

Research on the Microelements of the Marketing Environment of Enterprises from Different Industries

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Abstract—Enterprises operate within an environment that directly influences their activities. Different industries react specifically to individual elements of this environment. The main purpose of the research is to demonstrate the company's reactions to the stimuli from the environment, which has a direct impact on the activity. The subject of the research are the microelements of the marketing environment, and the object are companies from different industries in Veliko Tarnovo region.

Keywords—environment, microelements, marketing

I. INTRODUCTION

Business organizations operate under the conditions of constant influences from elements of the environment, and “company managers must consider the influence of this environment on the company's activity and take it into account when making management decisions in press” [1].

The theory highlights several elements of the environment that have a direct impact on the activities of enterprises, such as “the individual factors of this immediate environment are customers, suppliers, marketing intermediaries, contact audiences and competing firms” [2].

A similar opinion is expressed by R. Ileva, adding that “the main elements of the marketing microenvironment directly affect the state of the company's activities and contain within themselves or become conductors of the influence of the factors of the macroenvironment as well” [3].

The main dimensions of sustainable development are three interrelated elements: “economic, social, environmental. Sustainable development should not be viewed as a stagnant process, a constant of production and

consumption. On the contrary, it is dynamic, with progressive innovations - in economic, environmental and social terms, finding a wide field of application” [4].

The topic of sustainable development “with the complex of environmental, social, and economic problems is increasingly entering every sphere of public life” [5].

In general, it can be said that “in many areas of public life, research is needed into the needs of certain social groups”, as well as in various industries [6].

A. Velikova points out that “every person can make independent decisions without realizing the importance of the skills possessed for this” [7].

Thanks to their intelligence, “people have the opportunity to objectively perceive the surrounding environment and respond adequately to its factors” [8].

For N. Uzunov, “intellect is to a large extent a natural given, the ability to deeply understand tasks, problems, situations” [9].

We are now witnessing the advent of artificial intelligence, which allows for the “phased closure of activities, industries, businesses and human lives” [10].

In the article we will examine the influence of five microelements of the marketing environment: customers, suppliers, competitors, marketing intermediaries and contact audiences.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

For the purposes of the study, data from two business surveys conducted by the author were used. The first was conducted in the period February - May 2018 and surveyed 92 business managers from the Veliko Tarnovo region,

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Bulgaria. The second survey was conducted in the period April - June 2024, in which 70 managers from the Veliko Tarnovo region were surveyed. Both surveys asked the same questions related to the company's environment, thus allowing for a temporal comparison of the results.

In both studies, companies from the Veliko Tarnovo region are divided into separate industries. The study examines representatives of the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy, such as companies from the fields of agriculture, light industry and services. This allows to highlight not only the temporal fluctuations in the opinions of company managers, but also to reveal the specifics that are characteristic of the individual sectors of the economy.

The main research method in the article is comparative analysis.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first and, according to many authors, the main element of the microenvironment for the company are the customers.

In this connection customer relationship management “aims to create a solid base of current and potential customers over a long period of time” [11].

The influence of customers on the activities of agricultural enterprises is presented in Table I.

TABLE I. INFLUENCE OF CUSTOMERS ON ACTIVITY OF AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES

№	Influence for agricultural enterprises		
	Influence	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	0.0	25.0
2	Low Influence	0.0	0.0
3	Medium Influence	0.0	25.0
4	Strong Influence	100.0	50.0

In 2018, managers in this industry only reported the strong influence that customers have on their business. Subsequently, the opinion changed, with most respondents still reporting a strong influence on the business from customers. Opinions also emerged about a moderate influence, and a small part of managers are not aware of the basic influence of customers on the company's business.

The influence of the “customers” factor on light industry can be seen in Table II.

TABLE II. INFLUENCE OF CUSTOMERS ON ACTIVITY OF LIGHT INDUSTRY COMPANIES

№	Influence for light industry companies		
	Influence	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	0.0	33.3
2	Low Influence	6.7	0.0

№	Influence for light industry companies		
	Influence	2018	2024
3	Medium Influence	26.7	0.0
4	Strong Influence	66.7	66.7

In both studies, two-thirds of managers in light industry companies report a strong influence of customers on their activities. On the other hand, managers stop seeing a weak or moderate influence over time, but one-third of them start to think that customers do not influence the company's activities. Many authors can argue with this statement.

Table III demonstrates the influence of customers on the service sector.

TABLE III. INFLUENCE OF CUSTOMERS ON ACTIVITY OF ENTERPRISES FROM THE SERVICE SECTOR

№	Influence for service sector		
	Influence	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	6.3	0.0
2	Low Influence	0.0	0.0
3	Medium Influence	12.5	7.7
4	Strong Influence	81.2	92.3

The service sector is a sector that has seen consistency over time. To a great extent, managers in this sector understand the strong influence that customers have on their business.

Suppliers are another major element of the enterprise's microenvironment.

Table IV shows the influence of suppliers on the activities of agricultural companies.

TABLE IV. INFLUENCE OF SUPPLIERS ON ACTIVITY OF AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES

№	Influence for agricultural enterprises		
	Influence	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	33.3	0.0
2	Low Influence	0.0	0.0
3	Medium Influence	0.0	100.0
4	Strong Influence	66.7	0.0

It is notable that all managers in the agricultural sector are beginning to consider the influence of suppliers on their activities. However, over time, managers are fully beginning to accept that this influence is moderate, while in 2018 most reported a strong influence. It is possible that the COVID-19 crisis has led to certain business decisions that reduce the business's dependence on suppliers to some extent, without completely eliminating it, such as

maintaining more stocks of necessary raw materials and supplies, including more protective clauses in contracts with suppliers, and others.

How suppliers, as a microelement of the environment, influence the activities of light industry companies is presented in Table V.

TABLE V. INFLUENCE OF SUPPLIERS ON ACTIVITY OF LIGHT INDUSTRY COMPANIES

№	Influence for light industry companies		
	Influence	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	6.7	0.0
2	Low Influence	13.3	11.1
3	Medium Influence	40.0	0.0
4	Strong Influence	40.0	88.9

In the light industry, there is an increase in the impact of suppliers on operations. To a very large extent, managers in the industry report a strong impact from suppliers.

The following table (Table VI) demonstrates the influence of suppliers on the activities of service companies.

TABLE VI. INFLUENCE OF SUPPLIERS ON ACTIVITY OF ENTERPRISES FROM THE SERVICE SECTOR

№	Influence for service sector		
	Influence	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	25.0	7.7
2	Low Influence	0.0	7.7
3	Medium Influence	31.2	38.5
4	Strong Influence	37.5	46.2

In the services sector, no serious changes have been observed over time. There is a slight increase in the number of managers who believe that suppliers have a moderate and strong impact on the activities of the enterprise, and it is positive that there is a decrease in the number of managers who think that suppliers have no impact on the activities of their enterprises.

Competitors are considered by most authors as an element of the microenvironment of firms.

Table VII presents the influence of competitors on the overall activities of agricultural companies.

TABLE VII. INFLUENCE OF COMPETITORS ON ACTIVITY OF AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES

№	Influence for agricultural enterprises		
	Influence	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	0.0	50.0
2	Low Influence	0.0	25.0
3	Medium Influence	33.3	0.0
4	Strong Influence	66.7	25.0

There is a significant increase in the number of managers in the agricultural sector who do not think that competitors have an impact on the activities of their enterprises. Opinions about a weak impact of competitors are emerging, at the expense of the moderate and strong impact that were reported in the first study.

How competitors influence light industry companies is presented in the following table (Table VIII).

TABLE VIII. INFLUENCE OF COMPETITORS ON ACTIVITY OF LIGHT INDUSTRY COMPANIES

№	Influence for light industry companies		
	Influence	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	13.3	11.1
2	Low Influence	33.3	0.0
3	Medium Influence	26.7	0.0
4	Strong Influence	26.7	88.9

Managers of light industry enterprises think in the opposite direction to managers from the agricultural sector. They are increasingly aware of the strong influence that competitors have on the company's activities.

The influence of competitors on the activities of the service sector is demonstrated below (Table IX).

TABLE IX. INFLUENCE OF COMPETITORS ON ACTIVITY OF ENTERPRISES FROM THE SERVICE SECTOR

№	Influence for service sector		
	Influence	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	6.3	7.7
2	Low Influence	6.3	23.1
3	Medium Influence	31.2	30.8
4	Strong Influence	37.5	38.5

In the services sector, there is stability over time in the opinion about the impact of competitors on company

activities. However, the majority of managers in the sector report a moderate or strong impact of this microfactor.

The extent to which marketing intermediaries influence the activities of enterprises in various industries as microelements of the surrounding environment will be discussed in the following lines.

The influence of marketing intermediaries on company activities in the agricultural sector is presented in Table X.

TABLE X. INFLUENCE OF MARKETING INTERMEDIARIES ON ACTIVITY OF AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES

№	Influence for agricultural enterprises		
	<i>Influence</i>	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	0.0	50.0
2	Low Influence	33.3	25.0
3	Medium Influence	66.7	25.0
4	Strong Influence	0.0	0.0

Managers of agricultural enterprises have never perceived marketing intermediaries as a factor with a strong impact on the company's activities. However, over time, those who think that the impact is moderate are also decreasing. In 2024, half of the managers in this sector believe that marketing intermediaries do not affect the company's activities.

Table XI presents the opinions of light industry managers regarding the influence of marketing intermediaries on the activities of their enterprises.

TABLE XI. INFLUENCE OF MARKETING INTERMEDIARIES ON ACTIVITY OF LIGHT INDUSTRY COMPANIES

№	Influence for light industry companies		
	<i>Influence</i>	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	33.3	11.1
2	Low Influence	26.7	44.4
3	Medium Influence	33.0	33.3
4	Strong Influence	6.7	11.1

No serious changes are observed in the light industry, but the position of weak influence on the part of marketing intermediaries as a microfactor is strengthening.

How marketing intermediaries influence a company's activities in the service sector is presented in Table XII.

TABLE XII. INFLUENCE OF MARKETING INTERMEDIARIES ON ACTIVITY OF ENTERPRISES FROM THE SERVICE SECTOR

№	Influence for service sector		
	<i>Influence</i>	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	50.0	30.8

№	Influence for service sector		
	<i>Influence</i>	2018	2024
2	Low Influence	18.7	7.7
3	Medium Influence	18.7	30.8
4	Strong Influence	6.3	30.8

Only in the services sector is there a more serious increase in managers who report moderate and strong influence on the company's activities from marketing intermediaries.

Contact audiences, as a full-fledged microelement of the environment for organizations, directly impact their activities.

Table XIII demonstrates the influence, according to managers, of contact audiences on the activities of companies in the agricultural sector.

TABLE XIII. INFLUENCE OF CONTACT AUDIENCES ON ACTIVITY OF AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES

№	Influence for agricultural enterprises		
	<i>Influence</i>	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	33.3	25.0
2	Low Influence	33.3	0.0
3	Medium Influence	0.0	75.0
4	Strong Influence	33.3	0.0

Regarding contact audiences in the agricultural sector, there is a significant shift towards the opinion of a moderate impact on company activities.

How contact audiences influence the activities of light industry companies is presented below . (Table XIV).

TABLE XIV. INFLUENCE OF CONTACT AUDIENCES ON ACTIVITY OF LIGHT INDUSTRY COMPANIES

№	Influence for light industry companies		
	<i>Influence</i>	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	53.3	22.2
2	Low Influence	20.0	44.4
3	Medium Influence	26.7	33.3
4	Strong Influence	0.0	0.0

In the light industry sector, contact audiences are not traditionally viewed as having a strong impact. There is a shift towards a weak impact, as in the first period of the study, half of the managers in the sector did not report an impact of this microfactor on the activities of the enterprises.

The influence of contact audiences on the activities of service companies is presented in Table XV.

TABLE XV. INFLUENCE OF CONTACT AUDIENCES ON ACTIVITY OF ENTERPRISES FROM THE SERVICE SECTOR

№	Influence for service sector		
	Influence	2018	2024
1	Without Influence	56.3	53.8
2	Low Influence	25.0	7.7
3	Medium Influence	12.5	15.4
4	Strong Influence	6.3	23.1

In service companies, most managers do not report the influence of contact audiences on the business.

The environment is dynamic and company managers must take this into account. With the development of digitalization in most business activities and the use of CRM systems, social networks, the strengthening of e-commerce and the introduction of artificial intelligence, the perception of the microenvironment by company managers is changing.

These innovations have an impact on the structure of the microenvironment and its individual elements. The changed conditions can provide advantages, but can also create obstacles to company activities. This depends on the reaction of their managers.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The results presented in the article show interesting trends. First of all, it should be noted that, consistently, customers have the greatest influence on a company's activities, with their influence being most pronounced in service companies.

Competing companies also have a serious impact, especially in the light industry sector.

There are interesting fluctuations among suppliers, but overall they are also among the microfactors with a significant impact on business.

The least considered is the influence of marketing intermediaries and contact audiences, which in most cases either have a slight impact or their impact on business activity is not taken into account.

In future research, it will be interesting to examine how the use of artificial intelligence, big data, and cloud technologies changes the way that companies interact with their customers and suppliers.

It is also appropriate in future research and analysis to compare the data obtained for the Veliko Tarnovo region with other regional data or data at the national or European level.

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