**Dissertation Proposal on:**

# Marketing Strategies Towards Overcoming Rising Competition: A Case Study of Baskin Robbins

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## Abstract

The world economy is in crisis, businesses both established and start up are faced with imminent collapse. The lucky businesses are recording minimal margins while the not so lucky are registering huge losses and are winding up shop. Ironically, some businesses have been able to weather the vagaries of financial crisis and stiff competition and are registering impressive financial bottom lines. One notable business is Baskin Robbins that is rapidly expanding despite the harsh economic climate. Baskin Robbins is an ice cream store that operates under franchise business model. The success of Baskin Robbins is replicated in every location it operate, may it be in its home town of the United States of America or in the emerging markets of the Asia tigers. This study will establish the marketing strategies that the franchisor uses to create a competitive global brand that overcomes stiff competition that characterizes the present global market. The study will use secondary data that will be analyzed qualitatively. The secondary data will be obtained from previous works from scholars, companies websites, journals, and books among others. The study will analyze 4 research works to establish marketing strategies that Baskin Robbins use to overcome competition, effectiveness of the marketing strategies and how present day competition is shaping Baskin Robbins marketing strategies.

# 1. Chapter 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

Businesses in developed, emerging and third world economies are facing numerous challenges from ever evolving consumer taste and preferences, global competition, technological advancement to diminishing returns. To stay ahead of the pack, firms are forced to be innovative to grow and retain their market share. Companies that have failed to re-invent their product and strategies have been forced to exit the market due to either low return on investments or huge losses. Nevertheless, small companies and even startups that strategically positioned themselves have been able to grow their balance sheet, market share and are perched high in the corporate echelons. These conglomerates that were once tiny outfit have been driven by technology adoption or market responsive strategies to overcome fierce competition that defines present day markets.  Therefore, business executives today are grapple with competition for sustainable growth. Ironically, scholars consent that competition has enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in the market. As the world shrinks to a global village, companies are venturing into new markets far from their home turf to improve their competitiveness and diversify their markets. This has taken competition to a global scale as global brands compete to outdo each other.

Scholars and business executives contend that competition is present in all marketing functions. Competition manifest in pricing of products, qualities of products, distribution channels and in promotions. Companies in an effort to overcome competition develop strategic plans, which indicate how each business functional unit will outdo its rivals. Pitney Bowes in an effort to overcome competition differentiates its product quality and distribution network from its competitors.  Some global brands particularly fast food chains have resorted to franchising in an effort to be globally competitive. In a bid to establish the marketing strategies that Baskin

Robbins, a franchisee business, uses to overcome competition this chapter presents the study background, problem statement, research questions, research aim and objectives as well as the study rationale to lay an introduction to the entire dissertation proposal.

## 1.2 Background of Study

According to Zapletalova (2009), companies are devising competitive strategies to compete on both local and global level. These strategies are based on the environment the company wishes to invest in, taking into consideration the customers and the challengers. Zapletalova (2009) continues to state that for a company to succeed in its target market, it should serve the customers better than its rivals. According to franchising experts, franchising is a business method that has been used by companies to catapult their products and services to global brands. However there is paucity of knowledge on the determinants of franchise success. According to Bordonaba-Juste and Polo-Redondo (2008), franchisee success is partially dependant on its relationship with franchisor. To understand and contribute to the body of knowledge on franchise business model; this study seeks to establish the marketing strategies employed by Baskin Robbins to overcome competition in all the market it operates.

## 1.3 Problem Statement

The purpose of the research is to establish the marketing strategies that Baskins Robbins utilizes in an effort to overcome competition in the different markets it operates, bearing in mind it serves different markets with different needs, cultures and attitudes.

## 1.4 Research Questions

i. What are the marketing strategies employed by Baskin Robbins in the different markets it operates?

ii. How effective are the marketing strategies in overcoming competition in those markets?

iii. How has the present day aggressive competition revolutionized marketing strategies employed by Baskin Robbins?

## 1.5 Research Aim and Objectives

The study aims to investigate how marketing strategies have shored up Baskin Robbins, which is a franchisee business operating in different geographical areas and serving different customers' taste and preference, to weather the storm of competition in all the market it operates. To achieve this end, the following objectives will guide the research.

i. To investigate the marketing strategies that Baskin Robbins marketing managers employ.

ii. To establish the effectiveness of the Baskin Robbin's marketing strategies in overcoming competition.

iii. To establish how present day competition is shaping marketing strategies been employed by Baskin Robbins.

## 1.6 Rationale Statement

The study will be of great significance to franchisee businesses that aim to be global brands. To achieve this end, the research will illustrate the marketing strategies that Baskin Robbins institute to overcome competition in different markets, how effective the marketing strategies have been in regard to fighting competition and lastly how present day competition is shaping Baskin Robin's marketing strategies. Through this approach a franchisee business will be able to compare its marketing strategies with Baskin Robbins strategies and establish how it can improve its strategies. Given the dynamism of the market conditions and structures, competition is in constant evolution, a franchisee business will be able to compare the marketing strategies it is employing to respond to present day competition vis a viz the marketing strategies Baskin Robbins is utilizing to counter the present day competition.

### 1.7 Company Overview

According to Finaish (2005), Baskin Robbins was founded in 1953 by Burt Baskin and Irv Robbins. The two brothers-in-law loved old-fashioned ice cream and desired to offer their customers a wide variety of flavored ice cream made from high quality ingredients. They also envisaged to create an ice cream store that will be a social gathering point. Initially, in 1945 Irv Robbins launched his first store, Snowbird Ice Cream in Glendale California. The store sold 21 high quality ice cream flavors. In 1946, Burt Baskin followed in the footsteps of Irv and opened Burton's Ice Cream Shop in Pasadena, California. As the two businesses grew, the two entrepreneurs came up with the idea of Baskin-Robbins. The two brothers-in-law who were now business partners realized that to maintain their mission of serving high quality ice cream across the entire stores; they needed a manager who had ownership stake in the business. Though they didn't realize this was to be the birth of franchise business model. As part of their growth strategy, in 1953 they introduced 31 flavors, which meant one flavor for every day of the month. This underpinned their mission statement that they sell fun and not just ice cream as these novelty ensured that customers enjoyed fun in seeing and tasting a wide variety of new flavors. Around 1965 thereof, Baskin-Robbins was operating 400 stores scattered throughout the United States of America. During the decade of 1970, Baskins Robbins opened ice cream stores in Australia, Korea and Saudi Arabia.

To date, Baskin-Robbins is in more than 6,000 locations scattered in over 35 countries and serving over 150 million customers. The United States of America alone has 2,800 outlet while Japan has 800 operational stores. Baskin-Robbins boasts of over 1,000 unique and delicious flavors and still counting, on average each store has more than 31 flavors. The franchise model that was pioneered by Burt and Irv ensures that the franchisees cater for the locality they operate in while product development is done at the headquarters in Massachusetts (Finaish 2005). To ensure success, the franchisor, Baskin Robbins, subjects franchisee to extensive vetting followed by intensive training in their brand, marketing and promotion. As part of promotion and celebration of 31 logo brand, Baskin Robbins Ice Cream Stores in Malaysia were giving 31% discount on every ice cream on every 31$^{st}$ day of a month. Also the Malaysia franchise had a promotion dubbed “Pink day” on this day customers will be given discount on products if they carried anything with the color pink.

### 1.7.1 Vision

Baskin Robbins vision is to be the best premium ice cream player (Baskin Robbins, 2012).

### 1.7.2 Mission

Though Baskin Robbins has no specific mission statement it has a general mission of “We exist to thrill customers, define and lead multi-branding, enrich stakeholder, and build powerful brand image.” (Baskin Robbins, 2012).

### 1.7.3 Objectives

Baskin Robbins objective is to create brand awareness (Baskin Robbins, 2012).

### 1.7.4 Segmentation, targeting and positioning.

Baskin Robbins as a business target people from all age group, however its target market is people from higher middle to high income group (Baskin Robbins, 2012). Baskin Robbins Ice Cream Stores are strategically located in malls or location with high pedestrian traffic.

### 1.7.5 Marketing Mix

To offer unrivalled product and services Baskin Robbins offers unique and high quality ice cream flavors by integrating the 4Ps of marketing that is product, place, price and promotion. Consequently Baskin Robbins believes their success is derived from their unique and innovative flavors, excellent brand image, global footprint and well connected distribution network. Baskin Robbins serves its customers with the following main products (Baskin Robbins, 2012).

i. Beverages: Baskin Robbins serves frozen drinks like Bold Breezes, Blast, Shakes and Malts. The beverages come with different flavors like wild mango, strawberry citrus, chocolate, Mocha and kiwi among other flavors.

ii. Ice Cream: Baskin Robbins serves over 1000 variety of ice-cream flavors. The flavors are grouped into permanent flavors, seasonal flavors, low fat, regional flavors and no sugar added.

iii. Cakes: Baskin Robbins offers customized cakes for their customers depending on the occasion; the cakes come in different sizes, flavors and design. Additionally for the health conscious customers, Baskin Robbins offers nutritional and ingredient information on their cakes.

Baskin Robbins prides in having a vast chain of ice cream stores, with over 6,000 scattered all over the world (Baskin Robbins, 2012). The ice cream stores are located in malls and in busy pedestrian places. This ensures that they are accessible to majority of their target market.

Baskin Robbins products are premium priced as compared to other ice-cream brands such as London Dairy. The price is attributed to uniqueness and high quality ingredients of Baskin Robbins ice cream.

Baskin Robbins carries out in-store promotion to attract new customers and showcase their new products (Baskin Robbins, 2012). The promotion can be free samples for customers or discounted prices on cakes on a customers' birthday. The firm also engages in interior design to attract customers from different demographics. To promote and market their products Baskin Robbins hosts a website and issues brochures.

# 2. Chapter 2. Literature Review

## 2.1 Competitive and Corporate Strategies

One thing that business executives from the smallest player in a Third world country to an executive heading a multi billion conglomerate in a developed country consent is that strategic planning is the pillar of beating competition and staying ahead of the pack ( Dibb, Farhangmehr and Simkin, 2001). Empirical studies show that businesses that formulate strategic plans report strong market and financial performance (Siu, Fang and Lin, 2004; Pulendran, Speed and Winding, 2003; Claycomb, Germain and Droge, 2000). Strategic planning involves identifying the competitors, analyzing their strength and weakness and subsequently developing competitive strategies based on the analyzed information (Fahy and Smithee, 1999; Kriemadis and Terzoudis, 2007). Various researchers believe that strategic planning should be different at different business levels. Strategic planning at the corporate level should be to spur growth while at different business functional levels strategic planning should be concerned with identification of future investment opportunities. Both vertical and lateral business growth is hampered by aggressive competition in the market, necessitating formulation of competitive and corporate strategies.

There is a clear distinction between competitive and corporate strategies (Forgang, 2004; Yoshino, 1996). Competitive strategies are strategies based on how a firm competes within a specific market while corporate strategies are strategies based on where the firm competes (Thompson and Martin, 2010). Effective competitive strategies should not only counter competitive forces but also build the business both from the inside and the outside. Kanagal (2010) asserts that competitive strategies help businesses create sustainable competitive advantage.  Kanagal characterizes resources that help businesses create sustainable competitive advantage to be valuable, imperfectly imitable, cannot be strategically be substituted and should not be easily available to competitors. Businesses that enjoy sustainable competitive advantage record enhanced long term business performance (Kanagal, 2010). Thus, every business despite competition it faces from rival firms strives to create sustainable competitive advantage as a survival tactic and growth driver.

**2.2 Competitive forces**

Competition occurs when firms offer the same products and services in the same market (Fleinsher and Bensoussan, 2007). According to Porter (1998) competitive analysis model, competition varies across industries and that competition is fiercest in low return industries. Kotler (2003) in illustrating Porter's model argues that corporate face five potentially aggressive forces in their quest to maximize profit and dominate market leadership. The forces highlighted are; risk posed by new entrants, rivalry among industry peers, risk posed by substitute products and bargaining muscle by consumers and suppliers. Dostaler and Flouris (2004) believe firms can combine their competitive advantages and competitive edges to formulate corporate strategies that counter these forces. These corporate strategies can be categorized as cost leadership, cost focus, differentiation and focused differentiation. Dostaler and Flouris (2004) state that cost leadership as a business strategy involves pricing of products below competitors' price. Thus, firms adopting this strategy should be highly efficient inorder to maintain the low prices and generate a profit margin. Dostaler and Flouris continue to explain that businesses that use differentiation as a strategy do so by offering goods and services that their target market perceive as different from what is offered by other businesses. They note that customers are willing to pay a premium for this uniqueness. Businesses are faced with a delicate balance as cost leaders cannot overlook offering unique products and service that customers value, and on the other hand they should not incorporate unique features that are similar to differentiated products (Dostaler and Flouris, 2004). Businesses that try to incorporate cost leadership and differentiation strategy have been faced with what Dostaler and Flouris (2004) term as “being stuck in the middle”. This shows that businesses cannot pursue all the competitive strategies concurrently due to their inherent inconsistencies.

Firms that try to pursue all strategies simultaneously have recorded poor market and financial performance. Porter (1980) illustrates this phenomenon when he described how Laker Airways which used to pursue low cost strategy started to differentiate its services by offering fancy onboard services, this resulted to low margins and the firm was forced to hike their fares. However, some researchers believe that these two competitive strategies are not mutually exclusive, citing example of mature industries that rejuvenate themselves by initiating product differentiation and at the same time maintain low cost and efficiency (Dostaler and Flouris, 2004). Cronshaw, Davis and Kay (1994) support this view and note that businesses that neither establish low costs nor differentiated products are doomed to fail while those who combine cost leadership and differentiation have high chances of succeeding. Contemporary some literatures have introduced integrated cost leadership/differentiation as a fifth strategy. Organizations pursuing this strategy achieve competitive advantage by concurrently establishing low costs and highly differentiating their products. According to Dostaler and Flouris (2004) Southwest airline has succeeded to weather tough economic times due to their integrated cost leadership/differentiation strategy. The airline which pioneered low cost business model is also synonymous with excellent customer service and on-time performance which act as their differentiation product. Additionally, Porter (1990) believes that there lurks danger when a business is associated with low cost and fails to offer quality goods and services similarly to a firm whose products are differentiated with a high premium. Porter in his book “The Competitive Advantage of Nations” believes that deriving sustainable competitive advantage from the stated four competitive strategies depends on continuous innovation and improvements, source of competitive advantage and the distinctiveness of the source. Low-order advantages are derived from cheap labor and low cost raw materials while high-order advantages are derivative of product differentiation or refined process technology. Porter conjectures that low cost advantages are less sustainable as compared to advantages inherent from differentiation. He thus supports differentiation as a competitive strategy for sustainable competitive advantage.

As noted earlier technology facilitate in creating both low and high order competitive advantages. Contemporary businesses pursuing low cost competitive strategies are embracing technology to lower their operational costs and maintain low costs. Padget and Mulvey (2007) observe that banks in an effort to maintain their profit margins that are dwindling due to competition are turning to low-cost electronic operations. Technology is playing a key role in creating high order advantages through differentiation. This is achieved by harnessing the power of technology to invent and manufacture unique products. As noted earlier in the case of Southwest airline, excellent customer service is a source of differentiation. Consequently businesses are using technology to serve their customers efficiently; an example is Wal-Mart that utilizes “efficient customer response system” that facilitates replenishment of orders bought by customers (Manyika and Nevens, 2002).

**2.3 Marketing Strategies**

According to Yannopoulos (2011), competition necessitates formulation of marketing strategies. Depending on the industry and the form of competition firms engage in either offensive or defensive marketing strategies. Marketing strategy helps businesses, both new entrants and incumbents, expand their market share, penetrate their rival's market share or create new market share with a view of enhanced business performance. Kanagal (2010) view relationship marketing as a subset of competitive marketing strategy. However, Yan and Chew (2011) view marketing strategy as aggregate of competitive marketing strategy and relationship marketing strategy. Competitive marketing strategy is concerned with efficient utilization of resources to gain competitive advantage (Yan and Chew, 2011). Relationship marketing strategy is primarily concerned with establishment, maintenance and enhancement of relationships and networks with the external stakeholders for improved business performance Kanagal (2010). Steinman, Deshpande and Farley (2000) note that in the past decade there has been an emergent of two streams of strategic marketing, with one stream concentrating on relationship between customers and suppliers while the other stream concerns sellers building long term profitable partnerships with other stakeholders. The latter stream is relationship marketing, which seeks to invest in an indefinite mutual profitable relationship that extends one off transaction consummation. Therefore relationship marketing strategy contributes to sustainable competitive advantage through fostering long term relationships that enhance customer satisfaction and increasing sales and profitability.

## 2.4 Conceptual Framework of Competitive Marketing Strategy

According to Kanagal (2010), marketing objective is the beacon of marketing strategy. Marketing objectives define what the business aims to achieve in terms of market share, profit, sales brand image, customer value and satisfaction and price stability. After conceptualization of marketing objective, it is vital to conduct strategic market analysis and internal analysis. Businesses conduct strategic market analysis to evaluate their relationship with their cutomers, management, scan the environment they are operating in and forecast on future market trends. Internal analysis is vital for a business to analyze its strength, core competencies, weaknesses and resource constraints. Through critical evaluation of strategic market analysis, marketing objective and internal analysis, marketing strategies are formulated taking into account the 4Ps of marketing. Due to market dynamism, marketing strategies are in constant evolution to beat emerging threats and maintain leadership. Therefore, Kanagal (2010) views marketing strategy as both systematic action and dynamic adjustment procedures that aim to maintain market position.

The figure below illustrates conceptual framework of competitive marketing strategy.

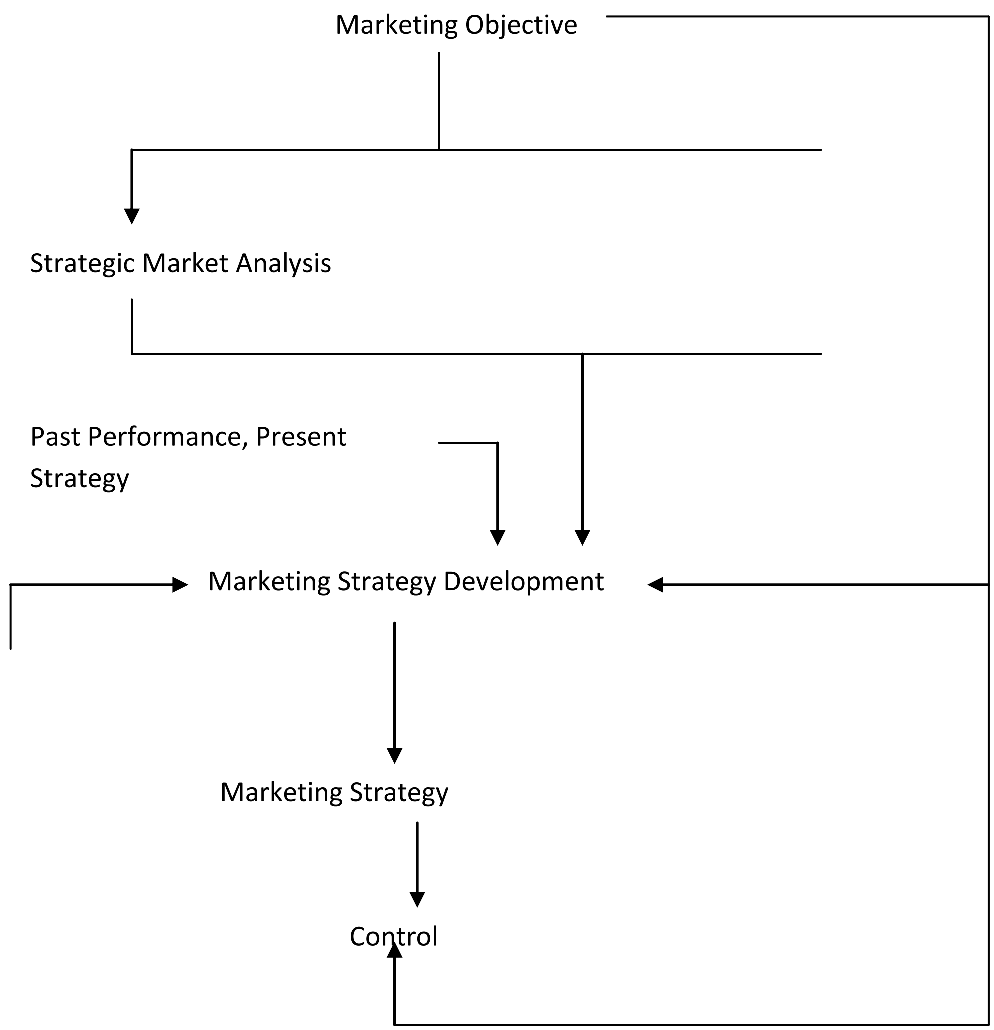


Fig 1. Conceptual framework of competitive marketing strategies. Adapted from Kanagal (2010)

**2.5 Defensive strategies**

According to Hauser and Shugan (2008), innovation and entry of a new product or service means that the incumbents must defend their market positions from external attack, hence defensive strategy counters new-product strategy. Hauser and Shugan (2008) believe that defensive strategies by firms has been intensified by shorter product life cycle, continuous innovation, global competition, technological advancement and the ever evolving distribution channels. This view is supported by many scholars and researchers. Notably, Bridges and Freytag (2009) found out in their empirical study that technology adoption and competition in manufacturing industry fuelled investments in offensive and defensive marketing strategies. Competition forces firms to engage in defensive marketing strategies to retain their customer base (Bridges and Freytag, 2009; Zhou, Yim and Tse, 2005). Karakaya and Yannopoulos (2011) believe that established firms engage in defensive strategies to discourage new entrants into the market. The incumbent engages in activities that make the industry unattractive by lowering profitability outlook and return on investment for the new entrant. Thus the new entrant is forced to recede the decision to enter into what was once a lucrative market. This tact is known as pre-entry strategy, however, if the competitor enters the market, marketing managers can engage in post-entry strategies to maintain their market share. According to Yannopoulos (2011) defensive strategies are effective if they are instituted before the challenger commits fully to the investment, as a committed challenger is difficult to dissuade more so if the exit barriers are high.

**2.6 Pre-entry strategies**

Pre-entry defensive strategies are actions such as signaling, fortify and defend, covering all bases, continuous improvement and capacity expansion (Yannopoulos, 2011). According to Yannopoulos (2007) companies that use signaling strategies make announcement that are meant to deter any potential entrant into the market. The company uses print, electronic or any other conduit of communication to relay retaliatory information to the challengers. Mostly retaliatory information is on price cut, credit and rebates. In recent past, a reputable consumer electronics shop in Canada went public to declare that it will match its competitor's low prices. Companies that engage in severe retaliatory attack indicate their strong commitment to protect their market position (Yannopoulos, 2011). Researchers believe that businesses in industries that record super profits are susceptible to attacks from firms that are willing to enter the lucrative industry.

However, Hill and Jones (2007) believe that high entry barriers may discourage entry even if the industry is lucrative. The incumbent firms may use fortify and defend strategy to lower the attractiveness of the industry. The strategy involves lowering profit expectation and erecting barriers to entry for the new entrants. According to Yannopoulos (2007) aerospace, automobile and ship-building industries are the most difficult industries to enter due to high barrier to entry. These industries are characterized by massive capital requirement, restricted access to raw materials, proprietary technology, switching costs, and patent among others (Porter, 2008). Covering all bases or product proliferation is another pre-entry strategy that incumbent firms employ to deter attacks. Firms perfect this strategy by introducing a range of products serving a specific product line. The products are of different model, brand or type, thus saturating the market and blocking access to new entrants. The strategy is also synonymous with chain stores that try to expand rapidly and wade off competition. Continuous improvement strategy entails firms' continuous endeavor to improve its product quality, price innovation and enhancement of its distribution network. Through these strategies, a firm is able to retain its market position and market share. One conspicuous characteristic of continuous improvement strategy is launching of improved products which renders existing product obsolete (Yannopoulos, 2011).

**2.7 Post Entry Defensive Strategies**

Firms in any industry need to guard their market share from incumbents and new entrants who are yet to be established in the industry. Firms, therefore, employ post-entry strategies such as introducing fighting brands and cross-parry strategies. According to Yannopoulos (2011) when a firms core brand is under attack by competitors, the firm should launch a lesser priced brand that is similar to the brand been attacked, through this the company safeguards margins and reputation of the core brand. Engagement in cross-parry strategy is enforceable by firms that compete in multi-markets. The strategy entails reacting to a competitors attack in another area far from the point of attack. This could be in a different market segment, different brand or different geographic.

**2.8 Offensive Strategies**

Firms employ offensive marketing strategies to gain their competitor's market share (Keegan, Davidson and Brill, 2003). The strategy may involve direct or indirect attack depending on the resources of the competitor. Offensive strategies may take the form of frontal attack, flanking attack, guerrilla attack or predatory strategy. According to Yannopoulos (2011) frontal attack entails taking the competitor head on. This can be through offering the competitors clients' similar products and at similar or reduced price. Frontal attacks are effective when the attacker attacks the rivals' weakest point. Flanking attack strategy is similar to frontal attack though it concentrates on areas which the attacked firm is unable or unwilling to defend (Yannopoulos, 2011). A firm may notice that its competitor does not fully satisfy its certain segment due to the segment's low return on investment, a firm can attack its competitor by offering superior products to this segment. Guerrilla attack strategy is synonymous in industries with a dominant market leader (Yannopoulos, 2011). The competitors who are small and resource disadvantaged engage in activities meant to demoralize and weaken the dominant player. The guerilla attack strategies are executed in limited geographical space and in short duration to surprise the market leader. The last offensive strategy is predatory strategy that involves cutting prices below costs. The predatory pricing strategy is done under the premise that the competitor will incur huge losses and subsequently exit the market (Yannopoulos, 2011). The strategy is effective if the competitors are financially weak and cannot absorb sustained losses.

# 3. Chapter 3. Methodology

## 3.1 Introduction

Research methodology involves the activities of research that will be carried out, the procedure to be followed, how the progress of the research would be measured and what would constitute the result of the research. Methodology is also the theoretical analysis of the methods appropriate to a particular field of study or to the body of methods and principles particular to a branch of knowledge, Saunders, Lewis and Thorn (2003). This chapter will present the methods that will be used in the process of data collection in this case, research methodology is considered as a systematic process that will be used to establish the marketing strategies that Baskin Robbins employ to overcome competition.

## 3.2 Research Design

Research design is a roadmap defining the methods and procedures the researcher intends to use in guiding and focusing his research. There are two different research designs which can be used by researchers in research studies, they include; quantitative design and qualitative design. This study will use qualitative design to analyze data that will be obtained from similar literature on marketing strategies by franchisee businesses. The analysis stage will identify themes and patterns which are congruent with the research questions of the study.

## 3.3 Research Strategy

This research will utilize case studies from other scholars and literatures. A case study enables the researcher to study the particular subject under investigation in depth. To this end, the case study will be an appropriate strategy to be used in establishing the marketing strategies used by equally successful franchise businesses in overcoming competition in their global marketplace.

The main data collection methods employed in case studies include questionnaires, interviews, observations and documentary analysis

### 3.3.1 Population.

The case study will focus on fast food franchise business models that are similar to Baskin-Robbins. Though there are many ice-cream store franchise businesses that are more comparable to Baskin-Robbins, they are not global success stories that can compared to Baskin Robbins Ice Cream Store. The franchise businesses to be included in the population should be recognized brands from the developed market in the United States of America to the emerging markets of the Asian Tigers. Additionally these fast food chains should be market dominants in their area of operations just like Baskin-Robbins ice cream stores.

### 3.3.2 Sampling technique.

The research has a wide range of literature, documentation, interviews and case studies. However, the research will use two case studies to draw conclusion on the marketing strategies used by equally successful franchise businesses as Baskin Robbins. The research will also use two studies to critique the success of Baskin Robbins marketing strategy as compared to other franchise ice cream businesses. The 4 review materials that will be used in the analysis will be identified non randomly, through convenient sampling.

## 3.4 Data Collection

### 3.4.1 Collection method

Data will be collected by the use of secondary method of data collection from the stated literatures. The data from the literal works to be used was obtained from websites, interviews, case studies, seminars and publications.

### 3.4.2 Instrumentation

Secondary data will be collected from books, articles; including web articles on Baskin Robbins, McDonald, Pizza Hut and journals containing relevant information for this research.

### 3.4.3 Ethical considerations

Ethics are closely related to law as well as rules and regulations and don't oppose research, (European Union 2007). The information obtained form all the materials herein will be used only for this study and any confidential information will not be divulged to a third party. Analysis will be carried out in a professional and unbiased manner.

### 3.4.4 Limitations

The validity of the results, findings and conclusions are subjective since they suffer fro the drawbacks of use secondary materials. Biasness that was captured in the literature that will be used will be passed on to our study. This would have been minimized if we use primary data.

### 3.4.5 De-limitations

The use of secondary data is easy, fast and convenient as compared to the use of primary data. It is also easy to reach conclusion as it doesn't involve complicated statistical analysis.

## 3.5 Data Analysis

Data will be analyzed by thematic analysis. The researcher will match themes and patterns present in the case studies and literature been used with the research questions.

## 3.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter presents the methodological aspects selected in conducting the research. It presents the basis of justification of the method opted for this study. The research design, strategy, data collection method and analysis that will be utilized in this study have been examined and discussed.

### 3.7 Structure of the Final Report

**Chapter I: Introduction**

Will include; the introduction to the topic of study, the study background, problem statement, research questions, research aim and objectives as well as the study rationale.

**Chapter II: Literature Review**

A review scholarly literature on the marketing strategies employed by businesses to overcome competition, sub-topics will include corporate strategies, competitive forces, pre-entry defensive strategies, post-entry defensive strategies, offensive strategies and franchisee marketing strategies.

**Chapter III: Methodology**

Presentation of the methods to be used in the process of data collection; this will be detailed under the following sub-topics: Research design, research strategy, data collection which will entail (data collection methods, ethical considerations, as well as limitations and delimitations) and data analysis.

**Chapter IV: Findings**

Presentation of research findings

**Chapter V: Analysis**

A qualitative analysis of the data collected will be employed and will involve thematic analysis and patterns present in the analyzed literal works.

**Chapter VI: Conclusion and recommendations**

The conclusion will present a summary of the research learning outcomes and the recommendations will present commendations based on the research findings.

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