

**ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING INNOVATIVENESS AND ORGANIZATIONAL
COMPETITIVENESS OF EATERIES IN PORT HARCOURT**

Adebayo Joshua Olaitan, Ph.D

Corresponding Author's email: olaitanade2012@gmail.com or olaitanade_14@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study empirically examined the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness of eateries in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design. The population of the study comprised fifty-two (52) registered eateries under the Rivers State Ministry of Commerce and Industry. A sample of ten (10) eateries was selected for the study. The unit of analysis consisted of six (6) managerial staff from each firm, including marketing, production, finance, human resources, sales, and general managers, resulting in a total of sixty (60) respondents. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising thirty-nine (39) items, which captured the dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness (product, brand, and packaging innovation) and measures of organizational competitiveness (market share growth and customer retention). Out of the sixty (60) questionnaires distributed, forty-nine (49) were returned, and after data screening, forty-four (44) valid responses were retained for analysis, representing a 73% effective response rate. Data were analyzed using both univariate descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation) and bivariate inferential statistics, specifically simple regression analysis, with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 22.0. The findings revealed that entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness significantly and positively influences organizational competitiveness, particularly in terms of market share growth and customer retention. This suggests that firms that adopt innovative marketing practices are better positioned to achieve superior competitive outcomes. The study concludes that entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness is a critical driver of competitiveness in the hospitality sector. It recommends that eateries should proactively adopt innovative marketing strategies, embrace new business models, and integrate innovation across their value delivery processes to enhance adaptability, improve market responsiveness, and sustain competitive advantage in both local and broader markets.

Definition of terms: Entrepreneurial, Marketing innovativeness, organizational competitiveness, eateries.

INTRODUCTION

Fast food restaurants business is one of the fastest emergent and most lucrative in terms of revenue and size of the market in Nigeria with a population of over 200 million (Census, 2021 cited in Amue & Asiegbu, 2023) and an addressable market size of 73 million (Market Survey of Fast Food, 2019). Fast food restaurants is a business that provides cooked foods, normally packaged and kept hot for customers who either eat in the restaurants or purchase in take-away packs. In most cases, these foods are mostly cooked from a central location and distributed to the various outlets to ensure conformity to standards (Mustapha, Fakokunde, & Awolusi, 2014). This industry attracts both local and foreign firms to explore the marketplace. The Nigeria fast food market is highly competitive with major players, such as Mr. Biggs, Genesis, Kilimanjaro, Sammies, De promise, Tantalizers, Taste Fried Chicken, Sweet Sensation and Chicken Republic, Pepperoni, etc, accounting for greater percentage of the market. Industry players have gone beyond serving quick food to venturing into African delicacies. This strategy of capturing more markets has expanded the customer base of the industry over the past few years.

Due to the high level of competition, it becomes imperative to maintain and increase innovation. One of the efforts made by fast food restaurants, among others, is indulging its customers with various kinds of service quality, and further optimizes product attributes and customer services

offered. This is done as a form of orientation in order to keep customers satisfied, and the long term partnership continuously and is also expected to engender repeat business (Cronin, Michael, Brady & Hult, 2000). The industry evolved significantly between the years 2000-2020 where the industry witnessed the influx of many more players resulting in a huge impact on the financial position of companies. Due to this fierce market competition and reduced profit level, all the players are trying to create maximum value for their customers.

Various strategies have been used by organisations in the past such as supply-push strategy to produce products and services with specifications to match customer specifications. This strategy later became inefficient and thus another strategy evolved. This new evolution was called demand-pull strategy that was aimed at producing products and services based on customer preferences. This product strategy also became replaced by customer centric strategy called customer relationship initiation. Customer relationship started as a feedback reversible reaction approach by treating different customers in different ways to achieve mutual benefits for the organisation and the customer. Customer relationship is expected to help the organisation to provide products and services according to customers' preferences and to increase loyalty. In all, it is expected to lower operational costs and increased revenue (Zong, 2008). Customer relationship has been defined as a business philosophy, a business strategy, and a business technology and as a coordinating strategy mediated by a set of information technologies, which focuses on creating two way communication with customers so firms can have an intimate knowledge of their needs, wants and buying patterns (Pedron & Saccol, 2009).

Today in fast paced global environment more competition requires more performance which pinpoint need to develop marketing innovation. Ndubuisi (2004) argued that now firms are striving for more firm innovation to gain organizational competitive advantage to serve and keep customers away from competitors.

The challenges facing eateries industrial in Port Harcourt should be tackled by creating organizations with entrepreneurial marketing behaviours (Olalekan, 2010; Schilo, 2011; George & Marino, 2011; Feder, 2015). Entrepreneurial marketing is simply the strategic posture of entrepreneurship in marketing. It is the integration of entrepreneurship and marketing. Therefore, entrepreneurial marketing exhibits the combined characteristics and behaviours of entrepreneurship and marketing which is used by small, medium and large organizations to confront dynamic and ever-changing business environment (Mehran & Morteza, 2013; Olannye & Eromafuru, 2016).

Entrepreneurial marketing is the employment of factors of production such as land, labour, capital and management in order to proactively identify, explore and exploit opportunities by creating value for the acquisition and retention of profitable customers (Kowalik, 2016; Mehran & Morteza, 2013). The entrepreneurial marketer in order to produce valuable goods and services for the market, leverages resources known as factors of production, which are superior relative to the competitors' resources. The focus is to provide superior products and services to the customers in order to earn sustainable competitive advantages.

Since organizational competitiveness focus on the superiority by which firms produce goods and services and related functions when compared to other companies in the market place (Onyemenam, 2004). Hence, entrepreneurial marketing is the strategic resource for managing markets and successful businesses in the face of the competition in the global market place.

world (Taghizadeh Jayaraman, Ismail & Rahman, 2016). Moreover, recently it was concluded that a firm innovativeness leads to the superior firm performance in turbulent business environments (Zawawi et al., 2016). Similarly, other studies have also demonstrated the positive impact of innovation on firm performance (Bartoloni & Baussola, 2018; Ribau, Moreira & Raposo, 2017; Gërguri Rashiti et al., 2017; Tajuddin, Iberahim & Ismail, 2015). Evidently innovation is believed to be one of the key drivers for the long-term success of a firm in the competitive markets (Naranjo-Valencia, et al., 2016). It is A vast literature is evident on the significant positive relationship between innovation and a business's success (Naranjo-Valencia et al., 2016). Studies also find that innovation strategies increase the scope of firm success in today's competitive based on this background, that

the study investigated the entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness of eateries in Port Harcourt.

Statement of the problem

Food is a necessity and this has made the eatery business lucrative yet competitive (Hughes,2016). The eateries business is of special importance from an innovation marketing perspective due to emerging competitive trend and the relevance of the industry to customers (Mojekwu, Rahim, &Ighomereho, 2016). The influx of foreign eateries; KFC, Double four, Chinese eateries, etc into Port Harcourt and Nigeria at large, has triggered the need for sustainable marketing innovation strategies to survive, gain a prime place in the competitive space and improve business performance (Ogunde,2012; Olalekan, 2019). Preliminary studies on the marketing innovation efforts of eateries in PortHarcourt found that, most eateries are performing below customers' expectations as the case of Mr. Biggs, Sizzler, etc that have folded up. The low performance of the eateries in Port Harcourt could be attributed to their orientation towards mobile marketing strategies (Osuagwu, 2006).Most eateries in Port Harcourt are largely focused on traditional marketing tools such as handout, banner, print advertisement, in-store marketing and mass media which are obsolete measures in this innovative marketing era. Hence, they had no competitive advantage (Olalekan, 2019). Albeit, several studies have linked product, brand, service and package innovations marketing and other as dimensions to productivity, market share growth, customer retention as construct (Patat, 2011; Amer, Abdallah & Hanadi, 2016; Saeed & Bekhet, 2018;Nazari, Fattah, Zainuddin & Yusoff, 2018; Abdul, Waheed & Shaharbano, 2019). Relatively few studies on product, brand, process and package marketing innovations exist in developing economies and none has considered using them as dimensions. Furthermore, the application of entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness in developing countries has suffered some setbacks due to limiting factors like high degree of poverty, underdeveloped marketing skills, large rural population, high level of illiteracy, etc (Osuagwu, 2006). Therefore, there is need to study the practices entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness of eateries in Port Harcourt.

Conceptual Frame work

The major variables of this study are entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness (predictor variable) and organizational competitiveness of eateries (criterion variable), while environmental factor being technology (moderating variable). The focus of this study is on organizational competitiveness of eateries through entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness. The diagram below shows the diagram of conceptual model of the study with different variables

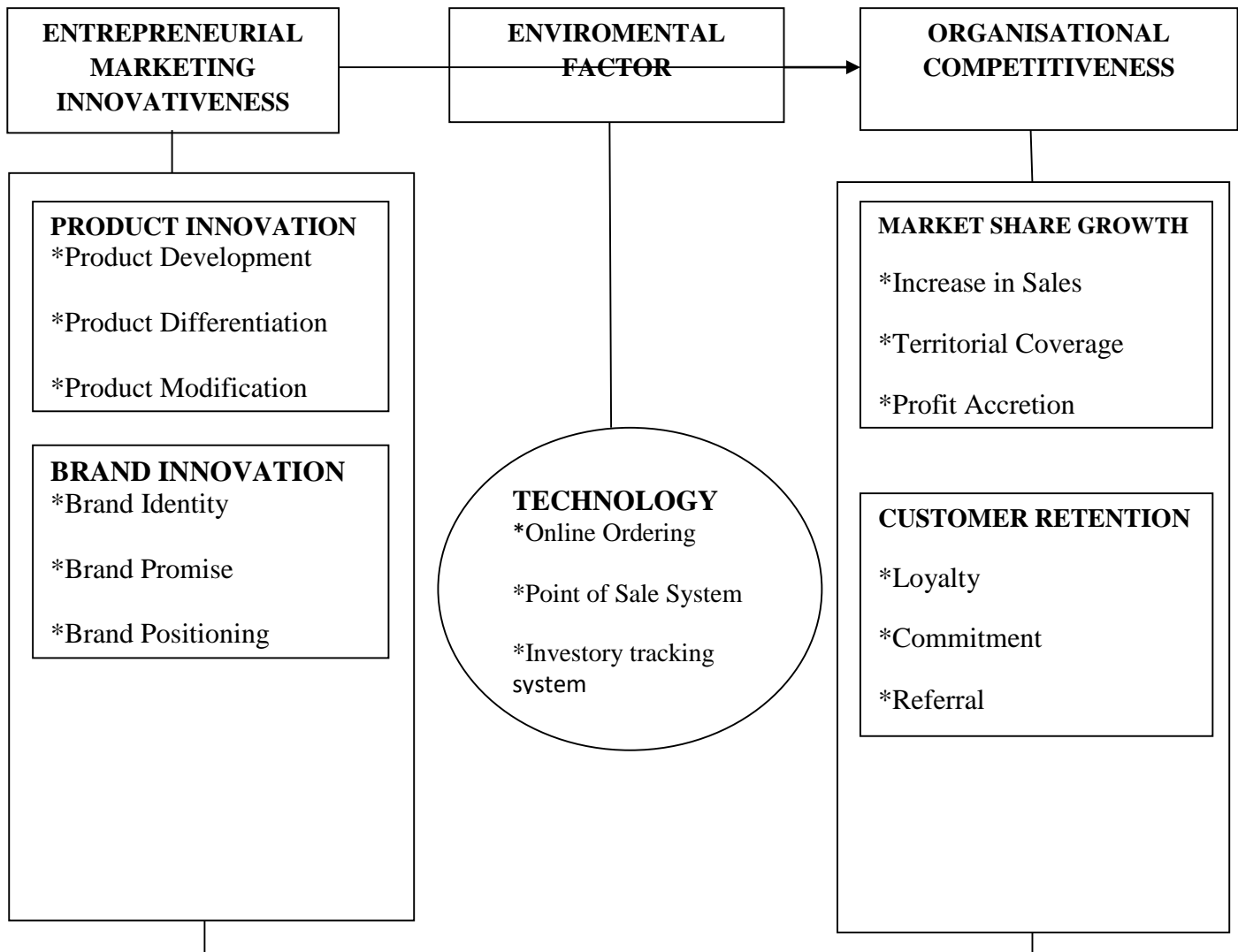


Fig. 1 Conceptualization of Entrepreneurial Marketing Innovativeness and Organizational competitiveness of Eateries

Source: Bernard & Diriri (2022); Adame D.G (2021); Otite, W.I (2020)

Aim and Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study was to empirically investigate the extent of relationship between Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness of eateries in Port Harcourt. Specifically, this study tends to:

- determine the extent of relationship between product innovation and market share growth.
- ii. examine the extent of relationship between product innovation and customer retention.
- iii. evaluate the extent of relationship between brand innovation and market share growth.
- iv. examine the extent of relationship between brand innovation and customer retention
- v. investigate the extent of relationship between package innovation and market share growth.
- vi. examine the extent of relationship between package innovation and customer retention.
- vii. evaluate the extent to which technology relates to entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study

- i. To what extent does product innovation relate to market share growth of eateries in Port Harcourt?
- ii. What is extent of relationship between product innovation to customer retention of eateries in Port Harcourt?
- iii. To what extent does brand innovation relate to market share growth of eateries in Port Harcourt?
- iv. What is extent of relationship between brand innovation to customer retention of eateries in Port Harcourt?
- v. What is extent of relationship between package innovation to market share growth of eateries in Port Harcourt?
- vi. To what extent does package innovation relate to customer retention of eateries in Port Harcourt?
- vii. To what extent does technology moderate between entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness of eateries in Port Harcourt?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested:

- Ho1 Product innovation does not significantly relate with market share growth
Ho2 Product innovation does not significantly relate with customer retention.
Ho3 Brand innovation does not significantly relate with market share growth
Ho4 Brand innovation does not significantly relate with customer retention
Ho5 Package innovation does not significant relate with market share growth
Ho6 Package innovation does not significant relate with customer retention
Ho7 Technology does not significantly moderate the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The Concept of Entrepreneurial Marketing Innovativeness

The operating business environment is dynamic and ever changing. It is only the institutions that are innovative that can keep pace with the dynamics of the market; customers, the competition, the economy, technology, government regulations and policies, socio-cultural factors etc (Stoner, Gilbert & Freeman, 2013; Kotler & Keller, 2012). Hence, since today's business environment is turbulent it requires different approaches to doing business. Innovativeness is a laudable business scheme to adapt to the challenges of the ever-changing business space and to improve competitive hedge in the industry (Robert & Allen, 2010; Okpara, 2007). Innovativeness of firms is highly important due to dramatic changes occurring in the business environment which is largely driven by globalization and liberalization of markets. Due to globalization and liberalization of markets, the business environment is more dramatic highly competitive and ever changing. Innovative entrepreneurial marketing will always develop adaptive organizations, products, services, processes and technologies to cope with the demand of the present-day business environment (Stoner, Gilbert & Freeman, 2013).

According to Kamaruddeen, Yusof & Said (2014), innovativeness is desired as "firm's overall innovative ability or capability of introducing new products to the market or opening up new markets through an integration of strategic orientation with innovative behaviour and processes". It is the process by which management of an organization engage in new ventures, adopt new ideas and novelty programmes that may translate to new products services and technologies. It is simply the process of achieving innovation; new products, new services, new production technologies and processes (Wang & Ahmed, 2004; Kamaruddeen, Yusof & Said, 2014). Thus, an organization is regarded as being innovative when the company's management adopts innovation. The dimension

of innovativeness of a firm is a function of the number of innovations adopted by management. In most industries, the most innovative firms are those companies who pioneer the adoption of innovation.

Innovativeness is an important construct of growth strategy which help corporate managers to attain sustainable competitive advantages especially, those companies with continuous innovative behaviours and characteristics (Wang, 2015). The author opined that, a company's innovativeness can be explained in the perspectives of product innovativeness, process innovativeness, organizational innovativeness and marketing innovativeness. Management thinking of innovativeness encompass the adoption of these business activities as innovation (Wang, 2015; Wang & Ahmed, 2004). Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness is laudable in business practice as it is conceptualized as the series or number of innovations a firm adopt. It is the ability of a company or an institution to generate new ideas and continuously innovate over time (Ruvio et al., 2014). It is the process of innovation and possess characteristics of creativity, internal knowledge development, future orientation, risk management and proactiveness (Ruvio et al., 2014). Hence, entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness helps organizations and nations in the transformation of existing markets, creation of new markets and stimulate economic growth through the employment and implementation of these characteristics.

According to the conceptual definition of Maritz, Waal & Verhoeven (2011), the entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness is "doing something new with ideas, products, service or technology and refining these ideas to a market opportunity to meet market demand in a new way". According to the authors, the characteristics of innovativeness are modifications, customer focus, integrated marketing, market focus and unique propositions. Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness is aimed at continuously creating new things, processes with a view to satisfying the market with appropriate goods and services in line with customers changing expectations, thus, improving the quality of life of customers and the firm's stakeholders and to also drive the company's brand success in the market (Abasag & Breman, 2017). The innovative organization should have the right leadership, firm's strategy and culture as conditions for achieving successful innovation. Again, the company should assemble the right resources such as human capital, competencies, firm's structure, financial resources, external collaboration and processes for achieving successful innovation at work (Alexe & Alexe, 2016).

Dimensions of Entrepreneurial Marketing Innovativeness

Product Innovation

Product innovation is the creation and subsequent introduction of a good or service that is either new, or an improved version of previous goods or services. This is broader than the normally accepted definition of innovation that includes the invention of new products which, in this context, are still considered innovative.

Product innovation is the development of new products, changes in design of established products, or use of new materials or components in the manufacture of established products. Numerous examples of product innovation include introducing new products, enhanced quality and improving its overall performance. Product innovation, alongside cost-cutting innovation and process innovation, are three different classifications of innovation which aim to develop a company's production methods. Thus product innovation can be divided into two categories of innovation: radical innovation which aims at developing a new product, and incremental innovation which aims at improving existing products.

Brand Innovation

Branding innovation refers to the ways that firms mix and match their brand's name on their products which it presents to the world (Aaker, 2004). Several authors have studied branding innovation and have identified some innovations with different taxonomy, listed below: Individual product branding and corporate branding, Branded house and house of brand, including 'endorsed

brands' and 'sub brands, Endorsement branding initiative, strong endorsement, token endorser and linked name, No endorsement, weak endorsement, medium endorsement and strong endorsement (Aaker,1991; Armstrong et al., 2007; Kotler, 2008). Every eatery has brand name like genesis, Klinmanjaro, the promise, etc, they all have brand name for their products. Innovative brands bring customers closer to the products and increases patronage.

Package Innovation

Packaging innovation seeks to increase resource efficiency, eliminate waste and reduce environmental impact through improved design and the use of alternative materials. Packaging is used throughout the food and beverage supply chain – by agriculture, in manufacturing, by retailers and in the home. Packaging innovation has the potential to reduce waste and costs of foods in eateries, while adding value and driving sales.

There are many ways in which the food sector can innovate with packaging, as follows:

- The reduction of material use through better design
- The reduction of energy consumption by light-weighting
- Increased durability, enabling re-use and reducing failures
- Proper handling and appealing to the consumers
- Increased sales and patronage through design.
- Greater conformity of design to reduce wasted space

The line between packaging innovation and product innovation for many large eateries businesses is either blurred or nonexistent. Packaging innovation is often seen as the most viable means to get successful new products out into the marketplace. However, some eateries see real packaging innovation as too risky or expensive and prefer renovation as a means to boost a flagging brand or product. Although this is generally cheaper and less risky, its effects are usually much more short-lived; it offers a temporary check on a brand's decline.

With packaging innovation now an integral part of most brand owner innovation strategies, it is useful to have a basic understanding of innovation principles and definitions. Innovation is often confused with renovation and/or invention. Invention is the realisation of an idea into a physical form, innovation is the commercialisation of an invention or idea, and renovation is the upgrading or updating of an existing pack design.

Packaging innovation has a long-term vision; it is not limited to viewing packaging as an addition to the product but as the product itself. In other words, packaging and product innovation become one and the same. This places packaging innovation squarely within R&D, a centralised function with direct representation at board level, e.g. the R&D director. The packaging innovators will be involved in researching and reviewing new and emerging technologies and thinking creatively about how they can be applied to create new products or new uses for old products within the context of the business. It is first and foremost an innovation (invention) function, with packaging second as a specific skill or knowledge set.

The Concept of Organizational Competitiveness

The business environment is becoming more dynamic and ever changing. Industries are now in a state of high competition among players. This foregoing is largely due to globalization and liberalization of markets which has made the world a common market place being driven by information, communication and transportation technologies (Opara & Adiele, 2014; Kimemia, Gakure & Waititu, 2014). An organization can only survive if it can be competitive in the market. For an organization to be a significant player in its chosen industry, it must have competitive advantage by providing more economic values that are superior in the market relative to competing firms in the industry (Kimemia, Gakure & Waititu, 2014).

Today, most industries in Nigeria and other developed or emerging markets are experiencing high competition among domestic companies and multinational firms. The competitive focus organization will adopt wide-ranging business strategies to attain superiority among its peers in the market or

industry-sector. Competitiveness of an organization implies economic strength of a company relative to the competition in the industry. It constitutes a laudable objective of a firm in the present context of globalization and shift in technologies (Claude, 2018). According to the scholar, organizational competitiveness is the ability of a company to create superior economic value than the competition in the industry. The definitions encompass the firm's ability to design, manufacture and market products and services which are superior to the offerings of the competition. Firm competitiveness is also the steady presence of a company and its offering in the market, making of business success such as productivity and profitability (Claude, 2018).

According to Johansson (2003), competitiveness could be defined as a company offering better value, high quality or low prices to the market. The organization can achieve competitive advantage by erecting robust organizational structure, business processes and support systems. Organizational competitiveness is the deliberate efforts of firm's leaders to continuously improve their processes for innovation, creativity and productivity in order to outperform the closest competitors in the market (Johansson, 2003; Kotler & Keller, 2012). Thus, there are some competitiveness factors in the industry that will lead a firm to competitive advantages and subsequently drive the organization to performance. These factors are internal knowledge and competency development, technological leadership, new product or service introduction and new market exploration among other factors (Okerefor, Ogungbangbe & Anyanwu, 2015).

Competitiveness of the firm in the industry or market place come with some salient factors which help to drive the competitive advantage of an entity (Kimemia, Gakure & Waititu, 2014). Hence, there are some measures or key indicators of organizational competitiveness. We will now turn to discuss these measures of organizational competitiveness by looking into the operational definitions of various scholars in the literature.

Measures of organizational competitiveness

Market Share Growth

Market share is defined as the portion of a sector controlled by a particular company or product. It is calculated by comparing the percentage of total sales in the relevant market to a specific company's revenue. From organizational competitiveness we obtain a strategic marketing definition of market share from the American Marketing Association website. It defines market share as "the proportion of the total quantity or sales in a market that is held by each of the competitors. Innovation empowers eateries in Port Harcourt to increase share growth of the market. Innovative push strategy brings about dramatic change of market share.

Effect of Market Share Growth

Increase in Sales

As mentioned before, market share has been seen as the most influential measure to evaluate the organizational competitiveness (Clark, 2001). According to the research conducted by the Profit Impact of Market Strategies (PIMS) project and the Boston Consulting Group, companies which have focused on gaining market share through increase in sales can enjoy the economies of scale and long-term profitability (Clark, 2001). Therefore, increase in sales seems to be the main emphasis for a lot companies and also generally seems to dominate market concentration measures in explaining companies' profitability in increased sales (Kurtz & Rhoades, 1992).

Territorial Coverage

The market can be defined as broadly as the industry, or all substitutes, or as narrowly as a specific market segment. The territorial coverage of the eateries cover leads to market growth such as genesis, the promise, Kilimanjaro, Chine restaurant, etc. The choice of market depends on which level gives the best insight into competitive position". This more competitor-oriented definition reflects its strategic purpose. High-growth markets are generally viewed as relatively more attractive by businesses because of the high margins and growing demand that characterize them (Szymanski

et al., 1993). As a result, more and more companies will be willing to try to enter this market due to the possible good profitability. As more companies enter the market, the number of competing firms in the market will increase. In addition, those high-growth markets can also be associated with high marketing costs, very tight cash flow strategy, needing more investment inputs to be able to stay in the game, increasing productivity, and high levels of buyer spending. By taking those increased profit margins and sales along with the reduced costs into account, the firm profitability seems to be increased (Buzzell & Gale, 1987). Eateries strive to dominate the environment they find themselves which they strategically positioned to serve, as well position to take competitive advantage against competitors in the area.

Profit accretion

Market share growth positively being associated with firm performance has received increasing attention in the marketing discipline since 1970 (Kurtz & Rhoades, 1992). The nature of the relationship between market share and business profitability has intrigued researchers, consultants and managers for years (Prescott et al., 1986). In 1975, Buzzell et al. published an article called "Market Share—A Key to Profitability", saying that from an ongoing study of 57 companies, they reveal a positive link between ROI and market share (Buzzell et al., 1975). This is a very important article in the market share research. From then, many researchers began to be devoted themselves to this particular research stream.

As Buzzell et al. (1975) mentioned in their article, "it is now widely recognized that one of the main determinants of business profitability is market share growth". They believe that companies with a higher share of the markets are considerably more profitable than their smaller-share rivals under most circumstances (Buzzell et al., 1975). Market share growth is also thought to be able to reflect the current competitive position for a company. Therefore, companies with high market shares growth are believed to satisfy customers' needs better and enjoy a competitive advantage against their smaller share competitors (Schwalbach, 1991).

Customer Retention

Customer retention refers to customer's stated continuation of a business relationship with the firm (Timothy et al, 2007). Successful customer retention starts with the first contact an organization has with a customer and continues throughout the entire lifetime of a relationship (Atieno, 2001). Eateries ability to attract and retain new customers is not only related to its products or services, but strongly related to the way it serves its existing customers and reputation it creates within and across the market place. In New Zealand, customer retention is an important element of marketing strategy in its increasingly competitive environment (Gale and Wood 2003) and this also applies to Nigeria. Meanwhile eateries always identifies and improves upon factors that can limit customer defection.

Effect of customer Retention

Loyalty

Customer loyalty has usually been regarded as the continuous buying of a product of interest (Hsu, Huang, Ko & Wang, 2014). Customer loyalty is a desire to maintain a relationship with a service provider (Moorman, Deshpande & Zaltman, 1992). Customer loyalty is also defined by Bose and Rao (2011) as the customer's commitment to engage in transaction with a specific organisation that leads to repeat purchases of products offered by that organization. To Rai and Srivastava (2014), for survival, companies need repeat buying due to the fact that such actions in customers can imply the customers' preference for a brand, disclose the customer's purchase intentions, and obtain long-term profitability. Therefore, satisfying a customer is of great importance to business survival. Eateries can get a part of the customers' wallet if they can maintain customer loyalty (Izogo, et al., 2017). Rauyruen and Miller (2007) view customer loyalty as the constant longing or readiness of the customer to repurchase and stay with the

company and as well as make the customer advocate for the business. Loyal customers are persons who have the passion about the products they consume. The more passionate a customer is, the bigger the profit the brand obtain (Malcolm, 2008). Loyalty is customer's show of unwavering faithfulness to an organization regardless of the occasional mistakes. According to Bagram and Khan (2012), "customer loyalty is defined as the action of a customer in which he or she demonstrates the willingness to repurchase from a firm and remain in relationships with the same firm in his or her future purchases." Jaiswal and Niraj (2011) opine that nurturing loyalty and retaining customers are important for every organization. This is due to the fact customer loyalty is the strategic objective of several organizations and the competitive advantage it offers. Roberts-Lombard (2014) opines that to secure loyal customers, firms are expected to invest in relationship-building in areas of customer intimacy, customer orientation and to improve on their reputation, because creating such relationships and intimacy will lead to stronger loyalty of eateries.

Commitment

Commitment may be defined as a permanent wish to maintain a relationship (Sosa-Varela et al., 2011). Moorman et al. (1993) state that consumers that are already committed will be more prone to act in a way that is consistent with this commitment. Based on Porter et al. (1974), it is possible to affirm that customers that have developed a certain sense of commitment towards an online operation will have a strong connection with it. Loyalty that is preceded by a sense of commitment towards the brand will be stronger and produce a more stable relation between customer and company (Castañeda, 2005). A customer's commitment implies their will to establish a long-term relationship, make certain short-term sacrifices to keep up this relationship, and a feeling of trust towards the stability of the commercial relation (Anderson and Weitz, 1992). In accordance to these views, commitment is an essential element in the development of long-term business relationships (Sánchez-Franco et al., 2007). In light of eateries in Port Harcourt is dependent on the commitment of the customer to the efficient organizational competitiveness.

Referral

When an individual customer contributes to a service provider goal as a result of satisfaction derived from a product or service it is said to be referrals (Watlins & Liu, 1996). Referral or word of mouth constitutes an exchange of ephemeral oral or spoken message between a contagious source and recipient communicating directly in real life and a positive word of mouth may appear to have more impact than a well-researched printed source of product formation (Stern, 1994). Similarly researchers has accepted the fact that positive word of mouth has a tremendous influence on behaviour than other marketing communication source (Headley & Millier, 1993) and referral has help member obtain relevant and accurate information to meet specific needs through the help of market orientation. Gelb and Johnson (1995) said that word of mouth helps in creating awareness of an innovation and also help in securing a decision for customer to try the product.

Technology on entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness

Technology is a moderating variable between entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness optimization. Technology has proven to be a highly effective tool in changing the narrative, driving a change in operating and business models, improving platform for innovation and creating immense opportunities for eateries and marketing performance of the eateries, according to Chen et al (2006).The technology impact landscape continues to change through the never-ending rollout of faster, more accessible networks, impacting every component of service delivery of eateries in Port Harcourt. On this note, technology connects both innovation and organizational competitiveness. Technology modifies the eateries business in the following ways: *mobile payment*- The proliferation and surge in the use of mobile devices in e-business, as well as the acceptance of mobile phones has led to the development of mobile payment tools

(Gokhan & Sebnem, 2016). Dahlberg, Mallat, Ondrus and Zmijewska (2008) posited that mobile payment is the payments for goods, services, and bills with a mobile device such as mobile phone, tablets etc. by maximizing wireless and other communication technologies. Pousttchi (2006) considered mobile payment as the instigation, permission, and completion processes of payment through mobile devices. Mobile payments are payments made through mobile network operators (MNO) and mobile devices using associated infrastructures (Robin, 2014). Ondrus and Pigneur (2006) indicated that mobile payment systems are expected to be major tools in numerous transactions because of the rapid growth in the usage of mobile devices and rapidly development in m-commerce activities. Mobile advertisement- *Mobile Advertisement* Mobile devices have become the most significant tools in the retailer – customer relationship. Maja, (2014) submitted that several applications on mobile devices can keep target market informed about special offers, new products and services. And mobile advertising is the new direction of marketing activities of many retailers as retailers are able to personalize their market offerings, fully aware of individual needs of customers. Rejzerewicz, (2012) indicated that mobile advertising is one of the newest technological capabilities of mobile devices that not only assent the sending of messages, but also use the bluetooth system to spread information about new store offers, new products, services, promotional campaigns, sales, etc. Fawaz, Hojaj and Kobeissi (2011) opined that mobile advertisement is sending messages to customers' mobile devices about sales, promotions and bluetooth marketing. Other technologies include, online ordering system, stock taking software.

Theoretical Framework

The following theories shall guide this study which includes Nicosia Model, theory of innovation and theory of subjective entrepreneurship.

Nicosia Model

This study was based on Nicosia model. In Nicosia (1969) a consumer is an individual who purchases, or has the willingness and ability to purchase goods and services offered for sale by marketing institutions in order to gratify individual or household needs, wants or desires. Schiffman and Kanuk (1987) noted that the Nicosia model focused on the relation between firm and its potential consumers. The organization connects with the customers through its marketing messages (advertising) or captions on the packing and consumers also relate with the organization through their purchase replies. The Nicosia model is interactive in design. Nicosia model is divided into four major fields (Good hope, 2013) namely, the consumer's attitude based on the firm's message; search and evaluation; the act of purchase; and feedback.

This study draws its hypotheses from this model in that, branding and its qualities are part of communication to patrons which the hotels hope could inspire patrons to patronize their services. Customers in turn, are becoming classy in their search for accurate information that can help their purchasing decisions. The model distinguished that consumer forms favorites among the brands in the choice set and may also form an intention to buy the most preferred brand. Marketers must monitor post purchase satisfaction; post-purchase action and post purchase product uses.

Radical subjectivism theory of entrepreneurship

Ludwig M. Lachmann was a German Economist who proposed a radical subjectivist theory of entrepreneurship as an alternative to existing Austrian School theories of entrepreneurship (e.g., alertness theory or uncertainty-bearing theory or creative destruction theory). According to Lachmann, entrepreneurs develop plans according to their subjective knowledge and expectations. Expectations form as a result of the creative imagination of entrepreneurs, who may envision many competing futures. Entrepreneurs continually revise their plans as they encounter new bits of market information during exchange experiences. Capital is seen as continually recombining due to the process of capital regrouping. As capital is invested sub-optimally, errors lead to new temporary stocks of capital that need to be redeployed toward new purposes. Institutions are viewed as signposts that provide the rules of the game for millions of individuals,

allowing for mass coordination. Lachmann assumes that individuals experience time differently and that the only way to interpret events is to reconstruct them from bits of information after they have occurred. According to Lachmann, knowledge includes interpretations of the past and expectations about the future. However, expectations and interpretations are continuously changing. As past events are reinterpreted, new expectations form about the future. Therefore, entrepreneurs should embrace the continuous revision of their plans.

The theory of Innovation

Although since the late 1880s there have been reports of the use of the term "innovation" to mean something unusual, none of first precursors of innovation have been as influential as the Schumpeter. According to him, consumer preferences are already given and do not undergo spontaneously. It means that they cannot be cause of the economic change. Moreover, consumers in the process of economic development play a passive role. In Theory of economic development and further work, Schumpeter described development as historical process of structural changes, substantially driven by innovation which was divided by him into five types:

1. launch of a new product or a new species of already known product;
2. application of new methods of production or sales of a product (not yet proven in the industry);
3. opening of a new market (the market for which a branch of the industry was not yet represented);
4. acquiring of new sources of supply of raw material or semi-finished goods;
5. new industry structure such as the creation or destruction of a monopoly position.

Schumpeter argued that anyone seeking profits must innovate. That will cause the different employment of economic system's existing supplies of productive means. Schumpeter believed that innovation is considered as an essential driver of competitiveness and economic dynamics. He also believed that innovation is the center of economic change causing gales of "creative destruction", which is a term created by Schumpeter in *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*. According to Schumpeter innovation is a "process of industrial mutation, that incessantly revolutionizes the economic structure from within, incessantly destroying the old one, incessantly creating a new one".

Empirical Review of Related Literatures

This implies the review of previous related studies on Entrepreneurial Branding Initiatives and Marketing Success of Hotels. This study embarked upon some systematic review on the apprehensive subject and presents underneath, with meticulous orientation to topics, locations, methodology and findings.

Nwekeala and Diepriye (2020) investigated the impact of entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness on organizational competitiveness in the context of quoted industrial goods manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The study adopted a cross sectional survey research design with the use of explanatory research design and with a causal investigation. The population of the study was the ten (10) quoted industrial goods manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The findings of the study indicates that entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness has positive and significant impact on the measures of organizational competitiveness; productivity, value creation and new market exploration. We therefore conclude that, entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness significantly improves organizational innovativeness.

Ademe (2021) examined the relationship between customer relationship and customer satisfaction of Fast Food Restaurants in Port Harcourt. The cross-sectional research design was adopted by the researcher. The population of this study are customers of registered fast food restaurants in Port Harcourt. Fifty two (52) registered fast food enlisted by the Rivers State Ministry of Commerce & Industry (Yellow Pages, 2016/2017). Sampling techniques was adopted for this study. Spearman Rank Order Correlation Co-efficient was used. The findings of the study established that a positive and significant relationship exist between the variables established that a positive and significant relationship exist between the variables. The study therefore concludes that the dimensions of customer relationship to a large extent influence customer satisfaction.

Suraksha Gupta et al (2016) investigated Marketing innovation: A consequence of competitiveness. This research used complexity theory to probe the relationship between competitiveness and innovation in the marketing practices of large manufacturing firms that offer their branded products in a foreign market by engaging a network of local small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). A deductive, quantitative research approach was employed and data were collected over a nine-month period from resellers of international IT firms in India using a questionnaire. A sample of 649 respondents to find answers to the questions raised. This research indicates that a successful business relationship between a brand and its resellers can enable both parties to compete in a competitive market. This study finds that innovativeness in the marketing initiatives of the brand can be a function of the contributions made by the brand to its competitiveness.

Mohammad et al (2018) investigated entrepreneurial innovativeness and its impact on SMEs' performances. Research employed structural equation modeling partial least square (SEM-PLS) to test proposed theoretical framework on a dataset of 450 SMEs in the wholesale and retail industry in Malaysia. Findings revealed that there was a significant positive impact of entrepreneurial innovativeness on three types of business performances namely perceived non-financial, perceived business growth, and perceived performance relative to competitors. However, based on our findings, increased financial performance was not derived from entrepreneurial innovativeness

Gap in Literature

After due diligence and critical reviewed of all the previous scholar studies, it was discovered that no work on entrepreneurial marketing innovation and organizational competitiveness of eateries in Port Harcourt. Secondly it was also noticed that no scholar has ever used the market share growth as measure and statement points, hence necessitated focusing on the measure to see how it affect the organization competitiveness in the saturated market of eateries in Port Harcourt where eateries are struggling to innovatively dominate the market.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research method, the research design is cross sectional with explanatory or hypotheses testing research design to determine the extent of relationship between entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness of eateries. The population of the study was fifty two (52) registered eateries in Rivers State Ministry of Commerce and Industry online yellow page 2022. They are registered and functional eateries in Port Harcourt. Random sampling method was adopted for the study. Ten (10) eateries were selected out of the 52 because they share the same characteristics. However, six managers from marketing, production, finance, human resources, sales and the general manager in each of the organisation to whom questionnaire were administered constituted the respondents of the study. Sixty copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the managers, six (6) copies to each organization's managers. The study employed a 39 item questionnaire which was validated through pilot study. Primary data: Eateries management staff were visited and required information was gathered as per the questionnaire. Secondary data: Information was sourced from annual reports, customer record, association journal and interactions with staff of the eateries through well designed questionnaires that aim at identifying the true customer experience quality. The instrument used was validly subjected to assessment to make the items in the instrument to be relevant, reasonable, unambiguous and clear. The instrument was reliable using Cronbach's Alpha procedure to determine the level of internal consistency among the measurement items. Data was analyzed with the help of univariate descriptive statistics and bivariate inferential statistics with the aid of the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 22.0.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Data for this study were administered and collected from sample of 10 eateries in Port Harcourt. Data were collected through a 39 items questionnaire administered to the respondents.

Data Presentation**Table 1 Demographic Information of Respondents**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Questionnaire Distributed	60	100
Questionnaire returned	49	82
Questionnaire valid and used	44	73
Gender of Respondents		
Male	28	64
Female	16	36
Total	44	100
Age of Respondents (Years)		
21-38	8	18
39-49	15	34
50-59	21	48
Total	44	100
Marital Status		
Single	7	16
Married	37	84
Total	44	100
Educational Status		
HND/1st Degree	29	65
Master's Degree	13	30
Ph.D	2	5
Total	44	100
Working Experience (years)		
11-15	7	16
16-20	18	41
21-25	9	20
26-29	10	23
Total	44	100

Source: Research Data, 2024

Table 1 explained the demographic information of the respondents. From the table, the researcher distributed sixty (60) copies of the questionnaire to the respondents; from the returned questionnaire only forty four (44) copies were validly used after coding, editing and data cleansing which represent seventy three percent (73%) of the total number of questionnaire distributed to the respondents. The gender distribution indicates that 28 managers were men representing 64% of the total number of respondents while 16 respondents were female managers representing 36% of the total number of respondents. Thus, the industry is made up of more of male managers. About age distribution, eight (8) respondents fall in the age range of 21-38 years, fifteen (15) respondents were in the age range of 39-49 years while 21 respondents were in the age range of 50-59 years. Important to note that the industry is made up of more of young managers. Furthermore, the marital status of the respondent managers revealed that seven (7) respondents were single representing 16% of the total number of respondents, 37 respondents were married, representing 84% of the total number of respondents. Again the quoted industrial goods manufacturing industry is made up of more of married managers. On the educational status of the managers 29 respondents

representing 65% have HND/first degrees while 13 respondents representing 30% of the total number of subjects are master's degree holders. Only 2 respondents representing 5% of the total number of the respondents are Ph.D holders. Respondents of our study are highly educated with varied fields, business, technical, engineering etc. The subject of working experience revealed that 7 respondents representing 16% of the total number of respondents have worked for 11-15 years, 18 respondents representing 20% of the total number of respondents have worked for the period spanning 16-20 years. Nine (9) respondents representing 20% of the total number of respondents have worked for 21-25 years while 10 respondents representing 23% of the total number of respondents have worked for 26- 29 years. Important to note that respondents have considerable number of years of working experience.

Test of the Hypotheses

Table 2: Relationship between Product Innovation and Market Share Growth

Correlations			
Variables	Statistics	Product Innovation	Market Share Growth
Market Share Growth	Pearson's correlation	1.000	.639***
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Product Innovation	N	100	100
	Pearson's correlation	.439***	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	100	100

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

Table 2 shows that the Pearson's $r = 0.639^{**}$. This indicates that a moderate relationship exists between Product Innovation and Market Share Growth. The sign of the correlation coefficient is positive, indicating that when Market Share Growth augments, market share growth also augments. Therefore the study rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternative hypothesis that Market Share Growth significantly relates with Market Share Growth.

The significant/probability value (p_v) = 0.000 < 0.05. Therefore the researcher concludes that a significant positive and moderate relationship exist between product innovation and market share growth, implying that when a company is perceived as applying product innovation in its company, this endeavor will in turn lead to market share growth in the organization.

Table 3: Relationship between Product Innovation and Market customer Retention

Correlations			
Variables	Statistics	Product Innovation	Customer Retention
Customer Retention	Pearson's correlation	1.000	.479***
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
Product Innovation	N	100	100
	Pearson's correlation	.469***	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	100	100

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

The information in table 3 reveals that a moderate relationship exist between brand awareness and customer retention ($r = 0.479^{**}$). This is in agreement with the earlier decision rule that if the correlation value is within 0.40-0.59. The relationship is moderate. The correlation value is also

positively signed indicating that a positive relation exists between Product Innovation and customer retention. The relationship is also significant (significant/probability value (pv) = 0.001).

Table 4: Relationship between Brand Innovation and Market Share Growth Correlations

Variables	Statistics	Brand Innovation	Market Share Growth
Market Share Growth	Pearson's correlation	1.000	.479***
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	100	100
Brand Innovation	Pearson's correlation	.479***	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	100	100

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

The information in table 4 reveals that a moderate relationship exist between brand innovation and market share growth ($r = 0.479^{**}$). This is in agreement with the earlier decision rule that if the correlation value is within 0.40-0.59. The relationship is moderate. The correlation value is also positively signed indicating that a positive relation exists between brand innovation and market share growth. The relationship is also significant (significant/probability value (pv) = 0.001).

Table 5: Relationship between Brand Innovation and customer retention (n=100) Correlations

Variables	Statistics	Brand Innovation	Customer Retention
Customer Retention	Pearson's correlation	1.000	.429***
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
Brand Innovation	Pearson's correlation	.429***	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100

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

Table 5 shows that the Pearson's $r = 0.429^{**}$. This indicates that a moderate relationship exists between Brand innovation and customer retention. The sign of the correlation coefficient is positive, indicating that when customer retention augments, market share growth also augments. Therefore the study rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternative hypothesis that brand innovation significantly relates with customer retention.

The significant/probability value (pv) = 0.000 < 0.05. Therefore the researcher concludes that a significant positive and moderate relationship exist between brand innovation and customer retention, implying that when a company is perceived as applying brand innovation in its company, this endeavor will in turn lead to customer retention in the organization.

Table 6: Relationship between Package Innovation and Market Share Growth Correlations

Variables	Statistics	Package Innovation	Market Share Growth
Market Share Growth	Pearson's correlation	1.000	.489***
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	100	100
Package Innovation	Pearson's correlation	.489***	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	100	100

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

The information in table 6 reveals that a moderate relationship exist between package innovation and market share growth ($r = 0.489^{**}$). This is in agreement with the earlier decision rule that if the correlation value is within 0.40-0.59. The relationship is moderate. The correlation value is also positively signed indicating that a positive relation exists between package innovation and market share growth. The relationship is also significant (significant/probability value (pv) = 0.001).

Table 7: Relationship between Package Innovation and Customer Retention Correlations

Variables	Statistics	Package Innovation	Customer Retention
Customer Retention	Pearson's correlation	1.000	.459***
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	100	100
Package Innovation	Pearson's correlation	.459***	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	100	100

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

The information in table 7 reveals that a moderate relationship exist between package innovation and customer retention ($r = 0.459^{**}$). This is in agreement with the earlier decision rule that if the correlation value is within 0.40-0.59. The relationship is moderate. The correlation value is also positively signed indicating that a positive relation exists between package innovation and customer retention. The relationship is also significant (significant/probability value (pv) = 0.001).

Moderating role of Technology on the Relationship between Entrepreneurial Marketing Innovativeness and Organizational Competitiveness.

This section presents the analysis of the moderating variable: Technology. In this section, the partial correlation coefficient is used to show how the moderating variable moderate or influence the relationship between attributes of entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness.

Table 8: Partial Correlation Analysis showing the role of technology on the Relationship between Entrepreneurial Marketing Innovativeness and Organizational Competitiveness (n=100)

Control Variable	Variable	Statistics	Attributes of Entrepreneurial Marketing Innovativeness	Technology

		And Organizational Competitiveness			
-nonea	Attributes of Entrepreneurial Marketing Innovativeness	Correlation	1.000	.609	.064
		Significance	.	.000	.183
		(2-tailed) Df	0	198	198
	Organizational Competitiveness	Correlation	.609	1.000	.570
		significant (2- tailed) df	.000	.	.002
			.198	0	198
	Technology	Correlation	.064	.570	1.000
		significance	.183	.002	.
		(2-tailed) df	.198	198	0
Technology	Attributes of Entrepreneurial Marketing Innovativeness	Correlation	1.000	.507	
		significance	.	.002	
		(2-tailed) Df	0	197	
	Organizational Competitiveness	Correlation	1.000	.507	
		significance	.	.002	
		(2-tailed) Df	0	197	
	Organizational Competitiveness	Correlation	.507	1.000	
		significance	.002	.	
		(2-tailed)df	.197	0	

a. cells contain zero-order (Pearson) Correlations.

Table 8 shows that a strong and significant relationship exist between technology and organizational competitiveness ($r = 0.570$, $Pv 0.002 < 0.05$), while a weak and insignificant relationship exist between technology and the attributes of entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness ($r= 0.064$, $pv 0.183 > 0.05$). Table 7 shows that there is a strong and significant relationship existing between attributes of entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness ($r= 0.609$, $pv 0.000 < 0.05$). However, when technology is held constant/controlled, the relationship between attributes of entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness becomes ($r = 0.507$, $pv 0.00 0.01$) hence, a significant difference exist.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The first hypothesis sought to determine the extent of relationship between brand awareness and market share growth by means of the Pearson’s product moment correlation analysis. The dispensation of product innovation alone is not enough to sustain the required level of customer experience, but it is a basis for the execution and achievement of overall eateries competitions. The second hypothesis brought coefficient outcome to the interdependency of product innovation and customer retention as one the key factors to capture customers for eateries in the market of restaurant industry.

In the third hypothesis, our finding confirms that a moderate, significant and positive relationship exists between brand innovation and market share growth. This clearly shows that brand innovation and market share growth is very important, and it is a eateries firm’s objective criterion, since it is very vital in the analysis of the relationship between the variables.

The fourth hypothesis reveals that there is a very strong relationship between brand innovation and customer retention. This result proves the relevance of this innovation that guarantee the organizational competition of eateries that leads to success at any point of decision making.

The fifth hypothesis, which states that the higher the package innovation, the higher the market share growth, is supported empirically. This result is consistent with the results of previous studies conducted by previous researchers stated in the study. This revealed that package innovation was able to improve the image of eateries.

The sixth hypothesis, which states that the higher the package innovation, the higher the brand loyalty, is supported empirically. This result is in line with empirical studies. When the customers understood that the eateries had quality package delivery. Therefore, the management must innovate to make the eateries unique compare to the others.

The seventh hypothesis indicates that a strong and significant relationship exists between technology, entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness. When technology is held constant, the relationship between innovativeness and organizational competitiveness becomes ($r=0.607$ $p < 0.000 < 0.05$). Technology will reduce the difficulty in the services whereby people or customers could stay somewhere book online, pay online, and transact online without being physically present.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The followings are the discussion of findings. The findings revealed that all dimensions are moderate and strong positive relationship with the two measures to show the significant impact of innovation on organizational competitiveness. The coefficient of p -value showed the reaction to other values as explained under the test of hypothesis.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study investigated the impact of entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and organizational competitiveness of eateries in Port Harcourt. From the empirical results we conclude that entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness positively and significantly improve organizational competitiveness. Again, entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness (product innovation, brand innovation and package innovation) positively and significantly enhance organizational competitiveness (market share growth and customer retention) of eateries in Port Harcourt.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made

- i. The eatery firms should take a lead in the introduction of new production technologies, new processes etc. This will enhance their competitiveness in the industry
- ii. The organizations should be the first to embrace new business models introduced in the industry, accept changes in the business environment. This will make the companies to be adaptive to changes and be competitiveness in the market place.
- iii. The eatery firms should focus on innovativeness and innovation in their entire value delivery chain. This will help the companies to develop new processes and services, meet the changing requirements of the market and enhance their competitiveness both in the domestic market and the global market place.

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