

## **ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING STRATEGIES AND BUSINESS EFFECTIVENESS OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE FIRMS IN RIVERS STATE.**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The study examined the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing strategies and business effectiveness of food and beverage firms in Rivers State. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design. The population of the study consisted of twenty-five (25) food and beverages firms in Rivers State. The study adopted a census study with a focus on four managerial staff from each of the firms, which includes the production manager, quality control manager, marketing manager and procurement manager. However, 89 respondents provided data for the study with the use of semi structured questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's alpha test and it stood at 0.98 higher than the benchmark of 0.7. The data collected for this study were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics. The Spearman Rank Order Correlation Co-efficient was employed to test the various hypotheses formulated with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0. The study revealed that all the dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing strategies presented a significant relationship with business effectiveness of food and beverage firms in Rivers State and further concludes that innovativeness and value creation are the cornerstone and significant predictors of business effectiveness and success of food and beverage firms. The study recommends amongst others that management across food and beverage firms in Rivers State at all levels, should ensure that entrepreneurial marketing strategies are implemented across to achieve effective performance particularly in terms of brand recognition and market share.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Entrepreneurial marketing is fast evolving and has emerged as a marketing practice recommended for firms functioning in highly dynamic environment. The focus of an entrepreneurial marketing perspective is on marketing undertaken using entrepreneurial, innovative, proactive, and opportunity driven approaches (Fiore, Niehm, Hurst, Son & Sadachar, 2013). The desire of firms to improve their business performance in the market is the essential push behind entrepreneurial marketing strategies and because the sales performance of the firm is sacrosanct to the corporate wellbeing of a business (Horsefall & Ikegwuru, 2018). Entrepreneurial marketing strategy is an approach tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities that food and beverage firms in Rivers State face. This strategy diverges from traditional marketing by emphasizing innovation, flexibility, and the efficient use of limited resources to achieve significant market impact. It involves a blend of proactive customer engagement, iterative product development, creative promotional tactics, and strategic relationship building.

Entrepreneurial marketing begins with a deep understanding of customer needs and a commitment to delivering exceptional value. Entrepreneurs engage directly with potential and existing customers to gather insights and feedback, which are crucial for refining their products or services. This customer-centric approach ensures that offerings are closely aligned with market needs (Blank, 2013). The goal is to develop a compelling value proposition that clearly differentiates the product or service from competitors (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). Becherer (2008) asserted that firms that are competitively advantaged are those engaged in entrepreneurial marketing, while the marketing approaches used by entrepreneurs reflect this innovative orientation. Business effectiveness involves aligning organizational activities with strategic objectives, balancing multiple performance metrics and continuously adapting to market and

environmental changes. It is therefore critical for new ventures to understand which entrepreneurial marketing strategies are most effective so as to achieve a variety of successful outcome and ultimately for improved performance.

Currently, there is a growing competition in the manufacturing sector and many firms had gone out of business due to lack of creative and innovative mindset. It is important to say that business is evolving daily and firms that are not entrepreneurial eventually fail. This is because the 21<sup>st</sup> century business is entrepreneurial in nature and as such it demands more of innovative techniques. Hence, entrepreneurial marketing strategies have emerged as crucial tools for gaining a competitive edge, fostering innovation, and responding swiftly to market changes. This has compelled food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State to seek strategic options that will expose them to opportunities among competitors, survive and remain in business by gaining competitiveness. This, however, largely depends on their ability to promptly identify and implement suitable entrepreneurial marketing strategies (Klapalova, 2011). Evidentially, entrepreneurial marketing is being presented by experts as a survival strategy, which will enable the entrepreneurs to identify and adequately utilize marketing opportunities in the marketplace and market space (Oguru & Nwokinaka, 2024; Mojekeh, 2012).

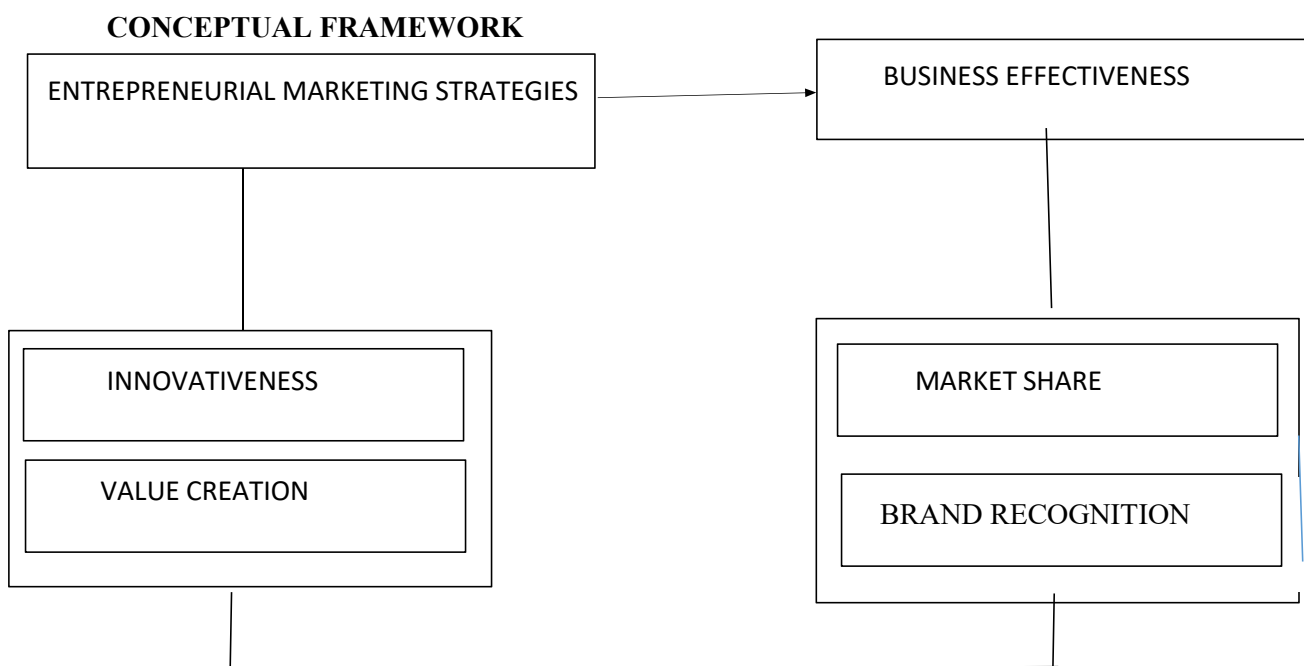
The food and beverage industry is becoming hypercompetitive, managers employs different innovative and creative tools in order to gain favourable advantage. The desire of firms in the food and beverage sector to improve their performance in the market is the paramount push behind all marketing decision and programmes, because the performance of the firm is cardinal to the corporate wellbeing of business undertakings and determines the continued existence of the firm in the business landscape (Barango-Tariah et al, 2023; Horsfall & Ikegwuru, 2018). Although the food and beverage firms have achieved some notable level of success in their operations, they are still faced with some identifiable pitfall. This includes decreased competitive edge due to inappropriate entrepreneurial marketing strategy, inability to adapt to market changes, stagnant innovation, weak brand positioning and inadequate value creation amongst others LaForge, (2002). However, the perceived inefficiency and sometimes failures of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State can be traceable to their negligence of entrepreneurial characteristics such as proactiveness, innovativeness, calculated risk-taking, and opportunity focus. Many studies have been carried out in respect of entrepreneurial marketing strategies with different geographical location and sector but there is limited empirical evidence on the specific impact of these strategy on the effectiveness of the food and beverage sector. Evidently, Olawali (2019) studied Entrepreneurial Marketing and Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in South Africa; Nehal (2018) studied Impact of Entrepreneurial Marketing on the Organizational Performance within Saudi SMEs; Gunger, Sclim, Sule & Hale (2012) investigated the Effect of Entrepreneurial Marketing on Firm's Innovative Performance in Turkish SMEs; Eximiery & Mohammad (2013) tried to link Entrepreneurial Marketing and Performance Indicators in Jordan Hotel industry. To the best of the researcher's knowledge and from the above instances, it is factual that there are little or no empirically evidenced proof portraying the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing strategies and business effectiveness of food and beverage manufacturing firms, particularly in Rivers State. It is against this backdrop that the researcher is necessitated to embark on this study to bridge the existing gap in knowledge. The researcher believes that if this identified gap is filled, food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State will be more effective and successful in their business especially in terms of customer loyalty, strong advocacy and brand recognition.

### **Theoretical Foundation**

This study is underpinned by the innovation theory which was propounded by Schumpeter (1939) who viewed entrepreneurship as the fourth factor of production. He also asserted that an entrepreneur is the one who is innovative, creative and has foresight. Innovation and enterprise

are concerned mainly with producing new combinations. It is the entrepreneur who breaks the cycle of routine activity, swimming against the stream to produce new markets explores new sources of raw material and rearrange markets (Davidson, Delmar, & Wiklund, 2006 as cited in Mugambi & Karugu, 2017). Schumpeter (1939) posited that entrepreneurs create radical innovation in the face of competitiveness.

This theory depicts that entrepreneurs adopt flexible and adaptive marketing strategies that quickly respond to market change and emerging trends. This allows businesses to stay relevant, meet evolving customer demands and maintain a competitive edge, leading to sustained business success. Integrating Schumpeter's theory of innovation into marketing strategies allows entrepreneurs to enhance their business effectiveness through differentiation, market disruption, rapid adaptation and organizational agility. Food and beverage firms in River State should therefore align innovation in their marketing strategies to drive growth, profitability and long-term success and effectiveness in their business operations.



**Fig 1: Conceptual Framework Showing the Relationship Between Entrepreneurial Marketing Strategies and Business Effectiveness of Food and Firms in Rivers State.**

**Source:** Desk Research, 2024.

### **Entrepreneurial Marketing Strategies**

Entrepreneurial marketing is an evolving concept in the discipline of marketing; it is a two distinctive discipline that forms a construct to achieve profitability within the company level. To understand entrepreneurial marketing, it is important to first establish the concept of marketing and entrepreneurship. The American Marketing Association (2005) sees marketing as the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational goals. Kotler and Armstrong (2010) maintained that marketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others. On the other hand, Aruwa (2006) posited that entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek for investment opportunities, to establish and run an enterprise successfully. Anyanwu (1999 as cited in Agwu, 2012) defined entrepreneurship as

the capacity and attitude of a person or group of persons to undertake ventures with the probability of success or failure.

Entrepreneurial marketing strategy refers to the innovative and resourceful approach that entrepreneurs use to identify, create and deliver value to their customers (Kraus, Harms & Fink, 2010). It involves leveraging limited resources effectively and taking calculated risks in order to achieve business growth. Morrish, Miles and Deacon (2010), defined entrepreneurial marketing strategies as innovative, proactive, and risk-tolerant approaches used by entrepreneurial firms to identify and exploit opportunities, often with limited resources. These strategies emphasize recognizing opportunities, creatively utilizing limited resources, building strong customer relationships, fostering innovation, and maintaining flexibility to adapt to market changes. Hills and Levis (2008) highlighted that entrepreneurial marketing strategies encompasses a proactive and creative mindset aimed at seizing opportunities through innovative approaches while being mindful of resource constraints. This study considered value creation and innovativeness and value creation as the dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing strategies.

### **Innovativeness**

Innovativeness is a critical determinant of business performance (Olanye & Edward 2016). It is a pre-requisite for a firm competitive advantage and survival (Vande, Jong, van & De-Rochemont, 2009). Innovativeness involves proactive firms that explore new opportunities rather than just exploiting current strengths and therefore seems essential to an innovative effort capable of exceeding the customer's expectations (Santot-Vijande & Alvave, 2001). Innovativeness refers to the tendency of an individual, organisation or society to generate, adopt and implement new ideas, processes, products or services. It is a multifaceted concept that includes aspect such as creativity, openness to new experiences, risk-taking and the ability to transform ideas into tangible outcomes. Schilling (2022) described innovativeness as the process of developing and applying new technologies and business models to gain a competitive advantage. She maintained that innovativeness focusses on strategic management and technological innovation. Similarly, Lomborg, Urbig, Stöckmann, Marino and Dickson (2017) identified innovativeness as the propensity of business enterprises to inculcate the spirit of generating creative ideas or processes to introduce new products or services through experiment or feasibility study. Furthermore, Furr and Dyer (2020) posited that innovativeness is the capacity to navigate and leverage uncertainty. They emphasized that innovative leaders are those who can systematically explore new opportunities, adapt to changing conditions and integrate new technologies and methodologies into their operations.

Tsao and Chan (2012) asserted that if business enterprises imbibe the culture of innovativeness, such enterprises are probable going to possess diverse capabilities to cope with rapid changes in market needs and compete favourably in the marketplace. Without innovation, an enterprise quickly becomes obsolete, and its product and service start losing value. Innovation centered on people, culture, structure, process and techniques. It is the process to which the entrepreneur converts market opportunity into workable, profitable and marketable idea (Agwu 2012). Choi and Williams (2016) posited that innovative mindsets in business establishments promote the development of skills and technical know-how to effectively handle unpredictable market situation. Innovativeness involves not only generating new ideas but also effectively implementing and commercializing these ideas to create value. It encompasses creativity, risk-taking and the strategic management of innovation processes within dynamic environments. It is factual that innovativeness consists of certain technical knowledge about how things can be done better than the existing state of art (York & Venkataraman, 2010).

Thus, being innovative will help firms expand new businesses and sell business opportunities and successfully compete in transition economy. This will enable firms establish a dominant

competitive position and can afford a newcomer firm and opportunity to gain an edge in the market (Olanye & Edward, 2016).

### **Value Creation**

Value creation is an essential base to support a profitable and lasting business. Without it, your customer retention and your bottom line will be threatened. Value creation is the bedrock of every successful business. It's what sets you apart from your competition, secures long-term customers and brings distinct meaning to your brand and your solution. Without creating a value for your business, your unique offering will be seen as just another commodity in the eyes of your target market (Spivey & McMillan, 2002). The value creation process begins with the recognition and exploitation of opportunities (Adverez & Barney 2010). Stefan (2022) viewed value creation as the process of turning labor and resources into something that meets the needs of others. He maintained that value creation in business has become more and more pertinent in business as competition has increased, customers have become more demanding and technology has been able to provide new ways of doing things. Therefore, actual value creation occurs when businesses develop consistent streams of products and services that offer compelling and unique benefits to a specific target audience. This means an organization must establish and maintain a specific, sustainable value creation model to maintain industry leadership.

Entrepreneurial value creation refers to the process of identifying, developing, and delivering unique value to customers through innovative products, services, or business models (Korsgaard, 2013). Entrepreneurs seek to create value by addressing unmet needs or solving problems in new and creative ways. One key aspect of entrepreneurial value creation is the ability to identify opportunities that others may have overlooked. This involves understanding customer pain points, market trends and emerging technologies to develop solutions that offer distinct benefits. Moreover, entrepreneurs often leverage limited resources efficiently to create maximum impact. This can involve using technology creatively, forming strategic partnerships or adopting agile methodologies to iterate on ideas rapidly. Additionally, successful entrepreneurial ventures often focus on creating not just functional but also emotional and social value for their customers. By building strong brand identities and fostering meaningful connections with their audience, entrepreneurs can differentiate themselves in competitive markets.

Entrepreneurial value creation involves recognizing opportunities for innovation and leveraging resources effectively to deliver unique and compelling offerings that meet customer needs while also generating economic and societal benefits. According to Ondrej (2014), creating value for customers means providing useful products and services that customers consider worthy of their time, energy and money. He claimed that for customers to find value in a product or service, its perceived benefits need to outweigh its cost and that providing useful products and services for your customers can have a direct impact on your company's long-term success, as it encourages sales, improves customer loyalty and increases your brand's reputation and profits. Furthermore, providing valuable goods and services can increase customers' confidence and trust in your company's offerings; as customers who feel they have made a good purchase are more likely to buy from you again and share their positive experience with others. Consequently, taking the time to learn what benefits your customers' value can help you improve your product, increase sales and encourage customer loyalty (Ondrej, 2014).

### **Business Effectiveness**

Effectiveness is a fundamental concept that plays a crucial role in various aspects of every business entity including leadership, and personal development. It refers to the ability to achieve desired outcomes or goals efficiently and successfully. In entrepreneurship, effectiveness is essential for entrepreneurs to navigate challenges, capitalize on opportunities, and drive sustainable growth. Entrepreneurial effectiveness involves making strategic decisions, managing

resources wisely, seizing market opportunities, and creating value for customers. By focusing on effectiveness, entrepreneurs can enhance their competitive advantage, build resilient businesses, and contribute positively to economic development. Effectiveness is about achieving results that matter while optimizing the use of available resources. It requires clarity of purpose, strategic thinking, and continuous improvement efforts to ensure that actions align with objectives effectively. The concept of effectiveness in entrepreneurship refers to the ability of entrepreneurs to achieve their goals and objectives while maximizing the use of resources. It encompasses various dimensions, including strategic decision-making, resource allocation, opportunity recognition, and value creation. Effectiveness in entrepreneurship also involves setting clear business objectives and implementing strategies that lead to the successful attainment of these goals (Baron & Shane, 2008). This may involve identifying market opportunities, developing innovative products or services, and effectively reaching target customers.

However, Business effectiveness refers to how well a company achieves its objectives and goals, encompassing various dimensions such as efficiency, productivity, profitability, customer satisfaction and overall organizational performance (Jim, 2011). Contemporary scholars and experts have approached this concept from diverse perspectives: Porter (2011) argued that true business effectiveness involves two aspects: Operational effectiveness (performing similar activities better than rivals) and Strategic positioning (creating a unique and valuable market position). Similarly, Kotler and Keller (2016) linked business effectiveness to customer satisfaction and market orientation, arguing that businesses are effective when they understand and meet customer needs better than their competitors. On the other hand, Drucker (2008) emphasized that effectiveness is more critical than efficiency, stating that "efficiency is doing things right, while effectiveness is doing the right things. He stressed that a business is effective if it can identify and achieve goals that align with its mission and vision. This study measured business effectiveness with market share and brand recognition.

### **Market Share**

Market share is a key performance metric in business that represents the percentage of an industry's sales or portion that a particular company controls. It is calculated by taking the company's sales over a given period and dividing it by the total sales of the industry in the same period. Understanding market share is essential for assessing a company's competitiveness and overall market position (Keller 2016). Market share refers to the percentage of total sales within a market that a company or product controls. Kotler (2009) defined market share as the company's sales expressed as a percentage of the total market sales. A higher market share indicates a stronger competitive position and a greater ability to influence prices, distribution and marketing efforts. Market share is another metric for evaluating marketing success, as it reflects a company's competitive position in the market (Kotler, 2009). Market share provides insights into a company's relative size compared to its competitors, indicating its ability to attract and retain customers. A larger market share often signifies stronger brand recognition, customer loyalty and operational efficiency. Companies with substantial market shares benefit from economies of scale, allowing them to lower costs and improve profitability (Porter, 2000). Additionally, market leaders often set industry trends and standards, influencing market dynamics and consumer preferences (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Gaining market share can be achieved through various strategies. Product innovation is one approach, where companies develop new or improved products that better meet customer needs, thereby attracting more buyers. Effective marketing campaigns that enhance brand visibility and appeal can also drive market share growth. Competitive pricing strategies, including price cuts or promotions, can attract price-sensitive consumers from competitors (Aaker, 2001). Moreover, superior customer service plays a crucial role in increasing market share. Companies that provide excellent customer experiences tend to have higher customer retention rates and attract new

customers through positive word-of-mouth (Homburg, Wieseke, & Hoyer, 2009). Strategic mergers and acquisitions can also expand market share by eliminating competitors or gaining access to new customer bases and distribution channels (Gaughan, 2010). Measuring market share involves analyzing both relative and absolute metrics. Relative market share compares a company's sales to the sales of its largest competitor, providing a sense of its market position relative to the top player. Absolute market share, on the other hand, is the straightforward calculation of the company's sales as a proportion of total market sales (Ailawadi, Lehmann, & Neslin, 2003).

Market share is also a reflection of a company's market strategy effectiveness. Companies continuously monitor market share to gauge the success of their business strategies and make necessary adjustments. A declining market share may signal the need for strategic shifts, such as rebranding, product diversification, or entering new markets (David, 2011). Hence, market share is a critical indicator of a company's success and competitive standing within an industry. Companies strive to increase their market share through product innovation, effective marketing, competitive pricing, superior customer service, and strategic acquisitions. Regularly measuring and analyzing market share helps businesses understand their position in the market and make informed strategic decisions to enhance their competitive edge.

### **Brand Recognition**

Brand recognition is a crucial aspect of marketing that signifies a consumer's ability to identify a brand through various elements such as logos, slogans, packaging, and distinctive features, even in the absence of the brand's name. This aspect of brand equity plays a pivotal role in influencing consumer behavior, where familiarity with a brand can sway purchasing decisions, fostering a sense of trust and preference (Keller, 2009). A brand with high recognition often enjoys a competitive edge in the marketplace, as it stands out more prominently against competitors, making it easier for consumers to choose it (Aaker, 2008). Moreover, recognized brands tend to build stronger customer loyalty, with consumers returning to the brands they know and trust, thereby ensuring repeat purchases and long-term relationships (Hoyer & Brown, 1990). Brand recognition refers to the extent to which consumers can identify a specific brand and its attributes, distinguishing it from competitors. Measuring brand recognition is vital for understanding its impact and effectiveness. Surveys and questionnaires that prompt consumers to identify brands based on logos or slogans are common methods (Netemeyer 2004).

Market research, including focus groups and interviews, provides deeper insights into consumer perceptions and behaviors related to brand recognition (Malhotra, 2015). Additionally, digital analytics offer quantifiable data on brand visibility and engagement in the online space (Peters 2013). In summary, brand recognition is not just about being known; it's about being preferred and trusted, driving long-term success through strategic, consistent, and engaging marketing efforts.

### **Empirical Review**

Entrepreneurial marketing strategies (EMS) play a crucial role in the business effectiveness of food and beverage firms, particularly in dynamic and competitive markets such as Rivers State. The confluence of entrepreneurial approaches with marketing principles forms a robust framework that enables firms to innovate, adapt, and thrive. This empirical review explores the impact of entrepreneurial marketing strategies on the business effectiveness of food and beverage firms in Rivers State, emphasizing the relevance of innovation, customer orientation, and resource leveraging. The food and beverage sector in Rivers State is marked by intense competition and rapidly changing consumer preferences, necessitating the adoption of innovative marketing strategies to sustain growth and profitability. Entrepreneurial marketing, characterized by proactive identification of opportunities, risk-taking, and innovative tactics, provides a competitive

edge to firms operating in this sector (Morris et al., 2002). These strategies encompass a range of activities, including market segmentation, branding, pricing, and distribution, all tailored to meet the unique needs and preferences of target customers.

Empirical studies have demonstrated the positive relationship between entrepreneurial marketing strategies and business performance. For instance, Kraus et al. (2012) found that firms adopting entrepreneurial marketing practices, such as opportunity-driven marketing and innovative resource use, exhibit higher levels of market performance and customer satisfaction. Similarly, Boso et al. (2013) highlighted the significance of entrepreneurial orientation in enhancing marketing capabilities, which in turn drives business success. In the context of food and beverage firms in Rivers State, entrepreneurial marketing strategies are particularly pertinent due to the region's diverse and evolving market landscape. The ability to swiftly respond to market changes, create value propositions that resonate with local consumers, and leverage limited resources effectively can significantly enhance business effectiveness. Furthermore, these strategies enable firms to build strong brand identities, foster customer loyalty, and achieve sustainable competitive advantages (Hills et al., 2008). This review will delve into various dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing strategies and their empirical linkages to business effectiveness. By examining case studies, survey data, and relevant literature, the review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how food and beverage firms in Rivers State can harness entrepreneurial marketing to improve their operational and financial performance. Key areas of focus will include the role of innovation, the impact of customer-centric marketing, and the effectiveness of resource leveraging in driving business success.

Olannye and Edward (2016), carried out a study on the effect of the dimension of entrepreneurial marketing on the performance of fast-food restaurants in Asaba, Nigeria. The sample objects were 160 staff and customers of some selected fast-food restaurants. A 20-item structured questionnaire was adopted as the research instrument. The correlation and multiple regression analysis were used as major analytical tools. The findings revealed that entrepreneurial pro-activeness, entrepreneurial innovation and entrepreneurial opportunity recognition as indicators of entrepreneurial marketing showed a significant positive effect on competitive advantage. It was concluded that entrepreneurial innovation determined the development of new markets; products of processes which help firms establish an edge over competitors.

Similarly, Mugambi and Karugu (2017) explored the effect of entrepreneurial marketing on performance of real estate enterprises in Kenya. The objectives were to unveil how strategic innovation, innovation orientation, market orientation, and resource leveraging affect the performance of real estate enterprise. The study adopted a descriptive research design, questionnaire was used as primary data collection instrument, the population consist of 522 clients; the sample size of 227 was generated through Taro Yamane's formula. ANOVA analysis was undertaken using SPSS version 21. The findings revealed a strong relationship between strategic orientation, market orientation, innovative orientation and resource leveraging on performance of real estate enterprise. It was concluded that strategic orientation is essential to effective operation; firms need to take the leverage on resource to be able to grow their business, they also need to take risk of introducing new products which need to go hand in hand with market research.

Also, Dewi, et al (2016), carried out a study on the effect of entrepreneurial marketing and customer relationship marketing on SMEs competitiveness in Indonesia. The study was quantitative in nature and multivariate analysis was used based on partial least square. The population consists of all entrepreneurs of wooden processing in SMEs in Bali Province. SPSS 17 was used to test validity and reliability. It was concluded that entrepreneurial marketing does not affect directly on the competences. However, the result revealed that customer relationship marketing has effects on the competitiveness of firms. Furthermore, Nwaizugbo and Anukam (2014), carried out a study on the assessment of entrepreneurial marketing practices among small



and medium scale enterprises in Imo State, Nigeria. The study explores with empirical evidence the event of overlap similarities and dissimilarities between entrepreneurial practices and the marketing concepts among SMEs. A sample of twenty (20) SMEs was studied. The data was analyzed descriptively based on qualitative techniques. It was revealed that entrepreneurial marketing improvises and does not seek for a perfect condition to grow a firm but traditional marketing requires certain conditions to thrive formal planning and theoretical structures.

### METHODOLOGY

The study used a cross-sectional research design. Using a self-administered, structured questionnaire, primary data were gathered. The population of the study consisted of twenty-five (25) food and beverages firms in Rivers State culled from [www.directory.org.ng](http://www.directory.org.ng). Sequel to the population, the study adopted a census study with a focus on four managerial staff from each of the firms, which includes the production manager, quality control manager, marketing manager and procurement manager. A total of one hundred (100) respondents were chosen. Consequently, one hundred copies of a structured questionnaire were distributed to collect data from the chosen respondents; however, only eighty-nine (89) copies were retrieved. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's alpha test and it stood at 0.98 higher than the benchmark of 0.7. The data collected for this study were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics. The Spearman Rank Order Correlation Co-efficient was employed to test the various hypotheses formulated through the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0.

### Data Analysis and Results

**Table 1: Correlation between Innovativeness and Measures of Business Effectiveness**

			Innovativeness	Market share	Brand recognition
Spearman's rho	Innovativeness	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.970**	.988**
		Sig(2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
	Market share	N	89	89	89
		Correlation Coefficient	.970**	1.000	.968**
		Sig(2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
	Brand recognition	N	89	89	89
Correlation Coefficient		.988**	.968**	1.000	
	Sig(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	
	N	89	89	89	

**\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

In the test of hypothesis one, as shown in the table above, the SPSS output reveals that Significant level (Sig) = 0.000 which implies that (Sig<0.01) while Spearman Correlation coefficient (rho) = (0.970, 0.988) also indicates that innovativeness has strong and positive correlation with business effectiveness. We therefore reject the Null hypotheses and accept the alternative hypotheses which state that there is a significant relationship between innovativeness and business effectiveness of food and beverage firms in Rivers State.

**Table 2: Correlation between Value Creation and Measures of Business Effectiveness**

			<b>Value Creation</b>	Market share	Brand recognition
Spearman's rho	<b>Value Creation</b>	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.991**	.964**
		Sig(2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	89	89	89
	Market share	Correlation Coefficient	.991**	1.000	.968**
		Sig(2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	89	89	89
	Brand recognition	Correlation Coefficient	.964**	.968**	1.000
		Sig(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	89	89	89

**\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

In the test of hypothesis two, as shown in the table above, the SPSS output reveals that Significant level (Sig) = 0.000 which implies that (Sig<0.01) while Spearman Correlation coefficient (rho) = (0.991, 0.964) also indicates that value creation has strong and positive correlation with business effectiveness. We therefore reject the Null hypotheses and accept the alternative hypotheses which states that there is a significant relationship between value creation and business effectiveness of food and beverage firms in Rivers State.

### Discussion of Findings

The results generated via the test o hypotheses showed that a significant and positive correlation exist between the variables under study since their correlations from the SPSS table were 0.970, 0.988, 0.991 and 0.964 respectively. From the result, it was apparent that all the dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing strategies had positive correlation with business effectiveness of food and beverage firms in Rivers State. It is worthy of note that these positive correlations cut across all the measures attributed to the variables which are found to be at different levels.

Thus: The first and second hypothesis indicated that innovativeness has a positive linear notable correlation with business effectiveness based on the P-value less than 0.05 (P-value = 0.000 <0.05) which implies that both variables have direct positive relationship which moves in the same positive direction. The third and fourth hypothesis showed that value creation has a positive linear notable correlation with business effectiveness based on the P value less than 0.05 (P-value = 0.000 <0.05) which implies that both variables have direct positive relationship which moves in the same positive direction. The findings conform to the findings of Olannye and Edward (2016), who carried out a study on the effect of the dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing on the performance of fast-food restaurants in Asaba, Nigeria; and found that entrepreneurial pro-activeness, entrepreneurial innovation and entrepreneurial opportunity recognition as indicators of entrepreneurial marketing showed a significant positive effect on competitive advantage. The findings also agree with the findings of Mugambi and Karugu (2017), who carried out a study on the effect of entrepreneurial marketing on performance of real estate enterprises in Kenya; and found a strong relationship between strategic orientation, market orientation, innovative orientation and resource leveraging on the performance of real estate enterprise.

### CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study and results of similar previous studies, the study concluded that entrepreneurial marketing strategies play a crucial role in the effectiveness and success of food and beverage firms. The following recommendations were hereby put forward:

- i. Management of food and beverage firms in Rivers state should put innovativeness and value creation into cognizance as these will lead to high and effective operational performance.
- ii. In order to enhance effectiveness, managers of food and beverage firms should ensure that entrepreneurial marketing practice is the business of all staff.
- iii. Innovativeness and value creation are the cornerstone for business effectiveness and profitability. Therefore, management of food and beverage firms at all levels, should ensure that entrepreneurial marketing strategies are implemented across the organization to ensure effective performance particularly in terms of brand recognition and market share.

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