MARKETING SKILLS AND PROMOTION AS A SUSTAINABILITY OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES AMONG SELECTED SMEs IN IKEJA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF LAGOS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study ascertained marketing skills on promotion as sustainability of small and medium scale enterprise performance. Survey research design was employed and questionnaire was used as research instrument. Simple random sampling technique was used to select one hundred and fifty (150) entrepreneurs and staff of selected small and medium scale enterprise in Ikeja area of Lagos state. One hundred and forty-five (145) copies of the questionnaire were fully completed and returned. Simple percentage was employed to analyse the responses of the questionnaire while Pearson Moment Correlation was used to test the hypotheses formulated. It was found that there was significant effect of relationship of marketing skills, book-keeping marketing skills and communication marketing skills on small and medium scale enterprise performance. It was recommended that sales promotion objectives of enterprises should determine its promotional strategy and that in order to achieve the objectives of developing favourable association as well as to impress customers; a suitable strategy should be designed to promote the image of the particular business.

Keywords: *Marketing Skills, Promotion, Small and Medium Scale Enterprise Sustainability*

1. INTRODUCTION

Marketing is a process used by companies to communicate with the consumer and make him knowledgeable about the various features of their products and services. It is an essential part of attracting the target buyers to a particular product. Companies use various innovative or tried-and-tested techniques to stay ahead of their competitors and make their place in the market. Indeed, as the global business environment has become increasingly competitive, ensuring long-term organizational performance has become a very difficult task. For Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), the capability to put in place appropriate marketing skills (MS) practices has long been deemed a key strategic differentiator and means of achieving high and sustained performance and leverage over competitors (Agbola, 2018). marketing skills (MS) practices are associated with marketing activities of firms which are small and resource constrained, making such firms to rely on creative and often unsophisticated marketing tactics that make heavy use of personal networks (Nabamita & Deepraj, 2019).

This implies that marketing skills (MS) practices are an integrative process designed to innovatively apply the collective knowledge and resources of the firm to market related needs of the business to enable the business to add value to its goods and services and meet competitive demands. Marketing skills (MS) are associated with marketing activities of firms like SMEs which are small and resource constrained, making such firms to rely on creative and often unsophisticated marketing tactics that make heavy use of personal networks (Naelati & SobrotulImti, 2018). This implies that marketing skills are an integrative process designed to innovatively apply the collective knowledge, skills, and resources of the firm to market related needs of the business to enable the business add value to its goods and services and meet competitive demands. As opined by Itodo (2019) marketing skills must in addition involve a process by which firms derive strategies to enable them anticipate and respond innovatively to

the dynamic business environment, adding that such efforts inevitably improve the competitiveness of business firms and eventually their performances. Marketing skills have been identified as one of the most important key ingredients for superior performance and global competitiveness in SMEs (Junde, 2018). Firm promotion the strategic outcomes that organizations use to realize its goals has therefore been established as a focal phenomenon in business studies.

Aremu and Lawal (2017) argue that strategy is a pattern of resource allocation decisions made throughout an organization. By implication, strategy is seen as both desired goals and beliefs about what are acceptable and most critically unacceptable means for achieving them. Aremu et al, (2017) considered strategy as the analysis of the market and its environment as well as customer buying behaviour, competitive activities and the need and capabilities of marketing intermediaries.

Typical marketing strategy starts with market research, in which needs and attitudes and competitors' products are assessed and continues through into advertising, promotion, distribution and where applicable, customer servicing, packaging, sales and distribution. Marketing strategy also focuses on delivering greater value to customers in particular Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) at a lower cost as well as providing a quality product that satisfies customer needs, offering affordable price and engaging in wider distribution and back it up with effective promotion strategy.

SMEs constitute the most viable and veritable vehicle for self-sustaining industrial development. More also, SMEs in developing Countries, like Nigeria are struggling to survive amidst intense competition arising from domestic and international enterprises. Oyebamiji, et al (2018) opined that Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria have not performed creditably well and hence have not played the expected vital and vibrant role in the economic growth and development of Nigeria. They note that the situation has been of great concern to the government, citizenry, operators, and practitioners. These challenges could be as a result of perceived ineffective marketing strategy, which is having negative effect on the organization's performance, product quality, customer satisfaction and profitability. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) operators need to provide a quality product with good packaging that satisfies customer needs, offering affordable price and engaging in wider distribution and back it up with effective promotion strategy in order to survive the pressure from global market competitive environment.

Promotion of SMEs is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon that has been established to directly depend on efficient marketing practices. Enhancing business performance through appropriate marketing skills is of increasing interest to all businesses (Kelson, 2018). The success or non - performance of SMEs rests in part on the nature and types of marketing skills they put in place for their businesses (Ediri, 2018). Competitiveness, considered to be a subset of the broader concept of organizational success is a fundamental feature for survival and sustainability as performance factors like appropriate marketing skills practices have been found to spur business expansion, sales growth, customer satisfaction and return on investment in all classes of SMEs (Itodo, 2019). Prior research efforts (Eniola, Entebang & Sakariyau, 2019) suggest that sound marketing practices are an important contributor to competitiveness in business. To this end, Taiwo (2019) conclude that marketing skills practices have a significant impact on the promotion of SMEs variables as they interact with different components to facilitate performance. It is therefore clear that there is a strong correlation between marketing skills and promotion of SMEs.

Observation shows by scholars that the emphasis of successive Nigerian governments have been on providing finances for entrepreneurial firms (Asikhia, 2015; Sanusi, 2018) with little

or no emphasis on how they can exploit their marketing advantage in the marketplace. Despite the implementation of various financing schemes by government, failure rate among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) is very high (Asikhia, 2010; Sanusi, 2018). Eighty per cent of SMEs in the country folded up before their fifth year anniversary (Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria, SMEDAN, 2008 in Asikhia, 2015). This suggested that the challenges plaguing SMEs in Nigeria are more than financing but include managerial skills and entrepreneurial capacity (Sanusi, 2018) and marketing problem (Asikhia, 2015; Sanusi, 2018). Asikhia (2015) identified marketing gap as a factor contributing to the failure of SMEs in Nigeria. Similarly, a marketing gap was also identified in most of the micro and small energy enterprises surveyed in some East African countries and it was concluded that without a dedicated marketing support to the entrepreneurs they may not break even or grow (Clough, 2019). Generally, there is much emphasis on marketing in large organizations (Hills & Hultman, 2019), with marketing in new and small ventures facing some problems (Kraus, Harms & Fink, 2019). Thus, marketing skills underscores that entrepreneurs should rely on marketing as a critical function in their firms, which can foster innovation and creativity as well as organizational competitive edge. It was against this backdrop that this study was embarked upon to ascertain Marketing skill and promotion of small and medium scale enterprise in Ikeja local government area of Lagos State.

The main objective of this study is to ascertain the impact of marketing skills and promotion as sustainability of small and medium scale enterprise in Ikeja local government of Lagos state. Other specific objectives are to: i. Establish the impact of relationship marketing skills on productive quality of small and medium scale enterprise. ii. Determine the impact of book-keeping marketing skills on sustainability of small and medium scale enterprise. iii. Determine the impact of communication marketing skills on customer patronage of small and medium scale enterprise. The following research questions were posed for the study: i. what is the impact of relationship marketing skills on productive quality of small and medium scale enterprise? ii. What is the impact of book-keeping marketing skills on profitability of small and medium scale enterprise? iii. What is the impact of communication marketing skills on customer patronage of small and medium scale enterprise? The following research hypotheses were formulated: Ho_1: There is no significant impact of relationship marketing skills on productive quality of small and medium scale enterprise; Ho_2: There is no significant impact of book-keeping marketing skills on profitability of small and medium scale enterprise; Ho_3: There is no significant impact of communication marketing skills on customer patronage of small and medium scale enterprise.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Kotler, (2015) defines marketing skills as "the science and art of exploring, creating, and delivering value to satisfy the needs of a target market at a profit. Marketing identifies unfulfilled needs and desires. It defines measures and quantifies the size of the identified market and the profit potential. It pinpoints which segments the company is capable of serving best and it designs and promotes the appropriate products and services." Julie, (2019) Marketing skills is traditionally the means by which an organization communicates to connect with and engages its target audience to convey the value of and ultimately sell its products and services. However, since the emergence of digital media, in particular social media and technology innovations, it has increasingly become more about companies building deeper, more meaningful and lasting relationships with the people that they want to buy their products and services. The ever-increasingly fragmented world of media complicates marketers' ability to connect and, at the same, time presents incredible opportunity to forge new territory.

Bianco and Henrich (2016) Marketing skills include research, targeting, communications (advertising and direct mail) and often public relations. Marketing is to sales as plowing is to planting for a farmer—it prepares an audience to receive a direct sales pitch. Blodgett, (2015) Marketing is an ongoing communications exchange with customers in a way that educates, informs and builds a relationship over time. The overtime part is important because only over time can trust be created. With trust, a community builds organically around products and services and those customers become as excited about the products as you are — they become advocates, loyal evangelists, repeat customers and often, friends. Marketing is really a great way to identify what grabs people and gets them excited about a brand, it the best part and build great friendships in the process. Bloomberg (2018) explained that marketing skills was "meeting the needs of your customer at a profit." For me that definition extends beyond just communicating product features. Marketers are responsible for a 360-degree experience. For example, in the social media world, a customer's Twitter needs may differ from her needs to "play with the brand" in terms of a social game promotion. Every customers touch point from customer service to sales to accounting and more, are part of the "new marketing." Path, (2017) Marketing is a strategy of the business – its value proposition, goes to market strategy, and brand positioning and image to the world. Marketing when not done well is (b) an endless checklist of advertising and promotional to-dos that can never be completed. Marketing in the twenty-first century must be (c) largely, but not entirely, measurable and accountable around driving business goals.

Burgess, (2019) Marketing is the process by which a firm profitably translates customer needs into revenue. Buyer, (2017) sees marketing as matching the right message/cause to the right person. Finding someone who has a personal connection with the products, services or cause in a way that is unobtrusive and inviting, marketing can be as simple as networking at an event or as complex as a multi-million-dollar global campaign that integrates print, digital, PR, social media and broadcast, delivering a specific message with one unified goal. Some of the best marketing outcomes come from the simplest initiatives. Keeping it simple is sometimes the best strategy. Cohen, (2019) marketing attracts consumers' scarce resources, attention and disposable income, to drive profitable revenues. Marketing is the process of getting a product or service from a company to its end customers, from product development, through to the final sale and post purchase support. To this end, marketing strategy consists of business goals, target customers, marketing strategies, marketing tactics and related metrics. As a function, marketing extends across the customer's entire purchase process including research, engagement, purchase, post-purchase (including supplemental support and returns) and advocacy.

It is necessary to first understand the concept of promotion. Promotion is defined as all activities undertaken to communicate and promote products or services to the target market. These activities include advertising, public relations, personal selling, sales promotion, exhibitions, brochures and demonstrations etc (Mbaga, 2016). According to Kotler and Armstrong (2018) promotion is important to communicate customer value by creating awareness of the product existence and characteristics. Promotion informs customers on the products availability in the market. According to Agbonifoh, Nnolim and Nkamnebe, (2017), sales promotion is a direct inducement which offers an extra value or incentive for product to the sales force, distributors, or the ultimate consumers. With this we realize that sales promotion should be directed to the sales force, middlemen and the ultimate consumer. Sales promotion includes tools for consumer promotion (for example samples, coupons, prize, cash refund, price pack, warranties, demonstrations, contest); trade promotion (for example buying allowances, free goods, merchandise allowances, co-operative advertising, advertising and display allowances, dealer sales contests); and sales-force promotion (for example bonuses, contests, sales rallies).

Mkanda (2019) defined sales promotion as to consist of a collection of incentives, tools, mostly short designed to stimulate quicker or greater purchase of a particular product or service by consumers or trade. Sales promotion also consists of a collection of incentives, tools, mostly short term designed to stimulate quicker or greater purchase of a particular product or service by consumers or trade (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Sales promotion also refers to any extra incentive manufacturers, retailers, and even not-for-profit organizations use that could serve to change a brand's perceived price or value temporarily (Shimp, 2018). For examples many offers in the markets notice such as promotion whereby discount is provided up to 50% and many other schemes are designed to attract customers to buy certain products. All these re incentives offered by manufacturers or dealers to increase the sales of their goods; These incentives may be in the form of free samples, gifts, discount coupons, demonstrations, show, and contests and among others. All these measures normally motivate the customers to buy more and thus, it increases sales of the product. The literature provides several definitions of sales promotion. Kotler (2016) describes sales promotion as adverse collection of incentive tools, mostly short-term, designed to stimulate quicker and/or greater purchase of particular brand, products, or service by consumers or the traders. He added that sales promotion had more impact at mature stage of a product and that product managers might try to stimulate sales by modifying one or more marketing mix elements.

According to Watson and Dafna (2018) small and medium scale performance is the achieving of set entrepreneurial goals. In addition, Perren (2019) argues small and medium scale performance utilizes the available opportunities to grow the business idea. However, small and medium scale performance can be measured subjectively and objectively; absolute performance is used to measure objective values using quantitative data while subjective values uses qualitative data by asking perceptive views about performance. Entrepreneurial performance can be seen from the level of sales, profitability, rate of return of capital, the rate of turnover and gained market share (Polder, 2015). Dooley and O'Sullivan (2019) uses 3 indicators for performance measurement of efficiency, growth, and profit, the business performance is the phenomenon of multiple aspects that are difficult to quantify. A variety of the literature shows that both quantitative and qualitative indicators have limitations and are recommended to be used interchangeably. Measuring quantitatively such as ROI, profit, sales, and so on, while the qualitative measurements are often called as performance indicators, performance measurement is by using the approach a certain scale of performance variables such as knowledge and business experience, the ability to offer quality products and services, the capacity to develop new products and processes, the ability to manage and work in groups, labor productivity, and corporate responsibility to the environment.

While Ezeani (2017) using performance effort represented by the growth venture consisting of sales growth, the growth of the company's assets, and profit growth. Studies in small and medium enterprises, business performance measurement approach typically uses a mixture of (financial and non - financial), but difficulties arose three managers or owners of small and medium enterprises are not willing or object to provide information a robust performance data. Akindamola (2019) posit that the success of a business is due to many factors, but the greatest determinant of a business's success is the entrepreneur him/herself. People who start up and run businesses need to know their own strengths and weaknesses because "entrepreneurship involves the ability to build a 'founding team' with complementary skills and talents" However, agreement is yet to be reached among various authors on the definition of success especially in the context of new business ventures, hence there is no universally accepted definition. Firm performance is a focal, complex and multidimensional phenomenon in business studies and it is used to refer to the firm's success in the market, which may have different outcomes. Performance can be characterized as the firm's ability to create acceptable outcomes and

actions. In business studies, the concept of success is often used to refer to a firm's financial performance (Islam, Khan, Obaidullah & Alam, 2016). The success of entrepreneurship has also been reported to be largely dependent on individual and or situational variables (Owoseni & Akanbi, 2015). Success has been defined in various dimensions by different scholars. In most studies in Nigeria, business success was defined as surviving the first two or three years that the company was in business (Owoseni & Akanbi, 2015).

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The study dwells on assimilation contrast theory which examines how external reference prices influence consumers' internal reference price and subsequent promotion evaluations. An external reference price may be introduced through a price advertisement or in-store communication that features both the lower promotional price and the higher regular price and, thus, documents the savings associated with the lower promotional price. As per assimilation contrast theory, an external reference price that is moderately higher than a consumer's internal reference price is perceived as plausible and assimilated. This assimilation effect results in a shift of the internal reference price toward the higher external reference price and a corresponding increase in favorability of promotion evaluations. However, if the external reference price vastly exceeds the highest expected regular price, it is likely to be perceived as unbelievable and hence contrasted with internal price standards. Studies based on adaptation level theory have shown that promotional advertisements that include the external reference price produce larger perception of savings than advertisements that include only the lower promotional price (Blair and Landon, 2019). Researchers have found that although very high external reference prices are somewhat discounted, they still manage to raise consumer perceptions about the value of a price promotion (Urbany, Bearden and Weilbaker, 2018). Blair and Landon (2019) found that promotional advertisements, which included the higher regular price along with the lower promotional price, produced larger perceptions of savings than advertisements that included only the lower promotional price. The authors found that subjects were skeptical of high external reference price claims and typically believed that these price claims were about 25% higher than the true prices. The greater was the percentage difference between the promotional price and the advertised regular price, the less believable was the external reference price.

Empirical Review

The relationship between marketing skills and sales promotion on organization performance is controversial. The nature of the impact is inconclusive. While some authors believed that the impact of marketing skills and sales promotion on organization effectiveness is minimal and non-significant (Dekimpe, 2019), others believe that the impact is high and significant (Odunlami and Ogunsiji, 2016). Organization effectiveness in this study is defined by higher sales volume and profitability.

Some of the recent studies include Pauwels (2017) which examined the permanent impact of sales promotion on accumulative annual sales for the two product categories which include storable and perishable products. Their findings show that perishable and storable product categories lack permanent effects of sales promotion. Furthermore, it is revealed that effects of sales promotion are short lived and persist only on average 2 weeks and at most eight weeks for both product categories. The research's results prove the common concept that sales promotion makes only benefits which are temporary for the established brands.

The result of Dekimpe (2019) also shows that there is rarely any permanent effect of sales promotions on the volume of sales. Their findings proved that sales promotion does not change the structure of sales over the long run. They suggest that the diminishing impact of sales

promotion may be because of choice of brand, quantity which is purchased and category incidence such as energy crisis. Pauwels (2017) are of the opinion that when a consumer is exposed to a sales promotion offer majority of the time, the consumer has already purchased and practiced a particular brand so the impact of learning form the that purchase is minimal and is easily balanced by a simultaneous and similar competitive offering. Therefore, the immediate effects of sales promotion are small. This is because of price promotion consumers are forced to make purchases and but this impact on sales cannot only be explained by accelerated rate of purchase due to price reductions.

Syeda (2017) explore the short term and long-term impact of sales promotion in Pakistani companies from two diverse industries, i.e. Beverage Industry(Shezan International Ltd) and Foam Manufacturing Industry (Diamond Supreme Foam) by regressing mean of brand loyalty on mean perception about promotion obtained through financial analysis and consumer survey respectively, using a sample of 200 consumers. The authors used time series models and OLS estimation. Their results reveal the presence of various extraneous factors impacting the effectiveness of promotions. It has been established in literature by some authors that there is a nexus between sales promotion and organization effectiveness. Syeda (2017), states that the following sales promotional types: reduced prices and free offers, premium offers of all kind, vouchers and samples, the supply of trading tramples, promotions which are linked with charity, and furthermore promotions related to prize of different kinds, including some other incentive programmes employed by companies affect profitability through motivating consumers to make an immediate purchase.

Similarly, Ailawadi and Neslin (2018) following a survey of the recent empirical literature on the subject found that, with respect to the earlier contributions, there is more agreement about the positive effect of sales promotion on organization effectiveness. They established that consumer promotions motivate the consumers to purchase larger amount and consume it faster; causing an increase in sales and ultimately profitability.

Preko (2017) made use of Chi-square test in order to determine how sales promotion is used to generate revenue, how it is done, the common sale promotion tools and strategies adopted by the company, and whether sale promotions increase advertising revenue. The result revealed that guarantees and warranties, souvenirs, discounts offer and give away are the mostly adopted sales promotion tools by TV Africa. Sale promotion tools and strategies have a positive impact on revenue. He concluded that management should continue modifying or updating its sales promotion activities according to the taste and preferences of its customers and the public at large.

Naude and Ivy (2015) examined the marketing strategies of universities in the United Kingdom. The Universities in the UK are facing huge changes to their environment, in terms of both supply of funding and level of demand for their courses. In order to find out how both old and new universities are responding to this rapidly changing environment, questionnaires were sent to a number of senior staff. Based on 131 responses (81 from old universities, 50 from new) The research clearly indicates that these two groups of institutions have fundamentally different approaches to operationalizing their marketing strategies. Bawa and Safrana (2018) in their study "impact of marketing strategy on customer retention in Handloom industry" attempts to know the relationship between marketing strategies and customer retention in handloom industry. This study selected an on-probability sampling technique i.e. convenience sampling to collect data from a sample size of 100 customers. In this study, there is strong positive relationship between marketing strategies such as product, price, and place/promotion and customer retention/satisfaction.

Arante, Adalia, Autor, Cuya, Hernandez, Panganiban and Lyceum (2019) studied effectiveness of marketing strategies of LPU-High school. The researchers came up with the idea of studying this in order to assess the strengths and weaknesses of LPU-High School marketing strategies. This study is descriptive in nature. The said instrument is divided into three parts which asked the participants to indicate their assessment regarding the marketing strategies of LPU High School and the factors that encouraged them to enroll in the aforementioned school, and the problems encountered by them. There were 205 high school students of LPU - High School who participated. The results were tallied, encoded, and interpreted using frequency distribution and weighted mean. The obtained data were treated using PASW Version 18 for further analysis. As a result, the marketing strategies are generally effective.

Chen (2019) studied the impact of marketing strategies and satisfaction model approach. The dynamic changes in higher education observed over the last 20 years have transformed the educational market. This study investigates the directions and strengths of the relationships among marketing strategies, student satisfaction, and loyalty in Taiwanese higher education. Structural equation models were used to validate the measure and test the proposed relationships. The target population comprised students in Taiwanese higher education institutions. Using purposive sampling, the author selected 20 universities (out of 161 higher education institutions in Taiwan) for study. One month later, the author had collected 692 responses. After data screening, 21 questionnaires were excluded from the analyses, resulting in a total of 671 valid questionnaires. The findings indicate that students' satisfaction is a key intermediate variable for marketing strategies and student loyalty.

3.   METHODOLOGY

The choice of an appropriate design is inevitable in achieving clear and systematic answers to question raised. The research design adopted for this study is survey method, a non-experimental research design consisting of descriptive survey. This design is adopted because it focuses on gathering opinions and views of the respondents on the research problem and it also allows the researcher to generalize the findings. The total population of the study was staff of small-scale businesses in Ikeja Area of Lagos State. Data from SMEDAN/NBS (2020) revealed that there were 11, 920 SMEs registered in Ikeja Area of Lagos state. The sampling technique used for this study was simple random sampling techniques. The sample size was determined with the aid of *Yaro – Yamani Formula is 150* respondents from the entrepreneurs and staff of selected small-scale businesses in Ikeja Area of Lagos State. reliability of the research instrument was determined using the Cronbach's Alpha and it was found reliable at coefficient value of .782 while the validity was determined through the preparation of the research instrument, administration of the research instrument, collation and analysis being scrutinized by the Experts from Academic and Industries and face validity and content validity of the research instrument were carried out. In analyzing data, simple percentages method was adopted, in testing the hypotheses formulated, Pearson correlation statistical method was adopted to accept or reject the hypotheses formulated. For this research project, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20 was use for all the analysis.

4.   DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section is based on the data collected from the questionnaire administered to respondents at the selected small-scale businesses in Ikeja Area of Lagos State. Indeed, a total of one hundred and fifty (150) copies of questionnaires were administered to staff of respondents while one hundred and forty-five (145) were fully completed and returned. The analysis was carried out using Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS). Descriptive statistics of frequency count and percentage; and Pearson moment correlation were used to analyze the data

collected in order to answer the hypotheses raised in this study. All statistical analysis was tested at 5% level of significance.

Hypothesis one

Ho₁: There is no significant impact of relationship marketing skills on productive quality of small and medium scale enterprise.

Correlations

		Relationship marketing skills	small and medium scale enterprise sustainability
Relationship marketing skills	Pearson Correlation	1	.782**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	145	145
small and medium scale enterprise sustainability	Pearson Correlation	.782**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	145	145

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation

The above hypotheses tested revealed that there is significant impact of relationship marketing skills on productive quality of small and medium scale enterprise. This was observed at (.782) Pearson correlation value and significant value (.000) Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate was accepted. This implies that there is significant impact of relationship marketing skills on productive quality of small and medium scale enterprise.

Hypothesis two

Ho₂: There is no significant impact of book-keeping marketing skills on sustainability of small and medium scale enterprise.

Correlation

		Book-keeping marketing skills	small and medium scale enterprise sustainability
Book-keeping marketing skills	Pearson Correlation	1	.720**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	145	145
small and medium scale enterprise sustainability	Pearson Correlation	.720**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	145	145

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation

The above hypotheses tested revealed that there is significant impact of book-keeping marketing skills on profitability of small and medium scale enterprise. This was observed at

(.720) Pearson correlation value and significant value (.002) Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate was accepted. This implies that there is significant impact of book-keeping marketing skills on profitability of small and medium scale enterprise.

Hypothesis three

Ho3: There is no significant impact of communication marketing skills on customer patronage of small and medium scale enterprise.

Correlation

		Communication marketing skills	small and medium scale enterprise sustainability
Communication marketing skills	Pearson Correlation	1	.515**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	145	145
small and medium scale enterprise sustainability	Pearson Correlation	.515**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	145	145

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation
The above hypotheses tested revealed that there is significant impact of communication marketing skills on customer patronage of small and medium scale enterprise. This was observed at (.515) Pearson correlation value and significant value (.001) Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate was accepted. This implies that there is significant impact of communication marketing skills on customer patronage of small and medium scale enterprise.

5.   CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Advertising, communication marketing, sales promotion, relationship marketing and book-keeping marketing combined together as marketing skills were exhibited for a better influence on the customer patronage. Organizations see marketing strategy as a way of providing quality products and services that satisfy customer's needs, offered at affordable price. Thus, performance of the organizations is further enhanced adopting effective promotion strategy under a wider distribution network. The ultimate goal of promotional strategy is to deliver greater value to customers and the organizations at a lower cost so as to increase customer's patronage. This study has confirmed the importance of marketing communication mix elements in the services of SMEs organizations. It has also revealed, through the rankings, the order at which all these elements are considered useful by the marketing personnel in the Nigerian business environment. It provides useful information for existing and prospective marketing managers, agents and the likes. Knowing how to use this information in the effectiveness of SMEs operations depends on the understanding of some key driving force such as culture, trust, information technology, publicity (timing, duration and cost) and customer relationship strategy. Based on the results of the responses from selected SMEs, the research finds out that most marketing officers are more interested in using three amongst the six elements in their

quest for generating premium income and large volume of businesses. These are: advertising, personal selling and sales promotion. For direct marketing, it was found that it contributes equally to both dimensions of the dependent variables of research interest. From the findings, it is recommended that;

- Communication marketing skills significantly affects consumer's patronage of selected SMEs; the sales promotion objectives of the firm should determine its promotional strategy, the researcher suggest further that in order to achieve the objectives of developing favourable association as well as to impress customers, suitable strategy should be designed to promote the image of the particular business.

- Relationship marketing skills significantly influence consumer's patronage. As such, direct marketing as a tool of communication should be explored and properly entrenched in all areas of operation of the business.

- There is need to determine advertising spending through the preparation of advertising budget. This can be based on advertising objectives which include increasing sales volume, informing customers of a new product or creating awareness of an old or new product in the mind of the consumers and customers.

- Personal selling is a significant determine of customers" patronage of business; that is business must now go out of their offices to meet clients, and even present such prospective customers with gifts and other incentives in order to attract their patronage.

- Sales promotion significantly affects consumer's patronage of business; the sales promotion objectives of the industry or firms should determine its promotional strategy. The researcher suggest further that in order to achieve the objectives of developing favourable association as well as to impress customers", a suitable strategy should be designed to promote the image of the particular industry or firm. Direct marketing significantly influence consumers" patronage of business, direct marketing as a tool of communication should be explore and properly entrenched in all areas of operation of the industry to increase the patronage.

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