationship capabilities merging with firm's assets expose company success (Setia et al., 2013).

P5: The higher the value added of physical and tangible asset in company's portfolio, the more likely the chance that it will qualify as company's marketing capability

Cultural/intangible assets→ Marketing capability

The market orientation literature has highlighted that company's cultural and intangible assets can be the key factor for business performance, as by tracing and replying to customers' preferences and needs, market oriented organizations can fulfil customer's requirements better while performing at a higher level of marketing capability (Foroudi et al., 2016) and organization performance (Kholi et al., 1993; Olavarrieta and Friedmann, 1999).

According to previous studies (Barney et. al, 1986; Fombrun and Van Riel, 1997) company's cultural assets encourage managers and employees' motivations and views. Mutual cultural values and powerful sense of identity gives the employees' the guidance to define the reasons that their firms exist, it also justifies their strategies for cooperating with important stakeholders (Fombrun and Van Riel, 1997). Strong cultures regulate views inside the companies therefore increases the probability that managers will provide more reliable self-presentation to external participants. By building the main principles, which is general knowledge of the correct way of achieving things in an organization, culture adds to the consistency of organizations' images with stakeholders (Camerer and Vepsalainen, 1988; Fombrun and Van Riel, 1997). Culture and identity are linked as identity defines core, enduring, and unique features of an organization that provides mutual interpretations between managers about ways which they should accommodate to external situations (Albert and Whetten, 1985; Fombrun and Van Riel, 1997). Furthermore, supplier's behavioural performance and cultural values such as the manifestations of an organization market marketing capability, may impact a purchasing organization's perceptions of a seller's or any other related task performance as well as in turn, the buying organization's future objectives toward the supplier.

P6. The higher the 'value added' of cultural and intangible assets in company's portfolio, the more likely the chance that it will qualify as company's marketing capability

Marketing Capability and Competences

The elementary postulation of the competence theory highlights that capabilities and assets of a firm governs a countless value-creating strategy in competition. These internal dynamics (capabilities and assets) generate core competencies throughout the path of ‘collective learning’ (Hafeez and Essmail, 2007). Marketing capabilities are integrative processes designed to apply the collective knowledge, skills, and resources of the firm to the market-related needs of the business, adding value to goods and services in meeting competitive demands (Day 1994; O’Cass and Weerawardena 2009). Besides, marketing capabilities are an imperative feature of business strategy as these may increase the proficiency of a firm to sense and react to a shifting business environment (Haeckel 1999; Roberts and Grover 2012).

Firm competences are prized capabilities in terms of “enabling the firm to deliver some fundamental consumer benefits” (Hamel, 1994, p.11). Competences involve generally a complex of capabilities rather than single activity-based. Many authors have highlighted that to develop a competence; a capability must be unique in the marketplace and collective in nature (Hafeez et al, 2002b). Competences are the podium of numerous lines of businesses within a corporation, and are the most significant constituents of cross-functional business processes (Day 1994; O’Cass and Weerawardena 2009). Competences supply a firm with new patterns of product competition. The business environment is progressively portrayed by competition, constant technological change, and constrained resources. The power to innovate is a crucial factor of firm success (Shieh and Wang, 2010). Fahy et al. (2000), Tsai and Shih (2004), and Vorhies and Morgan (2003), established an encouraging link among marketing capabilities and competence.

From resource based view theory organizations are the bundle of assets and capabilities. SME’s can determine future business directions based on the competencies. Organizations accumulate unique assets and competences also known as strategic resources create competitive advantage. Companies develop competencies for the long-term success of a firm (Christoffersen et al., 2012). Competences are the bundle of skills, know how, knowledge technologies a network of capabilities platform of multiply lines of business and/or product, constituents of cross functional business process an organization's ‘internal feature’ while capabilities are that organization’s ‘external feature’ which deliver a fundamental customer benefit (Hafeez et al., 2002b). Marketing capability is recognized as company competence. Therefore, marketing capability is created by a number of value added key capabilities that comprise tangible and intangible asset (Hafeez and Essmail, 2007). According to Hafeez et al. (2002a&b), competence are those key (value added) capabilities that have the characteristics of being “unique” in competition and “collective” in terms of its wide spread use that entails across-products, across business functions and across business units. Whereas, being unique is defined as something that is ‘rare’, ‘in-imitable’ and ‘non-substitutable’ (see Fig.1). We propose that the marketing competence is formed by a number of (value added) key capabilities that lead us to postulate the following:

P7a. The more “unique” company’s marketing key capability in competition, the more likely it will qualify to become marketing competence

P7b. The more “collective” company’s marketing key capability in its company-wide operation, the more likely it will qualify to become marketing competence

From our analysis of the literature, we identify those the key capabilities that are likely candidates to become marketing competence. These include including market sensing, corporate/brand identity management, customer relationship, social media/communication capability, design/innovation management, and performance management key capabilities.

Market Sensing Key Capability

As noted earlier, several scholars suggested that intellectual and emotional assets are positively related and influenced by market sensing capability and competences. Hawke (1993) distinguishes four functions namely (i) sensing (ii) intuition, (iii) thinking, and (iv) feeling, which in psychological types can be thought as competences. Skilled human capital with sensing competence will sense to pick up concreate data and factors or sense events. This competence is concerned with experience, facts and detail (Hawke, 1993). The literature on the subject suggests that competencies are valuable capabilities, which enable company to deliver customer benefit. According to Ljungquist (2013) sensing components are: R&D, process in innovation, development. However, according to Hafeez et al. (2002a) capabilities are deeply embedded in organizational practices and routines and business activities. Market sensing is a business activity of learning the external environment on demand, customers, and competitors while using knowledge to guide operations of the market (Sukdej and Ussahawanitchakit, 2015).

Teece (2007) argued that R&D, marketing, market search, production, distribution capabilities are highly valuable, rare, unique, inimitable, non-substitutable and these capabilities form competences. Market-sensing capability requires pursuit and examination throughout technologies and markets (Teece, 2007), as it exposes the organizational capability to determine about customers, competitors, and the broader market environment (Day 1994). Market-sensing capability can be implemented by utilising a variety of processes, including sustaining relationships with customers, suppliers as well as participating in professional associations and perceiving best practices. These processes require greater use of intangible assets of a firm. Particularly, market-sensing processes generate inputs for the requirements of reconfigured operational capabilities (Eisenhardt and Martin 2000). Competencies are network of capability or activity for example R&D as part of market sensing involves research and product development (Hafeez et al., 2002b; Hafeez et al., 2007). Accordingly, the following discussion research proposes that:

P8a. The more 'unique' company's market sensing key capability is, the more likely it will qualify as marketing competence

P8b. The more 'collective' company's market sensing key capability is, the more likely it will qualify as marketing competence

Corporate brand identity management key capability

A corporate brand is frequently used to improve company's brand trust competence and quality attributes. However, Gammoh (2006) recognised collaborative alliances which create competences, as the organizational ability to build relationship between people, group or joined together states for benefits or to achieve common purpose. The brand competence is to create, maintain, manage brand image in order to create relationship with people. Management capabilities highlight the importance of learning process that are essentials part of corporate brand identity (Pittaway and Rose, 2006). In addition, brand competences are closely linked to the knowledge creation by organizational learning, skills, experience, relationship and output, which provides superior performance and competitors are unlikely to acquire. However, rights to knowledge, patents brand image, employees know how etc. which is very often seen as element of organizational competences (Hafeez et al., 2006). Strong brand identity communicates unique characteristics, initiate relationship with channel members and consumers (Banerjee and Banerjee, 2014). Accordingly, the above discussion leads to propose:

P9a. The more ‘unique’ company’s corporate brand identify management key capability is, the more likely it will qualify as marketing competence

P9b. The more ‘collective’ company’s corporate brand identify management key capability is, the more likely it will qualify as marketing competence

Customer relationship management key capability

Communication capability is a procedure that reflects a firm’s ability to apply knowledge and finding combined and adapt tangible assets (e.g., billboards, point of sale) and intangible assets (e.g., brand identity, slogans) into direct and indirect performance outcomes (e.g., brand equity, sales, return on investment (Luxton et al., 2015). Social media can be professionally employed by tangible/intangible assets in effective which allows organization for more open and distributed communication. Communication capabilities exemplify a complex set of abilities to accomplish a firm's processes cost-effectively and systematically utilising a variety of organizational assets co-ordinately (Santos-Vijande et al., 2012).

Customer relationship capability has two underlying assumptions. The first is the understanding that relationships with customers are far more than a sequence of discrete transactions, with a relationship level viewed as more likely to create profitable outcomes for suppliers and bigger need satisfaction for customers (Dwyer et al., 1987; Verhoef, 2003). The second is an understanding that not every perspective and current customers are equally draw from the perspective of an organization's capacity to profitably fulfil their needs and requirements (Morgan et al., 2009). Therefore, customer relationship capabilities can be defined as organization's capability to recognise attractive customers including prospects, start and maintain relationships with attractive customers, and influence these relationships into customer level profit (Boulding et al., 2005; Morgan et al., 2009).

Competence is defined by Ndubisi et al. (2007) as the buyer's perception, or refers to the ability of the company to serve customers well. As it has been mentioned before by Hafeez et al. (2002a) integrated capabilities from business activities turn into competences. The competence in the business can be said that company can give special unique service, and according to Hafeez et al. (2002a) company can easily differentiate themselves against competitors. However, customer relationship is a part of relational capital, and relational capital is a resource, which form capability. In addition, customer relationship is the hardest capital to retain because it requires a lot time and trust which in this case are recourses. Accordingly, the following discussion research propose,

P10a. The more 'unique' company's customer relationship management key capability is, the more likely it will qualify as marketing competence

P10b. The more 'collective' company's customer relationship management key capability is, the more likely it will qualify as marketing competence

Social media/communication key capability

Social media/communication capability is a procedure that reflects a firm's ability to apply knowledge and finding combined and adapt tangible assets (e.g., billboards, point of sale) and intangible assets (e.g., brand identity, slogans) into direct and indirect performance outcomes (e.g., brand equity, sales, return on investment (Luxton et al., 2015). Social media as tangible/intangible asset can be professionally employed in effect which allows organization for more open and distributed communication. Communication capabilities exemplify a complex set of abilities to accomplish firm's processes cost-effectively and systematically utilizing a variety of organizational assets co-ordinately (Santos-Vijande et al., 2012).

According to Bradley and McDonald (2011) social media is “an evolution to expand organizational capabilities and it becomes part of company’s culture” (p.5). Assets itself are outlined with a wide variety of meanings. Grant’s portrayal that “assets are inputs into the production process-they are the basic unit of analysis”, where a capability is identified as “the capacity for a team of resources to perform some task or activity” (Hafeez et al., 2006, p.3594). Capabilities upshot commencing an intricate pattern of actions and a positive synergy between numerous assets. Social media and communication capability have been described as the extent to which organizations are able to effectively manage marketing communication programs and use marketing skills to approach customers in the market (Murray et al., 2011). Murray (2011) Suggested that social media and communication capability characterises the organization’s competence in using technologies such as internet and others to facilitate the interactions with customers. These interactions enable customers access to organization resources and add value by facilitating employees to optimize their focus on the customer by synchronising information and activities throughout the organization.

P11a. The more ‘unique’ company’s social media/communication management key capability is, the more likely it will qualify as marketing competence

P11b. The more ‘collective’ company’s social media/communication management key capability is, the more likely it will qualify as marketing competence

Design/innovation management key capability

Corporate design also known as visual identity is a term used to define the vast amount of visual cues which are linked with a specific organization. Corporate visual identity (CVI) is an the outcome of five elements namely, symbol/logotype, slogan, typography and colour (Dowling, 1994; Melewar and Saunders, 1998; Topalian, 1984). CVI can be conveyed through products, location, vehicle and architecture of its buildings. On the other hand, the interior design of a building may symbolise aspects of the corporate culture. According to Melewar (2003) there is an undeniable relationship between design and culture, as corporate slogan and mission are regularly seen as key factors of cultures and design.

Oliveira and Roth (2012) argue that innovation is a market driven phenomenon and leadership is driver which affect innovation (Foroudi et al., 2014; Gupta et al., 2016; Jaskyte, 2004). Leaders are able to build and manage an organizational culture which promotes innovation, that may be product, or process or its implementation to build organizational structure which encourages innovativeness (Jaskyte, 2004; Peters and Waterman, 1982; Van de Ven, 1986). Transformational leadership can increase organization capacity to innovate by directing energy and resources in order to implement new programs (Jaskyte, 2004).

P12a. The more 'unique' company's design/innovation management key capability is, the more likely it will qualify as marketing competence

P12b. The more 'collective' company's social design/innovation management key capability is, the more likely it will qualify as marketing competence

Performance management key capability

Magee (2002) posits that organizational culture and performance management are interdependent, and variation in one will have an impact in the other. According to Mujeeb and Ahmad (2011) argue that good performance depends on strong culture. It is the organizational culture that differentiates the outcome of business strategies for two organizations in the same location and in the same industry (Kandula, 2006; Mujeeb and Ahmad, 2011). A strong and positive culture can even make an average employee outperform perform and achieve whereas a weak culture can demotivate an outstanding employee to underperform and end up underachieve (Mujeeb and Ahmad, 2011; Murphy and Cleveland, 1995).

Performance management capabilities render the organization ability to create and manage an effective performance measurement and analysis system (Hafeez et al. 2006), which includes the selection of suitable metrics, gathering and analysis of data from suitable sources to support managerial decision making, communication of performance to appropriate stakeholders, and association of the performance management system with present and future business directions (Mithas et al., 2011).

P13a. The more 'unique' company's performance management key capability is, the more likely it will qualify as marketing competence

P13b. The more 'collective' company's performance management key capability is, the more likely it will qualify as marketing competence

Competences and Core Competences

Competences are assortments of knowledge, skills and performance, where performance is the ability to apply the knowledge and skills. Project Management Institute defines competence as "a cluster of related knowledge, attitudes, skills, and other personal characteristics that affect a major part of one's job" (Project Management Institute, 2007, p.73). Competence can be measured in contradiction of predefined norms and improved by training and development. In addition, Competences are extents of behaviour which are connected to superior job performance (Hafeez et al., 2002a).

Core competence is defined as organizational routines manifested in business activities and processes that bring assets together and enable them to be deployed advantageously (Hamel and Prahalad, 1990; Drejer, 2000). Core competences are those competencies that are flexible to meet the strategic needs of the organisation (Hafeez, et al. 2002a, 2007). Strategic flexibility is manifested by two determinants (i) ability of a firm to 'redeploy its resources' to meet future needs of the company (ii) ability of the firm to be able re-organise its routines to meet company's future needs to develop new products and/or services (Hafeez et al., 2002b). Appropriate management of competence portfolio complements value to an organization as well as strengthening core competence and its chance of survival in business environment (Shieh and Wang, 2010).

P14a. The more flexible the 're-deployment' of a marketing competence to meet its future product/service needs, the more likely it will qualify as company's core competence

P14b. The more flexible the 'routine re-organisation' of a marketing competence to meet its future product/service needs, the more likely it will qualify as marketing company's core competence

Model Testing

An empirical examination is the logical next stage in establishing the reliability and validity of the research framework and its propositions. Such examining must be constructed on several organizations and industries, with methods ranging from experimental research, qualitative study to surveys. Due to the number of construct in the model, it is suggested to examine only a portion of the framework in the first phase. In addition, it is recommended to adopt Churchill's (1979) paradigm, which integrates a qualitative paradigm (in-depth interviews and focus groups) to gather information in the first phase of the study. To increase the validity of findings as well as the richness of the conclusion, in-depth interviews with key informants and focus group discussions with employees and customers should be carry out. Such study helps to obtain necessary information and further understanding about the phenomenon in addition to purify measures for the questionnaire. The data triangulation boos the validity of findings as well as the fullness of the study conclusion (Churchill, 1979; Deshpande, 1983; Saunders, et al., 2007).

Multi-item Likert scales can be obtained or (re)adapted from previous studies in the domain for every concept (Churchill, 1979). The constructs can be operationalized by means of either objective or subjective measures or a combination thereof. After the measurement items are confirmed, we recommend distinct examinations of the three sub-models that establish the research conceptual model (i.e. (i) intellectual and emotional assets and its antecedents, (ii) physical/tangible assets and its antecedents, (iii) cultural/intangible assets and its antecedents → marketing capability and its components → competences → core competences). Due to moderately time-independent nature of the company's assets on marketing capability, it is predominantly amenable to experimental examination. Furthermore, it can be examined by means of questionnaire administered to pertinent setting concerning the research associations with companies. These relationships can be tests by fsQCA (fuzzy set/Qualitative Comparative Analysis), SEM (structural equation modelling), or path analysis.

DISCUSSION

This paper contributes to several study streams. The current commentary builds on the growing body of research on the subject of core competence. With deeper engagement in competence observable uniqueness and companywide learning (collectiveness) accomplishments, firms exploit company's resources more frequently by utilising company assets, marketing capability, and core competence. This paper delivers a combined conceptualization that points company's assets and marketing capability at the center of the firm's determinations to generate competence and core competence.

This study expounds theoretical and managerial suggestions to boost the comprehending and supervision of marketing core competences. In particular, our framework suggests that in harnessing the power of marketing capability in their own company–consumer contexts, managers must realise the following questions: what are the factors that influence on (i) intellectual and emotional (intangible) assets, (ii) physical (tangible) assets, and (iii) cultural (intangible) assets?, what are the key components of organizations' marketing capability?, what is the nature of the relationships of organization's assets with organizations' marketing capability?, how to isolate competencies from marketing capabilities by evaluating the collectiveness and unique attributes of marketing capabilities?, and how to further determine core competencies by evaluating the strategic flexibility of competencies? Before formulating and implementing core competencies of their organizations must ascertain whether they actually want their employees and consumers to identify with their company. The creation of a unique model for core competence is a fundamental provision of the current investigation. The major task in here is the creation of (multi-disciplinary) unique comprehensions into interactions, which can be transformed into outcomes with functioning applicability in the study (Palmer and Bejou, 2006).

Organizations that develop the variables of organizations' assets can achieve marketing capability accomplishing greater business competencies. The designed conceptualisation places marketing capability central based by variables that establish and support the direction of marketing management capability to ultimately achieve superior business core competencies (Bismuth and Tojo 2008; Kavida and Sivakoumar, 2009; Lim and Dallimore, 2004; Suciu et al., 2012; Sukdej and Ussahawanitchakit, 2015).

The most important aspect of the study is to extend knowledge by examining consumers and employee's evaluation of effect of company's asset, capabilities on competences within performing setting for providing competitive advantage (Hafeez et al., 2002; Johnson, 2002; Kavida and Sivakoumar, 2009; Lynn and Dallimore, 2004, Perunovic et al., 2012; Steenkamp and Kashyap, 2010). Some researchers (Bismuth and Tojo, 2008; Hafeez et al., 2007; Huggins and Weir, 2007; Kavida and Sivakoumar, 2009) suggested that company's asset relate to capabilities. However, the current study provides validated framework that investigate the relationship between the construct of (i) intellectual and emotional asset (ii) physical/tangible assets, (iii) cultural/intangible assets, and marketing capability, the factors which influence them its (antecedences) and relationship between marketing capability and its factors which influence competences and its consequences. It attempts to fulfil the research gap and responds to previous investigations from the perspective of different marketers (Kavida and Sivakoumar, 2009; Knight, 1999; Perunovic et al., 2012). The multi-disciplinary paradigm for the intellectual and emotional asset is a major contribution to the present research. However, many researchers believe that intangible, intellectual, and emotional resource which result in distinctive capabilities are more influential because they are more likely to create value and meet attributes of resource based view such as valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (Flatt and Kowalczyk, 2008; Hall, 1992; Omil et al., 2011).

This study seeks to explain in a more holistic manner the relationship between organizations' asset, marketing capability and competences in the eyes of consumers and employees within performing setting for providing competitive advantage. Substantial organizations' asset is very important for any organizations because of its growing importance in innovation, productivity, growth, enterprise competitiveness, and economic performance also its very costly (Lim and Dallimore, 2004). Besides, additional supposition can be delivered since this investigation related to the managers' and 'decision-makers' approaches (Sedera and Gable, 2010). Firms command a lifecycle-wide knowledge obtaining strategy. It is these authors confidence that each of the nine components of core competence should be adopted in all management plans for organizational competence. Nevertheless, firm's tangible/intangible assets creativities have naturally sought to increase exploration of digital technology and exploitation of marketing capabilities (Levinthal and March, 1993). The present study establishes an exceptional significance of all the dynamics of competence; each component delivering a distinct and significant contribution to organizational core competence.

Emphasizing the perceived constructive relationship amongst core competence dynamics and firm's success we anticipate that the outcomes of this research will aid managers practice to successfully and efficiently develop their organizational related competence, thus improving levels of competitive advantage and firm success for exploiting its strategic assets and tangible assets (Sedera and Gable, 2010; Hafeez et al. 2015; Foroudi et al., 2017).

Future research directions

This marketing research presents a preliminary initiation into the conceptualisation of the company's resources, asset, addressing its role in marketing capabilities and competences. Nevertheless, this research should be interpreted in the light of some important limitations that are relevant for future research related to the need for empirical testing as well as its measurement. As a pioneering study in the area of marketing, this is first attempt to investigate the topic of organizations' asset, its antecedents and consequences on marketing capability and competences. Further research should be undertaken to increase validity of the study. This study represents first attempt to investigate the concept of organization's asset, its antecedents and consequences on marketing capability and competences, for which the existing literature was limited. The results from quantitative studies would help to develop new scale adopted from previous studies.

Conclusion

This study reviewed how marketing capability can lead to firms' competitive advantage, there is no work how a *marketing firm* can identify its core competence in the sector to attain competitive advantage. By revisiting the resource-based theory, we present an integrated framework to identify and determine the antecedents of marketing capability and its relation to company's core competencies. We undertake extant literature review identify, fuse and systhesise the marketing and strategic management literature to provide a framework for core capability identification. We use the *resource based theory* to develop a core competence identification mechanism. We employ the *marketing theory* to identify the antecedents (under tangible and intangible assets) that are input to the marketing capability and core competence. This study is the first attempt to identify antecedents of marketing competence by exploiting tangible and intangible assets in terms of *intellectual*, *emotional* and *cultural* assets, and their relation to company's capability and core competence. This paper articulates a theoretical framework that makes significant contribution in the marketing and strategic management literature.

Case Study

Next Plc is one of the main retailers of clothes, apparels, footwear, home products and related accessories in the UK. It is the third largest clothing retailer after Primark and Mark & Spenser. Next Plc. is listed on the London Stok Exchange (LSE). From 700 Next Plc stores, 500 hinderers are located in the UK and the rest of them are active across Europe, Middel East and Asia. In 1864, it was founded by Joseph Hepworh & Son as a tailor in Leeds. At the begging, Hepworth was in partnership with James Rhodes but in 1872 the partnership was dissolved. After that, Hepworth extended the business and became an innovator to develop of chain stores in Britain and the company had 100 outlets at the end of year1884 across the UK. In 1984, Davies as the new chief executive converted 50 Hepworth stores across the UK to the Next format. This helped the company to develop a small department store across selling men's clothes and women's clothes and the entire footprint. After several years in 2008, Next bought the brand Lipsy. In 2009, for the first time, Next created an online catalogue for offering shoes, clothes and accessories.

According to (Distance Selling) Regulations 2000, BBC had an investigation in 2010 and found that there was a breaking of the Consumer charging customers for its delivery costs. They had been charging customers for three years but assured that they comply by 2010. Before 2007 Next usually use the TV and newspaper to advertise the products. However, Next after facing 7.2% fall in sales, was decided to invest £17 million over the next three years to resuscitate its existing stores and also, offer product and additional £10m for marketing. Next celebrated its 25th anniversary in September 2007. At this time, Next provided 'Ali's Party' with the song 'Suddenly I See' which was the first television campaign in twelve years.

Case questions

1. Does Next Plc. can manage the market Competencies?
2. What are the main features of the Next Plc approach to offer to marketing?
3. Is there any framework for understanding the Next Plc. marketing capability and its relation to the company's core competencies.

Key terms and definitions

Marketing Capability: highlight a superior method of utilising company knowledge and resources in order to reply successfully to shifting market requirements

Corporate reputation: endowed with a judgment and is the overall evaluation of a company over time

Knowledge management: is a complex undertaking involving the development of structures that allow the firm to recognise, create, transform, and distribute knowledge

Trust: has been defined as 'a feeling of security held by the consumer in his/her interaction with the brand, such that it is based on the perceptions that the brand is reliable and responsible for the interests and welfare of the consumer

Perceived quality: is defined as a consumer's judgment about an entity's overall excellence or superiority . Perceived service quality is also defined as the discrepancy between customer's expectations and their perceptions of the service performance. In other words, perceived service quality is the disparity between the consumer's expectations and their experiences

Corporate visual identity: is an assembly of visual cues to make an expression of the organisation by which an audience can recognise the company and distinguish it from others in serving to remind the corporate real purpose in serving to remind the corporate real purpose.

Physical structure/spatial layout and functionality: is the architectural design and physical placement of furnishings in a building, the arrangement of objects (e.g. arrangement of buildings, machinery, furniture and equipment), the spatial relationships among them, physical location and physical layout of the workplace which particularly pertinent to the service industry and can be symbolise something

Ambient conditions/physical stimuli: of an environment in service settings encourage stakeholders to pursue the service consumptions and subsequently affect on employees' behaviours, attitudes, satisfaction, and performance toward the service provider

Symbolic artifacts/decor and artifacts: is aspects of the physical setting that individually or collectively guide the interpretation of the social setting, can be related to the aesthetics and attractiveness of the physical of the environment, develop a complex representation of workplace Identity and mainly relevant to the service industry.

Digital technology: build and sustain present and future business applications resource and supports the critical internal processes

Vision: is the top management's aspirations for the company (Mukherjee and Balmer, 2008) and provides guidance about what core to preserve and what future to stimulate progress toward

Mission: is the company purpose, the reason for which a company exists or objectives

Value: is the dominant system of beliefs and moral principles that lie within the organisation that comprise everyday language, ideologies, rituals and beliefs of personnel

Corporate guidelines: is articulation and interpretation of corporate principles by CEO vision/leadership for individual areas of business activity and functions to guide the behaviour of individuals in an organisation

Corporate history: is history of the company and ownership

Country of origin: is the picture, reputation and the stereotype that consumers attach to products of a specific country

Subculture: refers to the different cultures belonging to different divisions or departments in an organisation

Market-sensing capability: concerns a firm's ability to learn about customers, competitors, channel members and the broader market environment in which it operates

Customer relationship capability: as the firm's ability to identify attractive customers and prospects, initiate and maintain relationships with attractive customers, and leverage these relationships into customerlevel profits

Social media and communication capability: is the extent to which companies can effectively manage marketing communication programs and use marketing skills to reach customers in the market. Social media and communication capability represents a firm's competence in using the Internet and other information technologies to facilitate rich interactions with customers. These interactions provide customers with access to firm resources and create value by enabling employees to improve their focus on the customer by synchronising activities and information throughout the organisation

Market-sensing capability: concerns a firm's ability to learn about customers, competitors, channel members and the broader market environment in which it operates

Corporate brand identity communicates to customers the differential qualities of their products, which in turn help firms improve their shareholder value. It assists organisations in communicating their differential advantage to the marketplace; however, all such organisation-specific attributes are signalled through the brand rather than other means of corporate communications

Customer relationship capability: is the firm's ability to identify attractive customers and prospects, initiate and maintain relationships with attractive customers, and leverage these relationships into customer level profits

Core Competences: are those competencies that are flexible to meet the strategic needs of the organisation

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Figure 1: Conceptual Framework