Strategic Impact of Planning Management on Quality Control in Measures Success of Small and Medium Enterprises in Nigeria: Student Output Outlets In University of Calabar, Cross River State

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Abstract: The modern sales promotion techniques are becoming indispensable for market success due to the swift transformation of the global market and the heightened competition. In University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria, the study looks at the strategic management of sales promotion techniques on product consumers of particular retail output outlets. The study used a survey research design, and the sample was chosen using a two-stage process that included judgmental and stratified random sampling. For data estimation, multiple regression analysis and one-way ANOVA were used. The study found that consumers in particular retail outlets within University of Calabar's Output Outlets in Cross River State, Nigeria, are significantly impacted by free samples of products. The study suggested that retailers try to use tactics for sales promotions aggressively since it would increase volume of sales and delay the expiration date of some products that are currently on the shelf. Additionally, it is best to oppose giving away free things in exchange for a token payment, as this practice irritates customers and reduces brand loyalty because many of them are unlikely to return for such a product.

Keywords: Cross River State; retail outlets; consumers; sales promotion; strategic management.

1. Overview

In fact, Abalaka (2022) asserts that success in business now depends on carefully thought-out planning that creates a competitive advantage over rivals in the marketplace. Businesses nowadays must necessarily organize themselves in response to the complicated and dynamic business environment, which is characterized by risk and uncertainty, intense competition, and customers' discretionary spending power must carve out a place in the market to successfully and efficiently meet their needs in order to foster brand loyalty. Promotional methods evolve based on the idea of providing the desired satisfaction more than competitors, according to Sulaiman (2020).

The essential characteristics of market competitiveness are evolving on a global scale, and these changes are happening at an accelerating rate. Ajiteru (2021). In order to encourage sales and brand loyalty, Bettis and Hitt (2019) proposed that tactics and contests in the late 21st century are shifting toward a "new competitive landscape" that embodies new themes, concepts, problems, and challenges. Follow-up, It becomes essential to strategically handle sales promotion tactics for customers' products in retail establishments. Strategic management is figuring out how the company positions itself in relation to its rivals and determining prospects and risks that a company faces, whether they originate from rival companies or from within the company. Businesses must strategically communicate their sales promotion tactics in order to continue being effective. Abalaka (2022) supported the following:

The goal of the strategic management process is to assist a company in logically addressing the obstacles presented by the competitive environment of the twenty-first century. In order to achieve the intended strategic objective, a company must analyze its internal and external environments, recognize opportunities and challenges in the market, and decide how to apply its core skills. With this information, the company develops a plan with the goal of using its assets, skills, and core competencies to win market share.

Selling products or services directly to customers for their own or non-business usage is referred to as retailing. Any firm whose primary source of revenue is retailing is a retailer or retail shop. Retailing is the activity of a company, be it a manufacturer, wholesaler, or retailer, that sells to final consumers. The method of selling the products or services is irrelevant.

(in person, over the phone, via mail, at a vending machine, online, or by mail) or where (at a store, outside, or at the customer's house). Consequently, strategic management of the sales promotion methods of certain retail outlets is crucial and serves as the foundation for this study, according to Sulaiman (2020).

2.1 The study's objective

This study's main goal was to determine how sales promotion strategies affected the merchandise that customers of particular retail stores at University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria, purchased. In particular, the research aimed to:

1. Determine the impact that sales promotion strategies have on consumers' desire to take part in a sales campaign.

2. Analyze the impact of free samples on the products that customers of particular storeoutlets at Cross River State University's Output Outlets in Calabar, Nigeria.

2.2 Questions for Research

In this study, the following research questions were employed.

1. What is the impact of sales promotion tactics on consumers' inclination to engage in a sales campaign?

2. How much of an impact do free samples have on the merchandise that customers of particular retail outlets in University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria, buy?

1. Research Conjectures

The following were the study's research hypotheses:

1. The motivation of customers to take part in a sales promotion campaign is not greatly impacted by sales promotion tactics.

2. Free samples have no discernible impact on the products that customers of particular retail locations in University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria, purchase.

2.3 Importance of the research

The research outcomes of this study will be advantageous to retail business operators, marketing professionals, and academic institutions. Retail store owners The study has clarified the hidden principles of sales promotion for the members of the channel of distribution, including retailers Ajiteru, (2021), therefore businesses would find the advice quite helpful. Additionally, by applying marketing consulting to marketing firms both inside and outside of Nigeria, marketing practitioners will gain from the study's conclusions. Based on the findings of this study, the marketing consultants will be qualified to offer guidance on sales promotion strategies. Because research of this kind has strengthened the foundation of sales promotion literature, the academic community will rely on the study's literary Sulaiman (2020).

3. The study's history

One of these crucial abilities is planning since it sets the pace assuming additional managerial duties. Because it views a company through its aspirations and life purposes, strategic planning is crucial. It is essential to a company's existence and prosperity. Sulaiman (2020) An organization's strategic plan outlines its goals for the following year or longer, as well as how it will get there and assess its success. While the focus of a business plan is typically on a specific product, service, or program, that of a strategic plan is typically on the organization as a whole. Abalaka (2022) Creating strategic plans is the process of strategic planning. It entails choosing the goals of the company, whether to modify them, and which resources to deploy in order to achieve them these goals and on the regulations that would control the procurement of resources, according to Sulaiman (2020).

Mc Carthy (2020) defines strategic planning as the managerial process of creating and preserving a match between an organization's resources and its market prospects. The strategic management process, according to Ajiteru (2021), calls for leadership roles in the definition of the company mission, analysis of the business environment and competitiveness, development of objectives, goals, and strategies, and specification of product market distribution and quality plans to carry out the business strategies. The definitions of strategy provided by Abalaka (2022) more closely resemble summaries of the objectives of strategic planning. The identification of fundamental long-term goals and objectives and the choice of a course of action are referred to as strategic planning and distribution of resources to achieve these objectives.

3.1 Difficulties facing the business

The corporation has difficulties much like any other, which helps to explain why the state's completed water project is not as feasible as it could be in terms of civil engineering and pipeline construction. Other issues and difficulties facing the business include:

1. Customers' failure to pay water fees on schedule.

2. public damage to pipelines caused by soil excavation or the construction of structures on water pipelines.

3. No incidences of broken pipes were reported to the firm.

4. Unauthorized connection

4. Water waste

4. Review of Literature

4.1 The theoretical structure

Strategic management, according to Sulaiman (2020), is a collection of managerial choices and actions that establishes the long-term performance of the company. It consists of scanning the internal and external environments, formulating strategies (long-term or strategic planning), putting those strategies into practice, evaluating them, and controlling them. As a result, the study of management places a strong emphasis on keeping an eye on and assessing external opportunities and threats in the context of an organization's strengths and limitations. In the modern era, any firm that wishes to prosper must fully adopt strategic management practices. We are living in what Sulaiman (2020) refers to as "The Age of Discontinuity," as far as business environments go. Due to the effects of globalization, internationalization, rising unpredictability, fierce rivalry, financial crises, digitally based business models, emerging nations, and accelerating technical improvement, changes during that era happen very quickly. Thus, businesses need to be more proactive in their approach to strategic management, embrace technological advancements, respond more quickly, and better control expenses Ajiteru, 2021).

Thus, the architecture of strategic management is the synthesis of form in response to function. Abalaka (2022). The definition of strategic management architecture, as applied to complex systems and organizations, is the basic arrangement of a system as represented by its constituent parts, their interactions with one another and the surrounding environment, and the guiding principles that direct the system's creation and development. Ajiteru (2021). This definition clarifies that form must come after function, meaning that structure should be in line with purpose. The idea of the strategic management architecture model has evolved throughout time, concentrating on the concepts and design of certain structures that promote growth, coherence, and change Sulaiman (2020). A company is an activity system with goals Abalaka, 2022. A coherently designed organization is one that is effective, as Sulaiman (2020) discusses.

Because organization development is a system-wide process of planned change aimed at improving the overall effectiveness of insurance firms by way of enhanced congruence of such key organizational dimensions as external environment, mission, strategy, leadership, culture, structure, information and reward systems, and work, developing insurance firms in Nigeria therefore requires knowledge of a set of values, largely humanistic; the application of the behavioral sciences; and open systems theory guidelines and protocols Sulaiman (2020).

4.2 Conceptual Difficulties

SMEs have different definitions in different countries (Gunasekaran, Forker, and Kobu, 2020). Nonetheless, the number of employed people appears to be a consistent trend (Adams & Hall, 1993). Other factors used to classify businesses include assets, sales turnover, and/or capital employed. A small scale enterprise in Nigeria is defined as a business that employs between 11 and 100 people and has capital of no more than N50 million, including working capital but excluding land costs. A medium-sized business, on the other hand, employs between 101 and 300 people and has capital of more than N50 million but not more than N200 million, including working capital but excluding land cost. In defining what SMEs are, the Central Bank of Nigeria (2010) acknowledged the number of employees working at the aforementioned level, although asset values vary. Businesses with have assets between N5 million and N500 million are therefore categorized as SMEs Sulaiman (2020).

In Nigeria, small and medium-sized businesses are thought to be responsible for 70% of industrial employment and 40% of the country's GDP. Ajiteru (2021). According to Abalaka (2022), small firms make up around 87% of all enterprises in Nigeria and account for 61% of the country's GDP. They are the source of 58% of jobs nationwide. Similarly, it is estimated that up to 40% of Ghana's GDP comes from SME, accounting for roughly 70% of all company enterprises. The experience of Kenya also indicates that there are over 1.3 million micro and small businesses that employ roughly 2.3 million people, generating income, jobs, and export growth Sulaiman (2020). SME sector comprises 98 percent of firms and employs a significant portion of the labor force in several newly industrialized nations such as China, India, South Korea, and others (Sanusi, 2023).

SMEs continue to play vital and important roles in social and economic stabilization, even in developed and highly industrialized societies. In Japan, for example, SMEs are thought to account for 99.7% of business enterprises, 87% of employment, and 51% of all goods exported to the USA. In the USA, SMEs also contributed to over half of the private non-agricultural GDP between 1998 and 2004, employed nearly 50% of non-farm private sector workers in 2006, and is in charge of creating 64.1% of net new employment from 1992 to 2009. SMEs not only give the public a way to hone their entrepreneurial talents, but they also innovate more quickly and effectively than larger companies when it comes to procedures, goods, and services. It is estimated that in OECD countries, micro and small businesses make up over 95% of businesses, 60–70% of jobs, and 55% of GDP (SMEs Agency, 2013, quoted in Gamage, 2014; USITC, 2010; Etuk,

The aforementioned demonstrates unequivocally the vital significance that SMEs continue to play in both developed and developing nations. These tasks are crucial, particularly in a country like Nigeria where the primary source of foreign exchange earnings is the export of crude oil. These roles include creating jobs, reduction of poverty, income redistribution, and inclusive growth, as well as the national economy's diversification and preservation of foreign exchange, indigenous technology development, and usage of local resources Abalaka, (2022).

4.3 Nigerian SMEs' challenges

It may be argued that because SMEs have not fulfilled their expected function, the Nigerian economy has not fared better. Nonetheless, this encourages coordinated actions by succeeding governmental administrations. This sector's poor performance is observably a sign of underlying issues that have not been resolved. Numerous problems are revealed in the literature, such as ineffective and inadequate infrastructure for the provision of power and water, a bad road system, business incubation centers, etc. Because of this, SMEs are forced to supply these essential services, which raises their operating expenses. Furthermore, the management of incentives, subsidies, and other interventions is distinguished by corruption and onerous regulations, deterring prospective business owners and pushing out current ones. The growth of SMEs is hindered by several factors, including poor documentation, poorly packaged and presented business proposals, a lack of collateral or security, and high interest rates. These factors can be attributed to banks' and other financial institutions' reluctance to extend credit to SMEs (Sulaiman, 2020).

Nnanna (2021) said that there are other difficulties, such as the inability to obtain affordable, adequate technology, the near lack of facilities for research and development, the declining market for locally produced items, and the growing desire for imported goods. Poor accounting records, a weak organizational structure, ineffective product and service marketing, little use of information technology, difficulties with human management, etc. minimal levels of formal education and The main issues facing SMEs in Nigeria are the owners' and staff' technical competency. According to Sulaiman (2020), the issues facing SMEs in Nigeria can be summed up as follows: low technology adoption, inadequate infrastructure and business support services, finance, accounting and internal control, marketing, human resource and general management, and financing.

4.4 Critical components of SMEs' success

The success of SMEs has been found to be determined by a number of factors. Sulaiman (2020), for example, summarized the study strands and came to the conclusion that certain criteria have been recognized as critical to the development of SMEs. Entrepreneurial traits, SMEs' traits, management expertise, goods and services, clients and markets, business strategy, finances and resources, external environment, and ICT are among them. Abalaka (2022).

Similar to this, Ajiteru (2021) looked into how contextual factors affected the performance of SMEs in Nigeria and discovered that a number of factors, including government policy, raw material availability, capital, and enabling environments, had a major impact on the growth of SMEs. According to research on SMEs' financing possibilities, Sulaiman (2020) found a strong correlation between SMEs' financing and Nigeria's economic expansion.

Despite the fact that many elements have been found to influence the success of SMEs, these factors can be generically classified as internal or external and placed within the context of the environment. Internal environmental variables: These are a group of organizational elements that have the power to affect how well a company performs or achieves its objectives Abalaka, (2022). Among them are the following:

Practices in human resource management (HRM): This is a people-centered role that primarily deals with luring in, inspiring, and keeping the human capital that an organization needs. Even though there are numerous managerial responsibilities, effectively managing human resources is essential to all other organizational functions, making it a fundamental and vital role. Hall & Goodale Sulaiman (2020), making a stronger case, define HRM as "the process through which an optimal fit is achieved between the worker, the task, the company, and the surroundings to ensure that workers fulfill their potential and the company achieves its objectives. When the aforementioned points of view are combined, it becomes abundantly evident that SMEs' capacity to meet their business goals and objectives is largely dependent on the availability of workers with the appropriate mix of backgrounds, abilities, and attitudes who can work in the appropriate locations and at the appropriate times.

Marketing: Companies, regardless of their size or location, confront fierce competition that might put them out of business if aggressive marketing plans, strategies, and tactics are not developed and put into action. As a result, company success is now determined by how well the four essential marketing components product, pricing, place, and promotion are executed. However, Carson (2020) noted that marketing in SMEs has distinct qualities that set it apart from the methods used in big businesses. These can be linked to a lack of specialized managers, limited market influence, and scarce resources (such as money, time, marketing, and expertise). As a result, SME marketing is frequently disorganized, informal, impetuous, reactive, and conforms to industry standards. Abalaka (2022). The above scenario explains why SMEs in Nigeria frequently fail to give scientific consumer needs and expectations, appropriate price, and appropriate market segment(s) enough consideration, nor do they develop effective and efficient promotional tools that can inspire patronage as well as increasing client loyalty Abalaka, (2022).

Finance: It is now known that having a strong financial foundation is necessary for a firm to survive. It is the grease that keeps any organization running smoothly. This implies that access to affordable long-term finance is essential for SMEs to thrive and make a significant contribution to the productivity of the country. In 2022, Abalaka observed that the The belief held by lenders and investors that SMEs pose a significant risk because of their low capital and asset bases, vulnerability to market fluctuations, and high mortality rate is a major factor in the incapacity of SMEs in Nigeria to secure funding from outside sources. Evaluation of SMEs credit worthiness is a laborious task due to incomplete accounting records, insufficient financial statements, and inadequate company strategies. The high transaction costs connected with SMEs financing further compound this problem (Sulaiman, 2020).

Businesses need to monitor this environment and also adjust to its changing dynamics. The following external environmental factors are crucial for SMEs:

Legal and regulatory framework: SMEs must adhere to a wide range of legal and regulatory frameworks, depending on the industry in which they operate. Nigerian regulatory organizations consist of the Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON), the Corporate Affairs Commission, the National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), and tax officials. These institutional frameworks frequently impose onerous and, for the most part, antiquated procedures for business incorporation, licenses and permissions, etc. In addition to these, other regulatory and legal barriers to the development of SMEs in Nigeria include uneven monetary and fiscal policy directions, which show themselves as unstable interest rate and exchange rate regimes, as well as instances of multiple or excessive taxes. Small business owners are frequently ignorant of the current laws and regulations that apply to their industry. It is possible that a great deal of effort and money were invested, just to have regulatory bodies penalize you for not meeting their criteria. Given that the majority of SMEs lack the resources to absorb such They are compelled to close or perform less well than ideal in order to evade regulatory inspection due to a loss of control or the inability to bargain favorably with regulatory agencies Sulaiman (2020).

The government still has to do more to enhance the external business climate in Nigeria, as seen by the falling ease of doing business index. This adverse the high tax rate and occasionally the variety of tax regimes on already-existing SMEs further aggravate the tendency.

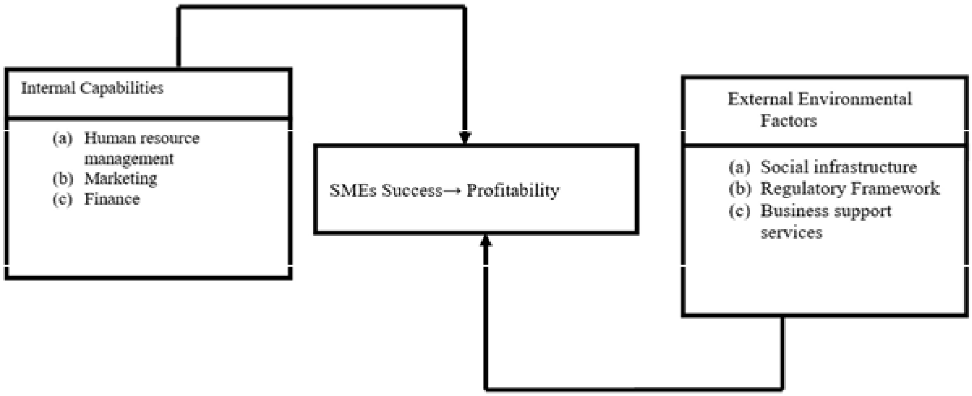


Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework of important performance determinants for SMEs Authors (2017) are the source.

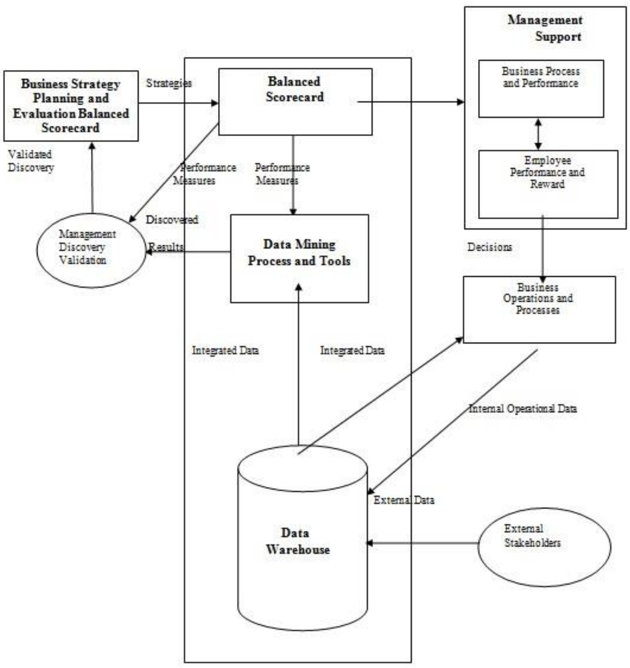
In light of the talks above, we speculate that:

Ho: *The combination of internal competencies (human resource management techniques, marketing, product/service quality, and finance) and external environmental elements (law/regulatory framework or institutions, and infrastructure) determines the success (profitability) of SMEs.*

4.5 Model of Strategic Management Architecture

Figure 1 below depicts the strategic management architecture that the authors suggest for Nigerian insurance companies. The data warehouse, the data-mining tool, and the balanced scorecard are the three parts of the model (Ajiteru, 2021).

Model of the Strategic Management Architecture in **Figure 1**



Adapted from [5]

4.6 The strategic management architecture model's adoption can aid in the growth of Nigerian insurance companies.

As can be seen from the above model, insurance companies in Nigeria must use the SMArt model as a managerial tool to collect data from external stakeholders in order to create a successful organizational structure and design. These stakeholders include the Nigerian Insurers Association (NIA), the Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria (CIIN), government organizations, insured parties, financial institutions, agents, brokers, loss adjusters, claims representatives, consultants, indirect marketers, actuaries, and the general public. A business registration certificate must be submitted with an application for registration as an insurer to the National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) in the required form prior to the registration of any insurance company in Nigeria, according to the Insurance Act of 2003, Part II, Section 5(1) plan and any further records or data that the Commission may occasionally request or mandate. According to the aforementioned regulatory instruction, the business plan that is presented to NAICOM must incorporate the strategic management architecture model, which focuses on organization structure, design, and culture. This will offer a foundation for the intended insurance company's structure and design. The data warehouse Sulaiman would then receive this aggregated information from the external stakeholders (2020).

The integrated data in the data warehouse was obtained from both internal and external data sources, such as operational database tables. The process of combining data from various sources into a standard format is known as data warehousing. The authenticity, accessibility, and degree of detail of the data in a data warehouse The quality of data discovered in the combined collection of functionally oriented data sources is inferior to that of the data in terms of accessibility, completeness, and consistency. According to Sulaiman (2020), it offers the infrastructure necessary to handle a broad range of data analysis and information needs. The integrated data can be utilized by several corporate functional areas, like financial accounting systems, materials resource planning, and customer relationship management, to assist in the development and modification of strategic objectives. Determining what information should be taken from other data sources is a difficult problem in the construction and upkeep of a data warehouse. It is necessary to decide which external data types should be merged with internal operational data. The integrated data would subsequently be used by insurance companies to restructure their product development policy, marketing strategy, design the policy of corporate social responsibility and the contentment of industry stakeholders Abalaka, (2022).

As indicated by the three components of organization strategic management architecture, ensuring the expansion of insurance companies in Nigeria is, in essence, institution building—the process of creating strong, long-lasting institutions. Insurance companies in Nigeria must be established in the same manner that an architect designs and builds a building if SMArt is to be used to assure the growth of insurance firms in that country. A building cannot be constructed without a design, just as an organization. In addition to detailing the locations of the walls and windows, the plan also describes the plumbing and electrical systems that will link each room to the others Sulaiman (2020). The arrangement and configuration of the rooms are established by the intended use of the area. The layout of the rooms enables the right amount of human movement. Architects have to strike a balance between conflicting demands when building or renovating, such as the necessity to conserve energy while maintaining aesthetics and the multitude of owner specifications while staying within budget. Abalaka (2022).

5. Participation of students

Student engagement, according to Abalaka (2022), is the extent to which faculty, administrators, and school leaders include students in curriculum development, governance, decision-making processes, and learning opportunities. According to Sulaiman (2020), student involvement is defined as the aims, aspirations, values, and beliefs that a student takes to higher education, as well as how these are formed and mediated by their experience as a pupil. According to these definitions, it is challenging to sum up the scope of the idea of student participation in a single definition. Ajiteru (2021). Operationalized engagement is a multifaceted notion that encompasses motivation, behavior, and cognition. Students who are considered to be engaged in their learning are believed to be deeply and broadly involved in it in terms of behavior, intellect, and emotion [29]. Effective learning is fueled by maintaining students' interest throughout their university education. Students who experience a strong sense of belonging to the departmental activities of the school feel more in line with their professional identities. Over time, this encourages them to develop instructional techniques that are successful and can support the development of such an identity. Abalaka (2022). There is now a greater requirement to guarantee that efficient systems for quality All higher education institutions have established systems of governance.

Sulaiman (2020) carried out a study that looked at how engaged students were with electronic learning and how that affected their academic performance. The lecture was given using an undergraduate level one module that combined traditional lecture delivery with online learning. One hundred and forty-five (145) of the one hundred and eighty-one (181) students who enrolled in the module finished it, and thirty-six (36) withdrew throughout the year. Due to incomplete data regarding the entry credentials of the students, only 113 out of the 145 who finished the module were used. The data was analysed using regression analysis. The outcome showed that the style of e-learning interaction had a beneficial impact on the module mark, which explains the upward variances in students' grades. This suggested that the goal of higher education should be to create efficient e-learning-based teaching techniques that will increase student engagement Abalaka, (2022).Check out the publishing statistics

6.0 Methodology

6.1 Tool and Example

The primary tool for gathering data for the study was a survey questionnaire that had two sections. Part "A" asked respondents for demographic data as well as other details about their firm, like how long they had been in operation, what kind of business they were in, how many employees they had, and how they were owned, among other things. The views of the respondents about internal capabilities, such as marketing, finance, and human resource management procedures, as well as external environmental elements, such as the regulatory and legal framework, were the main topics of the second section infrastructure and business support services have an impact on their profitability (business success). There were certain questions that asked respondents to rank things according to how important they thought they were to success. Five-point Likert scale questions were also employed to score respondents' perceptions in order to guarantee uniformity. Therefore, Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Moderately Agree (MA), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) were indicated by the numbers 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively. For example, the impact of finance on the success of the firm was rated 234, 170, 79, 63, and 45 for SA, A, MA, DA, and SA, in that order. The same queries were also posed for additional internal and external elements. Tax return data was used to determine profitability, and responses from the study instrument were used to confirm the results. Consequently, companies having yearly profits of categorized amounts from 1 to 5 million naira, 6 to 10 million, 11 to 15 million, 16 to 20 million, and amounts over 20 million on a scale of 1 to 5 Sulaiman (2020).

We embraced the Central Bank of Nigeria's definition of SMEs, particularly with regard to workforce size. Therefore, businesses with 11–100 and 101–300, respectively, were classified as small and medium. The only options available to respondents were manager or owner-manager for each SMEs. Our rationale for selecting the responders is based on the notion that key persons, such as the owner or manager Abalaka, (2022), have the majority of managerial authority and responsibilities in SMEs.

The study's population frame, which was restricted to three contiguous states, included SMEs that were registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) states in Nigeria's Niger Delta Region; output outlets at the University of Calabar, in the state of Cross River. After administering the study instrument to 921 small and medium-sized businesses from a variety of demographic segments, we found that 34% of the completed questionnaires were either incomplete or misfilled. Thus, we were able to attain a 64% (589) response rate. We considered the differences in SMEs' distribution throughout the study area when choosing the sample. In order to solve this issue, quotas were assigned to each state according to their percentage of the total number of SMEs in the region as reported in the Sulaiman data set (2020).

6.2 Data Analysis Method

Frequencies and straightforward percentages were used in a descriptive analysis of the data, with the proposed relationship was put to the test using IBM SPSS version 20's regression analysis. The study uses the multiple regression methodology's ordinary least squares technique to evaluate the impact of internal and external environmental factors on the profitability of SMEs in the study's focus area. Prior to deriving pertinent econometric, theoretical, and statistical conclusions on the findings, we first investigate the underlying statistical properties of the data, calculate Cronbach alpha to determine the internal consistency and reliability of the data, and then estimate our designated model Sulaiman (2020).

6.3 Model details

The following details apply to the study's baseline functional model:

$$PRF = f(HRMP, MKT, PDQ, FNC, INST, INFR) \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots. \quad (1)$$

The econometric specification of equation (1) takes the form:

$$\mathrm{PRF} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \mathrm{HRMP} + \beta_2 MKT + \beta_3 PDQ + \beta_4 FNC + \beta_5 INST + \beta_6 INFR + U_t \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \quad (2)$$

Where:

PRF	=	Profitability
HRMP	=	Human Resource Management Practices
MKTP	=	Marketing
PDQ	=	Product Quality
FNC	=	Finance
INST	=	Institutions (proxy for regulatory/legal framework)
INFR	=	Infrastructure

$\beta_0, \beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4, \beta_5,$ *and* β_6, are parameters to be estimated. U_t is the error term. On a priori, we expect the estimated parameters to be > 0.

7. Results Presentation

The data's statistical characteristics are shown in Table 1. All of the variables' mean values fall within a similar range, with infrastructure having the greatest mean (4.13) and INST having the lowest (3.06). The data's standard deviation indicates that there is homogeneity of variance because each variable's departures from its mean converged within a range of 1.06 to 1.25.

Table 1: Characteristic data

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	**N**
PRF	3.1511	1.18777	589
FNC	3.8438	1.25196	589
HRMP	3.9049	1.06958	589
MKTP	3.1851	1.22532	589
INFR	4.1375	1.06255	589
INST	3.0645	1.11082	589

Source: Authors' computation

Table 2: Correlation

Correlations								
		PRF	FNC	HRMP	MKTP	INFR	INST	α
Pearson Correlation	PRF	1.000						0.84
	FNC	.410	1.000					0.89
	HRMP	-.353	-.328	1.000				0.76
	MKTP	-.393	.326	.352	1.000			0.91
	INFR	.415	.406	.316	.313	1.000		0.87
	INST	.402	-.239	-.421	.340	.428	1.000	0.79

Source: Authors' computation

The factors' correlations (Table 2) show mixed associations with varying degrees of generally modest magnitudes. Overall, the multivariate correlations do not imply multi-collinearity, which is a crucial premise of the OLS that, if confirmed, would cause bias and spuriousness in the resulting regression results. We determined Cronbach alpha (α) values to verify the internal consistency of our measuring items. The findings demonstrate the reliability of our measuring tool (items), as determined by the Sulaiman (2020) α > 0.70 threshold computation. Regression findings are shown in Table 3, where the predicted coefficients of the predictor variables are highlighted (Abalaka, 2022).

PRF is a dependent variable.

Table 3: Outcomes of Regression

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.936	.347		8.473	.000
FNC	.107	.039	.112	2.738	.006
HRMP 1	.005	.046	.005	.112	.911
MKTP	-.093	.040	-.096	-2.343	.019
INFR	-.573	.232	.015	-2.461	.018
INST	.237	.059	.005	4.016	.000
R-squared: 0.651; Adjusted R-squared: 0.603; Std. Error: 1.179; Durbin Watson: 1.86; F-stat: 2.557 Prob (F-statistic) = 0.027					

Source: Authors' Computation

FNC, MKTP, INFR, and INST are statistically significant at the five percent significance level, according to the regression analysis's findings. HRMP, however, was not significant (p>.05. Theoretically, MKTP and INFR showed the incorrect signals. At the five percent level (p<0.05), the combined importance of the predictor factors as shown by the Fstatistic (2.557) is likewise noteworthy. The Durbin-Watson value of 1.86 does not support the existence of serial autocorrelation, but the adjusted R-squared, a measure of the regressors' explanatory power, is.603. With the predictor variables accounting for more than 60% of the variation in the dependent variable, the result indicates that the model fits the data well. The error component represents the 40% Sulaiman variance that cannot be explained. (2020).

8. Results Discussion

The majority of the predictor variables exhibited signs that weren't consistent with presumptive theoretical predictions, according to our calculated regression coefficients of the repressors. For example, the coefficients of institutions, infrastructure, and marketing strategies all showed unfavorable trends that went against theory. There are a number of economic explanations for this. For example, there is a wealth of factual data on infrastructure that shows how the massive infrastructure deficit and deterioration hinder the growth of SMEs in particular and the economy as a whole Sulaiman (2020). Even while SMEs have contributed to Nigeria's economic growth as a result of the information and communications technology (ICT) revolution, there are still issues with the depth and penetration of mobile telecom lines, particularly in the nation's rural areas. Just as difficult is the surge in power outages (electricity) in Ajiteru (2021). Any modern economy relies heavily on electricity to run and lubricate its machinery, therefore supply unpredictability presents a serious threat to the profitability of SMEs by raising operating costs.

It has been noted that most SMEs' operations and business plans, both in Nigeria and outside, are fairly haphazard and unscientific. For example, hiring employees does not follow any established HRM policy Ajiteru, (2021). This helps to explain why HRMP has no bearing ($p>0.05$) on the profitability or success of SMEs in Nigeria. Most entrepreneurs have the arrogant belief that only large companies can afford a well-thought-out HRM policy. Abalaka (2022). Nonetheless, our results concur with those of Osman, Ho, and Galang (2021) They assert that HRM and the success of SMEs are positively correlated. One important conclusion from the study is that, in Nigeria, SMEs' success is still largely determined by their access to money or capital. In fact, this has become well-known in the literature on SMEs. The financial variable's calculated coefficient was extremely significant ($p<.01$) and in line with theoretical assumptions.

9. Concluding remarks and suggestions

The aim of this The purpose of the article was to determine whether environmental factors, in addition to the traditional internal elements of finance and HRMP, are important to the performance of SMEs in Nigeria. Prior study hypothesized and empirically proved the existence of these environmental elements, which include social infrastructure and institutional frameworks such as the legal and regulatory ones. Our main survey instrument was structured questionnaires, and we used IBM SPSS to analyze our data using multiple regression analysis. This involved the technical steps of coding, pretesting, and retesting. Our results largely supported the study's hypothesis, which holds that the mix of internal resources (marketing, finance, and human resource management techniques) and external environmental factors (infrastructure, legal and regulatory framework, and institutions) determines the success (profitability) of SMEs. Sulaiman (2020), results deviated from the broad theoretical predictions regarding the study's important policy factors. In particular, we observe the following:

1. Infrastructure had a negative association with profitability in the current study, despite the fact that it was commonly thought to be a significant element determining the profitability of SMEs. Stated differently, the participants believed that insufficient or non-existent key infrastructure impeded their capacity to make a profit. The results indicated that respondents thought strong regulatory institutions, and particularly effective governance throughout the entire spectrum of the macro economy, was critical in SMEs success, with a high significance level of the computed coefficient of institutions. However, the outcome revealed a kind of paradox: a negative correlation between the performance of SMEs and institutions Sulaiman (2020). Stated differently, the profitability of SMEs was damaged by the regulatory framework and existing institutions.

2. The profitability of SMEs was positively connected with human resource management techniques. However, it did not play a major role in their success. Reasons that make sense for this have been mentioned above.

3. The profitability of SMEs was found to be positively and strongly connected with finance.

4. The marketing strategies used by SMEs in Nigeria are far from ideal. SMEs should include a documented, well-organized, and strategic marketing plan in their overall development plan.

The report suggests that the government use its fiscal policy leverage to solve the worrying infrastructure (roads, telecoms, trains, electricity, etc.) deficit in the nation in light of the aforementioned results. To enhance all of the nation's institutions, similar initiatives are needed.

The combined effect of these actions would guarantee a significant reduction in Nigeria's cost of doing business. SMEs should also implement strong HRMPs in their procedures for hiring, choosing employees, and paying them. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) should think about other funding options in addition to depending on government handouts in the form of short-term loans, as the recession's impact on government income reductions may not guarantee the sector's long-term viability (Sulaiman, 2020).

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