

**An investigation of the product life cycle concept as  
an instrument in marketing decision-making for  
selected small organisations in South Africa**

by

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**DEDICATED TO MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER**

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## **ABSTRACT**

An investigation of the product life cycle concept as an instrument in marketing decision-making for selected small organisations in South Africa

The product life cycle concept is currently a dominant component of marketing theory. There is however much criticism on and doubt about the applicability of the product life cycle concept as a marketing decision-making instrument. No evidence exists of the efficacy of the product life cycle concept as an instrument to develop marketing strategy.

The purpose of the study was to test the underlying theory of the product life cycle concept with the primary objective of establishing what the use and practical value of the product life cycle concept is in making marketing decisions in small manufacturing and dealer organisations.

The main focus was to test the ability of marketing decision-makers in small manufacturing and dealer organisations to associate their application and use of the product life cycle concept with Kotler's assumptions on the identified marketing characteristics, described marketing objectives and proposed marketing strategies.

A major finding was that small organisations tended to display a marketing knowledge level that was not in total unison with the existing marketing theory. Another important conclusion of the study was that the current product life cycle concept theory needs to be broadened to include strategies on the expanded marketing mix (people, processes and physical evidence).

Apart from the different use and application by marketing decision-makers in small organisations in South Africa the product life cycle concept theory has potential as a strategic tool and a high likelihood for its future use as a marketing decision-making instrument.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	Page
CHAPTER 1	1
<b>ORIENTATION</b>	
<b>1.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2 THE PROBLEM STATEMENT</b>	<b>2</b>
1.3 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	4
1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	4
1.4.1 Primary objective	4
1.4.2 Secondary objectives	4
1.4.3 Research propositions	6
<b>1.5 THE DEMARCATION AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>8</b>
1.6.1 Description of the product life cycle	8
1.6.2 Criticism of the product life cycle concept	12
1.6.3 Identified problems with the product life cycle concept	14
<b>1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN</b>	<b>15</b>
1.7.1 Secondary data analysis	16
1.7.2 Qualitative research	16
1.7.3 Definition of the information needed	16
1.7.4 Methods of collecting quantitative data	17
1.7.5 Questionnaire design	<b>17</b>
1.7.6 Sampling process and sample size	17
1.7.7 Plan of data analysis	18
1.8 THE IMPORTANCE AND THE VALUE OF THE STUDY	20
1.8.1 Importance of this study	20
1.8.2 Value of this study to small organisations	20

1.9	CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS	21
<b>1.10</b>	<b>CHAPTER OUTLINE</b>	<b>23</b>
1.11	CONCLUSION	25
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>		<b>26</b>
	<b>THEORETICAL FOUNDATION – STRATEGY AND THE ROLE OF MARKETING STRATEGY</b>	
2.1	INTRODUCTION	26
2.2	STRATEGY	27
2.3	VARIOUS LEVELS OF STRATEGY	27
2.3.1	Corporate level strategy	28
2.3.2	Business level strategy	31
2.3.3	Functional level strategy	40
2.4	USING THE 7Ps AS A GENERIC MARKETING MIX	49
2.5	STRATEGY IN SMALL ORGANISATIONS	51
2.6	CONCLUSION	55
<b>CHAPTER 3</b>		<b>56</b>
	<b>LITERATURE SURVEY: PRODUCT MANAGEMENT AND THE PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE CONCEPT</b>	
3.1	INTRODUCTION	56
3.2	THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE CONCEPT	56
3.2.1	Diffusion of innovation and the product life cycle concept	58
3.2.2	Different product life cycle patterns	60
3.2.3	Levels of aggregation for the product life cycle	63
3.2.4	Product life cycle extensions	65
3.2.5	Application areas of the product life cycle concept	68
3.2.6	Criticisms, gaps and the validity of the product life cycle concept	72

	Page	
3.3	PRODUCT MANAGEMENT	75
3.3.1	New product development	76
3.3.2	Market development	82
3.4	PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE AND GROWTH STRATEGIES	87
3.5	THE PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE CONCEPT AND STRATEGIC PLANNING	89
3.6	THE PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE AND PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS	95
3.7	MARKETING IMPLICATIONS IN EACH PHASE OF THE PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE	97
3.8	THE PLC CONCEPT CONTRIBUTING TO MARKETING STRATEGY AND DECISION-MAKING IN SMALL ORGANISATIONS	101
3.9	THE PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE CONCEPT AND DEALERS	102
3.10	THE PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE AND SMALL ORGANISATIONS	102
3.11	CONCLUSION	103
<b>CHAPTER 4</b>		<b>104</b>
	<b>SMALL BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA</b>	
<b>4.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>104</b>
4.2	THE STRUCTURE OF SMALL ORGANISATIONS GLOBALLY	105
4.3	MANAGERIAL INFLUENCE AND CONTROL OF SMALL ORGANISATIONS GLOBALLY	105
4.4	GLOBAL IMPORTANCE OF SMALL ORGANISATIONS	106

	Page	
4.5	THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF SMALL ORGANISATIONS OPERATING GLOBALLY	108
4.5.1	Advantages small organisations	108
4.5.2	Disadvantages	109
4.6	THE SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMY	110
4.7	THE SMME SECTOR IN SOUTH AFRICA	112
4.8	WHITE PAPER ON NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF SMMEs IN SOUTH AFRICA	113
4.8.1	Part A – Vision, objectives and principles	114
4.8.2	Part B – The enabling environment	117
4.8.3	Part C – Institutional support frameworks	118
4.8.4	Part D – Target areas for packaged support	119
4.9	SCOPE OF THE STUDY	119
4.10	THE STANDARD INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION (SIC) AND THE BUREAU OF MARKET RESEARCH (BMR) REGISTERS	120
4.10.1	The Standard Industrial Classification and the BMR Registers	120
4.10.2	A description of the two major divisions used in this study	122
4.11	CONCLUSION	122
 <b>CHAPTER 5</b>		 <b>124</b>
<b>PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS</b>		
5.1	INTRODUCTION	124
5.2	PROBLEM STATEMENT	124
5.3	RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS	126
5.3.1	Proposition 1	127
5.3.2	Propositions 2, 3, 4 and 5	127
5.3.3	Proposition 6	130



	Page	
5.4	CONCLUSION	130
<b>CHAPTER 6</b>		<b>131</b>
<b>RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURE</b>		
<b>6.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>131</b>
6.2	THE DATA SOURCES	131
6.3	DATA COLLECTION METHODS	131
6.4	POTENTIAL SOURCES OF ERRORS IN RESEARCH DESIGN	133
6.4.1	Total error	134
6.4.2	Dealing with non-responses	135
6.5	SAMPLING	136
6.5.1	Defining the population	139
6.5.2	Identification of the sample frame	141
6.5.3	Sample size determination and the selection of the sampling method	144
6.5.4	Selection of the sample elements	148
6.6	PERSONAL INTERVIEWING	149
6.6.1	Definition of a personal interview	149
6.6.2	Evaluation of a personal interview	150
6.6.3	Requirements for a successful personal interview	150
6.6.4	Personal interviewing techniques	151
6.6.5	Interview problems	152
6.7	MEASUREMENT AND MEASUREMENT SCALES	153
6.7.1	Measurement	153
6.7.2	Level of measurement	154
6.7.3	Scale types	155
6.7.4	Single-item versus multiple-item scales	158
6.8	QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN AND TESTING	159
6.8.1	Preliminary considerations	159
6.8.2	Asking questions	160

	Page	
6.8.3	Open-ended and closed-ended questions	161
6.8.4	Constructing the questionnaire	162
6.8.5	Pre-testing of the questionnaire	163
6.8.6	Questions in the questionnaire	164
6.9	INTERVIEWING PROCEDURE	170
6.10	CODING AND EDITING	171
6.10.1	Coding	171
6.10.2	Editing	172
6.10.3	Transferring of data	172
6.11	STATISTICAL PROCEDURES AND STATISTICAL TREATMENT USED IN THE ANALYSIS	172
6.11.1	Missing responses	172
6.11.2	Descriptive statistics	173
6.11.3	Statistical techniques and procedures to be adopted in this research	175
6.11.4	Statistical treatment	177
6.12	CONCLUSION	178
<b>CHAPTER 7</b>		<b>179</b>
<b>RESEARCH RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION</b>		
7.1	INTRODUCTION	179
7.2	REALISATION RATE	179
7.3	THE REPRESENTATIVENESS, VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF RESULTS	181
7.3.1	Representativeness of the results	182
7.3.2	Validity of the results	182
7.4	RESULTS ON A QUESTION-BY-QUESTION BASIS	183
7.4.1	Section A	183
7.4.2	Section B	188

	Page	
7.4.3	Section C	210
7.4.4	Section D	245
7.5	MAJOR FINDINGS	276
7.6	RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS	290
7.6.1	Proposition 1	291
7.6.2	Proposition 2	292
7.6.3	Proposition 3	293
7.6.4	Proposition 4	294
7.6.5	Proposition 5	295
7.6.6	Proposition 6	295
7.7	CONCLUSION	296
<b>CHAPTER 8</b>		<b>297</b>
<b>CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH</b>		
8.1	INTRODUCTION	297
8.2	PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE APPLICATION OUTCOMES	297
8.3	SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS BASED ON THE MAIN FINDINGS	300
8.4	LINKING THE QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH RESULTS/MAJOR FINDINGS TO THE DIFFERENT RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	310
8.5	LIMITATIONS	311
8.5.1	Limitations in the literature review	311
8.5.2	Limitations in the empirical research	311
8.6	RECOMMENDATIONS	312
8.6.1	Recommendations for future research	312
8.6.2	Recommendations based on the literature review	314
8.7	SUMMARY	316

**REFERENCES**

**317**

**APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 - Pre-testing questionnaire
- Appendix 2 - Final Questionnaire
- Appendix 3 - Flash cards

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1.1 - Phases in the product life cycle	9
Figure 2.1 - Hierarchy of strategy	28
Figure 2.2 - The BCG growth share matrix	34
<b>Figure 2.3 - GE's Strategic Business Planning Grid</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Figure 2.4 - Intensive growth strategies</b>	<b>37</b>
Figure 2.5 - Relating the marketing plan to the strategic plan	40
Figure 2.6 - The goods-service continuum	46
Figure 2.7 - The marketing planning process	53
Figure 3.1 - Traditional product life cycle concept	57
Figure 3.2 - The relationship between the cumulative and non – cumulative diffusion of innovation and the product life cycle curve	59
Figure 3.3 - Style, fashion and fad life cycles	60
Figure 3.4 - Growth – slumped maturity pattern	62
Figure 3.5 - Cycle – recycle pattern	62
Figure 3.6 - Scalloped pattern	63
<b>Figure 3.7 - Product petrification: A new stage in product life cycle theory</b>	<b>65</b>
Figure 3.8 - Life cycle phases of various products	67
Figure 3.9 - Sequence and steps associated with the development process of a product	76
Figure 3.10 - Growth of a new product	87
Figure 3.11 - Relationship between product life cycle and product portfolio	95
Figure 3.12 - Phases in the product life cycle	97

Figure 3.13	-	The inverted product life cycle	100
Figure 4.1	-	The national SMME support strategy	114
Figure 6.1	-	Errors in research design	134
Figure 6.2	-	A two-phased stratified sample	148
Figure 7.1	-	Normal probability plot	191

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
<b>Table 3.1: Application areas of the product life cycle concept</b>	<b>69</b>
Table 3.2: Major criticisms of and problems with the PLC concept	72
Table 3.3: Marketing implications of each stage of the product life cycle	92
Table 3.4: Implications of the product life cycle	93
Table 3.5: Characteristics, marketing objectives and strategies in the various phases in the product life cycle	94
Table 4.1: The codes and major divisions of the SIC	121
Table 4.2: The BMR Registers and the major divisions	121
Table 6.1: A summary of the data collection methods	132
Table 6.2: National distribution of large, medium and small organisations in South Africa	140
Table 6.3: BMR Register and employment size	140
Table 6.4: Schedule to the National Small Business Act	142
Table 6.5: Provincial allocation – Large, medium and small organisations in SA excluding the incomplete organisations	143
Table 6.6: Distribution of small organisations in Gauteng with 11 – 50 employees	144
Table 6.7: Appropriate statistics for nominal, ordinal interval and ratio data	155
Table 6.8: The linkage between the questions in the questionnaire, secondary research objectives and research propositions	165

Table 6.9:	The linkage between the different sections, questions, question formats and the different scale types.	166
Table 7.1:	A description of the sample frame	180
Table 7.2:	The realisation rate	180
Table 7.3:	Classification of organisations realised per region	184
Table 7.4:	Classification of organisations by core business activities	185
Table 7.5:	Departments and functions within manufacturer and dealer organisations	186
Table 7.6:	Organisational size according to the number of employees	187
Table 7.7:	Organisational size according to the number of employees by organisational type	188
Table 7.8:	Aspects of importance in the application of the PLC concept	189
Table 7.9:	Aspects of importance in the application of the PLC concept	190
Table 7.10:	Significance testing of means regarding aspects of importance	193
Table 7.11:	Factors providing a competitive advantage	195
Table 7.12:	Marketing mix instruments and marketing related aspects responsible for providing a competitive advantage	196
Table 7.13:	Other marketing related aspects responsible for providing a competitive advantage	197
Table 7.14:	Competitive advantage comparison by organisational type	198
Table 7.15:	The nature of product assortment	198
Table 7.16:	The nature of product assortment by organisational type	199
Table 7.17:	Application of the PLC on each individual product within each product range	200



Table 7.18:	Positioning of primary products in each PLC phase for the total sample	201
Table 7.19:	Percentage of primary products in each PLC phase per organisational type	201
Table 7.20:	Verbatim representation of primary products/best sellers per organisational type	203
Table 7.21:	Reasons why primary products or product ranges are best sellers	204
Table 7.22:	Marketing objectives for primary products or product ranges in the PLC phases	206
Table 7.23:	Marketing objectives for primary products or product ranges per organisational type	208
Table 7.24:	Strategic marketing planning and development by using the product life cycle phases	210
Table 7.25:	The use of the PLC in strategic marketing planning and development per organisational group	211
Table 7.26:	Involvement in strategic marketing planning and development for the total sample	211
Table 7.27:	Involvement in strategic marketing planning and development per organisational type	212
Table 7.28:	Influence of the PLC concept on marketing strategy planning and development for the total sample	213
Table 7.29:	Influence of the PLC concept on marketing strategy planning and development by organisational type	214
Table 7.30:	Degree of control over the marketing mix instruments for the total sample	215
Table 7.31:	Degree of control over the marketing mix instruments between manufacturers and dealers	216
Table 7.32:	The importance of marketing mix related aspects (people, processes and physical evidence) in the introductory phase of the PLC	218

	<b>Page</b>
Table 7.33: The importance of marketing mix related aspects (people, processes and physical evidence) in the growth phase of the PLC	220
Table 7.34: The importance of marketing mix related aspects (people, processes and physical evidence) in the maturity phase of the PLC	222
Table 7.35: The importance of marketing mix related aspects (people, processes and physical evidence) in the decline phase of the PLC	223
Table 7.36: The importance of marketing mix related aspects in the various PLC phases	225
Table 7.37: Importance of the three expanded marketing mix instruments	226
Table 7.38: The importance of the marketing mix instruments in the different PLC phases	227
Table 7.39: The importance of the marketing mix instrument in the different PLC phases per organisational type	228
Table 7.40: Significance test on the importance of the marketing mix instruments in the different PLC phases	229
Table 7.41: Marketing objectives in the introductory phase of the PLC	231
Table 7.42: Marketing objectives in the growth phase of the PLC	233
Table 7.43: Marketing objectives in the maturity phase of the PLC	235
Table 7.44: Marketing objectives in the decline phase of the PLC	237
Table 7.45: The primary marketing objective in the different PLC phases for the organisations per organisational type	239
Table 7.46: Comparison between the marketing objectives by Kotler (2000:316) and the marketing objectives provided by the sample	240

	<b>Page</b>
Table 7.47: Likelihood of continuing with the use of the product life cycle in future for general management decision-making	241
Table 7.48: Likelihood of continuing with the use of the product life cycle in future for marketing decision-making	242
Table 7.49: Significance test of the likelihood of continuing with the use of the product life cycle in future for general management and marketing decision-making	242
Table 7.50: Likelihood of continuing with the use of the product life cycle in future for general management and marketing decision-making per organisational type	243
Table 7.51: Likelihood of continuing with the use of the product life cycle in future by organisations with and without a marketing department for general management and marketing decision-making for the total sample	244
Table 7.52: Frequency distribution of the total sample with regard to the characteristics in each of the PLC phases	246
Table 7.53: Comparison of the total sample's responses of characteristics with the theory (T) in each of the PLC phases	247
Table 7.54: Comparison per organisational type of the characteristics in each of the PLC phases with the theory	248
Table 7.55: Association of respondent's perceptions of marketing characteristics with Kotler's theory in each of the PLC phases for the total sample for organisations with a marketing department or function	250
Table 7.56: Association of respondents' perceptions of marketing characteristics with Kotler's theory in each of the PLC phases per organisational type for organisations with a marketing department or function	252

	<b>Page</b>
Table 7.57: Importance of the traditional marketing mix related aspects	254
Table 7.58: The importance of marketing mix (product, price, place and promotion) related aspects in the introductory phase of the PLC	255
Table 7.59: The importance of marketing mix (product, price, place and promotion) related aspects in the growth phase of the PLC	257
Table 7.60: The importance of marketing mix (product, price, place and promotion) related aspects in the maturity phase of the PLC	258
Table 7.61: The importance of marketing mix (product, price, place and promotion) related aspects in the decline phase of the PLC	259
Table 7.62: The importance of the marketing mix instruments in the different PLC phases	261
Table 7.63: The importance of the marketing mix instrument elements in the different PLC phases per organisational type	262
Table 7.64: Significance test on the importance of the marketing mix instruments in the different PLC phases	263
Table 7.65: Importance of marketing mix related aspects	265
Table 7.66: Importance of marketing mix instruments	266
Table 7.67: Importance of marketing mix instruments in the different PLC phase	267
Table 7.68: Frequency distribution of the sample in linking the theory on the marketing strategies in each of the PLC phases	269
Table 7.69: Comparison of the total sample (P) response of marketing strategies with the theory (T) in each of the PLC phases	271

	<b>Page</b>
Table 7.70: Linkage of strategies to the appropriate PLC phases per organisational type	272
Table 7.71: Strategies of small manufacturers and small dealers that correspond with Kotler's theory	273
Table 7.72: Linkage of strategies to the appropriate PLC phases per organisational type with or without a marketing department and Kotler's theory	275
Table 8.1: Characteristics, marketing objectives and strategies in the various phases in the product life cycle as proposed by Kotler (compared to how marketing decision-makers from small manufacturers and small dealers in Gauteng apply this concept)	298
Table 8.2: The linkage between the questions in the questionnaire, secondary research objectives and the major findings	310