PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF MARKETING CONSULTANCY SERVICES IN NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY CONSULTANCY SERVICES, ZARIA

BY

RONKE SUIBAT ONIYANGI

A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA).

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION,
FACULTY OF ADMINISTRATION,
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY,
ZABIA.

NOVEMBER, 1988

DECLARATION

I declare that the work done in this MBA Project is wholly our efforts. No project of this nature has been presented in any form, anywhere for any other degree prior to our research. All materials used from other sources have been duly acknowledged.

SIGN _____

RONKE SUIBAT ONIYANGI

November, 1988.

CERTIFICATION

This project entitled, "Problems and Prospects of Marketing Consultancy Services in Nigeria: A Case Study of Ahmadu Bello University Consultancy Services, Zaria, by Ronke Suibat Oniyangi meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Master in Business Administration (MBA) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and is approved for its contributions to knowledge and literary presentation.

_____ Date: _____

Supervisor

_____ Date: _____

M.B.A. Coordinator

_____ Date: 8/2/89

Head of Department

_____ Date: 7-8-89

Dean, Postgraduate School,
A.B.U.

DEDICATION

THIS PROJECT IS DEDICATED TO MY LOVING PARENTS, DR. & MRS. A.S. ONIYANGI AND MY YOUNGER ONES, BOLA, YINKA, BANJI, TUNDUN AND JUMOKE FOR THEIR ENDLESS LOVE AND AFFECTION.

ABSTRACT

This research study intends looking into the various problems and prospects of marketing faced by consultancy service firms in Nigeria using Ahmadu Bello University Consultancy Services (ABUCONS) as a case study. Marketing aspect of consultancy services is the focus because marketing thinking and practice is seen to be gradually moving into the service industries. Another reason is because marketing in professional service firms helps the firms in meeting unprecedented challenges they might face.

In carrying out this study, written texts were consulted in order to have an overview of various authors-view points on marketing of professional service firms. Also, the consultants at ABUCONS were asked various questions in order to identify the specific marketing problems they encounter.

It is interesting to note that most of the problems they identified are very much intune to what the various texts enumerated as problems militating against marketing in consultancy service firms.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I owe a debt of gratitude to numerous people, whose suggestions and encouraging criticisms contributed in no small way to the successful completion of this work.

My sincere thanks goes to my supervisor, Mr. John Ayuba, who despite his enormous responsibilities took much pains to read every bit of this work and offered useful corrections and helpful suggestions.

I will also like to register my profound gratitude to Mr. D. Iornem of Kaduna Polytechnic, for making available to me some relevant texts. And also to Mr. Mike Ikupolati for his academic assistance throughout the duration of the course.

Worthy mention also need be made of the following; Mr. Fatai Belo-Osagie, Miss Evbakoe Aigbekaen and Miss Ann Agbi for the enormous moral support and care they gave me throughout my course of study. Their friendship has been a source of inspiration.

My profound gratitude also goes to two of my female colleagues, Miss Fatima Hassan and Mrs Patience Onyia, in whom friendship has prospered rather than being just colleagues.

My sincere thanks also goes to Prof. and Dr.(Mrs) I.A. Gambari for their continued guidance and valuable advice. May almighty Allah continue to shower on them his abundant blessings.

Another thanks goes to Mr. Anthony Agekamhe who helped greatly in putting the work through despite the short notice given him. I am indeed very grateful.

Finally, as human beings are prone to error, I accept the responsibility of any error in terms of facts and figures that may arise in this project.

RONKE SUIBAT ONIYANGI

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
	Title	i.
	Declaration	ii.
	Certification	iii.
	Dedication	iv.
	Abstract	v.
	Acknowledgement	vi.
	List of Tables	x.
CHAPTER ONE		
1.1	Introduction	1.
1.2	Statement of Problem	4.
1.3	Aim of Study	5.
1.4	Significance of Study	5.
1.5	Propositions	6.
1.6	Methodology	6.
1.7	Definition of Concepts	7.
1.8	Structural Organisation of Work	10.
CHAPTER TWO		
	Review of Literature	11.
CHAPTER THREE: DATA ANALYSIS		
3.1	Background History of ABUCONS.....	22.
3.2	Scope and Operations of Ahmaddu Bello University Consultancy Services (ABUCONS)	23.
3.3	General Problems of Marketing Consultancy Services	29.

Page

3.4 Marketing Problems in ABUCONS 31

3.5 Summary of Analysis 39

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 Conclusion ..... 41.

4.2 Recommendation ..... 43.

Bibliography ..... 45.

Appendix ..... 48.

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
3.1	Are Problems Encountered in obtaining clients?.....	32
3.2	The Promotional Technique in Use by the Organisation	34
3.3	Formula for sharing Net Revenue	38
3.4	Problems Encountered with their Marketing Techniques	39.

CHAPTER ONE

1:1 INTRODUCTION

Consulting, once a limited phenomenon now spans all fields and occupation. Management consulting is an exciting growth industry. Although, its roots go back to the early 1900s when it had a dominant engineering orientation, it was not until the 1960s and 1970s that consulting began to take off as a growth industry.

Today, we find consulting spread across a wide variety of industries and services. Every economic sector both produces consultants and increases its demand for consultants. Another reason for consulting's bright outlook is the rising interest of aspiring consultants. People want to use their hard earned knowledge, in addition, they want to gain the financial and psycholigical rewards of being their own boss. The growth of consulting industry can also be attributed to the fact that consulting is almost immune to economic changes. This is because, either during recessionary or inflationary economic periods, consultants are still being sought for. During periods of strength growth and inflation, organisations have money to spend and consultants are sought for two major reasons. One reason being that they can afford the consultants and the other is that consultants can advise them how to spend their money effectively. However during recessionary periods, organisations turn to consultants

KASHIM IBRAHIM

for advice on how to cut costs, save money and weather the economic storm.

The technological explosion of the twentieth century has also increased demand for expert advice in all sectors of the economy. To meet this need for information, consulting has become one of the fastest growing careers in the country.

To meet the expanding demand for a variety of services, the consulting industry as a whole has spawned many new firms that specialise exclusively in a few disciplines, single industries. It is clearly not a monolithic industry dominated by a few giants, but rather a plethora of large and small firms operating at the national and local levels, all positioned to appeal to a certain kind of clientele. Some of the peculiar features of consulting practice are as follows:

Firstly, consulting is an independent service. This is characterised by the detachment of the consultant which is a major feature of his role. But this independence means at the same time that consultants enter into a very complex relationship with their client organisations.

Consulting is also essentially an advisory service. This means that consultants are not recruited to run organisations or take delicate decisions on behalf of managers. They are advisers and their responsibility is for the quality and integrity of their advice, the clients carry all the responsibilities that accrue from taking it.

Thirdly, consulting is a service providing professional knowledge and skills relevant to practical management problems. An individual becomes a management consultant in the full sense of the term by accumulating considerable knowledge of varying management situations and problems and acquiring skills needed for problem solving.

Fourthly and lastly, consulting is not a service, providing miracle solutions to difficult managerial problems. It will be an error to assume that once a consultant is brought in, life becomes easy for management. Consulting is difficult, systematic and disciplined work based on the analysis of hard facts and the search for imaginative but feasible solutions.

The above features were enumerated to enable us gain an insight into what a consulting practice is like.

However, with its phenomenal growth, consulting is still at an adolescent stage venturing eagerly into the future. Consulting is a complex, elusive industry and occupation. In Nigeria, the local consulting profession is still a young one. There is however, a general trend towards a greater use of consultants. This is in no doubt because consulting can play a useful role in industrialisation, economic and social development generally. It can accelerate the transfer of management expertise and help to design and introduce management systems adjusted to the local setting. It thus helps to enhance the country's managerial competence which is one of the key condition to effective development.

Having gained an insight into the origin and importance of consulting, the main focus of the research study need be mentioned. As earlier on stated, consulting has many facets but this study intends focussing only on the marketing aspect of consulting. Marketing of consultancy services is considered the most important because consulting activities is more or less a consultant-client relationship where often times the clients ask the consultants either to think for them or help them think or help them improve their thinking process. Therefore, without successful marketing that is gaining new clients or ret ining old clients, there is likely to be little business walking in their door.

Consultants have therefore realised that consulting is an intangible service as there is no fanciful package for the client to see, touch or smell, hence various avenues need be advanced for marketing it.

1:2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Overtime, it has been found that consultants unnecessarily dislike marketing. Most importantly, they avoid marketing because they view it as an isolated activity that occurs at the start of an engagement. It is natural to most consultants to assume that effective consulting skills, combined with a few satisfied clients should lead to an endless stream of new clients. Therein lies the marketing failure of most consultants and consulting firms.

It is often very unusual to find consultants bring highly developed marketing skills as well as professional competence to the development of their practice. Often times, they continue to concentrate on developing their skills rather than developing new marketing skills.

Hence a fundamental problem considered by this study is estimating the importance of marketing in consultancy firms, bearing in mind the general negative attitudes of consultants to marketing.

Another problem will be finding out the major problems in marketing consultancy services.

1:3 AIM OF STUDY

This study aims at finding out major marketing problems of consultancy firms in view of its importance to consulting practice.

The study also aims at finding out why consultants often experience difficulty in finding clients.

Thirdly, the study aims at finding appropriate strategies for consultants in Nigeria.

Finally, it aims at finding out the peculiar marketing problems of Ahmadu Bello University Consultancy Services (ABUCONS).

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

This study is considered important in view of the relative importance of marketing in any product or service firm. It is also considered important because

marketing has been found to yield various benefits into a consulting practice. These benefits include helping to focus on business and efforts and also making the consulting firm visible to its clients and also help ABUCONS adopt appropriate marketing strategies that will enable it generate more profit.

It is also hoped that this study will be of use to future researchers who might be interested in this field of study.

1:5 PROPOSITIONS

These are not hypothesis because the research is a case study of a particular organisation. In view of this, the research study intends to focus on how the company perform its functions in the following areas:

(i) What aspect of consulting they deal in.

(ii) How are their clients obtained?

(iii) How are old clients retained (referrals)?

(iv) Manpower supply,

(a) the number required, the number obtained because of cost involved.

(b) training of their existing personnel.

1:6 METHODOLOGY

This research study adopted the use of two methods of data collection namely administered questionnaire and documentary methods. These methods were used to enable the researcher gain insight of situations that might later

on be tested by other techniques and also provide a supplementary data that might help findings by other techniques.

The questionnaire method was chosen for the simple reason that the method will permit maintainance of respondents and high response. In the questionnaire method, some of the questions were in fixed alternatives, the reason being that such questionnaire structure is easy for respondents to answer and it also gives broad coverage of answers to the questions. Other questions were in open-ended form so as to give respondents freedom of expression, reasoning of values and arguement. However, for analysis of the data, no special mathematical tool will be used.

1:7 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Various definitions of the major concepts of this research have been advanced by various authors, individuals and organisations. Some of the definitions will be enumerated and the ones adopted for the purpose of this study are:

A. CONSULTANCY SERVICES

The Institute of Management Consultants in United Kingdom defines consultancy service as "the service provided by an independent and qualified person or persons in identifying and investigating problems concerned with policy, organisation procedures and methods, recommending appropriate action and helping to

implement these recommendations"[1] This definition shows consulting to be a special service to which managers can address themselves if they feel a need for help in problem solving.

The Association of Consulting Management Engineers also defines consultancy services as "the professional service performed by specially trained and experienced persons in helping managers identify and solve managerial and operating problems of various institutions of our society."[2] They are also of the view that consulting services focuses on the managerial operating and economic performance of these institutions.

Another definition is that"it is a professional service that help managers analyse and solve practical problems and transfer successful management practices from one enterprise to another."[3]

Also Greiner and Mertzger define consultancy services "as an advisory service contracted for and provided to organisations by specially trained and qualified persons who assist in an objective and independent manner, the client organisation to identify management problems, analyse such problems, recommend solutions to these problems and help when requested in the implementation of solutions."[4]

---

1. Kubr M: Management Consulting: A Guide to the Profession. Page 7.
2. Advertising Brochure - New York Association of Consulting Management Engineers Inc, page 5.
3. M.S. Kutner - University Education for Management Consulting.
4. Greiner L. & Mertzger R - Consulting to Management page 7.

However, for the purpose of this research, the definition that will be adopted for consultancy service is that "It is a management service performed by trained and experienced persons for the purpose of assisting their clients in improving their methods of doing business."

B. MARKETING

Marketing has been described as the management function which organises and directs all those business activities involved in assessing and converting customer purchasing power into effective demand for specific product or service and in moving the product or service to the final consumer or user so as to achieve the profit target or other objectives set by a company.

The Marketing concept is often based on the belief that every business must first consider the needs of its customers and then gear the resources of the company to satisfy those needs at a planned level.

Since this research focuses on marketing consultancy services it is necessary to point out that marketing activities in consulting differs entirely from its other functions. It is in marketing of consultancy firms that the firms find itself in contact with external entities (competitors and clients) which have independent existence. The firm's survival depends upon how well it manages to adapt to the market conditions influenced by the activities of these external entitites.

However, for the purpose of this research, the marketing definition that will be adopted is marketing "is the total effort directed at convincing your clients

to satisfy their needs and wants through the services of consulting firms.

1:8 STRUCTURAL ORGANISATION OF WORK

The entire research project is structured into four chapters.

Chapter One entails a detailed discussion of the entire project. It enumerated the aims of study, the significance of study and meaning of the key concepts of the research.

Chapter Two deals with a review of related literature of the research. The various views upheld by various authors were discussed and also some of the problems of consultants and their general negative attitudes to marketing.

Chapter Three dealt mainly with the analysis of data. The chapter also discussed the scope and operations of Ahmadu Bello University Consultancy Services (ABUCONS) and the history behind its inauguration. Also data obtained through written texts and interviews were analysed.

Chapter Four is the concluding chapter where the conclusions and summary of the entire research was made and recommendations were advanced towards an improvement of the marketing efforts of ABUCONS.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Marketing is considered very important and there is the general belief that any organisation in which marketing is absent or incidental is not a business and should never be run as if it were one. So important is marketing in an organisation that Peter Drucker (1982) referred to it as the distinguishing and the unique function of the business. Marketing is also considered an essential business discipline that test the company's service or product against the customer's willingness to buy at a price that is not only accepted to them but also generates an acceptable profit to the company. As such, marketing thinking and practice has been gradually moving into service industries. H.G. Elam and N.Paley (1978) are of the opinion that "marketing and its functions are becoming increasingly more central to the firm and that the relationship to technology and increased competition from all sides is making the marketing role increasingly critical in the service industries."[1] Although in all, the role of marketing in service industries is still limited.

Unfortunately, the professional literature contained little on the marketing of professional services. This is because most consultants attribute their success in

---

1. Elem H.G & N.Paley: Marketing for the Non-Marketing Executive, page 38.

their services to simply "performing good work". This is undoubtedly true but not very definitive.

Various reasons are advanced for the series of problems encountered in marketing consultancy services. James J. Mahon (1978) is of the view that "unlike most commercial products which usually take tangible form, consultancy service firms are invested with a degree of abstract trust and credibility that borders on the ethereal; therefore efforts to market them must take cognizance of this".[2] Another author who holds a similar view is Thomas Dan R.E. (1978). He opined"that marketing of professional services is difficult because services are more abstract than products".[3] For instance, it is difficult to describe management consulting as a business to someone who has never experienced the consulting relationship. Another problem according to him in pricing. Pricing in consulting firms is often based on value rather than on cost and value is generally determined by the customer and to some extent by competition.

Another problem is that most consultants, like most professionals do not understand the importance of marketing, consequently they do not market their services well. This situation stems from various factors advanced by various authors. R.E.Kelley (1981) advanced two main factors. One of it is that most consultants have no training in marketing and when called upon to market their

---

2. Mahon J.James Marketing of Professional Services, p.4.

3. Thomas Dan R.E. Strategy is Different in Service Industries. Harvand Business Review July-August.

services, professionals often disregard marketing. Secondly, most professional associations often hinder marketing until recently they banned advertising as unethical, thus many consultants condluded that the ban extended to all forms of marketing.

Phillip Hotler and Richard Connor (1975) identified three main barriers in marketing consultancy services. Firstly, is the disdain of commercialism whereby professionals think of themselves as businessmen and show hostility to any suggestion that they are motivated by money rather than service to their clients. Secondly, Association Codes Ethics which has erected stringent rules against commercial behaviour. Thirdly, is equating marketing with selling. This occurs because of the bars against selling, therefore consultancy service firms show little interest in the subject of marketing, having made the error of equating marketing with selling. Therefore, in identifying the role of marketing in consultancy services, P.Kotler and R. Connor (1980) advanced this definition of professional service marketing which goes thus, "Professional services marketing consists of organised activities and programs by professional services firms that are designed to retain present clients and attracting new clients by sensing, serving and satisfying their needs through delivery of appropriate services in a manner consistent with credibable professional goals and norms."

Marketing in consulting also looks at the big picture of informing the public of their services. As earlier on stated, consultants generally dislike

marketing. Most importantly, they avoid marketing, because they view it as an isolated activity that occurs at the start of an engagement. However, to their surprise, marketing is the lifeblood of the consulting industry. Consultants would rather consult than sell. They often assume that effective consulting skills combined with a few satisfied clients, should lead to an endless stream of new clients. Therefore, it is very unusual to find a consultant bring highly developed marketing skills as well as professional competence to the development of his practice. They often times concentrate on developing their skills in their areas of specialisation rather than developing new marketing skills.

One fundamental problem in marketing of consultancy services is the existence of a reluctant market place. For a prospective client to admit that a consultant is needed is a difficult decision and even if the prospective client recognises a problem and admits to the possibility of using a consultant, it is still a big step hiring one. This is because of the considerable suspicion towards the value of consultants and prospective clients are often confused by the vast market place of consultants. However, consultants do not make it any easier for prospective clients, because consultants not only consider it distasteful for them to stoop to selling but they feel time is limited for their actual activity of consulting and selling time cannot be billed to a client.

Foremost also, consultants consider consulting as an intangible service. To them, there is no fancy package in consultancy services for the client to feel, see or

touch. R.O. Mertzger and L.E. Greiner identified two basic avenues for marketing an intangible service namely the direct and the indirect approaches. Each of the approach involves a great deal of ingenuity and skill. The direct marketing approach concentrates on image building and is largely the domain of the bigger and longer established consulting firms. Such consulting firms strive for an image of high quality and a full range of consulting services. This approach is low key and subtle. The market comes to the consulting firm because of its impeccable reputation, real or imagined. The reputation been planted consciously by the firm. Although this approach is seen to be good, as its used by big consulting firms, there are however, some obvious problems associated with it. One is the unspoken realisation that indirect marketing requires a long time to build up subtle awareness and trusting relationship in the market place. Another problem is the enormous cost involved to support the lengthy process.

The direct marketing approach lean more towards the smaller firms. This approach requires contracting large numbers of people. To be successful in direct sales therefore, the consultant requires straight forward skills in stamina, perseverance and easy sincere talk.

However, whichever approach is adopted, it requires that the market plan must be conceived, designed and executed efficiently.

One of the key facts of life in consulting learned over the years is that the higher in the organisation one

goes for initial contact, the better the chances of obtaining a client. Also, the best way in which to develop business is to understand thoroughly as possible, the business issues of a client's market place. This effort however takes time and to dissipate effort over several markets leads to insufficient knowledge of any one market and resultant failures as prospective clients see through a consultants superfaciality.

Another important aspect of marketing consulting services is knowledge of one's competition. This information is vital for large or small firms because it provides an awareness of what one is facing in a bidding situation. Often times, large consulting firms with high overheads and large business development expenses like ABUCONS tend to bid higher on a given proposal than do small local consulting firms.

As earlier on discussed, marketing in consulting takes one step further, because it forces the consultant to examine the interrelationship of the three essential elements of a marketing program namely: your services, clients and competitors. Moreover, it focuses attention on the clients rather than the firm's services.

Philip Kotler, a highly respected marketing professor, outlines three main marketing orientations: product, selling and marketing.

The 'product' orientation assumes consumers will respond favourably to good products or services that are reasonably priced. Companies with a 'selling' orientation assumes that consumers will normally buy

enough of the company's products or services with a substantial selling and promotion efforts. The selling orientation does not question the adequacy of the products or services, rather a firm develops methods to push them, at high volume to produce profits.

The 'marketing' orientation demands that the company must perform two key tasks. One one hand, the company must determine the needs, wants and values of a targeted group of consumers and on the other hand, the company must adapt its organisation to deliver the desired satisfactions more effectively and efficiently than its competitors. The key to profits under the marketing orientation is constant generation of consumer satisfaction.

In essence therefore, marketing familiarisse one with one's clients and also helps to bring the consultant closer to their competitors. The end result of such marketing orientation is a consulting practice with focus and direction. Often times, consultants neglect the future. However, consultants with a marketing orientation realise that certain activities are necessary today to insure a steady flow of work. These consultants identify future clients and what is necessary to secure projects with those clients.

Major advantages accrue to consulting practices when they market their services. One of such is that it provides the firm with visibility among potential clients and potential sources of clients. The style and content of a firm's marketing effort will help communicate

who they are and what they do. Marketing of consultancy services also allows the firm to reach and educate their clients. Many clients do not know how to use consulting services or why such services are important to them, however, through planned marketing efforts you can overcome your client's ignorance. The adverse effect of not marketing is that the consultant will reduce their exposure and opportunities to gain new clients.

Another aspect of marketing consulting practice is selling. This has however been identified as the most difficult because most consultants admit that they experience difficulty in finding clients and selling their services. Infact, consultants find it so difficult that they disguise it as "business development". But one should make no mistake about this general belief, because consultants whether they like it or not must sell their services. Infact, the ability to obtain new clients is an essential requirement to make partnership in most consulting firms. Infact, so important is selling in consulting business, that there is a general belief that to last in any consulting business, the consultant must become proficient in selling.

Most consultants avoid selling because they do not understand the selling process. They often view it as an isolated activity that occurs at the start of an engagement. Once the project is sold and the consulting begins, they believe the selling is over. They do not realise that consultants should always be selling. Infact, a client is not 'sold' until he or she is satisfied. Consultants

unnecessary dislike to selling can also be attributed to the stereotypes of sales people and their images. The image of sales people oozes with deception and manipulation, pitting buyers, which often times, the consultants dislike. Consultants also avoid selling, because they have no training in it and lacking faith in their abilities makes them unconfortable, since it directly contradicts their image as experts.

However, in a more positive light, selling is a personally rewarding experience. Selling allows one to help someone in need. Through the selling efforts, clients can relax, knowing that competent consultants are solving their problems. This however cannot occur unless consultants sell their services. Selling requires a certain orientation. Selling at its best is a mutually satisfying interaction in which both sides win. This is because clients needs are met on one hand and on the other hand, consultants generates income, engages in his or her profession and reaps personal reward for helping the client.

Successful selling demands more than proper attitude. The selling situation begins with marketing efforts and if these are executed effectively then selling involves making the consulting services available.

Therefore, selling is a continual and integral part of a consulting practice. If the consultant demonstrates his competence and concern for the client at all times, then selling is no more than and extension of consulting practice.

Apart from the general negative attitude of consultants to marketing, relunctance on the part of the prospective clients also constitute a problem. A result of this is that many a management has gone badly astray by applying the same rules that have served well over the years. The reluctance of the prospective client to hire a professional consultant is because management has far less experience in buying professional services than it has in buying goods and equipment. This makes all the more important a better understanding of the buying and selling of professional services. Warren J. Wittreich (1966) opined that various buying and selling concepts are necessary in the solving of this problem. He suggested three basic concepts which must be borne in mind by either a buyer or a seller of services. The concepts are

(i) minimizing uncertainty

(ii) understanding problems and

(iii) buying the professional.

By the minimization of uncertainty a consultancy service must make a direct contribution to the reduction of the undertainties involved in managing a business. The consultant must take into account the impact of its performance on the clients business. To understand the problems, the consultancy service must come directly to grips with a fundamental problem of the business purchasing that service. The third concept explains the fact that a professional service can only be purchased meaningfully from someone who is capable of rendering the service.

Finally, it is a widely held belief by consultants that clients will come to them without any organised effort on their part, simply as a result of achieving a good reputation. They would like to believe that they do not have competitors or that other firms are not aggressive and cultivating the same pool of clients. Whether this believe is right or not, this research write up will try to examine.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA ANALYSIS

3.1 BACKGROUND HISTORY OF ABUCONS

One of the main areas of increasing prominence of Nigeria's higher institutions today is their consulting units. There is no doubt that the extended concept of consultancy holds sway in most higher institutions. Quite apart from the profit motivation that is forcing cash strapped institutions to examine all options, the Nigerian society has become desperate and is now looking more seriously to the vast repository of largely unused knowledge available in its higher institutions for solutions of its multi-faceted problems.

The main area of consultancy units in higher institutions activities is project development. The main factor promoting the trend is the realisation that for projects with modest capital requirements, projects by the consultancy unit is not only feasible but infinitely more profitable than mere consultancy. These factors are therefore affecting the traditional definition of consultancy in institutions as mere purveyors of advisory services. However, it is in light of this new focus of consultancy units in Nigeria's higher institution that this study was augumented. Focus will now be made on the scope and operations of ABUCONS.

3.2 SCOPE AND OPERATIONS OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY CONSULTANCY SERVICES (ABUCONS)

ABUCONS was inaugurated in response to the challenge to Nigeria's difficult economic situation and the call by the Federal Military Government on the country's universities to explore and utilise their consultancy capabilities for any available consultancy jobs in the country, instead of such jobs being farmed out to foreign firms whose performance could at best parallel those of our indigenous talented experts.

ABUCONS was established by the University Council in order to coordinate consultancy activities amongst the various Departments of University. In promoting such organised consultancy work, the university expects to generate revenue to beef-up the institution's dwindling finances. This of course is consistent with Federal Military Government's directive urging universities to embark upon revenue generating ventures like consultancy services, for which they have unique advantage since universities are repositories of composite skills and knowledge usually employed in consultancy services.

As such ABUCONS is expected to scout for consultancy work, publicise consultancy service capabilities of the whole university and generally make proposals to attract funds to the university in exchange for professional and expert services.

ABUCONS provides quality and professional services to both private and public sectors of the economy in order to impress the relevance of higher education policy on the country's developmental needs and provide

complimentary funding for Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. ABUCONS fulfil these objectives through an organised and formidable team of experts in certain fields of expertise as represented by the teaching, research and service units of the entire Ahmadu Bello University. The combined expertise of ABUCONS is about 2,000, including 1,600 highly skilled ABUCONS professionals and 400 support technical staff.

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, consists of academic faculties and institutes, catering for both basic and professional education. ABUCONS depends mainly on the widespread talents available at the university to execute consultancing projects. ABUCONS is a multi-disciplinary consulting firm that applies its comprehen-sive services to regional projects for a variety of private, institutional and government clients.

ABUCONS provides among others, these professional services:

(a) Agriculture
(b) Management
(c) Environmental Design
(d) Management
(e) Educational
(f) Legal
(g) Medical and Pharmaceutical
(h) The Arts
(i) Librarianship and Library Service
(j) Computer Sciences and
(k) Natural Sciences.

The aims and objectives of ABUCONS includes:

(i) to provide technical, professional and other expert services to all tiers of government (Local, State and Federal Governments), parastatals, the private sector and to international organisations. Such services would take the form of feasibility reports, a wide range of specialised professional services such as socio-economic serveys, running of staff development programmes, refresher courses, workshops, etc.

(ii) to manufacture and supply essential goods and services to the general public areas where the immediate public are not adequately satisfied would be given priority e.g. scientific/pharmaceutical products, etc.

(iii) to provide university staff who are able and willing to provide consultancy services a legitimate avenue for making additional income in conformity with Federal Government decree on private practice.

(iv) to enhance and make more applicable the academic programme of the university through the involvement of academic staff and in the planning and execution of consultancy jobs. By providing consultancy services, academic staff would be encouraged to undertake research projects of immediate relevance to the country, thus leading to a mutually beneficial

relationship between teaching research and practice.

(v) to contribute significantly to the financial resources available to the university and make suggestions for the optimal investment of part of funds generated.

(vi) to undertake any other functions that may be prescribed from time to time.

In order to realise the objectives set above, as many members of the university community as are able to provide services required by clients would be involved in the various programmes. The major organs of ABUCONS are:

(a) The Management Board of ABUCONS,

(b) Group Management Committees,

(c) Project Teams and

(d) Central Coordinating Unit.

The Management Board of ABUCONS is the major policy making body of the unit. It is composed of the Vice-Chancellor as the Chairman, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, five management committee chairmen, one member of Senate selected by Senate, the Bursar and the Executive Director of ABUCONS.

The Group Management Committees are divided into five Management/Sub-Committees and they cater for consultancy service activities.

The Project Teams are often set up by the Group Unit sub-committees on an adhoc basis and whenever projects are obtained. After being constituted, the project team

should liaise directly with the Central Coordinating Unit as an executive arm. Such direct link between ABUCONS and the project team is vital to speedy execution of projects by reducing unnecessary levels of bureaucracy in the decision making chain.

The Central Coordinating Unit is the Directorate of ABUCONS and it comprises of the administrative, accounting, secretarial and supporting professional staff who are responsible for the day to day running of the main office. The Directorate should possess a corp of seasoned professional and technical staff who should be responsible for technical and professional matters. However, because of the difficulty in attracting such professionals to serve on a full-time basis at ABUCONS, willing professional staff from the relevant management groups are deployed for limited periods of time. The selection of such professional staff is based on the recommendation of the respective management groups. This has as its major advantages, amongst which is substantial reduction of costs through the utilisation of in-house resources and it also permits the replacement of unproductive staff.

In all therefore, ABUCONS is expected to yield benefits to the university community as well as the world at large. This is because the university and its staff through this consultancy firm would be able to avail themselves of the opportunity of earning additional income, while the external world benefits from the expertise of the university.

It would be recalled that this study is directed towards an explanation of how Ahmadu Bello University Consultancy Services (ABUCONS) markets its services, the problems encountered and the prospects it envisages for consulting practice in Nigeria.

This has made the focus of the investigation to be on a critical analysis of marketing in ABUCONS. In this regard, data collected were analysed with use of quanlitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. Thirty (30) questionnaires were administered and the results are analysed in this chapter.

The general problem of this research stems from the fact that most consultants do not like marketing. Most consultants deny a role to marketing. They often like to assume that 'hungry' clients will naturally search out their God-given talents. They also forget that competition within the consulting industry is intense and that many clients hold a skeptical view of consultants.

These and other problems identified will be discussed in the course / of this chapter. This data analysis is structured by first identifying the general problems of marketing professional services, secondly by identifying the marketing problems peculiear to ABUCONS and finally by giving a summary of analysis.

3.3 GENERAL PROBLEMS OF MARKETING CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Consultants often like to think of themselves as removed from business development responsibility in the practice of their professions. They would also like to believe that clients will come to them without much organised effort on their part, but simply as a result of achieving a good reputation. They also like to believe that their competitors or other firms are not aggressively cultivating the same pool of clients.

Also two main barriers to marketing have also being identified and are:

(a) Disdain of Commercialism - This refers to the hostility of most consultants when they are referred to as businessmen. This is usually because most consultants hate to be seen as motivated by money rather than service to clients.

(b) Equating marketing with selling - because of the bans against selling, consultinacy service firms show little interest in the subject of marketing, having made the error of equating marketing with selling.

These two barriers, coupled with the attitude of consultants to marketing makes them ill-equipped and unable to cope with the significant forces they face namely; changing expectations of clients and increased competition.

Another problem is that many consultancy firms turn to some form of marketing in order to achieve their objectives. Such objectives include sufficient demand, sustained growth and profitable volume. And often times they practice minimal marketing in order to avoid or

minimize conscious development of a marketing program. The firms feel that through minimal marketing, they will attain their objectives by rendering the best quality service to existing clients. They also reason that a high quality of service will lead to satisfied clients who will place their new business with the firm. Furthermore, that satisfied clients will recommend the firm to others, thus leading to a substantial inflow of new clients.

This logic seems quite appealing, but unfortunately, it has a decreasing tenable philosophy with consulting firms. One of it is that it places too much confidence in the assumption that quality speaks for itself and this in marketing circles is known as "better-mouse-trap-fallacy". Minimal marketing also assumes that competitors are not practicing the stronger forms of marketing, but in actual fact, an increasing number of firms are. It assumes that the firm will deliver distinctively better services than the competitors, but several other firms will and thus, no firm may strike the client as particularly exceptional in this respect. Another drawback of minimal marketing is that it is a reactive rather than a proactive approach to marketing opportunities. This is because the firm does little to shape its future clients or services.

The general negative attitude of consultants to marketing also constitutes another problem of marketing

consultancy services. This attitude stems from the fact that most consultants have no training in marketing and unfortunately much of what they read on marketing is essentially of a theoretical nature. And often times, the consultant has difficulty in translating such theoretical considerations into practical reality, thus his frustration builds. This atimes, results in the consultant loosing confidence in self as he gets discouraged, depressed and too frequently, begins to question his competence in the very areas,he has the greatest skills.

Having identified the general problems of marketing consultancy services, the peculiar problems of ABUCONS will be discussed. It is hoped that at the end of the research study, some specifics that consultants may adopt in marketing their services will be suggested.

3.4 MARKETING PROBLEMS IN AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY CONSULTANCY SERVICES (ABUCONS)

ABUCONS, like most other consultancy service firms does little or no marketing at all. It is their belief that clients will always come to them because of the reputation of Ahmadu Bello University. Aside from this, some other marketing problems were identified through the course of study. The various problems will be discussed under various subtopics. It should however be noted that these problems were identified based on the questions asked (See Appendix for Questionnaire).

(1) CLIENTELE PROBLEM

At ABUCONS, jobs are obtained through contacts and competitive proposals. Also, through departments writing proposals leading to job procurements. However. such departmental efforts are often notified to the relevant management committee which would in turn register or document the project with the central coordinating unit.

This method of job procurement looks quite in place but the responses obtained were far from being good. The respondents were asked whether they often encounter any problems when soliciting for clients, and their responses is as shown in the table below:

Table 3.1

Are Problems Encountered in Obtaining Clients?

RESPONSE GRADING	ABSOLUTE VALUES	PERCENTAGE
Yes	24	80
No	6	20
Total	30	100

From the findings 80 percent of the respondents agreed that they encounter problems in soliciting for clients. Of the reasons advanced was the fact that some clients already have their long standing customers and are unwilling to do business with any other consulting practice. This in essence means that the clients are resistant to change. Another reason is the stiff

competition they face in the market place especially with private consultancy firms. This is because most times in the market place there is the presence of what I will refer to as the 'Nigerian Factor', that is, bribery and the highest bidder gets the job. This however works against ABUCONS most times because they are not an autonomous consultancy firm and therefore operate within the vote from the university. So, they often depend on their 'sugar-coated' tongues as their bargaining power.

Another method of soliciting for clients is by making the public aware of their existence and the kind of services they render. This is done by ABUCONS through the organisation of workshops and seminars and these are often given extensive media converage. ABUCONS also consider their brochures as very essential for obtaining clients since it contains the guidelines and procedures for the consultancy services they render and often times, these brochures are used as a back-up device.

311492

(2) PROMOTIONAL PROBLEMS

The promotional techniques available for use by consultancy firms are limited. This various marketing techniques includes; referrals, brochures, sales presentation, published articles, speeches and mailing lists. However, different consultants hold differing opinions concerning the effectiveness of these methods. It is not suprising that they find certain methods ineffective, since most consultants market poorly.

From the result of findings, it was found that ABUCONS adopts mainly personal selling and referrals as their major marketing approaches. This is observed in the table below:

Table 3.2

The Promotional Technique in use by the Organisation

RESPONSE GRADING	ABSOLUTE VALUES	PERCENTAGE
Advertising	3	10
Personal Selling	13	43.33
Referrals	14	46.66
Total	30	99.99

Advertising is in very little use because it is considered unprofessional and rather too expensive.

ABUCONS rely much on referrals than any other promotional technique. Referrals is the term used for past and present clients in the consulting industry. Referrals is often in use because they are of the belief that referrals from past clients are of course the best possible prospects.

However, this referral approach results into a certain amount of dependency on the part of the clients and this is not a healthy situation. This is because long standing relationship may result in dependency hostility where some client managers may start perceiving the consultants as performing the work that rightly should have been theirs. Also when a consultant continues

to perform major assignments for a particular clientele, it means he has failed to assist the client in developing its own internal capabilities to perform the assignments in question. The unhealthy consequence on the part of the consulting firm is that they start loosing motivation and edge for developing new business.

From the findings also, it was observed that personal contacts also accounts for 43.33 percent of the promotional technique in use. Personal contact is also given prominence because in most consulting practices it is the skill on which the initial growth of a firm swings. Personal contact as a use of procuring jobs is more common in the various departments of the university, since they are involved in the procurement of jobs. Most of the time, the departmental jobs comes through the staff, through their personal contacts. Jobs secured this way are often properly recorded at the Group Management Committee and then with the Central Coordinating unit. However in such cases, the sharing formula for the net revenue relatively favour the individual procuring the jobs in order to provide incentives for further efforts.

(3) LOCATIONAL PROBLEMS

ABUCONS is situated on the Campus of Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria. Since Zaria is not a commercial city, most of the jobs they procure are often outside the town. This poses a problem to the firm, since most of their clients have to be contacted through mails and telephones. This methods are however very expensive.

Atimes too, sales representations are made, to familiarise clients with their capabilities and where the job is already obtained, they are made to keep the clients informed about the up to date activities of the firm on the assignment.

Apart from the large financial outlays involved, the location of ABUCONS also has other drawbacks. Among which is in the fact other institutional consultancy units like the University of Ibadan and University of Lagos often gets the jobs before ABUCONS since they are located in big commercial centres and they obtain the jobs at very little or no cost.

(4) PRICING PROBLEM

In most consultancy firms, what to charge and how to charge are often the most troublesome questions the consultant faces. It is however, a known fact that pricing policies are very critical in any consultancy service firm.

It would be recalled that the main purpose of establishing ABUCONS is as an alternative revenue generating avenue in order to supplement the dwindling subvention received from the Federal Government, hence a need to look at their pricing policies.

The procurement budget at ABUCONS aim for profit margins between 30-40 percent. Therefore several ways of costing consultancy jobs are in use. However, three principal methods were identified as the most favoured.

They are the fixed cost basis, the time-based approach and the cost-plus approach.

The fixed cost basis method is where a percentage of the estimated investment cost of the eventual project or the benefits accruing therefrom is charged. This approach is often in use for projects in engineering and the civil and construction industries where the rates are regulated by the relevant professional practice bodies.

The time-based approach is where the client pays a basic retainership and a variable sum, computed at agreed rates for the time spent by its staff on the project. In this approach the client is made to take care of all expenses incurred throughout the duration of the project.

The cost-plus approach is where the consultant carefully computes anticipated costs (expenses) of executing consultancy jobs and adds to such costs as adequate profit margin. This approach is the most intricate.

Of these three methods, the cost-plus method is most frequent in use at ABUCONS. At ABUCONS, the rates cheargeable depends partly on the clients ability to pay and on the operating policy of particular units.

Aside from the amount to be charged, ABUCONS also places much emphasis on sharing of profit. ABUCONS operates sliding scales with respect to amounts accruing to both participants and consulting departments and a corresponding graduated scale for the amount due to the university depending on the value of net receipts from a project. See Table 4.3 below:

Table 3.3

Formula for sharing Net Revenue (in Percentages)

Honoraria or Profit	Project Partici-tion	Group Management (on behalf of Depts.	ABUCONS(on behalf of the Univer-sity
Honoraria of up to ₦10,000	33⅓	33⅓	33⅓
Net Profit up to ₦100,000	30	30	40
Net Profit ₦100,000 and above	20	30	50

Source: Adapted from Guidelines and Procedures for Consultancy Services at Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, page. 8.

(5) STAFFING PROBLEM

Research findings at ABUCONS indicates the lack of quality staff to handle aspects of their jobs. ABUSONS do not possess permanent quality staff in handling their jobs, rather they depend more on staff from various departments. This could pose a problem to the firm especially with the increasing exodus of most university lecturers to the private sector.

Even for this untrained staff that exists at the firm, no training or staff development programmes is organised for them.

(6) INADEQUATE AUTHORITY

ABUCONS is a subsidiary organisation of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Therefore, it is not an autonomous organisation, hence it has an independency

problem. ABUCONS has inadequate authority, thus they are handicapped as to taking certain decisions on their own, unlike the private consultancy firms.

3.5 SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Having identified the various problems of marketing at ABUCONS, it is evident that the whole problems boils down to their deficient and inappropriate marketing techniques. As a result, more than 70 percent of the respondents attest to the fact that the marketing techniques in use by ABUCONS often encounter problems. See Table below:

Table 3.4

Does the Organisation encounter any Problems with their marketing Techniques

Response Grading	Absolute Values	Percentages
Yes	22	73.33
No	8	26.66
TOTAL	30	99.99

Various reasons were given for this, most of which emanates from the problems identified above. They also indicated that another reason they encounter problems is because their marketing techniques appear too sophisticated for the socio-cultural environment within which they operate. The general reason however, is that marketing techniques in the consulting industry is limited and most times, they found out that most

consulting firms adopt the same techniques.

Despite all the odds against marketing in the consulting industries, there is still a general consensus that the prospects of the industry is bright. From the findings, various reasons were given for this general thought.

Among the reasons advanced includes the fact that since Nigerian government is now insisting on self-reliance in all the facets of its national life, it means indigenous professional practitioners will now obtain increasing patronage. Another reason is that, it is increasingly becoming apparent that the trial and error approach often adopted by clients in tackling their problems is not effective. Thus, there is the increasing awareness for a need for scientific approach. Thus, there is the increasing awareness for a need for scientific approach, hence with time, clients will start seeking assistance from the appropriate place, that is, consulting firms.

Bearing in mind all the above points discussed as militating against marketing of consultancy firms, it is hoped that the researcher has been able to justify the claim that most consultancy firms are faced with marketing problems and that such problems is a direct consequence of their marketing techniques.

In the next chapter, suggestions on how such problems could be solved are raised and it is hoped that they will be of use to future researchers in similar field of study.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 CONCLUSION

This study has tried to explain the problems and prospects of marketing consultancy services in Nigeria using a case study of Ahmadu Bello University Consultancy Services (ABUCONS).

From the analysis, the way and manner by which ABUCONS markets its services were highlighted. It was observed from the findings, that most of their marketing problems stems from the way they market their services and the attitude of the consultants to marketing. One of the problem is in the fact that most of the consultants interviewed feel little or no need for marketing, they hold the view that clients will always come to them because of their reputation and public image. In a consultancy firm, this view is attenable where the firm undertakes continuous steps to increase their overall market visibility and reputation. This is because atimes, many consultancy firms have a distorted view of their image and are even suprised to discover how they are actually perceived and talked about by their competitors.

The investigation also revealed the negative attitude of the consultants and that they ignore the business aspect of consulting, hence consultants do not feel a need to market their services. However, with the increasing awareness of the need for consulting and hence the establishment of many consulting practices, consultants are now developing marketing strategies

because they feel a need to sell like everyone else. Also, apart from marketing being seen as necessary, it also yields tremendous pay-offs to the consultancy firm and without marketing, the consultants source of clients and revenue will dwindle. Beyond obtaining clients, marketing also has high internal value to the organisation. Through marketing, a good image is established and the quality performance of the organisation leads to a growth cycle. As you become known as a reputable consultant, your client base expands and higher fees can be charged. A result of this is an increased revenue and as such ABUCONS will be seen as achieving the aim of its existence.

Another conclusion drawn from the research investigation as problem militating against marketing in ABUCONS is the independency problem. This means that ABUCONS is answerable to Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. A result of this is that the authority of consultants over the operations of ABUCONS is limited and this invariably affects their competitive posture in regards to other private consultancy practices.

In all therefore, most of the problems of marketing in ABUCONS can be said to be internal, that is, they originate from within, both from the consulting firm itself and Ahmadu Bello University (Its parent organisation).

However, despite all these problems, the research findings still conclude a very bright future for consultancy practices in Nigeria because of the new orientation of the Nigerian society in the rationalization of their

economic choices hence the need to seek management and technical expertise.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Consultancy firms that want to grow and prosper will have to shed their negative attitudes to marketing and confront marketing issues and challenges. No consultancy firm can base its future on minimal or casual marketing.

In regards to the locational problems faced by ABUCONS, it is recommended that branch offices of ABUCONS should be established in the various commercial centres within the country and even abroad since they engage in international businesses. These branch offices should serve as collection centres for procuring jobs. The offices could also be granted the authority to carry out consultancy jobs of a maximum profit level. This will help reduce the costs involved in going to solicit for clients or even helping the clients (where jobs are already engaged) keep abreast with the developments of their jobs.

It also recommended that ABUCONS be granted autonomy. This will enable them compete effectively with firms in the private sector and this could also increase their quality of work and even give the consultants a sense of commitment since they know that the university depend on them for their revenue subvention. Also by granting them autonomy, the consultancy firm will be able to operate like a limited liability company and can thus solicit for financial loans to carry out its activities.

As regards staff development, various training programmes could be organised for their members in marketing planning and sales building. Also, seminars which they often organise as a promotional device for ABUCONS could be used as training of consultants.

It will also be necessary for a marketing plan to be devised since it is found very essential to the success of a consulting practice. Apart from it being necessary, an effective marketing plan also helps create demand for services.

Also, a time when consultants can rely on their good reputations and business will flow in is rarely the case today. A carefully planned and implemented marketing effort plays a crucial role in the development of every consulting practice. The option whether to engage in marketing of consultancy services no longer exists, rather the option relates to the steps one may take in developing an effective marketing program.

Finally, it is an agreed consensus that consulting has a future. For the future, government, business and other consumers will seek, pay and value people with information and consultants are the people with information.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Angulu, U.A., The Scope and operations of Consultancy Services in Nigeria's Higher Institution. Paper presented at a Workshop on Consultancy Services in Nigeria's Higher Institutions, 1988.

2. Ahmadu Bello University Consultancy Services (ABUCONS) Guidelines and Procedures.

3. Elam Houston & Paley N., Marketing for the Non-Marketing Executive. AMACAM Publishers New York, 1978.

4. Drucker Peter., The Practice of Management, New York.

5. Greiner L.E. and Mertzger R., Consulting to Management. Prentice Hall, Inc, Englewoord, Cliffs, 1983.

6. Kelley R.E., Consulting: The Complete Guide to a profitable career. Charles Scribner's New York, 1981.

7. Kotler Phillip, Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning and Control. 3rd Ed. Prentice Hall, Inc, 1976.

8. Kotler P & Connor R.A., Marketing Professional Services. Journal of Marketing (1966)

9. Kubr M., Management Consulting: A Guide to the Profession. Geneva Switzerland ILO, 1976.

10. Levitt, T., Marketing Intangible Products and Product Intangibles. Harvard Business Review May-June 1981.

11. Lippitt G. & Lippitt R., The Consulting Process in Action. La Jolla Calif. University Associate Press, 1978.

12. Mahon James J., The Marketing of Professional Services, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1978.

13. Nugent J.W., The Singleton Markets His Services 2nd Ed. LaCresta Publications, 1974.

14. Thomas Dan R.E., Strategy is different in Service Industries. Harvard Business Review July-August 1978.

15. Traxel K., Manager's Guide to Successful Job Hunting McGraw Hill, New York, 1978.

16. Tull D and Gree P., Research for Marketing Decisions 4th Ed. Prentice Hall.

17. Turner E.B., Marketing Professional Services Journal of Marketing (1969).

18. Wilson Aubrey. The Marketing of Professional Services. McGraw Hill, London, 1972.

19. Wittreich J. Warren. How to Buy/Sell Professional Services. Harvard Business Review March-April, 1966.

20. White E.B. and Strunk W., Getting Things Done Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1976.

21. Wexter J.A. & Carme C., How to Create a Winning Proposal. Santa Cruz, Calf: Mercury Publications, 1978.

APPENDIX

FIELD SURVEY ON

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF MARKETING CONSULTANCY FIRMS IN NIGERIA.

A CASE STUDY OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY CONSULTANCY SERVICES (ABUCONS)

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Sir/Madam,

The above study is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Masters Degree in Business Administration.

Your responses to the questionnaire will help indicate the problems and prospects of consultancy firms in Nigeria. Emphasis will however be on marketing of consultancy services.

Please bear in mind that any information given will be treated as confidential and there is no way you can be identified.

Thanking you for your anticipated cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Ronke S. Oniyangi
Research Student
Dept. of Business Admin.
Institute of Administration,
Ahmadu Bello University
Zaria.

SECTION A

(Please tick whichever is appropriate)

1. SEX: Female ☐ Male ☐

2. AGE: 20 - 29 ☐

30 - 39 ☐

40 - 49 ☐

50 and above ☐

3. DEPARTMENT.....

4. RANK.....

5. HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL ATTAINED

University Degree or Equivalent ☐

Diploma or Equivalent ☐

Any other, please specify.....

.....

SECTION B

1. How long has your organisation been in the consultancy business?

1 - 2 years ☐

3 - 4 years ☐

5 and above ☐

2. How does your organisation obtain its clients?

Please specify .....

.....

3. What convincing techniques does your organisation adopt in persuading your clients the need to make use of your services: .....

.....

.....

4. Do you often encounter any problem(s) in soliciting for clients?

   Yes ☐

   No ☐

5. If answer to Question 4 is Yes, specify what kind of problem(s) .....
   .....
   .....

6. Since consultancy services is still an entirely new phenomenon in Nigeria, how do you make the public aware of your services and its importance? Please specify .....
   .....
   .....

7. What kind of organisation makes the most use of your services?

   Private ☐
   Public ☐
   Government Corporation ☐

8. What promotional method does your organisation adopt in reaching your clients?

   Advertising ☐
   Personal Contact ☐
   Referral ☐

9. How does your organisation get to their customers and how convenient do your customers find the location of the organistion? .....
   .....
   .....
   .....

10. What pricing techniques are use to cost projects?

.....

.....

.....

11. Does your organisation encounter any problems with her marketing techniques?

Yes ☐

NO ☐

12. If Yes to Question 11 above what kind of problems? Please specify .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

13. Do you forsee any prospects for the consultancy industry in Nigeria?

Yes ☐

No ☐

14. Whatever your answer to Question 13 above, please indicate why? .....

.....

.....

.....