

Optimal Marketing Strategy and Sales Performance of Selected Manufacturing Firms in Delta State

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Abstract

The study analyzed optimal marketing strategy and sales performance of selected manufacturing firms in Delta State, Nigeria. This study used a cross-sectional survey research design, and a five-point Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect respondents' replies. The employees of the chosen manufacturing companies in Delta State, Nigeria, were given a total of 123 copies of the questionnaire. Excel spreadsheets were used to code the questionnaire, manual simple percentage analysis was used to analyze the respondent profile, and descriptive statistics which include minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation as well as factor analysis and correlation matrix were utilized to analyze the research questions. With the help of SPSS version 25.0, the multiple regression statistical tools were used to test the study's hypotheses. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between optimal promotion strategy and sales performance ($0.004 < 0.005$). With a P-value of ($0.041 < 0.05$), there is a significant relationship between the best distribution method and sales performance. The relationship between sales performance and optimal promotion strategy is substantial. Validated performance with a p-value of less than 0.05 (0.000). The study concluded that optimal marketing strategy has significant effect on sales performance of manufacturing firms in Delta State. The study recommended that manufacturing firms should implement strategies that focus on providing their customers with their products through the most practical and affordable channels possible in order to maximize value for both the companies and their clients. This could be through an assessment, re-evaluation and adjustment.

Key Words: *Optimal Marketing Strategy, Promotional Strategy, Distribution Strategy, sales performance and Manufacturing Firms*

Introduction

In fact, firms now see internationalizing their operations as a way to stay competitive in the ever-globalizing market. Consequently, the development of an appropriate marketing strategy has become crucial for any banking institution hoping to maintain its competitiveness in the global market (Ojo, 2022). Demand for more efficient manufacturing marketing management is rising in tandem with the manufacturing sector's expanding significance. Effective marketing techniques are essential for achieving frontline sales performance. Financial institutions usually use a range of sales tools and procedures to meet their sales goals. One of the best practices of those with highly successful sales programs is to provide management and front line staff at all branches with marketing strategies that detail tools and processes in detail. This helps to ensure that everyone involved in sales, no matter how remote, operates on a coordinated basis (Ishola, 2017; Iyadi, 2023; Iyadi & Sado, 2023).

The act of promoting or advertising the sales of items is known as optimal marketing. In accordance with Peace (2017), the process and action of developing, disseminating, providing, and trading goods and services is what adds value to clients, associates, and society at large. As per Kenu's (2018) explanation, marketing plays a crucial part in the creation of products, customer management, and value chain management. Therefore, firms need to incorporate marketing policies consciously and comprehensively through marketing strategies into their corporate management plan.

Providing a greater value to clients and allocating resources strategically to obtain a competitive edge are the hallmarks of optimal marketing strategies, which come with a complex structure and set of procedures (Kenu, 2018; Iyadi, 2023). It describes the processes by which businesses react to both internal and external market influences in order to meet their goals (Slater, Hult & Olson, 2020). All of an organization's decisions on its goods, prospective markets, marketing resources, and marketing initiatives in the creation and provision of worthwhile goods to both current and new clients are included in its marketing strategy (Amin, 2021; Iyadi, & Oruakpor, 2023). In a nutshell, an optimal marketing strategy is one that prioritizes activities that are focused on market segmentation, target market and competition analysis, context analysis, and a summary of the firm's profitability based on its marketing architecture.

Any company looking to increase its market share and reduce the impact of its rivals' actions must have optimal marketing strategies in place (Kenu, 2018). How to enter the global market is the main obstacle that businesses always face in order to improve their chances of profiting from the opportunities the market presents and gaining a competitive edge (EurActiv, 2019; Iyadi & Ojumude, 2023). In order to meet the ever-growing challenges of the global market, businesses must create the procedures and frameworks necessary to do so. According to Gamage et al. (2019), this can be done by making effective marketing decisions that will enable them to profit from cross-border trade and business partnerships.

According to Oyebamiji, Kareem, and Ayeni (2023), Nigerian manufacturing enterprises have not performed creditably, and as a result, they have not contributed as much as one would have expected to Nigeria's economic growth and development. They observe that operators, practitioners, citizens, and the government have all expressed serious concerns about the situation.

These difficulties might stem from an allegedly inefficient marketing plan that is negatively affecting sales performance in terms of product quality, client happiness, and profitability. This enables the performance of the company and its marketing plan to be linked. Finding the appropriate factors to demonstrate this relationship is still a challenge, though.

Moreover, Chan (2018) described the ideal marketing strategy as a long-term, proactive planning approach with the main objective of creating a sustained competitive advantage. Additionally, according to Kudyko and Sevruk (2016), a marketing strategy is a process or model that helps a business or organization concentrate its limited resources on the best chances to boost sales and ultimately achieve long-term sales success. Conversely, West (2020) described the ideal marketing strategy as a detailed plan created especially to meet the organization's marketing goals.

Sales efficiency is the rate at which each task in the sales process is finished, and sales effectiveness is the capacity of a company's sales professionals to "win" at every stage of the customer's buying process and ultimately earn the business on the right terms and in the right timeframe (Rogers, 2024; Iyadi & Itimi, 2023). Zhang and Tang (2020) define sales performance as a direct enticement with the primary objective of producing an immediate sale. This inducement offers the product more value or incentive to the sales force, distributors, or consumers. Sales performance, according to Dean (2015), is a good indicator of how loyal customers are to a business or a particular employee. The following indicators were used in this study to operationalize sales performance: sales volume and profitability.

Many variables, such as production effectiveness, efficiency, customer and employee satisfaction, market research and development, and corporate social responsibility, have been welcomed in previous attempts to measure sales performance. However, some important marketing variables, such as place, promotion, price, and product, have had less of an impact. Moore (2017) reports that a number of Nigerian manufacturing industries have experienced declines in productivity and performance as a result of a variety of factors, including low quality, low sales, and ineffective or absent advertising strategies; Bagozzi, ElAnsary, and Coughlin (2018) also identified ineffective distribution channels as a challenge to sales performance. The Nigerian economic environment has seen a number of issues over the years, including a lack of a clear strategy, individual accountability for outcomes, difficulties developing and implementing strategic marketing policies and programs, unfavorable government policies, and technological advancements. The management of manufacturing organizations has suffered as a result of these issues, and consequently, so has their sales performance.

Statement of the Problem

The researcher found that the typical consumer in Delta State is mainly unaware of the existence of numerous industrial companies. This prompted an initial investigation into the local business, following which the researcher noted that a number of manufacturing companies have found it increasingly difficult to satisfy client needs, which has led to subpar sales performance. This means that more research into the matter is required in order to formulate recommendations for the best ways to satisfy customers and boost sales. The researcher believed that the manufacturing enterprises' location (distribution) tactics and product prices may be to blame for the subpar

performance and inability to satisfy customer demand.

Increasing sales performance has long been a worry for marketing professionals because it can be challenging to accurately measure how best promotional methods affect sales return. The primary aim of any business, be it in the industrial or service industries, profit or non-profit, is to accomplish specific goals and objectives of the company. Research on the best marketing strategies to use in order to convince, rebuild, and restore customers' trust in their purchasing patterns appears to be ongoing in both developed and developing nations. Any business's only goal is to sell goods and services and turn a profit. Products are never known to consumers if they are not advertised. Additionally, it aids in the consumer's decision-making process regarding what to purchase. More people are becoming aware of new promotional strategies, but it's crucial to remember that every promotional tool has advantages and disadvantages, and choosing the best promotional medium to educate customers is essential to a successful business.

Finally, one of the main causes of the issue is the absence of a dependable transportation system and a well-coordinated distribution network. Furthermore, insufficient infrastructure, substandard management techniques, and restricted financial resources impede the marketing efficacy of marketers in Delta State. It is essential to create and implement efficient distribution strategies if one is to increase the impact of marketing on sales performance through optimal distribution. This entails putting in place a well-organized distribution network to guarantee the timely and dependable delivery of goods to every area in the region; better modes of transportation, like trucks and pipelines, to guarantee the efficient and economical delivery of goods to different markets or locations. Therefore, the goal of the study was to evaluate how best marketing practices affected the sales performance of a subset of Delta State manufacturing companies.

Research Questions

The following research questions were the focus of the study, which attempted to empirically address the research problem:

i. What impact does optimal promotion of sales performance of selected manufacturing firms in Delta State?

How does the optimal distribution strategy affect sales performance of selected manufacturing firms in Delta State?

Research Objectives

The study's overarching goal was to evaluate the relationship between optimal marketing strategy and sales performance of selected manufacturing firms in Delta State. The specific objectives are to:

i. evaluate how optimal promotion of sales performance of selected manufacturing firms in Delta State

ii. Assess the effect of optimal distribution strategy on sales performance of selected manufacturing firms in Delta State

Hypotheses for the Research

In accordance with the problem, questions, and study objectives, the investigation put forth the following null hypotheses for empirical testing:

H₀₁: there is no significant effect between optimal promotion strategy and sales performance of selected manufacturing firms in Delta State

H₀₂: optimal distribution does not have significant effect on sales performance of selected manufacturing firms in Delta State

Importance of the Research

Academic Knowledge: The study adds to the body of knowledge, serves as a reference, and provides background information for future research on the impact of ideal marketing strategies on sales performance. It is significant to researchers and students in the field of marketing.

Managers and Owners of manufacturing enterprises: Since the study offers data to help strategic decision-making that will improve their performance, managers and owners of manufacturing enterprises in Delta State, Nigeria, would also find value in it.

Economic Impact: By increasing marketing effectiveness, the study is expected to boost sales income, profitability, and economic growth, which will strengthen Nigeria's economy and create jobs.

Policy Development: By using the study's recommendations, policymakers can create policies that solve issues with distribution, upgrade infrastructure, and boost the performance of the sector as a whole.

Review of Related Literature

Optimal Marketing Strategy

Muthengi (2019) defines optimal marketing strategy as a way to concentrate an organization's efforts and resources on a course of action that can result in higher sales and market dominance in a specific niche. Product creation, promotion, distribution, pricing, relationship management, and other components are all integrated in a marketing strategy, which also establishes the company's marketing objectives and outlines how they will be achieved, ideally within a given timeline. Moreover, Kasiso (2019) argues that target market segmentation, positioning, marketing mix, and resource allocation are all determined by marketing strategy. It functions best when it is combined with the broader business strategy of the company, outlining how the latter will effectively interact with clients, potential clients, and rivals in the marketplace through corporate strategies, missions,

and objectives. Sales and marketing strategy are closely related since a company's revenue originates from its customers. One of the most important aspects of marketing strategy is often aligning marketing with an organization's ultimate mission statement (Pembi, 2021; Iyadi, 2023).

Optimal Promotion

Promotion in marketing refers to promoting a brand or product, increasing sales, and building customer loyalty. It deals with any type of two-way communication that occurs with the consumer and is one of the four essential components of the marketing mix. The four Ps of the marketing mix are place, promotion, product, and price. The direct method via which a company informs its target audience about a product or service is through promotion. The five primary components of the promotional mix are advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personnel selling, and direct marketing, according to Brassington and Pettitt (2020). According to Drewes and Brown (2020), the function of promotion has been reinterpreted as managing long-term connections with carefully chosen clients, including the creation of a learning relationship in which the marketer engages in conversation with a specific client.

Promotion strategy is the use of public relations, direct marketing, sales promotion, personal selling, and advertising to promote organizational products (Muchiri, 2016). Brassington and Pettitt (2020) define optimal promotion as a direct means by which companies can inform their target audience about their goods or services. Kotler and Armstrong (2008) claim that all efforts made to market and communicate goods and services to the intended audience are included in optimal promotion. As per Kotler (2012), the promotional mix comprises of advertising, sales promotions, personal selling, and publicity. The impact of marketing mix strategies on sales in Kenyan pharmaceutical manufacturing firms was studied by Kamba (2019). It was found that marketing managers need to ascertain which blend of promotions will produce the best promotion campaigns, which will raise sales. Aliata et al. (2018) conducted research on the impact of promotional methods on bank performance. A correlation between promotional techniques and bank performance was found. Promotion, however, has no appreciably good impact on sales success, according to Oyewale's (2023) research on the effects of marketing strategy on business performance.

Optimal Distribution

The strategies and locations you employ to make your goods and services easily accessible to your target market are referred to as optimal distribution (Dang, 2014). The best distribution strategy in marketing comprises the channel of distribution that a business uses to get its goods and services in front of consumers. An effective distribution plan is essential to a product or service's marketing mix, claims Harsono (2017). The location and placement of a company's goods and services are determined by its place strategy, which aims to increase customer purchases and market share. This part of the 4Ps is sometimes referred to as the distribution plan, and it can encompass any method the business uses to reach clients, including physical and online stores (Harsono, 2017; Kifordu, Ogala & Iyadi, 2022).

Optimal distribution strategies relate to the plans and methods implemented by enterprises to ensure the efficient flow of their products from the point of production to the point of consumption. Distribution strategies, according to Kotler and Keller (2016), include a variety of choices about the distribution network and means of transportation that businesses use. For the items to effectively and efficiently reach the target market, the distribution network is essential (Coughlan, 2016). According to Rutten (n.d.), an ideal distribution strategy is developing a productive way to market your business's goods or services. The objective of this kind of approach is to increase sales while retaining a clientele of devoted supporters.

The ultimate purpose of an effective distribution strategy, according to Lalush (2020), is to maximize income and customer loyalty by carefully distributing goods and services to end users. When a company sells goods or services, it can only attract loyal customers if it delivers the goods efficiently and makes sure that users can readily obtain item information. It can accomplish this by implementing a distribution plan that fits your needs as a business (Lalush, 2020, Onuorah, Iyadi, Kifordu & Ofili, 2022). Businesses can reach a larger audience of potential customers and lower the expenses of marketing and product delivery by using an efficient optimal distribution plan (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023). Additionally, according to Gorchels (2021) a distribution channel is a collection of linked businesses that work together to make a good or service accessible for use or consumption. Distribution channels can also include things like physical transportation, storage, product ownership, presale transactions, post-sale operations, order processing, credit and collections, and other kinds of support activities (Ndung'u, 2022).

Sales Performance

Sales teams face increased pressure to exceed revenue targets as firms become more enthusiastic about potential future development. These factors make a more rigorous and data-driven approach to core sales procedures like resource planning, territory allocation, strategy planning, and pay programming necessary for enhancing sales performance in the current economic climate. Performance can be defined as the degree to which an individual performs actual work or the degree to which an individual demonstrates genuine labor (Richard, 2019; Igwebuike & Iyadi, 2021). It is just not effective to use tactical selling techniques in this day and age of fiercer competition and difficult buyer negotiations. Delivering value that the buyer isn't presently taking into account in their decision-making process is the secret to successful sales. The behavioral and outcome dimensions have been added to the definition of sales performance. Performance-oriented salespeople have traditionally seen sales results as proof of behavioral performance; hence, a favorable correlation has been found between the commitment's job participation component and sales performance. Put differently, dedicated salespeople are expected to work harder, which directly affects sales effectiveness (Silva, 2016; Iyadi, & Edeme, 2022).

According to Abdel-Maksoud, Asada, and Nakagawa (2018), one of the most important metrics for assessing marketing companies, their operations, and surroundings is sales performance. Regarding the degree of patronage, the degree of customer acquisition, the degree of customer loyalty, and the degree of customer happiness, Bescos and Cauvin (2014) and Iyadi, (2023) saw it as a real output or results of a business. Here, the aforementioned variables will be beneficial when the marketing business's sales performance improves. According to Richard (2009), there are three

ways to judge sales performance: (a) investment and financial performance; (b) shareholder expectation and economic value; and (c) production capability. Salau, Adeniji, and Oyewunmi (2014) define sales performance as the marketing organization's relative strength and capacity to meet organizational objectives through increased sales and customer base. Sales performance is another measure of an organization's efficacy.

Independent Variable

(Optimal Marketing Strategy)



Dependent Variable

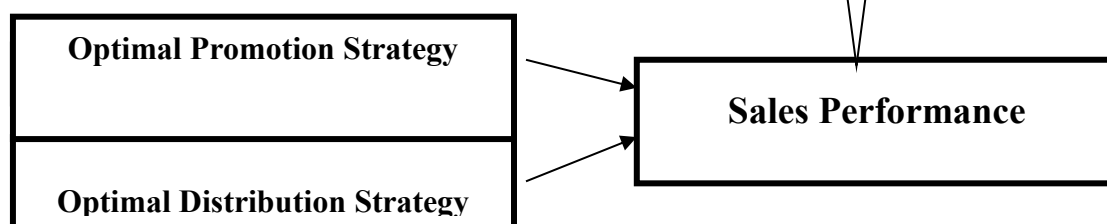
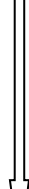


Fig 2.1: Conceptual Framework of the Study
Source: Researchers' Model (2024)

Theoretical Review

The study is anchored on Distinctive Competency Theory

Theory of Distinctive Competencies

Managers of businesses and manufacturing organizations are aware that building competencies in important strategic areas forms the basis of sales performance. According to Michael and Ireland (1985), an organization's competency is proved by its potential and actual ability to complete any task that it sets out to undertake. They noted that a company's capabilities are largely determined by the resources at its disposal, not only by the opportunities it faces. According to their opinion, a company's capacity to identify and/or develop a skill that is genuinely distinctive is what makes it a true tool for success. The unique things that a company or one of its components can perform better than its rivals are known as distinctive competencies.

A company can build unique competencies in areas like general administration, operations, finance, R&D, marketing, personnel, etc, claim Michael and Ireland (1985). It can be further stated that a company that possesses particular expertise will be in a better position to generate value and improve performance. Competencies are important components that contribute to an organization's success (Levina & Ross, 2003). Distinctive competencies are unique skills that a business possesses in its industry and that allow it to provide value for clients, giving it a competitive edge. Customers are more likely to support a company that establishes a unique competency in product packaging, particularly in international markets. Because it directs businesses to match expertise,

resources, and capabilities with distribution operations that boost competitiveness, the unique Competency Theory is pertinent to this study. With the purpose of making exact distribution operational and functional judgments, Competency Theory assists in identifying gaps in personality, interests, abilities, and values.

Review of Empirical Studies

Mohsen, Yousif, and Wally (2023) look into how various distribution channel types and methods affect consumers' purchasing decisions for convenience goods like protein bars. A conclusive research design was employed to assess the impact of different distribution channels' tactics on customers' purchasing behavior as well as to describe opinions toward various distribution strategies and types. The researchers used a non-probability judgmental sampling technique to present self-administered questionnaires to a sample of 120 consumers. To assess the research hypotheses, a quantitative analysis of the data was conducted using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The study's conclusions showed that, in the context of a convenience product, customers' purchasing decisions are influenced by various distribution channel types and tactics, particularly the intense and selective distribution techniques. The findings of the study offer valuable insights for distribution managers of convenience products, like proteins, on how to best distribute their goods to encourage favorable consumer behavior by choosing the right kind and intensity of distribution.

Ohai and Iyadi (2023) looked at the marketing effectiveness and distribution plans of Nigerian breweries. The descriptive survey research was used in the study. Employees at Nigeria Breweries Plc, Enugu, West Africa Breweries Limited, Lagos, International Breweries Plc, Onitsha, and Guinness Nigeria Plc, Benin-City, made up the study's population. There were 443 employees listed in these breweries. Thus, 210 responders were deemed to be a sufficient sample size for the research. The method of stratified sampling was applied. Both primary and secondary data provided the study's direction. Regression analysis and correlation analysis were the analytical techniques used to examine the data. The study discovered that the marketing success of Nigerian breweries is influenced by distribution techniques, including channel structure, exclusive distribution, intensive distribution, and selective distribution. The study came to the conclusion that distribution strategies—exclusive, intense, selective, and channel structure—have an impact on the marketing performance of Nigerian breweries. In order to get their products in front of consumers, the report advises Nigerian breweries looking to increase their marketing performance to use channel structure, exclusive distribution, intense distribution, and selective distribution.

Amadi (2022) looked at the connection between the sales performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the food and beverage exporting industry in South-South Nigeria and the packaging used. Using a descriptive survey research design, the study collected primary data from 160 enterprises that export food and beverages, mostly through the use of a questionnaire. Managers and business owners comprised the sample, and each received a copy of the questionnaire. Experts evaluated the questionnaire, and a Cronbach Alpha reliability test yielded a value of 0.814. Using SPSS (version 21.0), both descriptive and inferential statistical tools were

used to evaluate the data. The statistical analysis revealed a strong and positive correlation between packaging and sales performance. Based on the findings, it was determined that packaging is a crucial branding tactic that has the potential to have a big impact on Nigerian products' marketability abroad. Therefore, it was advised that Nigerian SMEs exporting food items put them in high-quality containers to prevent damage during shipment or transit. Using sturdy and durable packaging will guarantee the products reach their destination safely and boost sales as well as repeat business.

Dickson, Aneneb, and Emezue (2022) assessed how Nigerian commercial banks performed in relation to their distribution channel strategies. Specifically, the study's goal was to uncover the distribution channel techniques used by Nigerian commercial banks and ascertain how these strategies affected the institutions' overall performance. A descriptive survey research design was used in the study. 43 management personnel from five commercial banks with operations in Nigeria made up the study's population. A questionnaire was employed as the data gathering instrument. Standard deviation, mean, and percentages were used in the analysis and presentation of the data. The survey discovered that the banks used several distribution channels, electronic banking, and the branch network. Aggressive, mass, and value marketing were the marketing techniques used by the banks. The study also discovered that the distribution channel methods that the banks used had a big impact on their performance. Among other things, it was suggested that commercial banks embrace the idea of electronic banking wholeheartedly, since technology usage is already a battle for the banks and the one that should offer customers more features. They should also discard cost-adding marketing distribution strategies and adopt those that ensure the bank's performance is improved in order to effectively compete with the others.

Methodology

The cross-sectional study design method was used in this investigation. In a cross-sectional study, individuals who differ on a single important trait at a particular point in time are examined. Simultaneous data collection is conducted with individuals that have comparable attributes but differ in a critical feature of interest, including age, income bracket, or place of residence. Six manufacturing businesses based in Delta State were the study's target population: Legend Interiors, Permolit Paints, Hi-Tech Aluminum, Premium Steel and Mines Limited, and Olit Manufacturing. The study gathered information from the workers of the chosen Delta State manufacturing companies. The research has purposefully selected the target group, which consists of all 252 employees of the relevant industrial enterprises that are the subject of the study. The employees of the chosen manufacturing enterprises situated in Delta State comprised the population and sample factors. To choose the intermediate and upper level employees, the researcher employed basic random sampling. Every subject was sampled independently of the other participants in the population in a single phase. This was accomplished by the researcher by recording the names of every response from every department. The personnel of the chosen manufacturing companies in Delta State provided information to the researcher using a closed-ended questionnaire. The researcher opted to utilize questionnaire because big amounts of information may be acquired from

a large number of people in a short period of time and in a relatively cost efficient way. The degree to which a respondent agreed or disagreed with a statement of an attitude, belief, or judgment was measured using a five-point Likert scale, where 5 represents highly agree, 4 represents agree, 3 represents undecided, 2 represents disagree, and 1 represents severely disagree. In order to determine the extent to which a sample of items taken collectively provides a sufficient operational definition of a construct, this study used the Content Validity Index (CVI). This is due to the fact that content validity is an expert's subjective assessment of how much a relevant construct is included in an assessment tool. Primary data are those that are gathered specifically for the reason in question. The distributed copies of the questionnaire served as the basis for this investigation. Data that were gathered were coded and sorted. Data analysis was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Vs, 24.0). Data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential research methods.

Results and Discussions

Data Presentation

The researcher has already provided the methods used for the study in that chapter. The data from the fieldwork and analysis were presented in this chapter. in order to carry out an empirical examination of the best possible marketing plan and the sales results of particular Delta State manufacturing companies. In order to address the study questions, the replies (data) that were gathered from the respondents with the aid of the specially created questionnaire (five-point response type) were accurately characterized (using frequency, counts, and percentages). Additionally, relevant tests of hypotheses (Factor Analysis and Multiple Regression Analysis) were applied to these responses (data). All of the analysis, which was conducted using SPSS version 25.0, was based on 154 respondents; nevertheless, at the 5% level of significance, the tested hypotheses were either accepted or rejected. The results and associated interpretations are presented below.

4.1 Managing the research tool's administration

Employees of six (6) chosen manufacturing companies in Delta State—Olite Manufacturing, Permolit Paint, Legend Interiors, Top Feeds, Hi-Tech Aluminum, Premium Steel and Mines Limited—were given a total of one hundred and fifty-four (154) copies of the questionnaire. One hundred and forty-three (143) of the questionnaires that were distributed were recovered, according to the return. Only 123(79.8%) of the 143(92.8%) retrieved questionnaires were correctly filled out and used for the analysis; the remaining twenty (20) 12.9% of questionnaires were not properly filled out and were therefore not included in the analyses. The 123 (79.8%) questionnaires that were received were excellent and sufficient for the study, as evidenced by the fact that a sizable number of respondents were polled. In line with Cooper and Schindler's (2014) requirement that a response rate of 50% is sufficient for analysis and reporting, a rate of 60% is good, and a rate of 70% and above is exceptional, this response was commendable and representative of the community.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	44	35.8	35.8	35.8
	Male	79	64.2	64.2	100.0
	Total	123	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the employees of the six manufacturing enterprises in Delta State that were chosen. In particular, it can be seen that 35.8%(44) of the respondents were female and 64.2%(79) of the respondents were male. As a result, there are more men than women in the population.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Age Group

Age		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 30 Years	24	19.5	19.5	19.5
	30-40 Years	54	43.9	43.9	63.4
	41-50 Years	40	32.5	32.5	95.9
	51 Years and above	5	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	123	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 2 shows that 19.5% (24) of the respondents (workers) were under 30 years old, followed by 43.9% (54) in the 30- to 40-year-old age group; 32.5% (40) of the respondents were between 41 and 50 years old, and the 4.1% (5) of respondents who were 50 years of age and above. As a result, the majority of responders were either mature or older than 18. This study's dominant age grade makes sense because most respondents are thought to be mature enough to know what to do and how to do it to influence the best marketing strategy for their different firms

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

Marital Status		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	23	18.7	18.7	18.7
	Married	94	76.4	76.4	95.1
	Divorced	2	1.6	1.6	96.7
	Widowed	4	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	123	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

According to table 4.4 below, the majority of respondents—76.4%(94)—are still married, while 18.7%(23) are single, 1.6%(2) are divorced, and 3.3%(4) have lost their spouses. As a result, the outcome demonstrates that the respondents are married and mature.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Educational Background

Highest Education Qualifications		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	HND/B.Sc./BA/ BTech	37	30.1	30.1	30.1
	M.Sc./MBA/MA	70	56.9	56.9	87.0
	PHD	1	.8	.8	87.8
	Professional Qualifications	15	12.2	12.2	100.0
	Total	123	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4 reveals that the bulk of the workers, 56.9% (70), have an M.Sc., MA, or MBA degree, while 30.1% (37), have an HND, B.SC., BA, or B. Tech degree. Moreover, 12.2% (15) of the population is certified as a professional in their industry, while 8% (1) possess a Ph. D. This suggests that the majority of respondents have the necessary knowledge and training to carry out their roles and responsibilities in relation to organizational operations

Description of Variables

In this section of the study, we typically look at each research question, evaluate the different replies from respondents, and determine the study's impact for appropriate analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to do this. The following is a description of the descriptive statistics that were used in this study to describe the dependent variable, sales performance (SP), and the independent variables, which are proxies for optimal marketing strategy and include optimal promotion strategy (OPMS), and optimal distribution strategy (ODS)

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
OPS	123	16.0943	3.54268
ODS	123	16.2099	2.13322
SP	123	16.0543	3.03478
Valid N (listwise)	123		

Source: SPSS Output, 2024.

The mean and standard deviation of the variables taken into account in our model are displayed in the descriptive statistics in our table. The findings indicate that the optimal promotion strategy (OPMS) has a standard deviation of 2.20453 and an aggregate mean score of 16.6125. The overall mean score for optimal distribution strategy (ODS) is 16.2099, with a standard deviation of 2.13322. Ultimately, the findings also show that sales performance (SP) has a standard deviation of 3.03478 and an overall mean score value of 16.0543.

Data Analysis

Using Factor Analysis to Optimal Marketing Strategy on Sales Performance

A simple glance at the aforementioned facts shows that of the 12 items chosen in terms of the best possible sales performance and optimal marketing strategy. About 65.191 of the factors needed to describe the items were contributed by 5 factors that were extracted. Third, fourth, and fifth factors add 6.09%, 8.69%, and 5.08%, respectively, to the total contribution made by the first five components. The whole selected component contributes around 65.19%. This suggests that 34.81% of the variables influencing the best possible optimal marketing plan and sales results are unknown.

Correlation Matrix

The link between the independent and dependent variables was investigated using correlation analysis. Its values range from -1 to +1. A value of +1 denotes a perfect relationship and positive linear sense between two variables, whereas a value of -1 denotes a negative linear sense. This

indicates if there is a moderate or low level of correlation between the independent and dependent variables.

Table 8: Correlation Matrix

		OP	OPS	ODS
Pearson Correlation	SP	1.000		
	OPS	.727	1.000	
	ODS	.631	.582	1.000

Source: SPSS Output, 2024.

The table 8 above displays the Pearson correlation coefficient indicating the type of relationship that exists between the dependent variable, sales performance (SP), and the independent variables, (OPS), optimal promotion strategy (ODS), and optimal distribution strategy (OPMS) in a selected set of manufacturing firms in Delta State. The correlation matrix indicates once more that the optimal promotion strategy (OPMS) has a coefficient of $(r=0.720)72\%$, indicating a strong positive correlation between the two variables. This suggests that improving the OPMS would benefit the sales Performance (OP) in the chosen manufacturing firms in Delta State, Nigeria. The outcome additionally shows that the optimal distribution strategy (ODS) has a coefficient of $(r=0.554)55.4\%$. This indicates that sales effectiveness and social skills are positively and significantly correlated. This implies that an organization's sales performance will be favorable as its optimal distribution method increases.

Test of Research Hypotheses

The effects of the best marketing strategy on the sales performance of particular industrial enterprises in Delta State, Nigeria, were documented by the results of a multiple regression analysis. The six (6) manufacturing companies that are the subject of the study are Mines Limited, Olite Manufacturing, Permolit Paint, Legend Interiors, Top Feeds, Hi-Tech Aluminum, and Premium Steel. The optimal promotion strategy (OPMS), and optimal distribution strategy (ODS) are the two variables that were taken into consideration in this work to proxy optimal marketing strategy. All of these variables showed a positive significant effect on sales Performance (OP) in selected manufacturing firms in Delta State, Nigeria.

Table 8: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
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	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	6.648	1.376		1.722	.001
OPS	.834	.183	.822	3.730	.004
ODS	.328	.033	.294	5.231	.041

a. Dependent Variable: SP

Source: SPSS Output, 2024.

The t-statistic is computed to ascertain the significance of the coefficient of independent variable in an econometric model. The determined t for the variables influencing sales performance and the best distribution method (ODS) ($t=5.321$, $\beta=0.294$, $P=0.041$). This suggests that the sales success of telecom companies in Delta State, Nigeria, and optimal distribution strategy (ODS) are significantly correlated. The alternative theory is so accepted. This result is consistent with research conducted by Mohsen, Yousif, and Wally (2023), who examined the effects of various distribution channel types and methods on consumers' purchasing decisions for convenience goods like protein bars. A conclusive research design was employed to assess the impact of different distribution channels' tactics on customers' purchasing behavior as well as to describe opinions toward various distribution strategies and types. The researchers used a non-probability judgmental sampling technique to present self-administered questionnaires to a sample of 120 consumers. To assess the research hypotheses, a quantitative analysis of the data was conducted using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The study's conclusions showed that, in the context of a convenience product, customers' purchasing decisions are influenced by various distribution channel types and tactics, particularly the intense and selective distribution techniques. The findings of the study offer valuable insights for distribution managers of convenience products, like proteins, on how to best distribute their goods to encourage favorable consumer behavior by choosing the right kind and intensity of distribution.

Optimal Promotion Strategy and Sales Performance

Once more, the computed t for the variables influencing sales performance and the optimal marketing strategy (OPMS) is $t=3.759$, $\beta=0.194$, $P=0.000$. This suggests that sales performance of particular manufacturing enterprises in Delta State, Nigeria, and optimal promotion strategy (OPMS) have a substantial link. The alternative theory is so accepted. This result is consistent with that of Ibeh (2021), who investigated how promotional methods affected the market performance of particular manufacturing firms in Lagos, Nigeria. The study's precise goals are to: (i) ascertain how promotion strategy affects market performance; and (ii) ascertain the degree to which advertising influences market performance. Using survey design methodologies, the researcher used a descriptive study design. Using the SPSS software, multiple regressions and correlation coefficient analyses were also performed. Using a census sampling technique, populations of 24 managers involved in product promotion were selected, and all of the participants were used in the study. Data were gathered using two research instruments: a questionnaire and an annual report/financial statement. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data that were obtained. As compared to CNP, the outcome demonstrates that NNP's total profitability performances were strong. It was discovered that there was a strong and positive correlation between advertising and the companies' profit margin. The study also discovered that spending money on marketing or promotion can raise the company's profitability index. According to the survey, employees tasked with carrying out promotional strategies should set aside time

Table 10: Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.892 ^a	.895	.870	1.849	2.311

a. Predictors: (Constant), OPS, ODS,

b. Dependent Variable: SP

Source: SPSS Output, 2024.

Table 11: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	104.222	5	31.442	12.398	.000 ^b
	Residual	234.625	117	2.164		
	Total	338.847	122			

- a. Dependent Variable: SP
- b. Predictors: (Constant), OPS, ODS,

Source: SPSS Output, 2024.

Additionally, Table 11, the model summary table, demonstrates that the correlation coefficient (R) of the regression is 0.892 (89.2%), indicating a very strong positive relationship between the independent variables [Optimal Distribution Strategy (ODS), and Optimal Promotion Strategy (OPMS)] and the dependent variable [Sales Performance (SP)] in a selected manufacturing firm in Delta State, Nigeria. Optimal distribution strategy (ODS), and optimal promotion strategy (OPMS) accounted for approximately 89.5% of the variation in sales performance, according to the co-efficient of determination (R²) of 0.895 (89.5%). The remaining 10.5% of the variation in sales performance was caused by factors not included in our model. The model's fit or goodness of fit is gauged by the adjusted R². This demonstrates the model's goodness of fit and provides an 87-way explanation of the dependent variable's relationship to the independent variables. The remaining 13% is referred to as the error term and other extraneous factors. The Durbin Watson statistics was calculated to see if auto-correlation existed in our model. D-W = 2.311 in the model computation above. The absence of autocorrelation in the model serves as an indicator of this. Anova table 11 above illustrates the model's overall significance and has F= 12.398 with P=0.000, both of which are significant at the 5% level. This means that the independent variables of optimal distribution strategy (ODS), optimal promotion strategy (OPMS), and sales performance (SP) have a joint, meaningful connection.

Conclusion

According to the study's findings, optimal marketing strategy significantly affects sales performance in the chosen manufacturing companies in Delta State, Nigeria. In particular, it was discovered that sales performance was significantly impacted by optimal product strategy. Sales performance among particular manufacturing enterprises is impacted greatly by the use of product as a marketing technique. This is a result of the majority of manufacturing companies not making enough of an effort to interact with, comprehend, and learn about their clients' needs. Due to manufacturing companies' inability to determine what is appropriate and necessary for their customers, their products wind up being ugly, this makes many people want not to do business with them, which negatively impacts sales performance.

Based on the data analysis and subsequent study findings, the research concludes that the best distribution strategy has a significant impact on sales performance and that manufacturing firms have been generally performing close to expectations because of their current place (distribution) strategies' positive outcomes. This could be the consequence of a variety of factors, including their selection of distributors and distribution channels, among others.

Consequently, optimal promotion strategy has a major impact on sales performance, the study showed. By using public relations and personal selling to market their goods and services, businesses are able to communicate directly with their target market and learn about their needs

and desires.

Recommendations

Accordingly, the study makes the following recommendations in light of its findings and conclusions:

manufacturing companies in Delta State that seek to increase sales performance should develop and/or refine strategies focused on providing their goods to clients via the most practical and economical channels possible in order to optimize value for both parties. This might be accomplished by analyzing, reassessing, and adjusting their present distribution plans in order to achieve a greater and more effective reach.

Manufacturing enterprises' management ought to place a strong emphasis on using publicity and personal selling to market their goods and services. They will be able to communicate with their clients directly as a result, and they will be aware of their needs and desires.

Recommendations for Future Research

The study's narrow focus on six industrial firms prevented it from covering a larger geographic area. In order to provide results that may be applied to other states, it is recommended that future relevant studies incorporate all manufacturing enterprises in those states. In addition, it is recommended that future research incorporate secondary data to validate the degree to which optimal marketing techniques impact sales performance in terms of profitability.

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