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Research Article

Competitive Strategies and Performance of Selected Firms in Abuja-Nigeria

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Abstract: Firms have been engaged in the use of some competitive strategies in order to build and sustain their performance. However, these have not yielded the desired result fully as most of the selected firms' still experience difficulty in growth sustainability, reduction in product demand and difficulty in business expansion. The key aim of this research is to evaluate Competitive Strategies (CS) and Performance of Selected corporations in Abuja. The research investigates how the CS (product, process and marketing innovations) affect the performance (demand of product, business expansion and growth sustainability) of selected firms in Abuja. A survey research method where primary data were collected was with the use of questionnaire from the staff population of 737 of the selected firms was adopted. Secondary data was also obtained from various books. The study covered a period of 5 years from 2016 to 2020. Out of the 259 copies of questionnaires that were administered, 250 (representing 96.5% response rate) were retrieved and used for analysis. The study's objectives were tested using ordinary least square, and the results showed a significant relationship between the performance of the chosen firms in Abuja (product demand, business expansion, and growth sustainability) and competitive strategies (product innovation, process innovation, and marketing innovation). The study came to the conclusion that product innovation, process innovation, and marketing innovation have a favorable and significant impact on the performance (product demand, company expansion, and sustainable growth) of particular Abuja enterprises. It was recommended that the managements of the selected firms in Abuja should improve on process innovations in order to increase the product quality. This could be achieved through the adoption of efficient modern process technologies. Also the managements of the selected firms in Abuja should continuously improve the product innovation methods such as use of product packaging and branding and also implement market survey and market segmentation and to come up with products that can satisfy customers.
Keywords: Strategies, marketing, performance, product, demand, competitive.

Introduction

Competitive strategy (CS) gives a firm an edge over its rivals and an ability to generate greater value for the firm and its stakeholders. Therefore, to ensure survival in a competitive environment such as Nigeria, indigenous consumer goods manufacturing companies have to learn to weather the storms of competition and beat today's ferocious market forces. This can be achieved by providing quality products, distinct product features and customer customization that satisfy customer need at affordable prices with effective promotional strategy. Every firm possesses certain unique capabilities and competences that distinguish it from other firms and these features greatly influence its performance in the market and determine to what extent a firm survives the pressure from global market competition. This cannot be achieved except the right competitive strategy is developed and

implemented appropriately, Authors (Beaver, and Jennings, 2001) agreed that the 21st century is based on knowledge, information and innovative economy. That means that enterprise success depends on the managers and employee's knowledge, experience, creative activity, product features, customization of products, product quality and emphasis should be positioned on uninterrupted learning and research and development. Muogho (2013) stressed that "organizations can gain by adopting competitive strategy not only by managing effectively for today but also simultaneously creating innovation for tomorrow".

Statement of the Problem

The business climate in Nigeria is characterized by a difficult environment and fierce rivalry. As a result, managers are looking for methods to achieve, enhance, and maintain organizational performance and advantage. For a company to maintain its competitiveness and growth, designing and implementing competitive strategies is a crucial part of the management process. Nigeria's manufacturing industry, like that of many other nations, has been ranked among the most competitive in the world. There were initially only a few participants, but once other operators entered the market, Nigeria's sector became extremely competitive. Price wars arose as a result of the environment's increasing competition (Rof, 2012). Firms have employed some strategies in order to build and sustain their competitive advantage (Mohammed, 2015). In the selected firms in Abuja, some of these CS used include product, process, and marketing innovations. However, from the records of the selected firms through pilot study, these have not yielded the desired result fully as most of the selected firms still experience difficulty in growth sustainability, reduction in product demand and difficulty in business expansion. Apart from the harsh business environment such as irregular power supply, lack of fund, bad roads etc., incapability to gain competitive advantage has been attributed to ineffective planning and implementation of competitive strategies. Thus, the core aim of this research is to assess the impact of CS on the performance of selected corporations in Abuja. Specifically, the investigation is to:

- ✓ Evaluate the influence of product innovation (PDI) on the demand of product of the selected firms in Abuja.
- ✓ Determine the extent of impact of process innovation (PCI) on the business expansion of the selected firms in Abuja?
- ✓ Determine how marketing innovation affects the growth sustainability of the selected firms in Abuja.

Conceptual Review

Concept of Competitive Strategy

Organizations must lay out their plans for how to maintain their company performance, their competitive advantage, and raise their probability in the highly competitive business world of today. CSs are seen as being more skill-based and incorporating the art of war, strategic thinking, invention, execution, and critical thinking. The corporation's unique approach to succeeding in each of the strategic business areas is laid out in its competitive strategy. A competitive strategy gives a business an edge over its competitors in luring clients and fending off competing forces. Therefore, the goal of a competitive strategy is to develop a profitable and long-lasting position in opposition to the factors that define industry rivalry (Porter, 2008).

Competitive advantage (CA) is the capacity of a business to produce goods or services more efficiently than competitors do, hence surpassing them, according to Al-Rfou (2012). CA measures an organization's ability to establish a strong advantage over rivals (Barney, 1991). A CA is what distinguishes an entity's products or services from all of the alternatives available to a consumer, and the word is frequently applied to enterprises. Any enterprise, nation, or person in a competitive setting can use the CA methods (Arora, 2008).

According to Porter (1985), who was quoted by Pace, Kelly, and Hatcher (2015), firms can accomplish CA by using one of the three strategies of differentiation, cost leadership, or focus. They

went on to say that businesses that use differentiation strategies try to gain a competitive edge by differentiating their goods or services from those of their rivals (i.e. making their products unique).

Concept of Organizational Performance

For many years, the term "organizational performance" has been interpreted from a variety of angles. Some academics distinguish it as multi-dimensional, proposing that each organization has specific criteria for organizational performance and that the criteria that apply in one organization may not be appropriate in another (Lumpkin and Dess, 2001; Grünberg, 2004). The organizational performance elements linked to certain local instances and aims in specific cases. Therefore, it is crucial to accurately characterize the core elements of organizational success (Grünberg, 2004). However, academics have created a concept of organizational performance and standards applicable to all organizations and meaningfully positioned within a broad theoretical framework (Hornaday and Wheatley, 1986; Bandura, 2000; Bolino and Turnley, 2003; Chan, 2009). Traditional analysts emphasize that organizational performance for small business ventures encompasses explanations of why people start their businesses, what issues business ownership resolves and creates for the owners or top management, and specifically what the firm's top management actually desires to achieve for themselves (Chaganti and Chaganti, 1983; Marlow and Patton, 1993; Beaver and Jennings, 2001).

Theoretical Framework

Resource Based View Theory

Instead of always seeking to create a flawless environmental fit, the RBV approach to strategic management decision-making places an emphasis on the strategic capabilities as the foundation for the firm's dominance. Resources are the specific material, intellectual, and organizational assets that can be leveraged to put value-creating plans into action. Capabilities represent the ability of a group of resources to complete a task or activity, or, to put it another way, they represent intricate bundles of amassed knowledge and abilities that are exercised through organizational processes, allowing businesses to coordinate their efforts and make the most of their resources. Along with other restrictions like erosion or substitution, the capabilities are always susceptible to being taken away by a competitor's higher order capability. As opposed to tangible assets, which are more easily bought or copied, intangible assets are crucial to the RBV method to understanding competitive advantage.

Empirical Studies

The following research from various authors were reviewed under the empirical study;

Atieno (2016) investigated how competing strategies affected the expansion of women-owned SMEs in Kenya. Growth of SMEs entails an increase in sales, personnel, output, and service offerings; however, this study solely looked at growth as defined by the number of employees. Questionnaires were used to collect primary data, which was then processed and used descriptive and inferential statistics to help with the study's conclusions. According to the findings, SMEs that placed more emphasis on market penetration strategy outperformed SMEs that placed more emphasis on market development and product development strategies. The population, sample size and the particular inferential statistics method of data analysis were not shown and the study was limited to women owned SMEs in Kenya without any justifications. This could bring biasness in result of the study. The effect of CS on the performance of SMEs in Nigeria was examined by Uchegbulam *et al.*, in 2015. Regression analysis was used in the development and testing of hypotheses. 150 SMEs in the local government districts of Ikeja and Surulere in the state of Lagos were randomly selected to receive copies of a well-structured questionnaire. The research found a link between product attributes and client base, a link between product customisation and sales growth, and a link between value-added items and revenue growth. Additionally, it suggested that higher product quality affects returns on investment. The method of randomly selecting 150SMEs is not scientific as the population of the SMEs in area could be obtained in the local government areas and sample size determined using Taro Yamenes' formula. Ylvije and Elez (2013) investigated the effects of CS in SMEs in Albania. The report provided advice for SMEs on how to gain a competitive edge. According to the

study's findings, competitive advantage helps Albania's economy grow and develop dynamically while also raising productivity and company competitiveness. The population, sample size and the particular inferential statistics method of data analysis were not shown. Jeen *et al.,* (2010) looked at the role of Entrepreneurship and Luck in the effect of CS on SMEs. Analysis was done on 356 valid survey results from SMEs in Malaysia. Multiple regression analysis was used to evaluate the data, and the outcomes show that luck and entrepreneurship both have a substantial impact on how SMEs compete. The research makes a significant contribution to the development of a model of competitive advantage among SMEs. Policymakers are encouraged, based on the study's findings, to take into account include the development of entrepreneurial traits in the educational curriculum in order to instill these qualities in our next generation of business leaders. In addition, SMEs are urged to develop an adaptable organizational structure so that it can profit from both endogenous. The use of multiple regression analysis is commendable.

Research Methodology

This study adopted survey and descriptive types of research design. The reason for using survey approach is that it involves generating information from the sample through distribution of well-structured questionnaires and descriptive was used because the procedures have to be described. This makes it easier to obtain information from the respondents about the problem being investigated. Also, this study is explanatory in nature. The investigation is to establish the connection that exists between variables. In other word, it seeks to provide an explanation on the relationship between the CSs and their impact on organization performance. Thirdly, a pilot survey was carried out to evaluate the applicability and dependability of the research tool, making it exploratory.

Population of the Study

The study which is made up of the employees of the selected firms in Abuja.

Table 1. Distribution of the Population

Firms	Number of Employees
Procter and Gamble (P&G)	109
De United Foods Industries Limited	145
Cadbury Nigeria Plc	151
Aflon foods	128
Zoe Nigeria Foods	103
Megabites Limited	101
Total Number of Employees	737
Source: Firms Record, 2020.	

It can be seen from the table 1, that the population comprises of 737 workers of the six selected food manufacturing corporations for this study. The employees are made up of 109 staff of Procter and Gamble (P & G), 145 staff of De United Foods Industries Limited, 151 staff of Cadbury Nigeria Plc, 128 staff of Aflon foods, 103 staff of Zoe Nigeria Foods and 101 staff of Megabites Limited cutting across the six firms selected for this study.

Sample Size Determination

The sample was determined using the Taro Yamane formulae 1946

$n = N/1+N(e)^2$

Where:

N = Population

n = Sample size

$e = (0.05)^2$

n = 737/1+737(0.0025)

n = 737/ 1 +1.84
n = 737/2.84
n = 259

Simple Proportion

The number of workers in the sample was determined using the simple ratio, which gave the following results (see table 2):

Procter and Gamble (P&G) = $\frac{109}{737}\times$ 259 = 38

De United Foods Industries Limited = $\frac{145}{737}\times$ 259 = 51

Cadbury Nigeria Plc = $\frac{151}{737}\times$ 259 = 53

Aflon foods = $\frac{128}{737}\times$ 259 = 45

Zoe Nigeria Foods = $\frac{103}{737}\times$ 259 = 36

Megabites Limited = $\frac{101}{737}\times$ 259 = 35

Table 2. Distribution of the Sample

Firms	**Number of Employees**
Procter and Gamble (P&G)	38
De United Foods Industries Limited	51
Cadbury Nigeria Plc	53
Aflon foods	45
Zoe Nigeria Foods	36
Megabites Limited	35
Total Number of Employees	259
Source: Firms Record, 2020.	

Technique Used to Collect Data

A structured questionnaire was utilized in the study to gather information from the participants (employees). Two components make up the structured questionnaire. Section B offered information that was utilized in the evaluation and testing of the report's hypotheses, whereas Section A contained biographical details on the participants (workers). 5 point Likert's scale questionnaire was designed to get information from the respondents. It contains of statements, to which respondents react with one of five responses: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Undecided, Agree, and Strongly Agree. The use of questionnaires as a method of data collection is justified by the fact that they are less expensive, less time-consuming, and often feature standardized responses that make it simple to assemble data than spoken or telephone surveys. Additionally, it enables respondents to provide replies that are private to them.

Methods of Data Analysis

The methods of data analysis adopted for this study were the use of simple percentage and the inferential statistics approach of simple regression. The reason for using regression is that it is useful for valuation of independent variable Competitive strategy on dependent variable, organizational Performance. The regression is carried out using an e-view statistical and econometric test. The amount (proportion) of variance in the explained construct that can be assigned to the explanatory constructs is measured by the coefficient of determination, or R^2. The autocorrelation of errors in the regression equation is checked using the F-statistics, "t" statistics coefficient (which gauges the relative significance of each explanatory construct), and Durbin-Watson test. The p-value, which measures the likelihood that a result will be at least as extreme as the critical value, may aid in adapting the study's error components. Between 0% and 100% is the range for the R^2. Because more explanatory constructs will be shown to account for the variance in explained construct capture in the

hypothesis, it is advantageous when the value of R^2 is closer to 100%. The decision rule is that the researchers accept the probability at 5% level of significant, 1% level of significant and 10% level of significant.

Study variables and Measurement

Assessment of the connection between explained and explanatory constructs was done using Simple Regression method. For the purpose of this study, the explanatory constructs is the competitive strategy (CS) proxied with product innovation (PDI), process innovation (PRI) and marketing innovation (MKI) while explained construct is organizational performance (OP), proxied with demand for product (DDP), business expansion (BEX) and growth sustainability (GRS).

The general form for the model in the work is given as:
Y = a+bx……. regression equation

Where Y = Dependent Variable (Organizational Performance)
a = constant
b = coefficient
x = Independent Variable (Competitive strategy)

In specific form:
$DDP = a+b_1PDI+e$……..1
$BEX = a+b_2PRI+e$…….2
$GRS = a+b_3MKI+e$……...3

Where,
Organizational performance (Explained constructs) was proxied with demand for product (DDP), business expansion (BEX) and growth sustainability (GRS).

"a = constant; b_1, b_2, b_3 are regression coefficients which measure the degree of the responsiveness of the dependent variables to the independent variables; Competitive strategy (CS) (Independent Variables) was proxied with product innovation (PDI), process innovation (PRI) and marketing innovation (MKI); e = residual or stochastic term (which reveals the strength of $b_1x_1+ b_2x_2 + b_3x_3$; if e is low, this implies that the amount of unexplained factors is low, then the residual R and R^2 will be high and vice versa".

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis One

Ho_1: Product innovation does not have positive significant influence on demand of products of the selected firms in Abuja.

Regression Results for Hypothesis one

Variable	**Coefficient**	**Std. Error**	**t-Statistic**	**Prob.**
PDI	7.274265	3.571339	2.036845	0.0427
C	48.48824	2.020254	24.00106	0.0000
R-squared	0.016454	Mean dependent var		50.81600
Adjusted R-squared	0.012488	S.D. dependent var		26.50692
S.E. of regression	26.34089	Akaike info criterion		9.388090
Sum squared resid	172073.0	Schwarz criterion		9.416262
Log likelihood	-1171.511	Hannan-Quinn criter.		9.399428
F-statistic	4.148739	Durbin-Watson stat		1.876902
Prob (F-statistic)	0.042728			

The following is a presentation of the regression findings for the model of product demand:

DOP =47.49 + 7.27 PDI		
STD Errors	2.02	3.57
t-values	24.0	2.04
p-values	0.01	0.04
F (1,248) = 4.15, p = 0.04	R^2 = 0.016	Durbin-Watson Sta. = 1.88
Source: Authors computation from E-view 8		

The modified R-squared value is roughly 1.6%, as can be seen from the regression results in equation (1). This demonstrates that the firms' production innovations account for around 1.6% of the systematic fluctuation in demand for the products of the chosen firms. The F-statistic (F (1, 248) = 4.15, p = 0.04) confirms that the model is significant at the 5% level. It indicate that a significant connection between DDPs and PRI in the simple regression model. Thus, the overall model is significant. The Durbin-Watson statistic (d = 1.88) indicates that the model is free from autocorrelation problem. The intercept term is 48.49. Its t-statistic ($t = 24, p < 0.01$) indicates that it [the intercept] is significant at the 1% level. It reveals that without product innovation, the expected demand for products of the selected firms is about 48.5% of their total output. The estimated coefficient of PRI is correctly signed. The coefficient is 7.27. The t-value ($t = 2.04, p = 0.04$) indicates that PRI is significant at the 5% level. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis that PRI does not have positive significant influence on DDP of the selected firms in Abuja. Therefore, product innovation has a positive significant impact on demand for products of the selected firms in Abuja. The implication is that product innovation increases the percentage of demand for product by about 7.27%. In other words, it raised the demand for products of the selected firms from about 48.5% to 55.8% of their total output.

Hypothesis Two

Ho_2: Process innovation does not impact positively on business expansion of the selected firms in Abuja significantly.

Regression Results for Hypothesis two

Variable	**Coefficient**	**Std. Error**	**t-Statistic**	**Prob.**
PRI	8.565789	3.978743	2.152888	0.0323
C	62.00000	3.799647	16.31730	0.0000
R-squared	0.018346	Mean dependent var		69.81200
Adjusted R-squared	0.014388	S.D. dependent var		17.95154
S.E. of regression	17.82193	Akaike info criterion		8.606704
Sum squared resid	78770.01	Schwarz criterion		8.634875
Log likelihood	-1073.838	Hannan-Quinn criter.		8.618042
F-statistic	4.634929	Durbin-Watson stat		1.976006
Prob (F-statistic)	0.032292			

The outcome of the regression for BEX model is presented as follows

BEX = 62 + 8.57 PRI		
STD Errors	3.80	3.98
t-values	16.31	2.15
p-values	0.01	0.03
F(1,248) = 4.63 (0.03)	R^2 = 0.014	Durbin-Watson Sat. = 1.98
Source: Results extract from E-views 8.0		

As shown in the regression results in equation (2), it can be observed that the adjusted R-squared value is about 1.4%. It demonstrates that business PRI inside firms accounts for around 1.4% of the difference in BEX. The F-statistic (F (1, 248) = 4.63, p = 0.04) shows that the simple regression model is significant at the 5% level. It displays a substantial connection between business expansion and process innovation in the simple regression model. Thus, the overall model is significant. The Durbin-Watson statistic (d = 1.98) indicates that there is absence of serial correlation problem in the model.

The intercept term is 62. Its t-statistic ($t = 16,\ p < 0.01$) shows that the intercept is significant at the 1% level. It reveals that without process innovation, the expected proportion of business expansion of the selected firms is about 62% of their sizes. The estimated coefficient of process innovation is correctly signed. The coefficient is 8.57. The t-value ($t = 2.15,\ p = 0.03$) shows that process innovation is significant at the 5% level. Hence, we cannot accept the null hypothesis that process innovation does not impact positively on business expansion of the selected firms in Abuja significantly. Therefore, process innovation has a positive significant impact on business expansion of the selected firms in Abuja. This implies that process innovation increases the proportion of business expansion by about 8.57%. In other words, it raised the level of business expansion of the selected firms from about 62% to 70.57% of their sizes.

Hypothesis Three

Ho_3: Marketing innovation does not significantly affect the growth sustainability of the selected firms in Abuja positively.

Regression Results for Hypothesis three

Variable	**Coefficient**	**Std. Error**	**t-Statistic**	**Prob.**
MKI	5.902433	2.576355	2.291001	0.0228
C	63.07971	1.724427	36.58011	0.0000
R-squared	0.020725	Mean dependent var		65.72400
Adjusted R-squared	0.016777	S.D. dependent var		20.42952
S.E. of regression	20.25742	Akaike info criterion		8.862888
Sum squared resid	101770.1	Schwarz criterion		8.891059
Log likelihood	-1105.861	Hannan-Quinn criter.		8.874226
F-statistic	5.248688	Durbin-Watson stat		1.813484
Prob (F-statistic)	0.022803			

The cross sectional regression results for the growth sustainability model are presented as follows:

GRS = 63.08 + 5.90MKI		
STD Errors	1.72	2.58
t-values	36.58	2.29
p-values	0.01	0.02
F(1,248) = 5.25 (0.02)	R^2 = 0.017	Durbin-Watson Sat. = 1.81
Source: Results extract from E-views 8.0		

From the regression results in equation (2), it can be seen that the adjusted R-squared value is about 1.7%. This demonstrates that the MKIs of the companies account for around 1.7% of the systematic variation in growth sustainability of the chosen food companies. The F-statistic (F (1, 248) = 5.25, p = 0.02) shows that the simple regression model is significant at the 5% level. It indicates a substantial link between growth sustainability and market innovation in the simple regression model. Thus, the overall model is significant. The Durbin-Watson statistic (d = 1.81) reveals that the model is free from serial correlation problem.

The intercept term is 63.08. Its t-statistic ($t = 36.58,\ p < 0.01$) indicates that the intercept is significant at the 1% level. It shows that without marketing innovations, the expected growth rate of the selected firms is about 63.08%. The estimated coefficient of marketing innovation is correctly signed. The coefficient is 5.90. The t-value ($t = 2.29, p = 0.02$) indicates that marketing innovation is significant at the 5% level. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis that marketing innovation does not considerably affect the growth sustainability of the selected firms in Abuja positively. Hence, marketing innovation has a positive substantial impact on growth sustainability of the selected firms in Abuja. The implication is that marketing innovation increases the firm growth sustainability by about 5.9%. In other words, it raised the growth sustainability rate of the selected firms from about 63.08% to 68.98%.

Major Findings

Analysis in this research was based on the hypotheses testing, and the obtained regression results indicate a favorable association between the explanatory constructs, CS (PRI, PRI, and MKI) and the explained construct, OP: demand for product, business expansion and growth sustainability. From the calculated regression above using e-view statistical software package, the following results were obtained;

The exploration in hypothesis 1, the results is that product innovation has a positive significant influence on demand for products of the selected food firms in Abuja. The implication is that product innovation increases the percentage of demand for product by about 7.27%. In other words, it raised the demand for products of the selected firms from about 48.5% to 55.8% of their total output.

The exploration in hypothesis 2, the results is that process innovation has a positive significant impact on business expansion of the selected firms in Abuja. This implies that process innovation increases the proportion of business expansion by about 8.57%. In other words, it raised the level of business expansion of the selected firms from about 62% to 70.57% of their sizes.

The analysis in hypothesis 3, the investigation discovered that marketing innovation has a positive substantial effect on growth sustainability of the selected firms in Abuja. The implication is that marketing innovation increases the firm growth sustainability by about 5.9%. In other words, it raised the growth sustainability rate of the selected firms from about 63.08% to 68.98%.

Discussion of Findings

The results of the analysis indicate that there is positive connection between the independent variables, CS (PRI, PRI, and MKI) and the dependent variable OP: DDP, BEX and GRS.

The data from the administered copies of questionnaire concerning the independent constructs, CS (PRI, PRI, and MKI) and the dependent variable OP: DDP, BEX and GRS have been reviewed. The tested hypotheses show substantial link between the constructs and this finding is in tandem with that of Uchegbulam, *et al.,* (2015).

Research Question One: To what extent does product innovation influence the demand of product of the selected firms in Abuja?

The product innovation has a positive substantial impact on demand for products of the selected firms in Abuja. The implication is that product innovation increases the percentage of demand for product by about 7.27%. In other words, it raised the demand for products of the selected firms from about 48.5% to 55.8% of their total output.

This study supports the position of Uchegbulam, *et al.,* (2015), but who investigated competitive advantage and its effects on small and medium-sized businesses in Ylvije and Elez (2013) (Case of Albania). According to the study's findings, competitive advantage helps Albania's economy grow and develop dynamically while also raising productivity and company competitiveness. The

conclusion, however, conflicts with that of Dutse and Ayuba's (2015) study, which looked at how marketing mix techniques were used in the hotel industry in Abuja, FCT, Nigeria and found that the level of customers' satisfaction is not significantly related to the level of the application of marketing mix strategies in terms of products or service offerings, pricing and promotional strategies.

Research Question Two: To what degree does process innovation impact on the business expansion of the selected firms in Abuja?

The exploration in hypothesis 2, the findings is that process innovation has a positive significant impact on business expansion of the selected firms in Abuja. This implies that process innovation increases the proportion of business expansion by about 8.57%. In other words, it raised the level of business expansion of the selected firms from about 62% to 70.57% of their sizes.

This study supports the position of Uchegbulam, *et al.,* (2015), but who investigated competitive advantage and its effects on small and medium-sized businesses in Ylvije and Elez (2013) (Case of Albania). According to the study's findings, competitive advantage helps Albania's economy grow and develop dynamically while also raising productivity and company competitiveness. The conclusion, however, conflicts with that of Dutse and Ayuba's (2015) study, which looked at how marketing mix techniques were used in the hotel industry in Abuja, FCT, Nigeria and found that the level of customers' satisfaction is not significantly related to the level of the application of marketing mix strategies in terms of products or service offerings, pricing and promotional strategies.

Research Question Three: In what way does marketing innovation affect the growth sustainability of the selected firms in Abuja?

Marketing innovation has a positive substantial effect on growth sustainability of the selected food firms in Abuja. The implication is that marketing innovation increases the firm growth sustainability by about 5.9%. In other words, it raised expected growth sustainability rate of the selected firms from about 63.08% to 68.98%. Also it was discovered that process innovation as a competitive strategy influences the performance of selected firms in Abuja more than product innovation and marketing innovation, this study supports the position of Uchegbulam, *et al.,* (2015). A study on competitive advantage and its effects on small and medium-sized businesses by Ylvije and Elez (2013) (Case of Albania) the study's findings helps Albania's economy grow and develop dynamically while also raising productivity and company competitiveness. The conclusion, however, conflicts with that of Dutse and Ayuba's (2015) study, which looked at how marketing mix techniques were used in the hotel industry in Abuja, FCT, Nigeria and found that the level of customers' satisfaction is not significantly related to the level of the application of marketing mix strategies in terms of products or service offerings, pricing and promotional strategies.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the aforementioned outcomes, the following conclusions are made:

1) Product innovation has a positive substantial impact on demand for products of the selected firms in Abuja. The implication is that product innovation increases the percentage of demand for product by about 7.27%. In other words, it raised the demand for products of the selected firms from about 48.5% to 55.8% of their total output.
2) Process innovation has a positive substantial impact on business expansion of the selected firms in Abuja. This implies that process innovation increases the proportion of business expansion by about 8.57%. In other words, it raised the level of business expansion of the selected firms from about 62% to 70.57% of their sizes.
3) Marketing innovation has a positive substantial impact on growth sustainability of the selected food firms in Abuja. The implication is that marketing innovation increases the firm growth sustainability by about 5.9%. In other words, it raised expected growth sustainability rate of the selected firms from about 63.08% to 68.98%. Also it was discovered that process innovation as a competitive strategy influences the performance of selected firms in Abuja more than product innovation and marketing innovation.

From the results of the analysis, the following recommendations were made:

1) This study recommended that the managements of the selected firms in Abuja, should improve on process innovations such as application of quality control, use of improved technologies and equipment in order to increase the product quality. This could be achieved through the adoption of efficient modern process technologies and control and improve the demand for products of the firms due to improved product quality.
2) The managements of the selected firms in Abuja should continuously improve the product innovation methods by carrying out product innovation such as use of product packaging, product design, product branding and product segregation. These will enhance business expansion of the firms.
3) The management of the selected firms in Abuja should try to ensure that effective marketing innovations are sustained and improved upon as they contributed most to new product development in the organization. This can be achieved by creating and adopting good marketing strategies such as market penetration, market survey and market segmentation to come up with products that can satisfy customers thus leading to growth sustainability of the firms.

Conflicts of interest: There is no conflict of interest of any kind.

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