

The Mauritian Insurance Industry in the next Decade: Challenges and Opportunities

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Abstract

The insurance business is at a critical stage in Mauritius. There has been consistent decrease in the adoption of insurance products in part due to the high cost of living and rising unemployment rates. The young generation is not much aware of risk associated with not being insured. Nevertheless, the insurance industry continues to grow. Financial deregulation speeds up the development of the industry. Growth in income will also help the insurance business to grow. In addition, increased longevity and aging population will also spur growth in health and pension segments.

Through an in-depth analysis, we find that the emerging consumer need of young people is an aspect that insurance companies need to examine closely. This study explores this area. Using a survey, we evaluate the current insurance policies from both the young generation eyes and from the insurance managers. A series of recommendations have been provided in order to help insurance companies to better cater for the needs of the future generation.

Keywords: *Insurance, Next generation, Challenges and Opportunities*

**For correspondences and reprints*

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the years, the insurance industry has become a flourishing business. Insurance products and services were previously viewed as a means to minimize risk factors. However, it was observed that more so it is also viewed as an investment vehicles for the young generation.

1.1 Importance of insurance market in Mauritius

Turbulent change is taking place in customers' preferences. Growing and evolving macroeconomic factors are forcing insurance companies to better devise new and innovative products and services for the coming generation. This paper has placed the needs of insurance companies in 2020 at the centre to untangle the obscurity that can be associated in meeting the needs and wants of 2020 requirements as there is always the tendency of looking what the competitors are doing instead of pondering upon the developments outside the industry scope.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows: The second part gives an overview of the insurance industry, interlinks factors and reviews prior research on the insurance industry and practices. The third section discusses the methodology used and the limitations of the study. The fourth section presents the findings. Finally conclusions are drawn and research avenues to be explored are indicated.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Insurance industries around the world

Internet and technological advancement brought a revolution to the Insurance industry. Information about the cheapest rate is available at a click. Companies shop internationally for the right coverage. It provides a source of motivation for companies to merge with other financial services. The increase in size gives them a global market and the integration of services gives them a domestic advantage with customers who are more concerned with convenience than price.

The insurance market in Mauritius has evolved from the establishment of the first automobile insurance policy to the various types of life insurance products that

are available today. The insurance market has a structure that involves property and casualty insurers, life insurers as well as health insurers. Each type of insurers has regulations that apply to its policies. Insurers are in Mauritius and most other countries.

2.1.1 The U.S. Insurance industry

Insurance has been well developed in America even before the birth of the country. The National Association of Insurance Commissioners provides models for standard state insurance law, and provides services for its members, which are the state insurance divisions. Hereunder are the types of insurance marketed in the USA:

- ❖ Life, Health, and Variable Annuities
 - Health (dental, vision, medications)
 - Life (long-term care, accidental death and dismemberment, hospital indemnity)
 - Annuities (securities)
- ❖ Property and Casualty
 - Property (flood, earthquake, home, auto, fire, boiler, title, pet)
 - Casualty and liability (errors and omissions, workers' compensation, disability, liability)

According to a survey conducted by Ernst and Young in 2012, customers in the United States, Canada, Brazil and Mexico, there is strong evidence that indicates a profound change in consumer behavior. People want more information on products, more involvement in purchase decisions, improved service, and their loyalty rewarded through price discounts or better value.

In addition to these consistencies, the survey unearthed key market differences: Brazil, which is experiencing tremendous economic growth and the creation of a middle class, stands out against Mexico, where insurance markets are still developing. These countries' dissimilar customer profiles contrast further with markets in the United States and Canada.

2.1.2 The European industry

Despite the huge upheavals in financial and industrial structure of the past decade, the European insurance markets, with the partial exception of the United Kingdom and Switzerland, have traditionally remained highly fragmented national markets. Over the past decades, however, the development of a single European market has led to much consolidation among firms, both within European countries and across them. The insurance business has proved to be no exception to this pattern.

In contrast to the banking and securities sectors, the insurance sector has been overprotected and have not been part of any globalization process. This may be explained partly by the specificity of the insurance business, which has historically given rise to excessively restrictive regulatory systems, and partly by the existence of cultural differences and practices, which by themselves have restricted domestic competition and made foreign penetration difficult.

The European insurance industry entered 2011 financially stronger than it was at the beginning of 2010. As the credit and equity markets recover combined with reductions in claims frequency in 2009 and 2010, the industry's capitalization, solvency and profitability are improving. Efforts to maintain and increase capital will continue in 2011, as insurers prepare for the impending implementation of Solvency II and Basel III.

Survey conducted by Ernst and Young (2012) on the market trends suggests that:

- Europe in 2011 offers a financially stronger insurance market than in 2010, given strengthening of the credit and equity markets and improvements in the insurance industry's capitalization, solvency and profitability.
- While GDP is expected to decrease slightly in 2011, inflation should remain steady at 1.5% to 1.6% — levels that pose no immediate threat to growth.
- Litigation, fraud and catastrophe-type exposures also are increasing in the region.
- To seize growth in 2011, insurers will need to quickly address and adapt to the changing regulatory and accounting environments, enhance the

flexibility of their distribution systems, develop new markets and products and improve management of capital.

Another consumer Insurance survey by Ernst and Young conducted in 2012 states that challenging debt obligations across Europe are pressuring individual nations to rein in spending, with austerity measures in place across several countries. While the impact of these macroeconomic issues will play out further in 2012, insight into consumer buying behavior indicates significant opportunities for growth. In this survey of insurance consumers in eight countries—France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Turkey and the UK—several consistencies in customer preferences emerged, despite the differences in countries both economically and demographically.

More consumers are conducting product research online, seek more transparent product information from providers, desire better service and are willing to pay more for insurance from a financially strong company.

2.1.3 The Australian industry

Australia has a sophisticated and well-developed insurance market, which can be divided into roughly three components: life insurance, general insurance and health insurance. These markets are fairly distinct, with larger insurers focusing mainly on one line of business. Although in recent times several of these companies have broadened their scope into more general financial services, and have faced competition from banks and subsidiaries of foreign financial conglomerates.

Life insurers were traditionally mutual companies, but in the 1980s and 1990s many of them demutualised and with a few large exceptions are owned by banks. The large remaining insurers have become “financial services” organisations and now derive the majority of their revenue from superannuation investment products.

General Insurers have diverse ownership structures, and there are a number of standalone independent general insurers (although some life insurers do own general insurers). Health insurers are still predominantly mutual. The notable

exception is Medibank Private, the largest private health insurer in Australia, which is owned by the Australian government.

The prudential aspects of general and life insurance (solvency etc.) are regulated by the Australian Prudential Regulatory Authority (APRA). Matters relating to advice or disclosure of insurance products sold are regulated by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC). The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) also has a regulatory role with respect to competition law.

In certain states, various bodies also have powers in regulating certain types of statutory insurance. For example, in New South Wales the Motor Accidents Authority regulates Compulsory Third Party motor liability insurance. In many cases these bodies have powers regarding premium rating and reinsurance rules.

2.1.4 The Indian industry

The Indian insurance sector has remained on rails even in the toughest of the times recently, thanks to the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) tough and conservative apparatus. A sound insurance segment ensures better economic development as indicated by a study which states that 1% increase in insurance penetration leads to 13% reduction in uninsured losses and 22% reduction in taxpayers' contribution to recovery following a natural catastrophe.

Keeping pace with international happenings, the Indian insurance industry has remained in a good health and maintained absolute transparency and highest standards of corporate governance. Assets under management of Indian insurers are slated to touch Rs 20 trillion while the general insurance sector is anticipated to grow 18% in 2012-2013, said J Hari Narayan, former Chairman, IRDA. He further reported that the insurance sector has grown substantially over the last few years, with its AUM from Rs 8 trillion in 2008 to Rs 18 trillion in 2011-2012.

A consumer insurance survey by Ernst and Young (2012) concludes that India's fast-growing middle class is exhibiting significant opportunity to sell life insurance and non-life products. Challenges, however, include rapidly evolving

markets and fickle customer loyalty. Only one in five customers is extremely loyal to current providers, our survey reveals. Consumers seek providers that put a premium on customer service and offer innovative, competitively priced products.

2.1.5 Insurance Markets in Africa

Insurance penetration remains low across Africa. The whole of Africa, with the notable exception of South Africa, has an insurance penetration of roughly 1%. The sector in African countries is at different stages of development and relatively diverse product offering with only 7 countries having a penetration rate exceeding 2%. The industry is mostly dominated by the non-life insurance business, with life insurance at an early stage of development. Life insurance is relatively undeveloped in most countries, since not only is there insufficiently developed data on mortality and longevity but also a shortage of specialised skills needed. South Africa accounts for 93% of life business and over 50 percent in non-life business in sub-Saharan Africa.

There are considerable opportunities for further developing both general and life insurance in the continent. Products that can usefully be developed include, but are not limited to, health insurance, micro-insurance, agricultural insurance and other products that can alleviate poverty and promote small and medium enterprises (SMEs). One area of great interest is catastrophe insurance. Clearly floods, droughts, earthquakes and other types of adverse climatic conditions may have a profound impact on the populations affected by them, and significant developments are underway in creating the conditions to insure against these events.

The insurance industry in Africa has been growing at a moderate pace relative to other sectors of the financial services industry. Life insurance premiums in Africa fell by 2.4% to USD 47bn in 2010 after the 1.7% increase in 2009. South Africa represents the principal market, accounting for more than 90% of regional premium volume. In Egypt, the third largest market in the continent, the premiums shrank by 18%.

There is very little available data on the non-life insurance sector. Swiss Re finds that the non-life premiums in Africa rose 4.1% to USD 19bn, a 3.8% increase

compared to 2009, with South Africa, the largest market accounting for half of the regional non-life premium volume, experiencing a 4.2% growth.

Reinsurance is insurance transferred from one insurer to other insurers (called reinsurers) to limit the total loss the former would experience in case of experiencing greater than expected losses or a disaster. According to Swiss Re, Africa's reinsurance market represented in 2011 a mere 0.8% of the world share in direct premiums compared to 2.8% for Latin America and 10.7% for emerging markets and is worth a total USD 6.4 billion compared to USD 21.9 billion for Latin America and USD 83.7 billion for emerging markets.

The Insurance industry in Africa still faces major challenges, with some specifically affecting the reinsurance industry. The African reinsurance and insurance industries are heavily correlated to global trends, have high frequency of claim recurrence due to aging infrastructure relying largely on imports and thus on hard currency for replacement, lack adequately skilled labor and face ineffective and ill-enforced legal frameworks.

2.2 The insurance industry in Mauritius

Mauritius has one of the most developed insurance industries in Africa thanks to a relatively high level of income, macroeconomic stability, an established financial sector, a business-friendly investment climate, and good economic policy making. According to the Mauritian Financial Services Commission (FSC) there were 12 licensed non-life insurance companies and seven licensed life insurance companies at the end of 2012. The market is fairly concentrated, though. In the non-life segment, the top two companies – Swan Insurance and Mauritius Union General Insurance – each account for slightly over 26% of total premiums. The top five companies have a market share of 80%. In the life insurance segment, the biggest company is BAI with a market share of 43.5%. The next biggest is the State Insurance Company (SICOM) with a market share of 27.3%, while Anglo, which is a subsidiary of the Swan Group, accounts for 19.5% of premiums. These three companies account for 90.1% of total premiums. Although SICOM started out as a state-owned enterprise, it was privatised in 1988.

There were 14 insurers operating in the general insurance (non-life) market in mid 2014, all of whom were joint stock. Swan absorbed CIM Insurance effective 30 June 2012, and became the largest general (non-life) company, with around 27% of the market. It was slightly ahead of the merged Mauritius Union/La Prudence, trading under the name of Mauritius Union in the non-life market, which had nearly 25% of the market in 2012.

The Kenyan-owned Jubilee reopened in January 2011 and was concentrated on motor underwriting. In 2012 over 60% of its portfolio was motor. The company had ceased underwriting in 2008, but continued to service existing contracts in Mauritius. The economic and insurance environments are largely deregulated in Mauritius.

The State Insurance Corporation of Mauritius was set up in 1974 and was fully owned by the government. On 1 January 1989 it was turned into a limited liability joint stock company and renamed SICOM Ltd. Some 40% of its shares

were held by the State Investment Corporation and the rest by other state-owned institutions. According to the finance minister's speech announcing the budget for 2014 the life company SICOM Ltd, which is also the parent of SICOM General Insurance Ltd, is finally to be listed on the Stock Exchange of Mauritius.

Mauritian Eagle, a composite company, was set up in 1973 as a joint venture between Ireland Blyth and South African Eagle. The company has been quoted on the stock exchange since 1993. The company has an interest in H Savy Insurance in the Seychelles.

Mauritius Union is a composite incorporated in 1948. The company is quoted on the Mauritian Stock Exchange. In 2010 it merged with La Prudence Mauricienne, and now uses the Mauritius Union brand for the group's general business. In early 2006 La Prudence bought Island General. In 2014 Mauritius Union bought approximately 60% of the Kenyan company Phoenix of East Africa Assurance Company Limited (PEAL). SICOM, a composite set up in 1974 as a state company, transformed into a limited liability joint stock company in 1989 and is due to be listed in the near future.

Swan Insurance, a general company whose origins date to 1854, regained its position as the biggest non-life company when it merged with CIM Insurance (formerly Albatross) in 2012. The company has been quoted on the Mauritian Stock Exchange since 1990 and has an interest in the State Assurance Company of the Seychelles (SACOS).

2.3 Insurance Products in Mauritius

Any risk that can be measured can potentially be insured. There are various types of insurance policies provided by insurance companies in Mauritius to mitigate risk factors namely; motor insurance, health insurance, life insurance, homeowners' and renters' insurance amongst others.

2.3.1 Motor insurance

Motor Insurance is considered as the largest category of general insurance in the country. It typically covers the property risk; that is; theft or damage to the vehicle and the liability risk; accident.

The purpose of motor insurance is to help individuals limit their financial losses when an automobile accident occurs. There are 2 types of cover for motor insurance; comprehensive insurance policy which covers your claim and helps offset the cost of repairs and secondly we have the third party insurance cover which covers the claims of the opponents in an accident; the insurance pays for someone else's property or injuries, if one is at fault, in an accident.

It must be taken in to consideration that the number of road accidents in Mauritius as at June 2012 has been 20, 751; so having a proper motor insurance cover helps one in managing risk. Automobile insurance policies target all vehicle owners and it is a mandatory requirement for all vehicles in Mauritius. Buying a car is viewed a necessity for most young people due to the upgrading nature of work and the 24/7 concept. Catering for needs of these young people and the coming generation remains a subject of study.

2.3.2 Health insurance

Health insurance is also known as medical insurance. It provides protection to ones and its family from high-priced or unexpected health care expenses. Such policy normally includes doctor's appointments, hospitalization, prescriptions, dental, vision, long term care and other related costs. There are different types of insurance policies for health; either one purchases it for his/her own self or for his/her family or through an employer.

Health insurance policies in Mauritius are mostly sold and targets employed people; either through their employers or individual/family insurance. Health insurance can be viewed a necessary insurance as it touches lives of people and for anyone there is nothing dearer compared to life.

2.3.3 Life insurance

Life insurance is a contract specifying a sum to be paid to a beneficiary upon the insured's death. The purpose is to provide money for family members or dependents when a wage earner dies. Life insurance can be said to be necessary for people who have a dependent spouse, dependent children, an aging or disabled dependent relative, or business owners.

The main rationale of life insurance is to insure against loss of income due to death and can also be utilised for retirement plan and investment as well. It is an insurance you pay for, but only others will benefit from it.

2.3.4 Homeowner's and renters' insurance

Homeowner's insurance is a policy which combines property and liability insurance into one policy to protect a home from damage costs due to hazards. Property insurance protects the policy owner from financial losses due to destruction or damage to the property whereas liability insurance protects the insured from financial losses due to being held liable for losses of others.

The homeowner's insurance covers the alternative cost that will pay to rebuild the home if it is completely destroyed. On the other side, the Renter's insurance protects the policy owner from loss to the contents of the residence rather than

the residence itself. It covers major damages, provides liability protection, and provides for additional living expenses if the home is considered uninhabitable by one of the covered perils.

Renter's insurance is necessary because the landlord's insurance policy on the lodging does not cover the renter's personal possessions. This type of insurance mainly targets owners' of houses; mostly middle age people; people who have either acquired a house by heritage or by purchasing it.

2.3.5 Credit insurance

Credit insurance repays some or all of a loan when certain circumstances arise to the borrower that the latter cannot repay back its debt; death, total disability or unemployment. There are several types of credit insurance namely:

- Mortgage insurance where it insures the lending party against failure to pay by the borrower.
- Credit cards are offered as protection plan which is a form of credit insurance.
- Trade credit insurance is a type of business insurance where the policy pays the insured for covered accounts receivable if the debtor defaults on payment.

2.4 Limitations of present insurance products in Mauritius

2.4.1 Life insurance

One major insurance product is life insurance, which provides financial support to dependents when one passes away. The insurance provides a financial payment to dependents after the policy holder's death. Most likely the payout will initially cover funeral costs of the decedent. The rest of the payout will provide a source of income until financial stability is reached or goals are met for the surviving family whether it is to pay mortgage and other bills or children's postsecondary education costs.

Cash value policies provide tax-deferred growth. When there is a payout due to death, beneficiaries are not taxed for their personal income returns. However,

payouts are not free from estate taxes. All insurance policies charge various types of fees. Thus, potential policy holders must analyze the insurance contract before purchasing. Fees can be cheaper or expensive depending on the policy type of insurance.

2.4.2 Commercial insurance

Health and Safety Act requires businesses that employ workers to have some insurance coverage against injuries, accidents and claims of negligence. Product liability insurance covers against financial loss from claims of injurious product defects, while professional liability covers service businesses against claims of negligence, malpractice and errors. Commercial property insurance covers the loss of your business property from fire, vandalism or severe weather.

Commercial insurance, like all forms of insurance, comes with limitations and exclusions. If your business is exposed to greater-than-average risks, any insurance you buy will include a list of exclusions. Sometimes these exclusions rule out the very things you wanted insurance for in the first place. There may also be an annual dollar cap on paid losses, effectively cutting off your coverage at a certain threshold.

In the event of a massive disaster or a huge lawsuit, your insurance policy might cover only a portion of your losses. If you have a claim, you must also be careful to comply with reporting requirements. Some insurance companies are notoriously slow to respond to claims, citing incorrect reporting as the reason. On the other hand some insurance coverage, such as health insurance, is a necessity in a world where one serious illness can cause you to lose your home. If a fire or other disaster strikes, commercial insurance can be the difference between staying in business or going bankrupt.

Depending on the policy, one can replace lost income and money, restore damaged or destroyed property, or provide a shield against a lawsuit. Commercial credit risk insurance can also reduce the risk of doing business, because it covers you against customer bankruptcy, refusal of delivery or other non-payment

2.4.3 Automobile insurance

The advantages of auto insurance are clear. Maintaining automotive insurance demonstrates financial responsibility. It provides peace of mind in that any bills resulting from an auto accident will be covered. What people often fail to remember is that there are also disadvantages to automobile insurance. These disadvantages will vary depending on which type of auto insurance you carry.

It is a requirement to carry a minimum amount of liability insurance to pay the medical and property damage costs associated with an accident. Having an accident is not inevitable but it may happen. An automobile is a significant investment, and having auto insurance helps to protect that investment. On top of the financial assistance and repair shop referrals auto insurance companies provide to help you care for your auto after an accident, there is also theft coverage and riders for expensive accessories that you can use to protect your vehicle. For example, if you purchase expensive rims for your vehicle, you can add a rider to your auto insurance that will cover you for the cost of those rims if they should be damaged or stolen.

Recently, during the flood of 30 March 2013, the importance of car insurance was prevalent. However, at the same time it shows us the disadvantages of such insurance policies whereby not all factors are covered despite insuring for all risk the flood factor was mostly excluded.

2.5 Insurance in 2020

The factors that will make the insurance industry successful in meeting the changing needs of the young generation of consumers are discussed in this section.

2.5.1 Recognize and react to disruptive realities

Two of the four mega trends developed in our original study are the basis for our tactical exploration of innovation. The first mega trend focused on the disruptive potential that changing demographics will bring to insurance industry stakeholders. These demographic realities will impact not only insurance consumers, but also agents, brokers, policyholders and other industry

professionals across various demographics. For instance, will the female generation demographic, those people in their early teens to mid-twenties, continue to expect service industries to engage and reward them via the Internet? Will those working in insurance distribution need to make use of social computing tools in their careers? Insurers need to recognize that opportunities arising from understanding such demographics realities extend beyond optimization of sales channels. They include customer service, claims handling and fraud prevention as well as chances to engage consumers and clients with more customized products.

2.5.2 Changing demographics

As insurance operations grew over the years and more and more lines of business were introduced, the business side within insurance companies developed a product centric view of the industry. At the same time, information systems grew in capability and became a vital component of the business. When systems areas were created and funded, they necessarily formed around the existing lines of business, and thus today's silo approach to IT was born. Gradually the terms "one face to the customer" and "single view of the customer" gain a hold in insurance thinking.

While insurers were maintaining their product centrality, consumers changed in other ways. Consumers were more or less a uniform group 20 years ago, with price sensitivity versus service orientation. Today this has completely flipped, leaving a market with significant populations of consumers at both ends of the commodity pricing versus premium quality spectrum. As a result, the classic mass market is diminished although still pursued.

On one side, hunting for the cheapest offer has become a popular sport, rendering other product parameters irrelevant. On the other side, consumers are still willing to pay a premium for convenience and service. This forces vendors in all markets, including those in financial services, to be more precise in what they offer. In insurance markets, carriers will not be able to rely on applicants consistently buying the coverages and services they are offered. At the same time, carriers have to contend with market diversification as seen in consumer products, as well as the behavioral variance they will encounter among individuals.

2.5.3 Challenges to a changing demographics

Mauritians are tending to live longer on average, while birth rates are declining [1]. Demographic change is altering our society and requires new solutions from the insurance industry as well. Mauritian Insurers have to use extensive knowledge to address this dynamic development with customized offers in the various fields of business, a prudent staffing policy and by promoting social diversity.

The special needs of individual markets and the changes to be expected in their age structures. In our developing country for instance, the costs of pension insurance and healthcare are continuing to spiral upward. What's worse, the number of people without health insurance is rising continually. However, the trend towards increasing life expectancy is also evident in many emerging countries – as is the necessity of providing minimal healthcare to the population as a whole.

- **Making pension models sustainable.** It is expected that there will be dramatic cuts particularly in old-age pensions. People will increasingly have to finance not only a state pension, but also a private one in order to maintain their standard of living over the long term. Regardless of whether life policies or other sustainable models are needed, insurance companies must be strong, reliable partner that offers its clients a broad spectrum of flexible pension products.
- **Healthcare sector.** The insurance sector is firmly committed to covering primary insurance clients' risks, especially in the area of healthcare. Altered living and nutritional habits are causing an increase in diseases of affluence. The incidence of cancer and cardiovascular diseases is also rapidly on the rise, as are treatment costs. Insurers should address this trend by pooling its expertise in a dedicated unit.
- **Forward-looking human resources policy.** Current demographic trends pose a challenge even for an insurance company, particularly in view of

[1] Mauritius Facts available at: <http://www.indexmundi.com/g/g.aspx?c=mp&v=25>

the forecast reduction in well-trained young college and university graduates. individualised further training and career planning within Insurance companies will help to ensure that our staff can develop optimally. The issue of diversity is therefore crucial to success and of paramount importance to us. It defines a workforce characterised by a wide variety of social backgrounds and broad experience as one objective of successful human resources work.

2.5.4 Carriers must model business processes

Technology is leveling the playing field for traditional carriers, as well as the other players emerging today. To prepare for competition from these sources, carriers need to confront long-held industry beliefs. One of the most persistent beliefs of the industry is that its processes are so specialized that they cannot be handled by third-party software. And, even if third-party applications are purchased, they are often modified to such an extent that they became home-grown solutions.

This observation and similar ones are well known in the industry and yet too many insurers appear to be reluctant to act on this knowledge. The next future step is the evaluation of business and IT processes to determine what aspects of their operations could or should be in sourced, outsourced or co sourced in ways that provide not only cost reductions, but value enhancements as well.

This is possible today through the modeling of business processes into industry standard sets that can be further broken down into functional units called services. Once a company has developed a component based model of its business, it has, in fact, a common framework for discussing and acting on these issues.

2.5.5 Exploring initiatives for innovation

Jaffe (2009) suggests that the good news about the future of the life insurance industry is that life insurance is a product that will always be needed. The bad

news is that many, if not most, life insurance products already have or will become commodity products. Therefore, one of the key questions facing much of the life insurance industry in the year 2020 is how to survive in a commoditized market environment.

The report also suggests that companies that do well in a commoditized market tend to be very efficient operators or niche players. If a company elects to compete on price, then it must be a low cost manufacturer or it will not make money. However, in niche markets, price may not be the only or even the major factor driving a prospect's purchasing decision and being able to identify and connect with a particular niche market becomes of paramount importance.

While both the efficient operator and niche player approaches will work, they require different skills and attitudes in order to be successful. Efficient operators will probably be larger companies that can afford to invest in volume-related technology and are able to obtain volume related price discounts from suppliers. The efficient operators will also use very specific operating targets and have the discipline to stick to their plans. On the other hand, the niche players will be more market-oriented and will probably tend to be more creative.

2.5.6 Changing routes to market

The traditional life and pensions model in which policies are sold through intermediaries receiving a commission from the provider still prevails in countries like India and China. But even here its grip is loosening as new regulatory controls are introduced and more customers opt to self-serve or seek out fully impartial guidance.

It is believed that intermediaries will become less tied to insurers as adviser commissions are withdrawn in some markets and customers seek greater impartiality. This could leave life companies with little direct contact with the customer and put further pressure on margins. (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2012).

The change in fee structures is also likely to reduce the number of operators in the mass market. Some life and pensions companies may therefore look to build up their direct sales forces or strengthen their digital distribution capabilities. Others will seek to market their products through affinity or corporate channels. Examples include the extension of employee cover to families. This allows

policyholders to take advantage of economies of scale on price. In turn, your company could benefit from preferred access to a known customer segment.

Other examples include new web communities that not only negotiate discounts with providers, but also pool subscribers' contributions to pay for small claims.

The insurers' savings on the administrative costs of these claims can be passed on to the customers buying through the network. Even where agency channels still predominate, it will be crucial to think about how you engage with your customers and how they receive advice, as many customers will choose to augment face-to-face advice with information gleaned from the internet and social media. India and China are clear examples of markets where customers find it useful to research products online, but still feel more comfortable buying through an intermediary.

2.5.7 Repositioning your business

A more complex and fragmented sales, advice and service model is set to emerge as a result of the distribution disruption and customer revolution. This would require your business to judge whether it can most effectively compete as manufacturer, distributor or administrator and, if so, in which customer segments. The evolving value chain is likely to feature a number of loose collaborations and virtual networks. Examples might include generalists bringing in specialists to support their advice in areas such as financial and tax planning.

2.6 Insurance and ethics

Ethics and best practices are key words for governance in businesses. According to insurance stakeholders, the issue of compliance with ethics and best practices should govern market strategies and operations. Previous research and surveys shows that stakeholders have warned that the sector's efforts at achieving a more robust financial capacity would be rubbish if steps are not taken to address unethical practices and prevalence of fake institutions in the industry.

Insurance is a business based on trust. Hence, efforts are being made to abide by the prevailing rules and regulation of the Industry. Moreover, emphasis is being placed on quality assurance. We have seen collective resolve by underwriters, brokers, loss adjusters, and agents to ensure that funds injected into the sector are

safeguarded and used optimally through strict adherence to ethics of the profession.

Recent financial frauds in Mauritius such as the Whitedot International among others, there is the urgent need to place the bar high on ethics, governance and transparency on the agenda of authorities. Moreover, financial companies are facing pressures for compliance to ethics and professionalism.

Many ethical concerns exist because of this gap between consumer expectations and genuine insurable risk. For example, people are often disappointed, angry or disillusioned to find that the insurance they have been paying for does not cover a particular situation. This can leave consumers feeling that insurance is a poor economic value or a “rip-off”. Because of this difference between people expectations and what insurance provides, insurance can be said to be one of the most highly regulated industries in our country.

Unfortunately, there are times when the industry has not been a good corporate citizen. It has also been noted, that insurance industry has a history of discrimination, usurious prices and dishonest business practices.

On a closer look, insurance is a much needed product. Insurance, at its core, is a pooling of community risks. It is a formalized way for people to come together and help each other. For example, when we pay life insurance premiums we are putting our money together, not just to help ourselves but to help other families. When someone else dies, his family benefits because a payment can be made from this pool of premiums and investment income that arise from it. Insurance not only provides protection to the consumer, but also frees us to conduct business.

3. ANALYSIS

This chapter represents the representation and analysis of the gathered data through a survey. This process has been carried out in order to give a proper dimension of the information via graphical presentation and thus easing the flow for the conclusive part. The response at the resort was very motivating and after compiling all the questionnaires, 100 questionnaires will be taken into consideration so as to limit matters of biasness.

3.1 Demographic profiles

3.1.1 Gender

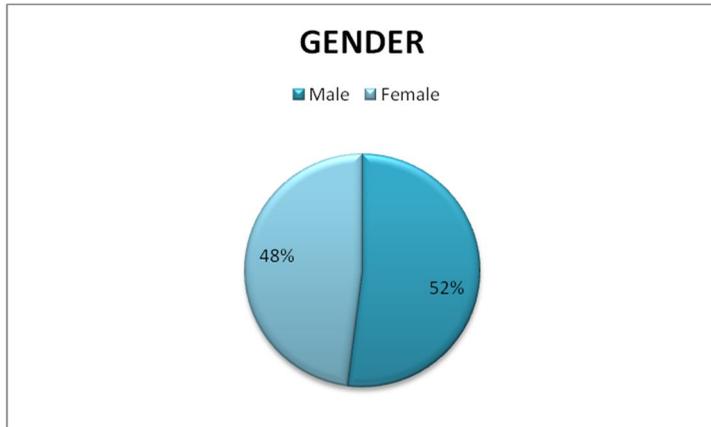


Figure 1

48 male repondents and 52 female repondents replied to the questionnaire.

3.1.2 Age

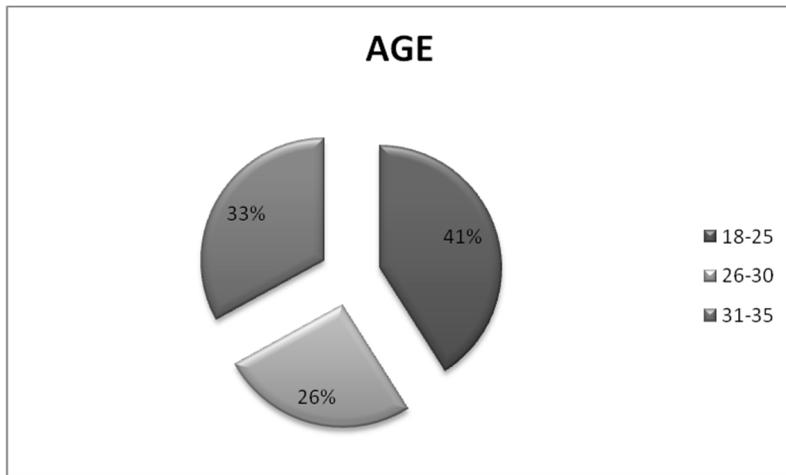


Figure 2

41 of the respondents were between 18-25 years. 26 of the respondents were between 26-30 years and 33 of the respondents were between 31-35. These ages are being chosen so as to get a better perspective of the needs and wants of the future generation.

3.1.3 Types of students

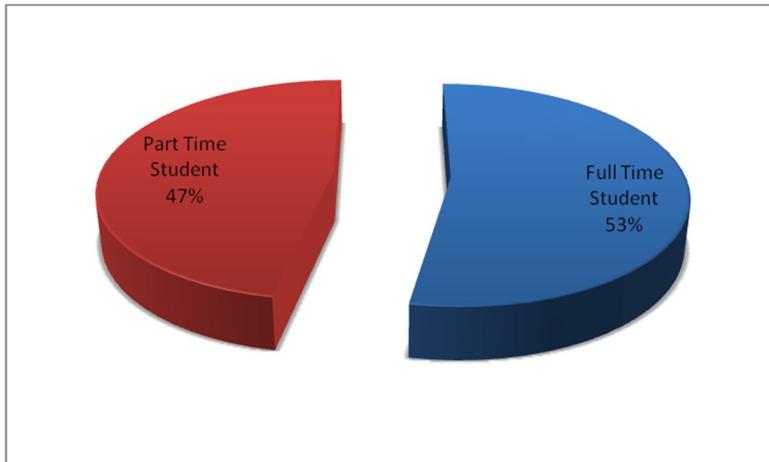


Figure 3

Both full time and part time students participated in this survey. This idea was adopted so as to get a larger view on how both working and non-working youngsters see insurance products and how they expect it to be in the future. 47 of them were part timers and 53 were full timers.

3.1.4 Marital status

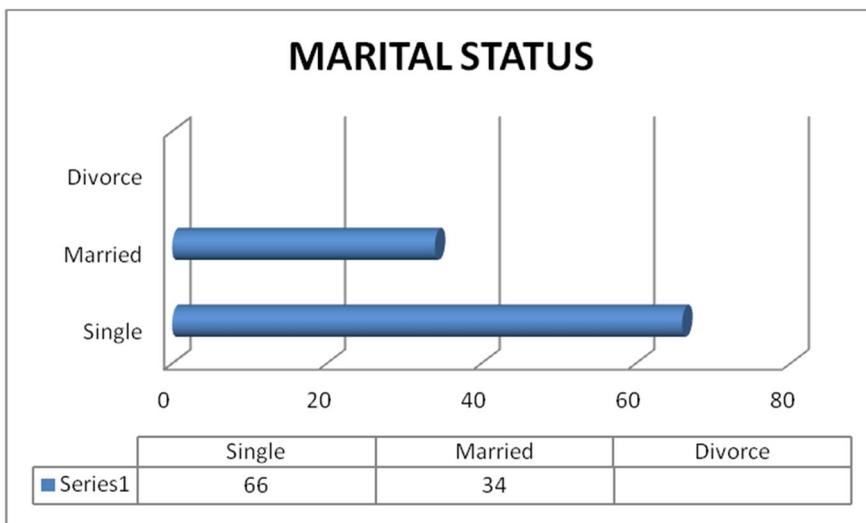


Figure 4

The majority of the respondents were of single status; 66% and 34% were married.

3.2 Insurance holders

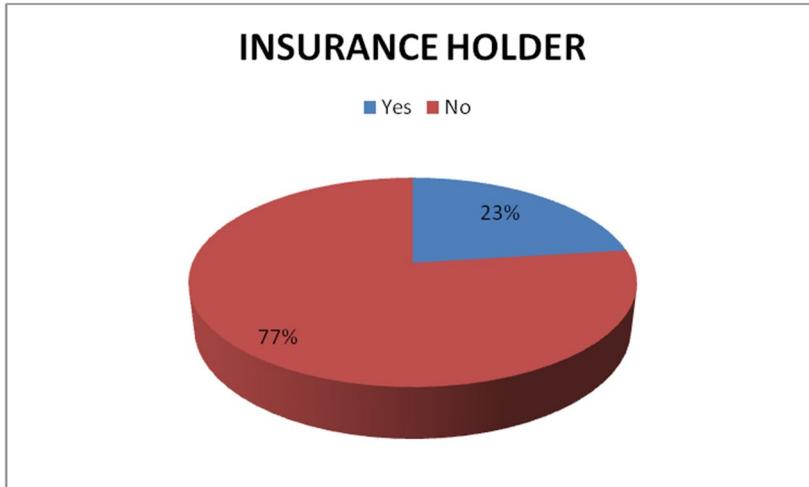


Figure 5

It was very surprising to note that only 23% of the respondents were insurance holders. This shows that insurance companies are not tapping in to the potential of these young people. This young generation can be of tremendous and rooted customers for insurance companies. We can say that the young generation does not perceive present insurance products as a worth while investments. This somehow shows that maybe the insurance companies are not devising proper insurance policies which will cater the needs and wants of the future generation.

3.3 Product satisfaction



Figure 6

The above diagram shows that the majority of the respondents are not satisfied with present insurance products that companies are delivering which again act as

a trigger alarm for more innovative products. 68% represents an overall dissatisfaction towards all insurance products. We can assume that these dissatisfaction somehow lies in ill proper use of technology and creative ideas.

3.4 Insurance policies and satisfaction

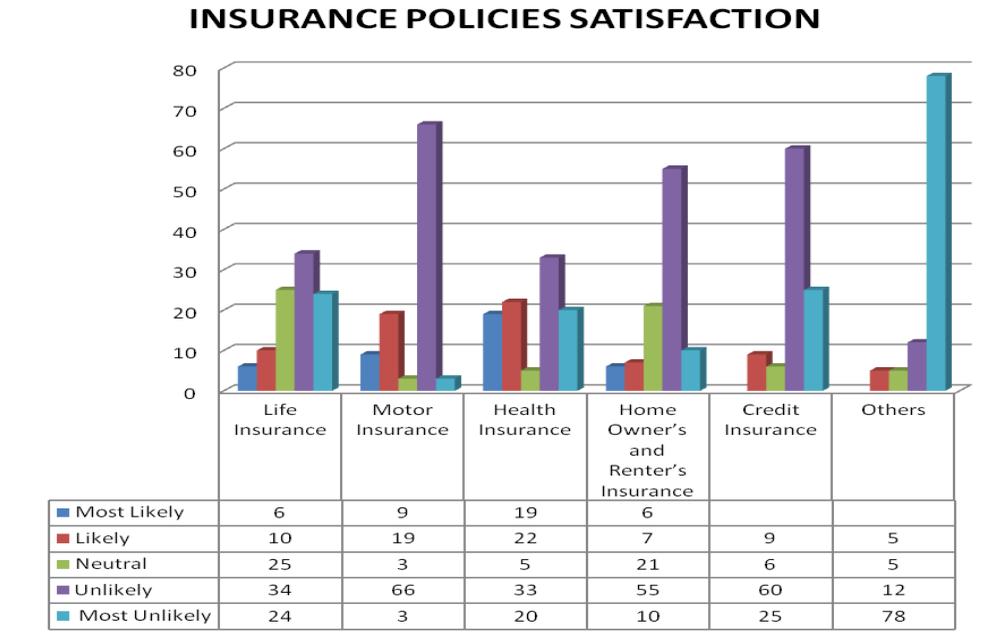


Figure 7

PERCEPTION OF YOUNGSTERS ON INSURANCE PRODUCTS

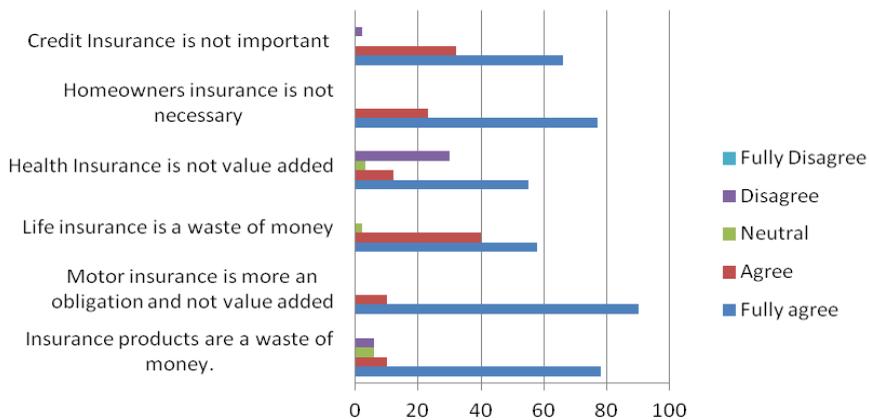


Figure 8

The diagrams above demonstrate more in depth the perception of youngsters towards each insurance products. For the life insurance policy, 58 respondents showed their dissatisfaction towards this policy. This shows that they no longer

view life insurance policy as a proper investment for mitigating risks. Money is being undervalued and it is at a much later stage that the money is gained. 88 respondents believe it is a waste of money. For motor insurance as well, 69% of the respondents disagreed towards this policy. 100% believe that motor insurance is more as an obligation for them instead of good investment. This shows that motor insurance policies need to be re worked so as it becomes more as an investment for individuals; instead of an obligation.

For health insurance, again the majority, are not satisfied with the scheme. However, we must take in to consideration that 41 respondents are likely satisfied with insurance products. This shows the potential of when it comes to this type of insurance, that insurance companies need to exploit the most. Risk factors concerning health touches all human beings, and insurance companies need to tailor made health insurance products in such a way to meet the needs and requirements of the young generation as they believe health insurance should be more of value added.

For the insurance policy of Home owner's and Renter's, again the majority are dissatisfied with the product as they believe that it is a waste of money for investing in concrete buildings which is not necessary. This perception can be so as Mauritius has not been victim of earthquakes and other calamities; however, flood has surely triggered a wakeup call.

More sensitization should be brought forward by insurance companies, in order to make the consumers gain awareness on unpredictable factors. Again, the majority did not approved as satisfying when it comes to credit insurance as they believe it is not important. This another time shows that there is a lack of creativity while designing products. Credit insurance should have been viewed as a value added investment that one will be contributing for minimizing credit risks. In general, it has been recorded that the majority are dissatisfied with the present insurances policies and they view it as a wastage of money rather than value-added.

3.5 Revamping insurance products

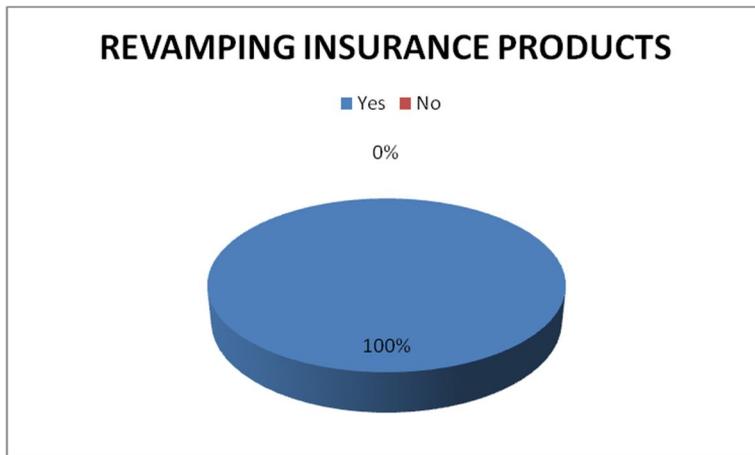


Figure 9

The diagram above shows that 100% approved the revamping insurance products. This demonstrates the lack of creativity and value added benefits in present policies. It can be said that there is a lack of the use of technology, studies on the needs of youngsters, demographic profiles etc.

3.6 Insurance systems

EVALUATING PRESENT INSURANCE SYSTEM

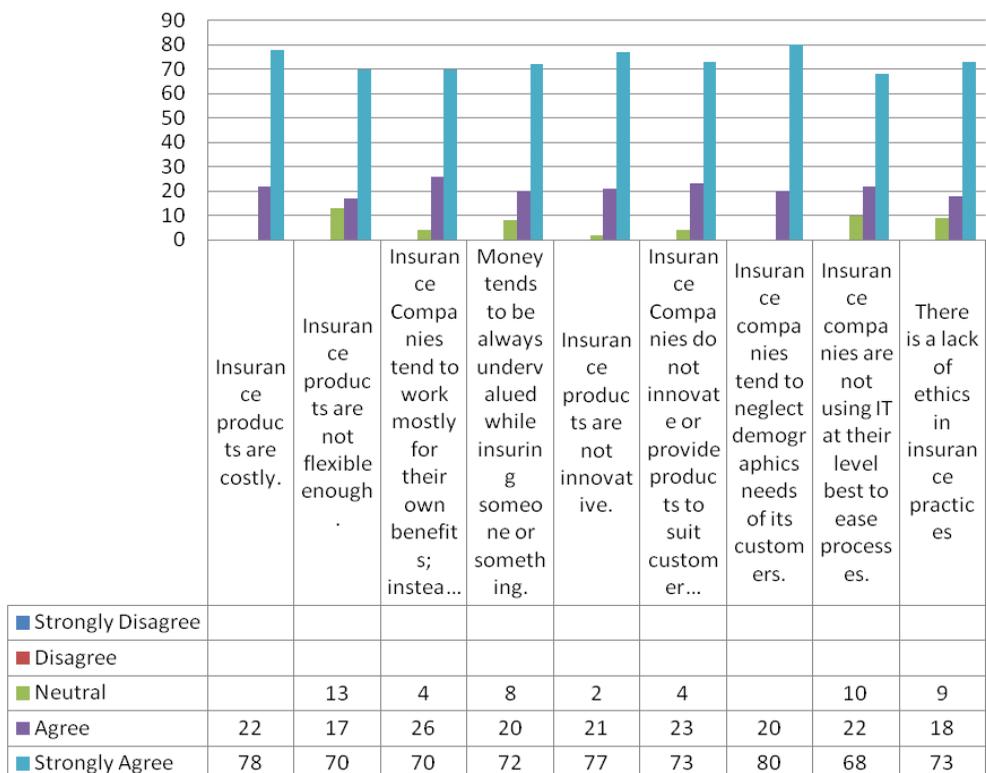


Figure 10

The diagram above shows the several challenges that insurance companies need to focus on. Insurance policies are being viewed as a costly investment for young people. The majority agreed on the lack of flexibility of the insurance policies. Being the main stakeholders of insurance companies, this young generation believes that insurance companies are working for their own benefits instead of catering for the needs of their customers. They also believe that when engaging themselves in a long term insurance planning, money tends to be undervalued.

This findings suggest in general that, this young generation do not find insurance policies as a proper investment for them. They believe that there is a lack when it comes to innovation of insurance products. It can be said that insurance products are like old wine in new bottles. Their products do not differ as per customers' needs. Demographic profiles are not being well studied by insurance companies; so it will be difficult to get hold of this new generation which is no longer gullible. Insurance companies must try to see the potential of the emerging market. The youngsters believe that there is a lack of technology in the processes of insurance companies. The majority agreed that there is lack of ethics in the practices of insurance companies.

As a conclusive note, it can be said that the above clearly shows the various loopholes that lies in the insurance products. Requirements and needs of youngsters have been identified. If all these points are being handled properly, it can be said there is light at the end of the tunnel.

3.7 Qualitative findings

Managers' View point on the future of insurance companies in meeting the changing needs of the young consumers

From the interview survey conducted within 10 Mauritian companies the below facts noted are discussed. It has been observed that the managers feel their present products are very satisfactory when it comes to meeting the needs of the young generation. However, the contrary has been noted from the youngsters' responses. They have stipulated that they are using promotional techniques to sensitize young people; yet young people are very skeptical about insurance products. This may be so because insurance companies are not being aggressive enough in their marketing techniques.

All the managers agreed that technology can help them in business growth. However, on a closer analysis we will note that technologies are not being exploited to its full potential in the internal processes of the business. Most of the managers replied that they use Facebook and other social networks for marketing of their products and to be able to reach the young people; however; on these social websites these companies are not aggressive enough.

From the 10 insurance Managers interviewed all of them foresee a revolutionized insurance industry through advanced technologies. Managers are all of the views that that information technology and social media will play an integral part of insurance marketing strategies as technology will be the pillar that will attract and maintained the new generation.

The maximum use of portal will be made for checking of profiles of customers and updates on policies. E-insurance will be a key competitive player. Insurance products will be sold online. Online platform will be used to pay premium and for additional services. SMS or mobile insurance will gained the market. Payment, product information and updates could be obtained. Insurance Managers go beyond stating that interactive session between customers and financial advisers could be held through social networking and replace teleservices in the future. Technology could not only alter insurance products but working methods of the industry as well.

Financial advisers would be available 24 hr/24 hrs at a click. Most corporate executives recognize the value of innovation, but few would be brave enough to boast of clearly understanding the process of implementing innovation in a business model, and even fewer of successfully integrating continuous cycles of innovation in their own companies.

According to them, that is not necessarily a mark of failure, but a recognition of reality. For a successful business, a commitment to innovation represents a gamble as to whether the innovation, if successful, will adversely affect the existing business or represent a substantial increase or improvement in the business.

In the insurance industry, it is difficult to implement a differentiation strategy on the insurance product but companies have to differentiate on the service and brand name. Mauritian enterprises differentiate on the below factors:

- **Speed of delivery**-is a benefit that most consumers value and are willing to pay extra for. If your company is able to services to the consumer faster than the competition speed of delivery might be the competitive advantage that's worth pursuing. This is a great way to differentiate, for example a request for a quotation cannot take more than 48 hours.
- **Availability**-Insurance companies make the best to be available to customer queries and implement a great communication strategy to create awareness. A brand that is readily available in more places than the competition could turn availability into a competitive advantage.
- **Loyalty programs**-is a great way to generate repeat purchase and build a solid customer base. Moreover, rewards can create brand preference particularly when the products are not easily differentiated. For examples, pay-off to claims should be within days or weeks.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Insurance products protect individuals and businesses against a wide range of risks - everything through to provision for a financially more secure future. By reducing the impact of any problems, the insurance industry allows people to bear risks with greater peace of mind. In this way a thriving market for insurance products in Mauritius underpins the everyday lives of private individuals, the transactions of business and the ethical conduct of our government policy.

This is a crucial industry which provides a service to society without which the burden would fall to the individual or the state. The financial crisis has served to heighten consumers' views that the world is a far riskier place and there is a greater need to protect what is valuable to them and provide for those that they hold dearest. Like many other countries, we have not been immune to the financial crisis but although we are in the heart of financial services the insurance industry has weathered the storm well compared to other sectors. There has been a great deal said and written about regulation across financial sectors, most of it

critical. It needs to be said that the prudential regulation of the insurance industry has proved to be successful in a period of extreme volatility in financial markets.

Further to the analysis undertaken in section 4, hereunder are some recommendations for a better regulated insurance sector to the underlying ethical values and principles crucial to our insurance services sector

4.1 Business ethics

The Insurance industry is an ideal example of the use of “grey areas” in the culture of business ethics. The field of insurance the use of business ethics couldn't be of greater importance than the companies that provide the actual policies themselves. Even with all of the regulations the Insurance Department puts on the insurance companies, agents, brokers, and adjusters there are still areas where discrepancies in the code of business practices exist. We will explain some of the insurance company's ways of motivation, monetary compensation, underwriting rules, business strategies, and the “grey areas” or lack of business ethics of the professional agents and brokers who sell their products.

A very important role for a good business is enhanced by the ethics. Insurers should appreciate that ethics represent a key aspect for business success. Obviously, the insurance field into a competition market must follow all the aspects related to ethics. The ethics should be an essential element of every insurance company management. If we talk about ethics in insurance we must mention all the generated relations between the insurance company and persons/companies/ organizations that it comes into contact. Distribution channels also should follow the ethics principles. The principles that should guide the activity of an insurance agent in the moment he presents an insurance policy are honesty, respect towards other persons or property. Even if these principles seem to be just a theory, the usage of them in the daily activity represents premise of business success.

4.2 Information technology

Social media and the internet are important tools of communication. Current insurance products and distribution methods do not fit well in those vehicles, but progress is being made. Online tools are becoming more robust, and insurers are

beginning to approach the Internet and social media as a primary channel, rather than just another place to post material developed for other media.

This change in approach, while subtle and still not prevalent for insurers, may be the first tentative step to making progress in reaching the middle market. Advances in analytics are already allowing insurance businesses to develop a better understanding of their risks and price more keenly. But we've only been scratching the surface up until now. The most important differentiator is going to be how to extract customer profiling data from all the purchasing, social media and other digital trails people leave. A lot of this information is unstructured, and new techniques are emerging to analyse this data. For example, transactional data is being used to find out where and what customers buy to determine 'well-being' scores, which can then be used to identify whether they are a good risk.

Analysis of these rich sources of data would allow you to develop a clear and comprehensive profile of the health, wealth and behaviour of the customer before he or she applies, saving all the form filling and verification needed. This would in turn allow you to target particular customers and offer instant online cover.

4.3 Financial literacy and responsibility

The process of buying insurance, or investing in a savings product, is often seen as too difficult by individual consumers, with the result that even those who know they should do something take no action. Relatively simple changes, such as setting defaults as to what will happen if an individual does not take action, can have a big impact on take-up.

It is hoped that the introduction of auto-enrolment for workplace pensions, where the default will be to be in the scheme, will help ensure that more

4.4 Dealing with evolving risks

Mauritius is facing substantial changes to society and its environment, which will impact the level and nature of the risks it faces. Climate change and an ageing

population are among the most immediate of these. We are proposing that the factors of natural calamities should be included insurance policies to avoid any bad surprise as was the case of flash flood of 30 March 2013.

4.5 Accessibility and flexibility

The development of low cost and easy-to understand and compare policies will be crucial in filling the gaps created by the withdrawal of social welfare and defined benefits plans.

Some life companies may be reluctant to devote too much investment to what they see as low-margin business. But it isn't just low-income policyholders who want simplicity. Youngsters are using the internet and social media to compare and buy products, with direct-to-consumer life policies likely to be a key growth area.

4.6 Repositioning the insurance business

A more complex and fragmented sales, advice and service model is set to emerge as a result of the distribution disruption and customer revolution. This would require your business to judge whether it can most effectively compete as manufacturer, distributor or administrator and, if so, in which customer segments. The evolving value chain is likely to feature a number of loose collaborations and virtual networks. Examples might include generalists bringing in specialists to support their advice in areas such as financial and tax planning.

4.7 Life insurance

The life industry has tried to tap the potential of the middle market for many years, but that market remains underinsured, and overall life insurance ownership has reached historic lows. The higher inflation rates eroded household financial conditions, making life insurance protection even more important at exactly the time people have less money available to address the need.

The life insurance industry is undergoing a period of profound change that is reshaping the retail distribution landscape. Call it creative destruction, a tipping point or a paradigm shift, the means by which carriers engage with prospects and customers provide advice, sell products and support policyholder relationships

will look fundamentally different in 2020 than it does today. Two large-scale demographic shifts and the digital revolution are forcing carriers to make a critical strategic choice as they prepare for tomorrow's markets.

Then they must determine how they will reposition, retool and restructure their distribution models (including traditional agencies) to serve those segments. This is a strategic reckoning that cannot be deferred. For one reason, the process of retooling distribution networks is a long-term process and there is an advantage for first movers. Secondly, and more critically, insurers who fail to act risk falling behind as they become mere providers of commoditized products in a market looking for personalization. Certainly, carriers must avoid the strategic miscues of the past such as missing out on the rising asset accumulation market that arose as baby boomers worked through their most productive years and that were seized by the mutual fund industry.

The bad news is that many, if not most, life insurance products will become commodity products. Therefore, one of the key questions facing much of the life insurance industry in the year 2020 is how to survive in a commoditized market environment.

Companies that do well in a commoditized market tend to be very efficient operators or niche players. If a company elects to compete on price, then it must be a low cost manufacturer or it will not make money. However, in niche markets, price may not be the only or even the major factor driving a prospect's purchasing decision and being able to identify and connect with a particular niche market becomes of paramount importance.

While both the efficient operator and niche player approaches will work, they require different skills and attitudes in order to be successful. Efficient operators will probably be larger companies that can afford to invest in volume-related technology and are able to obtain volume related price discounts from suppliers. The efficient operators will also use very specific operating targets and have the discipline to stick to their plans.

4.8 Health insurance

Private health care is becoming more prominent in Mauritius. There are 17 private clinics in the country, providing primary and specialist services, high-tech diagnostic services, renal dialysis and most recently cardiac surgery. These private sector facilities have over 600 beds. There are 413 registered private doctors, some working with the private clinics and others working from their private premises. There are 20 private medical laboratories which cover different pathological tests and other services.

As private household out-of-pocket payments for medical services have risen, private health insurance options have become more popular among Mauritian employers and citizens. The All in one family policy seems to be favourite among respondents. However, it is recommended that pre-existing diseases should be also covered.

4.9 Motor insurance

Motor insurance cover varies from companies. Given that several factors are taken into account when calculating insurance premium as mentioned below, customers shopped around a lot before deciding on the best comprehensive or third party policy.

- Age
- Driving history (Number and costs of accident made)
- Insurance History
- Value of the car
- Brand and car specification of the car (accessories)
- Driving experience
- Purposes for which the Motor Vehicle will be used
and
- whether it will be kept in a garage

The market of this type of insurance seems highly competitive. It was noted from findings that, cheapest policies might not be the best option. Conditions attached and reputation of the company matters to the customers. Hence, the need is for greater transparency in providing information to clients. More so,

with the disaster of the recent flash flood, customers are looking forward to motor insurance policies covering natural calamities.

4. CONCLUSION

Our recommendations should not be broken off and implemented piecemeal. To maximise their effectiveness they should be taken forward as a package. The recommendations put forward complement each other, build on each other's strengths, and together create a virtuous circle.

The ultimate objective is for:

- (a) a stronger Mauritian insurance industry that will be equipped efficiently to competes globally,
- (b) consumers who are more confident, engaged and informed, and
- (c) through a combination of these, a Government more able to respond effectively to future social and economic challenges.

Key attributes that will define competition and help insurance business keep pace with changing needs includes:

- Speed of decision making and agility to respond
- Clear insights into where in the complex new value chain they are best able to compete
- Using the latest developments in technology to enhance customer profiling, reduce costs and improve customer experience
- Using new technology to industrialise routine underwriting, sharpen their analytical capabilities and release talent to focus on high-growth markets and deal with more complex risks
- And to make sure they get the benefit from this, being able to communicate value clearly and convincingly to analysts and investors

Internet will bring forth the promise of significant increase in social welfare. Internet will reshape the distribution and funding of insurance products. By lowering transaction costs with less intermediation associated with delivery, the nature of insurance products will change significantly. Overall, internet and

technological advancements will enhance the efficiency of the insurance markets and benefits consumers by lowering costs.

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Appendix 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Participant,

We are part-time students of the University of Mauritius and enrolled for the course *MBA Financial Management*. We are participating in an FSC competition on Insurance Sector in 2020.

We would be very grateful if you could please allocate us a little time of yours and participate in this survey. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, you can withdraw from the survey at any point. It is very important for us to learn your opinions. All information given will be highly confidential and it will only be used for this dissertation.

We thank you in advance for your precious time and cooperation.

Kind Regards

Aumeer Soorayah

Murdan Ruma

Rughoobur Soujata

MBA Financial Management

University of Mauritius



Section A: Consumer satisfaction towards the present Insurance Products.

1. Are you a holder of an insurance policy?

Yes No

2. Are you satisfied with the types of insurance products that insurance companies offer?

Yes No

3. On a scale of most likely to most unlikely, please rate the following statement, which insurance products are up to your satisfaction and suit your needs.

1: Most Likely 2: Likely 3: Neutral 4: Unlikely 5: Most Unlikely

	1	2	3	4	5
Life Insurance					
Motor Insurance					
Health Insurance					
Home Owner's and Renter's Insurance					
Credit Insurance					
Others					

4. On a scale of most likely to most unlikely, please rate the following statements relating to the categories of insurance products

1: Fully agree 2: agree 3: Neutral 4: disagree 5: fully disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
Insurance products are a waste of money.					
Motor insurance is more an obligation and not value added					
Life insurance is a waste of money					
Health Insurance is not value added					
Homeowners insurance is not necessary					
Credit Insurance is not important					

5. Do you feel that these insurance products need to be revamped?

Yes

No

6. On a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree, please rate the following statement.

1: Strongly Disagree 2: Disagree 3: Neutral 4: Agree 5: Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Insurance products are costly					
Insurance solutions are ineffective.					
Insurance Companies tend to work mostly for their own benefits; instead of creating better products for customers?					
Money tends to be always undervalued while insuring someone or something.					
Insurance products are not innovative.					
Insurance Companies do not innovate or provide products to suit customer needs.					
Insurance companies tend to neglect demographics needs of its customers.					
Insurance companies are not using IT at their level best to ease processes.					
There is a lack of ethics in insurance practices					

7. In your opinion, what improvements should be brought to insurance products to be more innovative and meet the requirements of your generation?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Demographic Profile

8. Gender

Male

Female

9. Types Of Students

Full- time Student

Part-time Student

10. Age

18- 25

26-30

31-35

11. Marital Status

Single

Married

Divorced

Appendix 2

Questionnaire for Manager

1. How do you foresee the insurance sector in Mauritius?

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2. What are the new techniques of marketing you use?

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3. Do you think the use of technology can help your business grow?

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.....
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4. Do you use social media including smart phone, facebook etc..?

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5. What are your future plans about new novelty insurance products?

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.....
.....

6. How do you think young people can be more aware and keen about insurance products?

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.....
.....

7. Do you have a code of ethics? How do you implement and what is its importance?

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.....

8. Are there any recommendations you can make for a better insurance industry?

.....
.....
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