

The Effects Of Anglophone Crisis On The Sales Of Brasseries Companies In Cameroon

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Abstract : This study sets out to investigate the effects of economic crisis on the sales of Brasseries companies in the English speaking regions of Cameroon. The main objective was to examine the effects of the economic crisis in Cameroon on the sales of Brasseries companies in the English speaking regions. A sample 50 questionnaires were distributed to the comprising of management and staff of the institution. For data analysis, Descriptive and inferential statistics were used. For the inferential statistics, a One-Sample T test was conducted using the SPSS and tested at 0.05 level of significance, a T-value of 5.85 revealed that Economic Crisis has a significant effect on the sales of Brasseries companies in the English speaking regions. The researcher therefore recommended that Les Brasseries companies should have a decentralized sales draws during this period of crises which can be under the regional sales effort in order to increase the chances of attracting more personnel/consumers due to increased probability of winning in the market

Key; Economic crisis, sales of company, les Brasseries du Cameroun.

I. Introduction

The pattern of the evolution of macroeconomic variables in a country can be considered as a major determinant of the trend of stability and growth. Base on the findings of Country Assistance Evaluation, CAE (2001) Cameroon since independence has experienced a lot of macroeconomic changes. These macroeconomic changes also affect the economy at the micro level.

From independent in 1960, Cameroon witnessed more than two decades of growth without any major socio political crises. The country experienced positive results arising from the continued development of industrial production and agricultural exports and it even became better in the second half of the 1970s, with the exploitation of oil resources. This is evident by the fact that between the period 1965 and 1977, Cameroon witnessed an average economic growth rate of 4 % with a developing banking sector (Ibrahim and Kamdem, 2014).

The period of economic recovery and globalization which began in Cameroon in 1995 can be considered the most glorious period in the country's economic history. This period has two major issues; the issue of economic recovery and reforms and the issue of globalization. After the Economic Crisis, there was a significant improvement in macroeconomics policies in 1996. Therefore, according to CAS (1996), there was an implementation of policies by a reform minded government. The three main objectives of the 1996 CAS were to; consolidate the benefits of the devaluation, alleviate poverty and create a climate favourable for private sector development. Substantial progress was achieved toward the first and third objectives, but not the second. Assistance by the World Bank in close collaboration with the IMF was very effective in improving the macroeconomic situation, reforming the banking sector and promoting privatization. Under the dual influence of the devaluation of the CFA franc and the positive results obtained from previous reforms, Cameroon once more enjoys economic growth. The 1994/1995 financial year ended with a 3.3 percent real economic growth rate which by the end of 1997/1998 had climbed to slightly over 5 percent. This renewed growth was reflected notably in the improved living conditions of the people through a slight increase in incomes and consumption

within a context where inflation was brought increasingly under control. The parities impact of this Economic revival on public finances enabled the Government to embark on measures geared towards improving the living conditions of low income earners particularly the most under privileged segments of the population. The declining trends have been reversed both by the internal adjustment measures -fiscal reforms and external competitiveness deregulation and liberalization of the economy, following the adoption and implementation of the economic recovery programme. The overall objective of the economic reform was to restructure the country's production and consumption patterns with a view to diversifying the sources of foreign exchange earnings and eliminate price distortion to enhance competitiveness. The specific objectives of the programme were to restructure and diversify the productive base of the economy in order to reduce the dependence on the oil sector and imports; achieve viability in the balance of payments; and achieve fiscal balance by enhancing the government's revenue base and reducing unproductive public sector investments and improve the efficiency of the private sector. This led to the signing of three stand-by arrangements with the IMF in September 1988, November 1991 and March 1994. These was later revisited and combined with other arrangements such as the rescheduling of debt repayment and the classification of Cameroon into the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC). Overall, real GDP turned around from an average decline of 4.1% during 1986-95 to an average growth of 5.2% during the 1996-2000. The acceleration of economic growth in Cameroon since 1996 reflects the strong bounce back in economic activity following the demise of the macroeconomic policies that restricted growth in the first half of the decade (Molua, 2010).

Brasseries companies was one of the first business organizations to feel the effects of the economic crisis in the 1980s and the effects of the crises showed in the company's declining revenues and decreasing demand in its products and services. Cameroon faced with a sociopolitical crisis in its two English speaking region can again affects the sales of Brasseries companies. This is because within a healthy economy, sales forecast is perceived as a 'wellrunning machine'; while during unstable periods it is sometimes viewed as a low priority since there is a lot of uncertainty (Mainzer, 2009).

However, most organizations with the aim of attaining higher productivity end up not meeting up their goals because of macroeconomic problems. One of such problems is socio political crises which usually affects the economy negatively. A socio political crisis comes along with so much uncertainty in an economy and usually makes it difficult for a company attain maximum sales. As such, socio political crises results to economic crises. Brasseries companies is not left out of the problem. It is upon this backdrop that this research work seeks to examine the effects of economic crises on a company's sales.

1.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The broad objective of this study is to examine the effects of the economic crisis in Cameroon on the sales of Brasseries companies in Cameroon. However, the specific objectives of the study are to:

- To examine the effects of the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon on the sales of Brasseries companies in the English speaking regions of the Cameroon ;
- To examine the role of risk reduction on the sales of Brasseries companies ;
- To outline the possible crisis response strategies on the sale of Brasseries companies.

1.2 Research Questions

The main research question is; what are the effects of economic crisis on the sales of Brasseries companies in the English speaking regions of Cameroon?

The problem as stated brings to mind the following specific research questions:

- What are the effects of the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon on the sales of Brasseries companies in the English speaking regions of the Cameroon?
- What is the role of risk reduction on the sales of Brasseries companies?
- What are the possible crisis response strategies that can affect sales of Brasseries companies?

1.3 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

These are statements that would be tested to determine the significance of the relationships between the variables being tested.

H0: There exist no significant effects of economic crises on the sales of Les Brasseries du Cameroon in the Anglophone regions of the Cameroon.

H1: There exists a significant effect of economic crises on the sales of Les Brasseries du Cameroon in the Anglophone regions of the Cameroon

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The word crisis means different thing to different people in different professions. The term crisis has also been defined and conceptualized by different scholars and authorities in the field of management. Pas (2011) defined crisis as an inherently abnormal, unstable and complex situation that represents a threat to the strategic objectives, reputation or existence of an organization. Fink (2002) sees crisis as an abnormal situation, or even perception, which is beyond the scope of everyday business and which threatens the operation, safety, and reputation of an organization. Crisis is also conceptualize as an unstable time or state of affairs in which a decisive change is impending (Seeger & Ulmer, 2003). Crisis is also defined as a specific, unexpected, and non-routine event or series of events that create high levels of uncertainty and threaten or are perceived to threaten an organization's high priority goals (Boins & Sundelius, 2005). MacFarlane (2010), Crisis is also conceptualize as a serious threat to the basic structures or the fundamental values and norms of a system, which under time pressure and highly uncertain circumstances necessitates making vital decisions. A change, which may be sudden or which may take some time to evolve, that results in an urgent problem that must be addressed immediately. An event that threatens the strategic objectives, reputation or existence of an organization (Pearson & Sommer, 2011) Crises are events or trends that threaten the viability of the organizations within which they occur. (Coombs, 2011), see crisis as the perception of an unpredictable event that threatens important expectancies of stakeholders and can seriously impact an organization's performance and generate negative outcomes.

According Bonciu (2010) there are many recent papers that have studied firms' performance during the 2008–09 crisis and how various factors propagated the shocks.

For example, Claessens, et al. (2011) examined the performance of manufacturing firms in 42 countries and found that the crisis had a bigger negative impact on firms with greater sensitivity to aggregate demand and international trade. Laeven and Valencia (2011), using cross-country data found that the growth of firms more dependent on external financing was more positively affected by bank recapitalization and stimulus fiscal policies. Bricongne et al. (2012) using a sample of French firms showed that the effect of crisis on large firms has been mainly at the intensive margin and has affected less the products being offered to export destinations.

Latham (2009) revealed that small businesses are the first victims of a prolonged economic crisis. Also, SMEs are those who are disproportionately affected compared with the larger enterprises, due to limited financial resources and the main dependence on bank lending, forcing them to pay higher interest rates than large firms, which the burden even more effective in times of crisis. Storey (1994) has discussed the general differences between large and small firms in terms of centrality of owner-manager, the structure, resources and number, and variety of products and range of markets served. In smaller firms, owner-managers are less able to influence competitive environment than larger firms. Jennings and Beaver (1997) have shown that the smaller firms' organization structures are likely to be organic and loosely structured rather than mechanistic and highly formalized. In smaller firms, all the roles will either be performed by one manager or by a very narrow range of managers who may have been appointed because they are family members or friends rather than on the basis of ability or education.

Thus, it is worth investigating whether better corporate governance impacts the performance of family and non-family businesses during the crisis. Aldamen et al. (2011) claimed that better governance, irrespective of whether the firm is family or non-family, is associated with better accounting and market performance during the crisis, while Chaston (2012) claimed that familyowned hotels outperformed nonfamily businesses mainly due to their entrepreneurial orientation and strategic flexibility. Another, worth investigating point is the resilience of the agricultural cooperatives in economic crisis periods. It is believed, that cooperatives play an important role in discovering successful markets for agricultural products (see for example Gavruchenko et al., 2003 for organic olive oil). Moreover, according to Bardsley and Bardsley (2014) agricultural cooperatives

could help to retain flexibility, and enhance resilience, in a rapidly changing agricultural marketplace. Nevertheless, performance seems to be strongly dependent on firms' strategy choices even for SMEs (Jones and Tiley, 2003; Anghel et al., 2013) and agricultural cooperatives (Baourakis et al., 2003, Salavou and Sergaki, 2013). A recent research of Pavlatos and Kostakis (2015) in Greece showed that during the crisis, strategic and planning tools as well as Strategic management accounting techniques were considered more important and thus were used more extensively by companies as compared to the period before the crisis.

Kontogeorgos et al. (2014) have shown that the major problems faced by the Greek dairy and cheese companies are the liquidity problems along with tax and social security payments in combination with the services provided to them by these public organizations. Most probably, the amount of the payments to these organizations makes the managers-owners of the companies to demand higher quality services. Some other important finding of the aforementioned study is that the efforts made by the examined companies to reduce production and labour cost had not a direct impact on their profitability.

From the above, this present study examines the role of economic crisis on the sales of Brasseries companies in Cameroon and critically examining the above reviewed literature, it can be seen that most researchers in different economies have written on aspects concerning economic crises and trends affecting the business sales and other business objectives. From the above works, it can be seen that economic crises have a great negative impact on the sales of company's products but looking at this study in a more detailed manner, many studies have not considered specifically the effect of the crisis in a part of a country on the sales of a company's products and also providing possible measures that can improve the sales of a company's products during a period of crisis which have not been explored by other researchers.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Cameroun precisely in the English speaking region, using descriptive statistics and a one sample T-test analysis to ascertain the effect of Anglophone crisis on the sales of Brasseries companies. The target population are managers of the different sales points located in Buea and Bamenda. Buea and Bamenda were chosen because greater percentage of the sales points are located there. A sample size of 50 managers of the sales points formed the respondents for the study, out of 57 managers that formed the population of brasseries companies in the English speaking region. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents since it is less costly and normally leads to the required population sample. Questionnaires were used to collect data which were validated. These are self-administered questions that were both structured and semi structured formalized questions used in the survey to collect information which is later analysed to provide results necessary for solving a given research problem. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze data.

IV. Data Presentation

From the 50 (100%) respondents that participated, 50 (100%) questionnaires were distributed to the various managers from different sales points in the two English speaking regions of the country and 44 questionnaires were returned, having a return rate of 88.00% as shown in the table below:

Table 1: Distribution of the Return Rate of Questionnaires.

Questionnaires	Freq	%
Received	44	88.00%
Missing	6	12.00%
Total	50	100.00%

Source: field work generated by EXCEL 2020.

Description of some demographic information

Table 2: The Distribution of Workers according to Respondent's Gender.

Gender	Male	Female	Totals
Freq	30	14	44
%	68.18%	31.82%	100.00%

Source: field work generated by EXCEL 2020.

Looking at the table above, it is shown that majority of our respondents out of the 44 respondents constituted the male gender with a lion's percentage of 68.18% over the female gender with a percentage of 31.82%. This ratio explains the fact that the position of the post (manager) and the risk of the region show that employs are mostly the male gender.

Table 3: The Distribution of Respondents according to their Longevity in Service.

Longevity in service	0-5yrs	6-10yrs	11-15yrs	16-20yrs	20yrs+	Totals
Freq	11	14	10	7	2	44
%	25.00%	31.82%	22.73%	15.91%	4.55%	100.00%

Source: field work generated by EXCEL 2020.

Based on the table above, we can observe that majority of the respondents constitute the workers who have worked between 6-10yrs with a greater percentage of 31.82%, followed by those respondents at that have worked below 5yrs of service, with a percentage of 25.00%. The least number of respondents is the category with a working age of above 20yrs, having a percentage of 4.55%. We can say generally from this bar graph that majority of respondents in these selected organisation are qualified professionals. They then can provide some information that has a certain degree of reliability.

4.1 Data Analysis and Testing Of Hypotheses

Testing of hypotheses using a T-test assuming two unequal variances and testing at a 95% confidence interval

4.1.1. Effect of economic crises on Sales of les Brasseries du Cameroon

Table 4: One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Effect Crises	44	17.80	1.812	.273

Source: field work generated 2020.

From the SPSS results as seen on the table above, we can discover that assuming one sample statistic, a total population of 44 under study gave a mean of 17.80 and standard deviation of 1.812 showing the negative effects on sales of Brasseries companies in the English speaking region.

4.1.2. Effect of risk reduction strategies on Sales

Table 5: One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Effect Prostrate	44	10.16	1.952	.294

Source: field work generated by EXCEL 2020.

From the table above, we can discover that in order to answer the question of how risk reduction strategies can help increase the sales of Brasseries companies, out of a total of 44 respondents, a T-test assuming two unequal variances gave a mean of 10.16 and standard deviation of 1.952 and a standard mean error of 0.294. This relationship show a high mean and a positive standard deviation meaning that risk reduction strategies can as well have a positive effect on the sales of Brasseries companies in the English speaking regions.

From The presentations and analysis above, a T-Significance of 5.85 and 0.75 for the effects of crises on the sales and the risk reduction strategies respectively indicates that, at 95% confidence interval, there are significant effects of economic crisis on the sales of Brasseries companies in the English speaking regions. We

therefore should reject the Null hypothesis H_0 , which states that: there is no significant effect of economic crisis on the sales of Brasseries companies in the English speaking regions and accept the working hypothesis H_1 which explains that: there is are significant effects of economic crisis on the sales of Brasseries companies in the English speaking regions. And we conclude that economic crisis in Cameroon have a significant effect on the sales of brasseries companies in the North West and South West Regions.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Crisis has become a defining feature of contemporary governance. In times of crisis, communities and members of organizations expect their public leaders to minimize the impact of the crisis at hand, while critics and bureaucratic competitors try to seize the moment to blame incumbent rulers and their policies. In extreme environment, policy makers must somehow establish a sense of normality, and foster collective learning from the crisis experience. In the face of crisis, leaders must deal with the strategic challenges they face, the political risks and opportunities they encounter, the errors they make, the pitfalls they need to avoid, and the paths away from crisis they may pursue.

This work will help open a pathway that will point clearly the present situation at which the company is operating, highlighting the various possible measures that may be put in place to reduce the risk of gaining negative business results.

In view of the findings, the following recommendations are necessary:

We can see that Anglophone crisis is a very big blow to the sales of Brasseries companies in the two English speaking regions of the country. It is therefore recommended to the sponsors and administration of the company to recruit highly skilled sales force, Make inroads on their competitors' customers, Find new applications and/or new markets for the products and services you represent, Find new ways to help existing customers and potential customers.

This study recommends that Brasseries companies should embrace the importance of sales promotion in their business in order to survive in the dynamic business environment and to always widen their profit margin.

Brasseries companies should have a decentralized sales promotion draws during this period of crises which can be under the regional sales promotion so as to increase the chances of attracting more personnel/consumers to increase probability of winning in a contests or sweepstake.

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