e-ISSN 2795-3248
p-ISSN 2795-3222

Check for updates

SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH
www.gphjournal.org
Open Access
Global Publication House International Journal

10.5281/zenodo.6966810 | Vol. 05 Issue 01 Jan. - 2022 | Manuscript ID: #0554

BRAND PRICE POSITIONING STRATEGY AND SALES TURNOVER OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN RIVERS STATE NIGERIA

Dr. Amadi, Lawrence

Department of Marketing Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

Dr. Ray Obasi

Department of Entrepreneurial Studies, College of Management Sciences, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State, Nigeria.

Corresponding author: *Dr Amadi, Lawrence
Email: amalaw2004@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the relationship between brand price positioning strategy and sales turnover of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) sector in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive research design. Data were drawn through questionnaires from 66 small-scale operators, 40 medium-scale operators making a total of 106 food and beverage manufacturing Entrepreneurs in the SMEs sector in Rivers State, and 384 customers of the said firms. The data collection instrument was validated by experts drawn from Entrepreneurship, Marketing, and Statistics and thereafter subjected to a reliability test using the Cronbach Alpha test which gave an average coefficient value of 0.764. A combination of descriptive and inferential statistical tools was employed to analyze the data with the aid of SPSS (version 21.0). The descriptive tools employed were tables, frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation while Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis constituted the inferential tools employed for data analysis. The study findings revealed that brand price positioning strategy was critical in determining the outcome of sales turnover. It was found to have significant predictive capabilities on sales turnover. In conclusion, brand price positioning strategies had a significant statistical influence on sales turnover by food and beverage manufacturing SMEs in Rivers State. Precisely, 37.5%, changes in sales turnover were significantly predicted by brand price. Therefore, this study advocated the adoption of a brand price positioning strategy that will enhance the affordability of their products in the marketplace.

KEYWORDS

Brand Price Positioning Strategy. Sales Turnover. SMEs

INTRODUCTION

Some business experts are of the opinion that Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) operators in the food and beverages sector should make brand positioning their number one priority considering the fact that it may likely impact positively on their sales performance (Sullivan, Peterson, & Krishnan, 2012). Sullivan, Peterson and Krishman (2012) remarked that if brand positioning is given priority in any business and executed in the right direction, entrepreneurs will attain competitive advantage. Brand positioning strategies may likely improve the sales performance of a firm by reducing direct competition (Dirisu, Iyiola&Ibiduni, 2013). Once customers perceive difference in market offering, they will be attracted to and will buy the products that offer superior value to them. A good brand positioning strategy will increase the brand's image and ultimately increase sales level (Chelumbrun, 2014). Walsh and Whelen (2002) stated that a successful positioning strategy will give a firm a competitive advantage, increase customer patronage and at the long run improve the company's sales performance.

The foregoing is achieved through brand positioning because of its ability to keep the brand on a top position in the minds of customers when they are considering a purchase. To be successful, a brand positioning strategy must differentiate the brand from competitors' own, address the important consumer buying criteria, and articulate the key brand attributes. Brand positioning should not be overlooked by manufacturers of food and beverage products because it is an essential ingredient in the buying process. In fact, brand positioning creates an opportunity for food manufacturers to positively influence market perception and improve brand competitiveness. Failure of a food and beverage manufacturer to embrace brand positioning strategies may lead to low sales and profit margin. Whether a food and beverage manufacturer likes it or not customers will always position his or her brand based on the information gathered from competitors which might hurt the manufacturer. Hickey (2017) argued that a good brand positioning strategy creates meaningful difference and distinguishes the brand from competitors' offerings.

The relationship between price positioning strategy and sales is well documented in literature. According to Begum and Sarala (2016), price positioning is an effective strategy for positioning a brand in the market because it has the ability of boosting sales of a firm. Shivashankar and Uma (2017) argued that price positioning is indeed significant in the market world because it is the most influential economic factor considered in consumer buying decisions. According to them, consumers are price sensitive and if a company positions its brand on the basis of price (i.e. as the cheapest provider of certain brand), it will experience massive increase in sales. It is to this end that this current study sought to investigate the relationship between price positioning strategy and sales turnover in the Nigerian food and beverages manufacturing sector with a focus on Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) in Rivers State, Nigeria.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Brand Positioning Strategies

The result of successful positioning is a distinctive brand image on which consumers rely on in making product choices. A positive brand image also leads to consumer loyalty, positive beliefs about brand value, and a willingness to search for the brand. A positive brand image also promotes consumer interest in future brand promotions and shield consumers against competitors' activities.

An advertiser's positioning strategy affects consumers' beliefs about its brand's attributes and the prices consumers are willing to pay. Positioning as a concept was first used by a man known as Jack Trout in a paper published by industrial marketing magazine in1969. The idea explains a process of filling a slot in the mind of the customer towards a favourable disposition to a product. This concept became more pronounced when Ries and Trout co-authored their most popular book: Product Positioning; The Battle of the Mind in 1981. Positioning advocates the need for brands to be differentiated from competitors in the market (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Customers are so demanding that they need varieties and choice in their preference and taste. Brand positioning is the way the brand is perceived and held by the customer either as a brand leader or operationally excellent brand in terms of performance (Asikhia, 2010). Positioning is the act of identifying a market niche for a brand, product or service utilizing traditional marketing placement strategies such as price, promotion, distribution, packaging, etc. Also positioning is defined as the act of designing the company's offerings and image to occupy a distinctive place in the target market's mind (Aaker, 1991).

The goal of brand positioning strategies is to differentiate a brand from other competing brands and position it in a market so as to enjoy competitive advantage (Komaromi, 2016). Brand positioning strategies start with a product and ends up creating a space and occupying the minds of the target consumers (Kamau & Wafula, 2015). Kamau and Wafula (2015) further stated that a well-known brand holds a distinctive position in the minds of the consumers which may be difficult for competitors to claim, and that this position would only be maintained with well-articulated strategies built around product, price, place and promotion. However, to position a brand in the consumers' minds, entrepreneurs must understand the dimensions along which consumers make their buying decisions.

From the foregoing discourse, it is evident that brand positioning is the process of positioning your brand in the mind of your customers. Brand positioning is also referred to as a positioning strategy, brand strategy, or a brand positioning statement. If management takes an intelligent, forward-looking approach, it can positively influence its brand positioning in the eyes of its target customers. Brand positioning has been defined, as "the act of designing the company's offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the target market". In other words, brand positioning describes how a brand is different from its competitors and where, or how, it sits in customers' minds (Bhasin, & McConnell, 2012).

Brand Price Positioning Strategy: Price is the amount of money charged for a product or brand. It is one of the most important factors which consumers consider before buying a product. Karnau and Wafula (2015) stated that consumers are very sensitive to price when making purchase decisions. They want to buy a quality product at a low price and at the same time get the desired benefits. Hence, business operators use price as a basis for positioning their brand in the market. Companies that adopt this positioning strategy tend to highlight how the prices of their brands differ from competitors. There are two ways in which a company can adopt price positioning strategy. Each of these two ways depends on the quality of the brand (Shivashankar & Uma, 2017). First, the company can use a higher price tag to exploit the popular belief that the more expensive a brand is, the higher its quality.

Some companies use the price-quality approach to position their brands in the market. In this case, they will attach a higher price to their product in order to build a perception that their products are of high quality (Hartrnann, Apaolaza& Sainz, 2002). Begum and Sarala (2016) argued that the price charged by a company must reflect the position of the brand in the marketplace. Rao (2010) stated that a brand that is well known and occupied a strong position in the market in terms of value and reliability may sell for a higher price with the expectations that the consumer will pay for the perceive benefits of using the brand. Another approach to price positioning strategy which a company can adopt is to promote itself as the cheapest provider of certain type of product without compromise on quality. This approach demands that the company offers high quality products or brands at a low price. This approach is very common to companies who want to penetrate a particular segment of the market (Janiszewska & Insch, 2012). Companies that use low price strategy for positioning their brands tend to offer high quality brand at a cheaper price compared to their competitors in the market.

Based on the foregoing submissions, if there is any factor that has great influence on consumer buying decisions, it is price. Consumers who are price sensitive will purchase those brands that go for lower price without compromise on quality (Blankson, 2008). Kamau and Wafula (2015) stated that consumers are very sensitive to price when making purchase decisions. Hence, most companies use price as a strategy for positioning their brands in the market so as to gain competitive advantage in the market.

Sales Turnover

Sales turnover refers to how often a company sells its inventory (Kennan, 2015). Different time-frames can be used to measure the sales turnover of a company. Hence every company chooses their time-frame to measure sales turnover. For instance, some companies may decide to measure their sales turnover weekly or monthly while others may choose quarterly or yearly (Pendharkar & Pandey, 2011). In accounting, sales turnover of a company is usually measured yearly. A company can determine its monthly sales turnover by simply dividing the total amount of sales by 12 months. For example, if a company had a total annual sale of N24, 000,000, the monthly sales turnover is N24, 000,000 divided by 12months which is N2, 000,000. The more sales the company makes, the higher the sales turnover rate (Adeniran, Egwuonwu, &Egwuonwu, 2016). If the sales turnover rate is high, it is an indication that the company is efficient in converting goods or inventory into cash. If the company's goods or inventory stay longer in the warehouse, it becomes difficult for the company to have cash to run other profitable business ventures (Stefan, 2016). It is crucial for SMEs to understand how fast their sales are growing.

To analyze the sales accurately, it is important for the entrepreneur or sales analyst to consider both the projected change in Naira and the percentage change from year to year. For instance, if the company had a total annual sale of N2, 000,000 in year 2015 and it becomes N4, 000,000 in the year 2016, it implies that the company has experienced a sales growth. If subsequent sales increases year to year (which is good), the issue will now be how fast is the company converting its goods or inventory to cash. It is important to have a higher sales turnover rate in order to maximize profit. Every small business owner including those manufacturing food and beverage products strive to increase their sales turnover rate. For sales turnover rate to increase, the entrepreneur must effectively monitor the sales level periodically. Increasing sales turnover rate is crucial to business growth. It is a strong indicator of sales performance of a firm. Every company wants to increase their sales turnover (Dale Carnegie & Associates, 2008). In fact, increasing sales turnover has become one of the most important objectives of business firms (Pendharkar & Pandey, 2011).

According to Adeniran, Egwuonwu and Egwuonwu (2016), companies strive to increase sales turnover because they want to maximize profit. Keenan (2016) provided further explanation on why companies seek to increase sales turnover. According to him, each day the inventory sits on the shelves or in the warehouse, the company cannot use the money paid for those goods to make a profit elsewhere. A firm can increase its sales turnover rate by delivering quality products and services that gives customer a positive experience. When a customer has a positive experience with the product/services purchased, he is more likely to make repeat purchases and this will increase the sales turnover of the firm (Adeniran, et al, 2016). The competitive nature of a business firm is evaluated by the rate of sales turnover. A firm's competitiveness impacts on profits via sales turnover rate.

Sales turnover rate is therefore a significant indicator of market performance, particularly sales performance of a firm (Sajuyigbe, Amusat& Oluwayemi, 2013). Besides, sales turnover is defined as the amount of goods sold by a company at a given period of time (Roberge, 2014). Similarly, Sara (2017) defined sales turnover as the total sales (in monetary terms) made by a company at a specific period of time. Sales turnover of a company can be calculated periodically usually one year (Bertuzzi, 2015).

The essence of calculating sales turnover of a company is to determine how well the company is doing in the market against its competitors (Bertuzzi, 2015). Every company wants to increase their sales turnover and maximize profit. According to Reibstein et al (2006), companies in the manufacturing industry are determined to increase their sales turnover because it is a sure way of maximizing profit. McKinsey, Baungartner, and Hatami (2016) added that increasing the sales turnover rate does not only help to increase a company's profit margin but also improve the competitiveness of the company. Most companies want to be the leading brand in their industry and to achieve this; their sales turnover must be increased. Sara (2017) posited that increasing sales turnover is a sure way of achieving business growth and continuity. Without increasing sales turnover, companies will find it difficult to breakeven and remain in business (Nelson, 2015). For this reason, manufacturing SMEs in the food and beverage industry are making adequate efforts to increase their sales turnover in order to survive in their industry. They are now strategizing to increase their sales turnover as a way of competing favourably with their larger rivals. Sales turnover represents the value of goods and services provided to customers during a specific time period usually one year (Debitoor, 2017). It is the net sales of a company which could be expressed in monetary terms or in units. Sales Turnover Sales could be defined as the total amount of goods sold at a given period of time usually 12 months (Macky, 2007).

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Brand Price Positioning Strategy and Sales Turnover

Janiszewska and Insch (2012) agreed with this position stating that rational consumers are price sensitive and they will always patronize those brands whose prices are relatively lower in the market without a compromise on quality. They further stated that if a company can capitalize on this area of advantage and position its brand as the cheapest among other competing brands in the market without compromise on quality, it will enjoy remarkable increase in sales. Heide (2017) supported this argument when he stated that price is a deciding factor for consumers. According to him, consumers will always stick to those quality brands whose prices are relatively cheaper in the market. There are several arguments in literature that support the relationship between price positioning strategy and sales performance of firms. For instance, Nazmul et al (2012) argued that price positioning is a suitable approach to position a brand in the marketplace to attract customer patronage and increase sales turnover. Shivashankar and Uma (2017) noted that some companies use pricing positioning as a strategy to increase sales turnover and profit margin. Hickey (2017) posited that price positioning strategy is an indispensible strategy for fastening the sales growth and turnover rate of a company. According to him, when a company positions its brand as the cheapest among other competing brands in the market, it will attract more customers, increase repeat purchases and sales turnover of the company.

Kongalla (2013) noted that some companies have been successful in using price as a positioning strategy to increase sales turnover. According to him, these companies produce quality products and price their brands slightly lower than their competitors' own which consequently attract more customers and boost their sales. Gibson (2013) agreed with Kongalla's position stating that price positioning is the most captivating tool used by new companies to increase sales turnover. According to him, companies that intend to penetrate a new market use price as their positioning strategy to increase sales turnover. Mulei (2005) argued that price positioning strategy has the ability to boost company's sales turnover. Blankson (2008) shared the same view with Mulei stating that most small scale firms used low price as a strategy for positioning the brands in the market because of its capacity to increase sales turnover.

Shivashankar and Uma (2017) empirically examined brand positioning and sales of apparels in Bangalore. They studied three different brands of jeans namely Wrangler, Lee and Levi Strauss brands with a particular focus on their attributes, looks, durability, quality, benefits, price, image and aesthetic value. The researchers adopted descriptive research design and they used a structured questionnaire to elicit data from 40 consumers regarding their perception on the attributes, looks, durability, quality, benefits, price, image and aesthetic value of the three brands of jean. After applying spearman rank correlation analysis, it was revealed that consumers ranked Lee brand higher, followed by Levi Strauss brand, and then Wrangler on the basis of attributes, looks, durability, quality, benefits, price, image and aesthetic value. The study therefore concluded that brand positioning enhances the sales of apparel in Bangalore. The sector considered in this study was apparel sector in Bangalore while the current study focused on food and beverage manufacturing entrepreneurs in SMEs sector in Rivers State of Nigeria. The two studies are related in terms of their adoption of descriptive research design and the use of structured questionnaire to generate data.

Hartmann, Apaolaza and Sainz (2002) empirically examined the effect of brand positioning on customer loyalty using energy utility lberdrola as a case study. Their study was aimed at ascertaining the current position of the company and its competitors and measure the loyalty effect of the company's positioning strategies. The researchers collected data from clients (customers) of the company (energy utility Iberdrola) and applied the regression model for data analysis. The result showed that all the dimensions of the company's brand positioning (attributes, quality, benefits and price positioning) have a significant effect on sales level. This study worked on energy sector while the current study worked on food and beverage sector. Both studies shared similarity in terms of their having the same predictor variables but with difference in relation to their criterion variables.

Nwazuluoke (2012) examined the relationship between branding and consumer loyalty in the Nigeria telecommunication industry. Primary data was used for the work which was sourced through questionnaire administered to customers of the four major telecommunication companies in Nigeria (MTN, Airtel, Globacom and Etisalat) residing in Enugu metropolis. The population of the study was 812,708, but the sample size was 400 which were determined with the use of the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination. Out of the 400 administered, only 392 were returned. A descriptive statistical technique was also adopted for the study and the statistical tool for the test of the formulated hypothesis was chi square, with the aid of the SPSS software. The study revealed that branding has a significant effect on product choice and customer patronage and also that Product diversification and innovation has a significant effect on consumer choice and patronage. It also shows that Brand loyal customers are prone to brand switch in response to changes in tariff of other brands and that there is a significant relationship between branding and consumer loyalty in Nigerian telecommunication industry. The researcher recommended that telecommunication firms should expand their network coverage, improve the quality of service they offer and provide better access to other networks within and outside Nigeria. The industry should also improve their customer service and value added services, because the findings show that consumers are not satisfied with the quality of these factors. It was also recommended that Telecommunication providers in Nigeria should be constantly involved in innovation and diversification, as to increase customer's product choice. They must come up with friendly tariff in order to increase customer loyalty and reduce brand switch. Finally, it was recommended that telecommunication providers in Nigeria must see branding as a very important aspect of its strategy and must be given serious attention.

Haasbroek (2007) carried out an empirical study on brand positioning in the remarket automobile industry. The study focused on how brand positioning and repositioning impact on customer satisfaction. The study employed a quantitative research approach and descriptive survey research design where questionnaires were used to sought data from 140 respondents. After analyzing the data collected using factor analysis, the study found out that brand positioning has a significant relationship with customer satisfaction. The study also reported that brand repositioning is significantly related to customer satisfaction.
From the forgoing, we predict that,

H1: Brand price has significant predictive capability on the sales turnover of food and beverage manufacturing SMEs in Rivers State.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Attitude Theory: The attitude theory explains that the attitude of a consumer towards a brand determines the position of that brand in the mind of that consumer. According the theory, a person's attitude towards a brand influences his or her behaviour. The theory explains that a company can influence consumer attitudes in favour of its brand by adjusting certain characteristics of the brand to suit the target audience. Thus, when a company has been able to gain a positive or favourable attitude towards its brand, the brand will enjoy good image and better patronage in the market as consumers would place the brand in a distinct position in their minds. However, a brand's position in the consumer's mind can be determined by a number of features of the brand such as the quality, price, package, benefit, etc. Consumers attach importance to each of these attributes and use them to position a brand in their mind. A company can also use various means including prompt delivery, promotion and innovation to change consumer attitudes towards its brand and reposition the brand in the minds of the consumers.

The theory of attitude is more suitable for this study because it gives a proper explanation on how consumer attitudes influence the position of a brand in the market. When a consumer has a favourable attitude towards a brand, it means that the brand occupies a distinct position in the mind of that consumer and the consumer will patronize the brand despite the presence of other competing brands in the market and this will impact positively on the company's sales performance. On the contrary, if the consumer has an unfavourable attitude towards a brand, it means that such brand does not have a place in the consumer's mind and as such the consumer cannot patronize the brand. In a developing country like Nigeria, consumers of food and beverages could develop positive attitude towards food brands on account of price which is affordable to a target market.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample Design and Study Population: The study adopted descriptive survey as the research design because it helped to obtain the opinion of the study subjects. The objective of the study was to establish and describe the extent to which brand price positioning strategy relates with sales turnover of food and beverages manufacturing SMEs in Rivers State. The geographical area covered in the study was Rivers State, South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria, while the target population comprised of entrepreneurs/managers operating food and beverages manufacturing SMEs in Rivers State and their respective customers. The register found at the Rivers State Ministry of commerce and industry as at March 2019, indicated 125 registered food and beverages manufacturers made up of 80 Small Scale operators and 45 Medium Scale Operators (45) respectively) in Rivers State. The entrepreneurs and their customers constituted the accessible population for the study.

Sample and Sampling Techniques: For the SMEs,66 was determined for small scale operators and 40 for medium scale operators, making a total sample size of 106 using Krejice and Morgan's (1970) table for determining the sample size of a given population as adopted by Sekaran (2003). With the same table, a total of 384 was the sample size determined for the entire customers of food and beverage manufacturing SMEs in Rivers State because Krejice and Morgan's Table holds that for a population that is estimated to be up to 1,000,000 and above, the appropriate sample size is 384.

Instrument for Data Collection: The nature of the study demanded that two sets of questionnaires were developed for the entrepreneurs and customers. The well- structured questionnaire divided: Section A dealt with the demographics of the respondents, while section B dealt with the study variables. Section A of the questionnaire had a total of 5-items while section B was structured in a closed-ended format using five-point rating scale which were rated 1 to 5 respectively. Section B had a total of 4 items which addressed the predictor variable (brand packaging).

Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument: Senior academics validated the research instrument. On the other hand, Cronbach's Alpha test produced a value of 0.764 which was considered appropriate based on the threshold value of .7 as suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994).

Data Analysis Techniques: A combination of descriptive and inferential statistical tools for data presentation and analysis were utilised. Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used to aid the analysis. The descriptive statistical tool was used for data presentation as it concerned demographic and univariate data analyses (mean and standard deviation). The hypothesis was subjected to bivariate data analysis using one inferential statistical tool –Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

A total of 490 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to owners/managers of SMEs and their customers. A total of 476 (97.14%) copies of the questionnaire were returned and all proved useful for statistical analysis. This represented 97.14% rate of return.

Questionnaire Distribution

The copies of questionnaire returned by the various study subjects comprised of 66 copies from small scale operators, 40 copies from medium scale operators and 370 copies from customers of the investigated food and beverage manufacturing entrepreneurs operating in the small and medium scale sector in Rivers State.

Demographic Profile of respondents

The profile of respondents showed that 18(17%) of the respondents revealed that their companies have been in manufacturing operation for less than 1 year, 13(12%) of the respondents stated that they operated between 1-3years, 17(16%) of them confirmed they operated between 4-6 years, while 58(55%) of them indicated above 6 years. Also, 48(45%) of the respondents were owners, 21(20%) of them were managers, while 37(35%) of the respondents were staff. On the other hand, percentage distributions of customers who responded showed that they have patronised the companies as follows: 39(11%) between 1-5 years, 147(40%) between 6-10 years, 184(49%) between 10 years and above.

UNIVARIATE DATA ANALYSIS

Here, necessary analysis regarding the research questions was carried out using relevant statistical tools. Specifically, research questions were analyzed using mean scores and standard deviation values.

Analysis of responses to research question on brand price

Here, analysis was carried out regarding responses on the items addressing research question 1 which bothered on the predictive capability of brand price on sales turnover using mean scores and standard deviation values as illustrated below.

Table 1: Univariate Analysis of Brand Price Items

Descriptive Statistics

S/No	Item Description	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	This organization usually sets competitive pricing for each of their products/ services.	476	1.00	5.00	3.3481	1.18980

2	Cost reduction drives all levels of this firm's production and it impacts on their brand price.	476	1.00	5.00	3.5827	1.04417
3	This firm grant discounts to their deserving customers.	476	1.00	5.00	3.6593	1.06587
4	This firm considers the economic status of its customers in pricing its brands	476	1.00	5.00	3.8074	1.76390
	Overall Mean Score				**3.5993**	

Brand price was measured using four questionnaire items which were developed on a five point Likert scale. The item labels are shown above. The mean responses on the four items were calculated and used to obtain the overall mean response on the brand price construct. The overall mean response on the items (3.5993) shows that the price the customers pay for the food and beverage manufacturing SMEs is fairly good implying that brand price has a predictive capability on sales of food and beverage products manufactured by entrepreneurs in SMEs sector in Rivers State.

BIVARIATE DATA ANALYSIS

The hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient through the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The result of the statistical test was used to either support or not support the hypothesis formulated at 0.05 level of significance.

Testing of Hypothesis 1

H1: Brand price has significant predictive capability on the sales turnover of food and beverages manufacturing SMEs in Rivers State.

Table 2: PPMC Correlation between brand price and sales turnover of food and beverages manufacturing SMEs in Rivers State

Correlations

		Brand Price	Sales Turnover
Brand Price	Pearson Correlation	1	.612**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	476	476
Sales Turnover	Pearson Correlation	.612**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

N	476 $r^2 = 0.375$ (37.5%)	476

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

From Table 2, the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.612$) between brand price and sales turnover of food and beverages manufacturing SMEs in Rivers State is positive. The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.375$) indicates that 37.5% change in sales turnover of food and beverages manufacturing SMEs can be explained (predicted) by brand price. The significant value of 0.000 ($p< 0.05$) reveals a significant relationship. Based on that, the hypothesis was supported. Therefore, brand price has a significant predictive capability on the sales turnover of food and beverages manufacturing SMEs in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings from the test of hypothesis one($r = 0.612$; $r^2 = 0.375$; 0.000 $p< 0.05$) revealed that brand price has a significant predictive capability on the sales turnover of food and beverages manufacturing entrepreneurs in SMEs sector in Rivers State. This suggests that the respondents agreed that the organization they buy from usually sets competitive pricing for each of their products/ services, cost reduction drives all levels of their production and it impacts on their brand price, they grant discounts to their deserving customers and they consider the economic status of their customers in pricing their brands. This finding is supported by Heide (2017); Begum and Sarala (2016) who maintained that brand price positioning is an approach used by firms to achieve sales growth. The implication of this finding is that if food and beverage manufacturing SMEs in Rivers State adopt a brand price positioning strategy, it will lead to growth in sales. This finding is also supported by the works of Mulei (2005), Blankson (2008), and Ndinda (2005) who noted that brand price positioning is an effective strategy to increase sales turnover of business firms. This implies that if food and beverage manufacturing SMEs in Rivers State position their brandson the basis of price, it would increase their sales turnover. Hartmann, Apaolaza and Sainz (2002) examined the effect of brand positioning on customer loyalty using energy utility as a case study. The result showed that all the dimensions of the company's positioning including price have a significant effect on sales level. This agrees with the present study. This implies that consumers are price sensitive and if a company positions its brand on the basis of price (i.e. as the cheapest provider of certain brand), it will experience increase in sales. Consumers will always stick to those quality brands whose prices are relatively cheaper in the market.

Conclusions

The research results have proven that brand price, can increase sales turnover. Therefore, when companies embrace brand price positioning strategy and endeavour to position the brands they offer in terms of price, they stand chances of achieving better sales turnover within the shortest possible time. Drawing from the findings above, the concludes that brand price has a significant predictive capability on the sales turnover of food and beverages manufacturing SMEs in Rivers State.

Consumers are price sensitive and if a company positions its brand on the basis of price (i.e. as the cheapest provider of certain brands without compromising quality of such brands), it will experience noticeable increase in sales.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions made above, this study recommends that manufacturing entrepreneurs should endeavour to make their brand price affordable because, consumers will always stick to those quality brands whose prices are relatively cheaper in the market.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Studies

The generalization of our findings cannot be sustained for the entire country and the larger world in general because the setting is limited to Rivers State only. Its expected that further research should be conducted in other states and regions in order to confirm or contradict our findings.

REFERENCES

Aaker, A. Kumar, V. & Day, G. (1998). *Marketing Research*. New York: John Wiley

Baridam, D. M. (2001). *Research Methods in Administrative Sciences*. Port Harcourt: Sharebrooke Associates.

Basher, I.H., (2013). Diversifying Nigeria's economy through non-oil manufacturing and export promotion. *Business Day newspaper*, May 13.

Begum, K. W. & Sarala, KS. (2016). Impact of Brand Positioning on Customer Purchase Decision of Men Apparel Brands in Udupi. *International Multidisciplinary Research Journal, 5(10),* 213-224.

Bertuzzi, T. (2015). *The Sales Development Playbook: Build Repeatable Pipeline and Accelerate Growth with Inside Sales*. London: Prentice Hall.

Blankson, C. (2008). Impact of Positioning Strategies on Corporate Performance. Retrieved from:www.journalof advertisingresearch.com (Assessed 23/7/2018).

Chelumbrun, J. (2014). The Concept of Product Differentiation in Marketing. Retrieved from https://www.linkedin.com/in/jag-chelumbrun(Assessed 23/8/2018).

Dale Carnegie & Associates (2008). Sales performance defined. *Dale Carnegie Training*. Available at: www.dalecarnegie.com

Dirisu, J. I., Iyiola, O. &Ibidunni, O. S. (2013). Product Differentiation: A Tool of Competitive Advantage and Optimal Organizational Performance (A study of Unilever Nigeria Plc). *European Scientific Journal*, 9, (34), 258-281.

Gibson, M. (2013).Using Brand Positioning and Content Creation to Move into New Markets. Admarco. Retrieved from: www.admarco.net (Accessed 20/10/2018).

Hartmann, P., Apaolaza, V. & Sainz, J. F. (2002). The Effect of Brand Positioning on Customer Loyalty: An Empirical Study of the Iberdrola Case.http://www.researchgate.net.(Accessed 23/7/2018).

Heide, M. (2017). A Brand Positioning Strategy Recommendation for an Asian Company. Retrieved from: www.studenttheses.cb.dk(Assessed 22/7/2018).

Hickey, C. (2017). *Marketing Strategies*. London: Cambridge University Press.

Janiszewska, K., & Insch, A. (2012). The Strategic Importance of Brand Positioning in the Place Brand Concept: Elements, Structure and Application Capabilities. *Journal of International Studies*, 5(1), 213-221.

Kamau, A. N. & Wafula, M. K. (2015). Effects of Strategic Positioning of Service Delivery on Customer Satisfaction - A Case Study of FINA Rank. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, 5 (1),* 1-15.

Kennan, M. (2015). How to calculate sales turnover. *Small Business*, Chron. Available at: www.smallbusiness.chron.com

Komaromi, K. (2016). Brand Positioning and Organizational Competitiveness. *International Journal of Marketing*, 56 (3), 245-256.

Kongalla, R. (2013). *Online Marketing - Differentiation and Positioning*. India: India Institute of Tourism and Travel Management.

Macky, R. (2007). Poor sales performance kills your revenue. Weblink – Retrieved from: http://assess-systems.com.au/blog/2007/poor-sales-performers-kill-your-revenue/

McKinsey, C., Baungartner, T. & Hatami, H. (2016). Sales Growth: Five Proven Strategies from the World's Sales Leaders Hardcover.*The Amazon Book Review*.

Mulei, A. (2005).Evaluation of Effectiveness of Positioning Strategies on Customer Choice: The Case of Laundry Detergents. *MBA Thesis*, University of Nairobi.\

Nazmul, A. K., Islam, M. S., Hossain, F. & Chowdhury, M. T. (2012). Product Positioning: A Study of Soap Industry in Dhaka City. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 4(12), 83-95.

Ndinda, P. (2005). Positioning Strategies used by HMOs in Kenya.MBA Thesis, University of Nairobi.

Pendharkar, A. and Pandey, V. K. (2011). Personality and Sales Performance: An Empirical Investigation. Central Test: The Art of Assessment.Paris.

Rao,V.(2010).*The Seven Dimensions of Positioning.* https://www.ribbonfarm.com/author!admin/

Roberge, M. (2014). *The Sales Acceleration Formula: Using Data, Technology, and Inbound Selling to go from $0 to $100*. New York: Macmillan Publications.

Sara, S. (2017). How to Increase Sales in Retail: The Ultimate Guide. Shopkeep. www.shopkeep.com (Assessed 21/7/2018).

Shivashankar, S. C. & Uma, T. G. (2017). Brand Positioning and Customer Perception towards Apparels — A Study in Bangalore. *International Journal of Applied Research, 3(2):* 213- 218.

Stefan, T. (2016). Turnover sales definition. *Small Business*, Chron. Available at: www. smallBusiness>Running a Business>Sales-turnover-definition.

Sullivan, U. Y., Peterson, R. M. & Krishnan, V. (2012). Value Creation and Firm Sales Performance: The Mediating Roles of Strategic Account Management and Relationship Perception. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 41, 166–173.

Walsh, P. P., & Whelen, C. (2002). Product Differentiation and Firm Size Distribution: An Application to Carbonated Soft Drinks. A Paper Presented at the Network of UK Industrial Economists in Royal Holloway College, the Industry Group in STICERD, London School of Economics and Political Science.