

IMPACT OF MARKETING STRATEGIES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF MANUFACTURING SMALL AND MEDIUM-SCALE ENTERPRISES IN ABUJA, FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY (FCT)

¹Ene, Emeka E. & ²Uduma, Ekanem O.

¹Baze University Abuja, Nigeria. Email: emeka.ene@bazeuniversity.edu.ng

²Torrens University Australia, Adelaide Campus,

Email: Ekanem.Uduma@business.torrens.edu.au

Abstract

This study analysed the impact of marketing strategies on the performance of manufacturing small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in FCT with focus on bottled water manufacturing SMEs. This research adopted quantitative research method, and obtained data from a survey of 174 registered and NAFDAC-approved bottled water manufacturing SMEs – out of which 148 responses were retrieved. Results from the descriptive and regression analysis revealed that adoption of technology in marketing management exerted a positive influence on the performance of bottled water manufacturing SMEs in FCT. Firms' marketing resources also had a positive impact on the performance of bottled water manufacturing SMEs in FCT. It was recommended that managers of SMEs should efficiently include social media channels as a dynamic part of their marketing channels. Given the significant contribution of marketing to SMEs' business performance, it was also recommended that SMEDAN should map out strategies to support firms in developing effective marketing resources.

Keywords: Marketing Strategy, Price, Place, Product, Promotion, Technology, Resources, performance.

Introduction

The importance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in every economy irrespective of its developmental stage cannot be overemphasized, there is a general consensus that SMEs contribute immensely to employment generation, export-led growth, and overall economic growth. According to Agwu (2014), SMEs remain a critical socio-economic component that is necessary for the realization or attainment of industrial growth and sustainable economic development. This disposition is attributable to the inherent capacity of SMEs to complement the activities of large-scale industries in actuating industrial production expansion and the actualization of economic growth objectives (Agwu, 2014; Udofot & Etim, 2017). This overarching and significant role in the achievement of sustainable economic development, as opined by Peace, Ajike and Ezejiofor (2017), has engrained the growth and development of SMEs as a crucial component in all developmental strategies across the globe consequently prompting an increased attention on different methods and approaches of building and sustaining an SME-dominated private sector. This is particularly relevant in Nigeria as government thrives to curb the prevailing conditions of unemployment and underdevelopment.

Marketing is defined as the act of advertising or promoting the sales of goods. According to Peace et al. (2017), it is the activity and process of creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging product and service offerings which has value for customers, business partners, and the society in general. Since marketing, as explained by Kenu (2018), performs an essential role in the products creation, customers' management, and value chain management, companies must intentionally and elaborately include marketing policies in their corporate management plan via marketing strategies.

Marketing strategies provide an elaborate structure and processes which will enable an organization channel its resources appropriately to gain competitive advantage through the delivery of a superior value to the organization's customers (Kenu, 2018). It refers to the procedures by which organizations respond to the external and internal market forces so as to achieve their business objectives (Slater, Hult & Olson, 2010). Comprehensively, marketing strategies entails the decisions of an organization which specifies their products, potential markets, marketing resources and marketing activities in the development and delivery of valuable products to existing and potential customers (Amin, 2021). Simply put, marketing strategy is a strategy that focuses on events that are centered on customer and competitor analysis, target market and market segmentation, context analysis and outline of the firm's profitability based on its marketing mix.

Almeida and Daniel (2020) characterized the marketing of start-ups and SMEs as haphazard, informal, loose, reactive and unstructured. However, the authors insist that the influence of marketing on the activities of small businesses such as SMEs cannot be overemphasised. Marketing strategies are vital prerequisites for any organization that seeks to bolster its market share and cushion the effects of the activities of its competitors (Kenu, 2018). The major challenges consistently faced by SMEs is how to access the global market so that they can increase their chances of successfully capitalizing on the prospects presented by the market and gain comparative advantage (EurActiv, 2009). The SMEs thus have to develop processes and structures to handle the poliferating challenges of the global market and this, according to Gamage, et al. (2019), can be achieved through effective marketing decision making which will make the SMES gain benefits from cross border exchange transactions and business relationships.

In Nigeria, research interests in SMEs have been mostly based on their contributions to economic growth (for example: Kowo, Adenuga & Sabitu, 2019; Bello, Jibir & Ahmed, 2018; Ogbuabor, Malaolu & Elias, 2013; Muritala, Awolaja & Bako, 2012). The focus is further heightened by the expectation that SMEs have a part to play in poverty alleviation and the creation of employment opportunities (Ojokuku & Sajuyigbe, 2015). Previous studies (Amin, 2021; Abiodun & Kolade, 2020; Daniel, 2018; Kenu, 2018; Kasiso, 2017) carried out on the correlation between marketing, marketing strategies and SMEs' performance have widely used the 4Ps of marketing (Price, Place, Product, Promotion) as their study variables with limited attention to other cogent factors of marketing strategies. Undoubtedly, in order to create efficient solutions to the performance and ultimate sustainability of SMEs, it is imperative to examine other internal and external factors of marketing strategies. This study therefore examined the impact of marketing strategies on the performance of selected bottled water manufacturing SME in FCT, Abuja using the adoption of technology in marketing management and the SMEs' marketing resources as independent variables.

The above statement of problem has given rise to the following research questions, which have been formulated to aid in this investigation:

- i. To what extent does the adoption of technology in marketing management affect the performance of bottled water manufacturing SMEs in FCT-Abuja?
- ii. To what extent does marketing resources impact on the performance of bottled water manufacturing SMEs in FCT-Abuja?

The next section presents the related literature, this is followed by section three which presents the methodology of the research while the results and discussions are presented in section four and finally the conclusion and recommendations are presented in the last section of the paper.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

Marketing in its basic meaning is the promotion of the products and services of the organization to the general public with intent of gaining new customers and ensuring maximum loyalty of existing customers (Varadarajan, 2010). Strategy, on the other hand, is a detailed outline of the methods or ways available for an organization to use and accomplish its business targets (Shaw, 2012). Therefore, marketing strategy is the action statement of an organization which states how the organization intends to achieve all its marketing goals. Many empirical literatures have proffered diverse definitions of marketing strategy. For example, Scrizzi (2007) stated that marketing strategy entails the strategic analysis of the competitive business environment, issues affecting the business and forecasting trends with particular focus on the organization's target market. Varadarajan (2010) however defined it as a unified pattern of an organization's decision-making processes which specifies its critical choices based on product offerings, the target market, marketing mix, communication and delivery of valuable products to the customers, thus enabling the organization to achieve its business objectives. To Ebitu (2014), marketing strategy involves formulating corporate and business unit strategies to participate in achieving business sales objectives. Furthermore, Borshalina (2015) defines marketing strategy as an important instrument that is developed to accomplish the corporate goal with regards to efficient target market share through the creation of a long-term, sustainable competitive effort in the market in which it is involved. Even though, Borshalina (2015) opined that marketing strategy majorly consists of the targeted market and the marketing mix, other studies include the concepts of adoption of technologies and firm's marketing resources (See Agostini & Nosella, 2020; Eze et al., 2020; Morgan, 2012).

Targeted Market: The choice of an organization's target market depends on the profitability of each market segment. When choosing a target market, organizations take into consideration; the current measure and projected growth of the market segment, the structural elements that influence the desirability of the market segment in the long run (such as existence of strong competitors and the buying power of consumers in the market segment), and the organization's objectives backed by the availability of adequate skills and resources to fully influence and control the market segment (Machfoedz, 2005, Borshalina, 2015).

Marketing Mix: This is a blend of four fundamental factors of an organization's marketing system: Product (generating satisfaction for customers by creating tailored products that are suitable to trends), Price (flexible and well defined pricing system that can increase demand and at the same time generate higher profits for the organization), Place (the organization's supply chain that ensures efficient movement of products from the producer to the consumer), and Promotion (the means employed to enhance product sales). These variables are popularly known as the '4Ps' of marketing (Swastha, 2007; Kotler & Keller, 2012).

Adoption of technology: The adoption of technology in marketing management, also termed as digital marketing, has become an integral part of the marketing strategies of most SMEs (Locket, 2018). Technology has the capability to enhance the SMEs' marketing strategy in a number of ways such as customization of product, client relationship marketing, new market access, b2b (business-to-business) collaborations, customer involvement in product creation

and optimal use of the firm's marketing resources (Arghya, Pradip & Shilpee, 2020; Eze et al., 2019; Barnes et al., 2012). Digital marketing is an essential tool in the promotion of products and services to different market segments, and it also serves as an efficient means of analyzing customer feedback (Agostini & Nosella, 2020; Hajli, 2014; Samoilenko & Osei-Bryson, 2018). Additionally, digital marketing enhances the level of the firm's engagement or communication with its current and potential customers. Summarily, Prause (2019) and Lee, *et al.*, (2018) explained that the main objective of the adoption of digital marketing is to rapidly broaden brand awareness and increase revenue using digital platforms (Prause, 2019; Lee, *et al.*, 2018).

Firms Marketing Resources: A firm's marketing resources is defined as the available marketing tools within the organization that can be transformed by the firm's marketing capabilities into valuable outputs. According to Morgan (2012), these resources typically include Tacit knowledge, Physical resources, Reputational resources, Human resources and financial resources.

- i. **Tacit knowledge resources** are implicit resources that relate to the technical knowledge required to execute a marketing task and such knowledge can only be obtained through direct experience (Morgan 2012). Marketing-related tacit knowledge resources include creative advertising selection, insights of a brand manager regarding the nature of a brand, and relationship-building approaches of the salesperson.
- ii. **Physical resources (physical assets)** are highly relevant in achieving a firm's marketing objective (Morgan, 2012). Important physical resources to marketing include plant and equipment, raw materials and retail stores. Specifically, raw materials, plant and equipment are fundamental in the determination of the quality of products in manufacturing firms.
- iii. **Reputational resources** have been identified to include corporate reputation and brand equity (Morgan, 2012). Corporate reputation is an intangible asset that entails the customer's perception of the firm. It exerts a considerable influence on customers' responses to the firm's marketing activities. Brand equity represents the value of a brand. According to Morgan, it is defined in terms of the distinguishable effects of marketing activities exclusively attributable to a specific brand's existence.
- iv. **Human resources** represent the available skills and technical know-how of the firm's workforce which provides inputs to the firm's marketing strategy (Morgan, 2012). This includes the number of available marketing and non-marketing personnel involved in creating and delivering value to customers.
- v. **Financial resources** refer to the available capital investable in marketing programs (Morgan 2012). The author explained that the size and accessibility of marketing budget was critical for the success of the firm's marketing campaigns.

From the aforementioned concepts of marketing strategies, it can be concluded that marketing strategy is an organization's business strategy that brings together all of the company's marketing goals into a single strategy.

Empirical Review

A number of studies have investigated the impact of marketing strategies on organizational performance, including that of SMEs. Such studies are reviewed as follows:

Evidence from Nigeria

Amin (2021) examined the ability of marketing strategies to improve the performance of SMEs in Abuja using data obtained from a survey of 339 respondents. The variables used in the study included product, pricing, place and promotion strategies. Analysing data using multiple

regression method, the study revealed a favourable relationship indicating that the implementation of marketing strategies has a favourable impact on the performance of SMEs. Also, findings revealed that product strategy was the most adopted marketing strategy. Using the same methodology, Abiodun and Kolade (2020) investigated marketing strategies impact on organizational performance in Nigeria by surveying 152 respondents. The variables used in the study included packaging, promotion, product and price. Findings reveal that the independent variables were joint indicators of business performance.

Furthermore, Daniel's (2018) study carried out on the Nigerian Bottling Company, Kaduna examined the interaction between marketing strategies and the organization's performance. The independent variables used in the study included production strategy, pricing strategy, distribution strategy and product standardization, while data was obtained from a survey of 245 respondents. Results from the Pearson Correlation analysis shows that all the aspects of marketing strategies excluding promotional strategy have positive impact on sales volume and financial performance.

Similar results were achieved in the study of Adewale, Adesola and Oyewale (2013) which analysed the impact of marketing strategy on business performance of selected SMEs using primary data obtained from a survey of 103 respondents. The variables used in the study included product strategy, promotion strategy, place strategy, price strategy, packaging strategy and after sales service. Using the zero-order correlation and multiple regression methods of analysis, findings revealed that the selected marketing strategies were positive predictors of business performance estimated as annual profit, market share, return on investment, and expansion. Lastly, Ogundele *et al.*, (2013) also confirmed that marketing practices have significant effect on business performance of SMEs. The variables used in the study included new product development, process development, segmentation, price discrimination, direct distribution, personal selling, sales promotion, relationship marketing and electronic advertisement.

Evidence from other countries

Karam et al. (2018) examined the linkage between marketing strategy and organizational performance in Iraq using Cihan University Duhok Camps KRG as a case study. The data obtained from a sample of 100 respondents was analyzed using multiple regression analysis method. Consistent with the findings of Adewale, et al. (2013), the study's proxies of marketing strategies (service, pricing, promotions, place, after sales service, higher education marketing and social media marketing) were found to have positive and significant impact on business performance measured by profitability, market share, return on investment and expansion. Focusing on selected manufacturing SMEs, Kenu (2018) also investigated the association between marketing strategy and business performance in Southern Ethiopia. Data was obtained from a survey of 250 owners/managers of SMEs and the study variables were product strategy, price strategy, promotion strategy, and placement strategy. The correlation analysis revealed the strategies focused on product, price and promotion have positive effect on performance of the manufacturing SMEs. Conversely, place strategy exerted a negative effect on the performance of the manufacturing SMEs.

Kasiso (2017) analysed the impact of marketing strategies on sales performance of fifty (50) SMEs in Kenya. From the results of the descriptive statistics, the author concluded that the independent variables (pricing, product development, promotional and place marketing strategies) have significant favourable effects on the turnover of the SMEs. Also in Kenya,

Kinuthia and Muturi (2016) analysed the effects of management strategies on productivity of soft drink distributors in sixty-two (62) soft drinks distributors. The study's independent variables were sales targeting plan, human resource planning, marketing initiatives, and cost reduction programs. Results from the descriptive statistics analysis revealed the indispensability of the perception of high-quality product in achieving success in soft drink industry, hence the importance of marketing initiatives.

Rakula (2016) investigated the effect of marketing practice on the performance of Phoenix of East Africa Assurance Company Ltd, Kenya. The qualitative information got from the interview of Five (5) were subjected to analysed using Content analysis. The findings substantiated the ability of marketing practices to improve firm's performance. The firm's marketing practices included product innovation and maintenance strategy, market orientation strategy, task-oriented approaches, customer acquisition and retention strategies. Sapuro (2016) also explored the association between marketing strategies and business performance of SMEs in Kenya. However, going beyond a single case study, the study used the census sampling method to select Sixty-two (62) SMEs in Kitengela Township. The descriptive statistics analysis of the data from 186 respondents revealed that with the exclusion of price marketing strategy, all the marketing mix strategy (product, place and promotion) had a positive and significant influence on business performance. Conversely, price marketing strategy had an insignificant effect.

Theoretical Framework

The study is based on the Market orientation theory. The theory emerged in the early 90s when Jaworski and Kohli as well as Narver and Slater published their market orientation frameworks with an aim to analyse and characterize market driven organizations (Kohli, Jaworski & Kumar, 1993; Jaworski & Kohli, 1993, Narver & Slater, 1990; Slater & Narver, 1995). Although the scholars disagreed on the exact definition and characteristics of market orientation, it is widely accepted by academicians and practitioners that both theories imply that the approach leads to better market performance (Tschida, 2010). According to this theory, successful businesses should be able to know the requirements and wants of their customers, with the goal of meeting those needs and wants more effectively than their rivals. Market orientation theory is conceptualized along three dimensions which are customer orientation, competitor orientation, and inter-functional coordination.

Customer orientation, according to Kohli, et al. (1993), involves being fully aware of the buyers and entire value chain with the single objective of effectively providing value for the customers while simultaneously achieving market advantage. Firms with stronger customer orientation are able to achieve higher market profitability and foster more value related to market tracking. Competitor orientation is described as the firm's knowledge of the strengths, weaknesses, strategies and capabilities of competitors in the market (Asgar, Hossien & Mohammed, 2013). While the last component, inter-functional coordination, focuses on improving the cooperation and integration of resources among the various units and departments of the organization, for the purpose of achieving its organizational goals thereby leading to enhanced performance and competitive advantage (Sikkens, 2017). From the angle of customer orientation, the theory implies that the satisfaction of customers will improve performance therefore, it is expected that customer centric marketing strategies will have a significant and positive effect on performance.

Methodology

The study adopts the qualitative survey research design. The respondents were chosen at random from the owners/managers of bottled water manufacturing SMEs within Abuja Metropolis totalling 174 (One hundred and seventy-four). A well-structured questionnaire was utilized to obtain sufficient and credible information from the selected participants, after which descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were applied in order to examine the data and test the hypotheses underlying the research. The analysis was supported by the use of tables for better understanding of data collected.

Table 1: Description of Variables

Type	Variable	Proxies
Dependent	SMEs Performance	Sales Volume
		Sales Outlets
Independent	Marketing Strategies	Adoption of Technology
		Firm's Marketing Resources

Results and Discussions

Descriptive Analysis of Structural Questions

Table 2 - Adoption of Technology in Marketing Strategies of SMEs

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total (%)
Q1.	We have active presence in the social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) and use their marketing tools in managing our firm's marketing needs.	73 (49.3)	70 (47.3)	3 (2)	1 (0.7)	1 (0.7)	148 (100)
Q2.	We adopt digital marketing tools (Websites, Google Analytics, Blogs, etc.) in managing our company's marketing.	89 (60.1)	49 (33.1)	3 (2)	6 (4.1)	1 (0.7)	148 (100)
Q3.	The use of mobile payment methods has made it easier for us to attract more customers.	102 (68.9)	42 (28.4)	4 (2.7)	-	-	148 (100)
Q4.	Our organization has the capacity to adopt and manage digital marketing tools.	101 (68.2)	35 (23.6)	8 (5.4)	2 (1.4)	2 (1.4)	148 (100)

Source: Researcher's Field Survey Result (2021)

Table 2 presents the analysis of the opinions of respondents as regards the adoption of technology and the performance of their SMEs. The 80% of the respondents consistently fall within the categories of Strongly Agree and Agree. This implies that most of the selected SMEs employ the adoption of technology as a major part of their marketing strategy.

Table 3 - Firm's Marketing Resources in Marketing Strategies of SMEs

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total (%)
Q1.	We are quick to respond to significant changes in our competitor's pricing structures.	71 (48)	73 (49.3)	4 (2.7)	-	-	148 (100)
Q2.	Our marketing personnel spend time discussing customer's future needs with other functional departments.	89 (60.1)	55 (37.2)	4 (2.7)	-	-	148 (100)
Q3.	The activities of the different departments and units of this company are well coordinated.	98 (66.2)	39 (26.4)	7 (4.7)	1 (0.7)	3 (2)	148 (100)
Q4.	We provide good customer service and efficiently work on customer complaints.	102 (68.9)	44 (29.7)	1 (0.7)	1 (0.7)	-	148 (100)
Q5.	We survey our customers at least once a year to assess the quality of our product.	98 (66.2)	46 (31.1)	2 (1.4)	2 (1.4)	-	148 (100)

Source: Researcher's Field Survey Result (2021)

Table 3 provides the analysis of the responses from the questionnaires as regards respondents firm's marketing resources. Similar to the results from adoption of technology, over 80% of respondents strongly agreed or at least agreed with the statements. This indicates that the SMEs consistently apply the firm's marketing resources as a vital component of their corporate marketing strategy.

Table 4 - Business Performance of Your Company

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total (%)
Q1.	In the recent past, the company has performed well in terms of increase in profits.	144 (77)	32 (21.6)	1 (0.7)	1 (0.7)	-	148 (100)
Q2.	We intend to roll out more marketing campaigns in the future as a result of the success of previous marketing campaigns of our company.	107 (72.3)	37 (25)	3 (2)	-	1 (0.7)	148 (100)
Q3.	There has been an increase in the company's sales volume due to our marketing strategies.	113 (76.4)	34 (23)	1 (0.7)	-	-	148 (100)
Q4.	Our marketing strategy has led to the opening of more sales outlets at various locations within Abuja.	109 (73.6)	38 (25.7)	1 (0.7)	-	-	148 (100)

Source: Researcher's Field Survey Result (2021)

The analysis of the opinions of respondents concerning the business performance of their SMEs and its relationship with market strategies as presented in Table 4 reveals that 77% of the respondents strongly agreed that their SMEs performed well in terms of increase in profits. With regards to the role of marketing strategies, the percentile analysis of statements 2, 3 and 4 indicate that most of the respondents believe that marketing strategies has played a positive role in achieving increase in company's sales volume and sales outlets as over 70% of them

consistently specified their strong affirmation to the statements. Therefore, it can be posited that marketing strategies has a positive impact on performance of bottled water manufacturing SMEs in FCT-Abuja

Test of Hypotheses

H₁ - The adoption of technology in marketing management has no significant impact on the performance of bottled water manufacturing SMEs in FCT-Abuja.

Table 5: OLS Results from regression of Adoption of Technology on Performance

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	3.889	.425		9.143	.000
Technology	.203	.070	.236	2.913	.004

Source: SPSS regression output

From Table 5, it can be seen that the p-value of the positive coefficient of the Adoption of technology is less than 0.05 (sig = 0.004), therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and the study concludes that the adoption of technology in marketing management has a significant and positive impact on the performance of bottled water manufacturing SMEs in FCT-Abuja. This result is consistent with the findings of the descriptive analysis.

H₂ - The firm's marketing resources have no significant impact on the performance of bottled water manufacturing SMEs in FCT-Abuja.

Table 6 - OLS Results from regression of Firm's Marketing Resources

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	4.812	.426		11.289	.000
Firm's Marketing Resources	.038	.057	.055	.664	.508

Source: SPSS Regression Output

In Table 6, the coefficient of firm's marketing resources is positive; indicating that firm's marketing resources has a positive relationship with performance. However, the positive coefficient is not significant since its p-value is greater than 0.05 (Sig = 0.508), hence we do not reject the null hypothesis and therefore conclude that firm's marketing resources has no significant impact on the performance of bottled water manufacturing SMEs.

Discussion of Findings

The results from the descriptive statistics reveal that bottled water manufacturing SMEs in Abuja have actively applied marketing strategies with the adoption of technologies and firms marketing resources being vital strategies within the corporate marketing campaign. The findings also indicate that there has been an increase in the performance of the selected SMEs which the respondents acknowledge is in response to the employment of marketing strategies. Therefore, the study concluded that marketing strategies has a positive impact of on performance of bottled water manufacturing SMEs in FCT-Abuja.

The regression analysis confirmed the positive impact of marketing strategies on performance of bottled water manufacturing SMEs in FCT-Abuja. However, while Adoption of technology was significant, the impact of Firm's marketing resources was found to be insignificant. This positive effect is consistent with the studies by Amin (2021), Abiodun and Kolade (2020), Daniel (2018) and Adewale, et al. (2013) which concluded that technology has the potential to enhance the SMEs marketing in a number of areas including customization, customer relationship marketing, access to new markets, business-to-business collaboration, co-creation of the product with customers and improving internal efficiency. The outcome is also in line with Morgan (2012) conclusion that a firm's marketing resources typically includes tacit knowledge, physical resources, reputational resources, human resources and financial resources; and they have positive impact on business performance. Furthermore, the results complement Kenu (2018) work that established a substantial relationship between product strategy, price strategy, promotion strategy and business profitability in manufacturing SMEs. However, with regards to place strategy, Kenu (2018) had found a negative effect while Daniel (2018) revealed a negative impact of Promotional strategy. These results do not align with our results.

Conclusion

The rise of more demanding clients and significant technology advancements have resulted in a complicated retail industry in today's business climate, which is defined by heightened competition. To cope with competition, penetrate new markets and retain efficient market shares, companies irrespective of size or domain have vigorously deployed marketing strategies with notable results. The study investigated the impact of marketing strategies on the performance of bottled water manufacturing SMEs in FCT-Abuja. Adoption of technology in marketing management and firm's marketing resources were the proxies for the independent variable (marketing strategies), while performance was estimated as sales volume and sales outlets. Using the survey design method, 174 questionnaires were distributed but only 148 responses were received. The descriptive and regression analysis of the data from 148 respondents revealed that all the proxies have positive impact on the performance of bottled water manufacturing SMEs in Abuja – FCT. This study therefore concludes that marketing strategies play a critical role in the performance of bottled water manufacturing SMEs in FCT-Abuja.

From the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Proprietors of bottled water manufacturing SMEs should vigorously engage social media channels as a dynamic part of their marketing channels.
- ii. Also, SMEDAN should map out strategies to support bottled water manufacturing SMEs towards developing plausible marketing tools given that marketing is a fundamental contributing success factor.

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