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Entrepreneurial Marketing and Business Sustainability of Shoe Making Firms in Rivers State Nigeria

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Abstract:- The study examined entrepreneurial marketing and business sustainability of shoe making firms in Rivers State. The objectives of the study was to determine the relationship between innovation and market share, and value creation and competeveness of shoe making firms in Rivers State. The study employed correlational research design. Correlational research design involves the collection of data in order to objectively determine the link between variables. The population of this study consisted of seventy (70) managers identified from fifty (50) registered shoe manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The sample size of thirty (30) were selected at random for the purpose of the study. Questionnaire was instrument of data collection. The reliability of the instrument was tested through SPSS Conbach's Alpha and it stood at 0.97 higher than Nunnally's (1978) benchmark of 0.7. Pearson Product Moment Correlations was employed to analyze the hypotheses with the aid of SPSS analytical tool version 22. Findings of the study revealed a strong relationship between dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing and the dimensions of business sustainability. The study concluded that entrepreneurship marketing uses innovative ways to improve consumers perception by providing new goods, services, or methods that reduce detrimental activities while also generating profits for the entrepreneur. Based on the conclusion the study recommended that entrepreneurial managers' should always come up with new innovations because innovation drives manufacturing activities; it enables a firm to compete favourably in its industry and increase its sales volume. Entrepreneurial managers' should always learn to discover new sources of customer value and create unique combinations of resources to produce value. Shoe manufacturing managers should always fine-tune untapped sources of customer value and create superior value for customers.

Keywords:- *Entrepreneurial Marketing; Business Sustainability; Innovation; Value Creation; Competitiveness; Market Share.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In a world of business, competitions are inevitable; competitions are major determinant of business success or failure. With competition, a company is faced with various opportunities and threats both internally and externally. For this reason, every company is required to understand the changes in the market space par time, what the consumers want (preferences), the changes in the business environment in other to gain competitive edge over rival companies. Therefore, a company must strive to minimize its weaknesses and maximize its strengths. As well as choose and establish an appropriate marketing strategies that can stand them out in the face of competition.

Companies with services that are below consumer expectations clearly experience competitive losses, where consumers will switch and look for other alternatives. If the company wants to gain competitive edge and market share must exceed the expectations of the consumers. Good services can increase consumer loyalty to the point where consumers will survive and not look at alternative options from other companies (Parasuraman, 2005).

Business sustainability is linked to the capacity to innovate. Firm's performance in a competitive setting is heavily dependent on their ability to innovate. Sustainability in business refers to a company's strategy to reduce negative environmental impact resulting from their operations in a particular market. A significant change, such as the production of a product or service that is superior to the initial state demonstrates the efficacy of an entrepreneurial marketing to the sustainability of a business]. The capacity to innovate inspires a firm to continue to provide new things (particularly to consumers), compete favourably, and be more sustainable in their company operations. A firm will survive and thrive if it operates innovative entrepreneurial marketing practices. Therefore, firms use the entrepreneurial marketing to increase market share and retain customers.

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Entrepreneurship is a human activity that stimulates the mind power to create or achieve the objective of a job. Entrepreneurship is a process of creating value by bringing together a unique set of resources, identifying and exploring opportunities, defining businesses, evaluating, managing and getting results. An orientation from an entrepreneur can lead to an increase in business performance. Entrepreneurial orientation and behavior enhance the marketing performance of a company which operates in a dynamic environment. Entrepreneurship is the main mediator of change. It is seen as an organizational orientation, which emphasizes the three dimensions: innovation, taking calculated risks and proactive orientation. (Nwaizugbo & Anukam, 2014).

Thus, the need for an entrepreneurial approach is paramount in situations where firms are faced with situations like: rapid changes in the technology, needs consumer and social values, decision-making situations in which reaction time is reduced, reduced possibility of long-term control of environmental variable. Entrepreneurial marketing helps SMEs to generate sales, grow, and survive in a modern-day competition (Fillis, 2010). Entrepreneurial marketing is a novel paradigm which integrates critical aspects of marketing and entrepreneurship into a comprehensive concept where marketing becomes a process used by firms to act entrepreneurially (Collinson, 2002). Entrepreneurial marketing is the integration of two distinct areas; entrepreneurship and marketing into one (Nwaizugbo & Anukam, 2014).

Entrepreneurial marketing connotes the ability of firms to simultaneously adopt both entrepreneurial and marketing approach to business (Morris et al., 2002). In this instance, application of marketing tools, concepts, strategy and theory will help new business creation and growth (Morris et al., 2002) while entrepreneurial mindset and approach to marketing can help successful development of marketing programmes (Kraus et al., 2010; Morris et al., 2002). However, unlike "Traditional marketing, Entrepreneurial marketing is characterized by informal Information gathering, which utilizes a network of personal contacts to collect market intelligence. Entrepreneurial marketing is commonly defined as proactive identification and exploitation of opportunities for acquiring and retaining profitable customers through innovative approaches to risk management, resource leveraging and value creation (Morris, et al., 2002). As stated by Ionita (2012), this definition integrates measures of entrepreneurship (proactivity, opportunity, risk taking and innovativeness) and marketing (customer focus, resource leveraging, guerilla marketing and value creation). The principles of entrepreneurial marketing can be applied to both small and large firms (Collinson & Shaw, 2001). " Awan & Hushmi, (2014).) opined that entrepreneurial marketing is marketing for emerging markets because it tends towards creativity and innovations in other to meet customers' needs and demands. It is on this backdrops that the study aims to investigate entrepreneurial marketing and business sustainability of shoe making firms in Rivers State

- *Statement of the Problem*

The footwear manufacturing industry is one of the most sensitive sectors of the economy that has the capacity of facilitating sporadic economic development within the country, boast our GDP, provide gainful employment, increase foreign exchange earnings, mobilizing domestic savings, alleviate poverty, distribute income, e.t.c. However, footwear manufacturing industries still experience stagnation from one level of growth to the other. Growth still remains a practical business performance indicator in footwear manufacturing enterprise. Most footwear manufacturing firms in Rivers have experienced stagnant growth in their finances, technical assistance, human capital and business environments. These, has grossly hampered the success and survival of the footwear industries. The challenges of footwear industries as a small scale business in Rivers state stem from inadequate knowledge of emerging technologies, basic marketing ingredients, marketing research, marketing planning and marketing segmentation, exportation of leathers, inadequate infrastructure facilities such as: communication, transportation, good road networks, electricity, multiple taxations, and the likes. Consequently, these problems caused some new and existing shoe making firms to close business. .

From the empirical studies reviewed under this study Abdul and Kanu (2020), Mohammed and Rusinah (2017) etc. It revealed that majority of the studies were carried out on entrepreneurial orientation and market orientation in manufacturing firms and firms' performance. None of the study has been carried out under the framework of entrepreneurial marketing and business sustainability of shoe making firms in Rivers State, hence the present study attempt to fill the gap in literature.

➢ *Conceptual Framework*

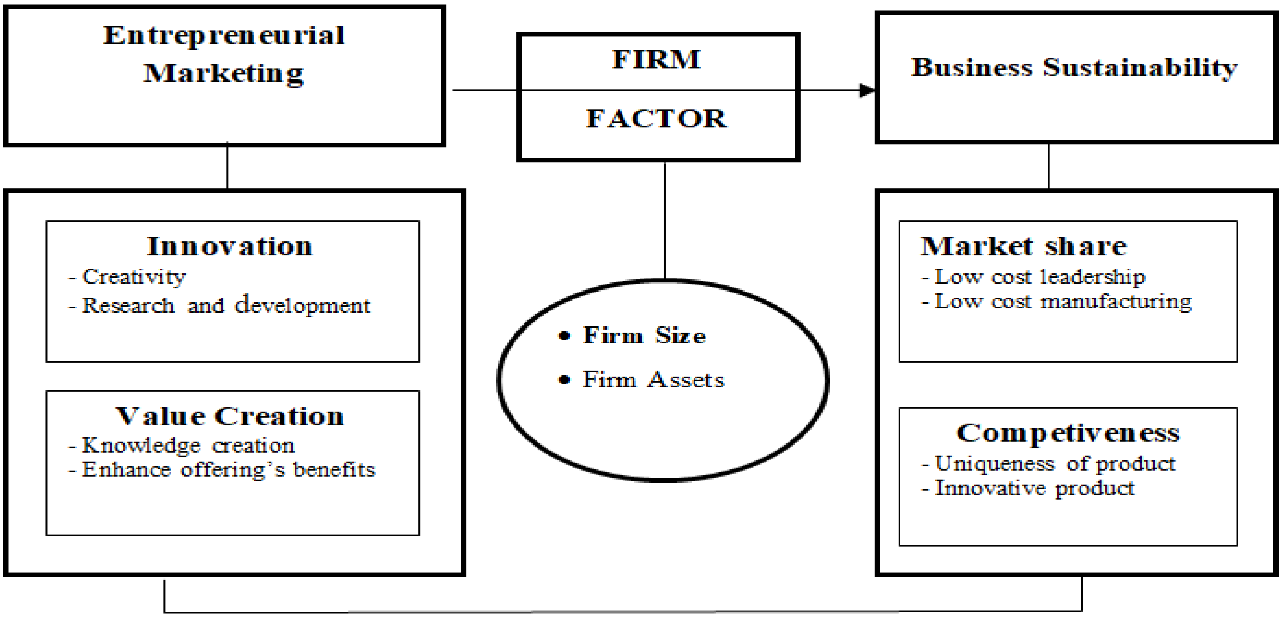

Fig 1 Conceptualization of Entrepreneurial Marketing and Business Sustainability
Sources: Nwizugbo &Anukam, (2014); Parasuraman,.(2007).

➢ *Aim and Objectives of the Study*

The aim of the study was to investigate Entrepreneurial Marketing and business sustainability of shoe making firms in Rivers State Specific objectives of the study are to:

- Investigate the relationship between innovation and market share of shoe making firms in Rivers State
- Investigate the relationship between value creation and competiveness of shoe making firms in Rivers State

➢ *Hypotheses*

The following hypotheses were formulated to be tested and analyzed:

- *Ho₁:* There is no significant relationship between innovation and market share of shoe making firms in Rivers State
- *Ho₂:* There is no significant relationship between value creation and competiveness of shoe making firms in Rivers State

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

➢ *Conceptual Review*

- *Concept of Entrepreneurial Marketing*

The concept of entrepreneurship has been subjected to different definitions by different people depending on the context of usage. However, Jones & Rowley (2011). writings gave credence to the definition of entrepreneurship by his emphasis on new combinations of factors of production that leads to technological change, in other words innovation. The core of entrepreneurship is innovation while the core of innovation is creativity. Remove innovation from entrepreneurship, it becomes normal, conventional or traditional activities in terms of products and services. Kilby (2016) described the deplorable condition estimably, when he associated defining entrepreneurship to hunting 'heffalump', the fiction animal. Entrepreneurship, like heffalump, has been hunted by many entrepreneurial researchers with diverse trapping devices, but none has succeeded in catching him. Those who claim to have sighted him reported that he is enormous, but there is no consensus on his exactitudes. This analogy set researchers on the task to find a solution to this conflictual concept.

Briefly stated, Entrepreneurship is the heart of the modern business – a force behind innovative businesses that characterize the modern economy. It is the dynamic process of creating incremental wealth by individuals who assume the major risks in terms of equity, time and/or career commitment of providing value for some product or service (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2018). Entrepreneurship has been and continues to be the main catalyst for business and economic development. Drucker (2015) defines entrepreneurship as the process of extracting profits from new, unique and valuable combinations of resources in an uncertain and ambiguous environment. This is closely related to Ulrich, K.T. (2001) who defined entrepreneurship as the process of perceiving profit opportunities and initiating actions to fill currently unsatisfied market needs or doing more efficiently what is already being done to better understand the concept of entrepreneurs. Schumpeter (2014) defined entrepreneurship as the process of creating new combinations of factors to produce economic growth. Schumpeter rejected the widely accepted view of the market as a perfectly competitive construct and instead viewed it as a dynamic process driven by creative destruction. He was the first person to view entrepreneurship as the act of innovation creative destruction to create something new and more valuable, the essence of economic development.

Morris et al., (2002) defined entrepreneurial marketing (EM) as the proactive identification and exploitation of opportunity for acquiring and retaining profitability through innovative approaches to risk management, resource leveraging and value creation. Miles and Darroch (2006) Entrepreneurial Marketing is composed of a proactive organizational focus on customer satisfaction through innovative and efficient value creation throughout the value chain. Beverland and Lockshin et al (2004) Entrepreneurial marketing as effective action or adaptation of marketing theory to the special needs of SMEs. Those effective actions should simultaneously resolve some risk.

Backbro and Nystrom (2006) Entrepreneurial marketing is the overlapping aspects between entrepreneurship and marketing; therefore it is the behaviour shown by any individual and/or organization that attempts to establish and promote marketing ideas, while developing new ones, in order to create value. Becherer et al (2008) Entrepreneurial marketing describes the marketing processes of firms pursuing opportunities in uncertain market circumstances.

Hills, et al (2010) Entrepreneurial marketing is a spirit, an orientation as well as a process of pursuing opportunities and launching, and growing venture that create perceived customer value through relationship, especially by employing innovativeness, creativity, selling, market immersion, networking, or flexibility. Kraus, et al (2010) Entrepreneurial marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders, and that is characterized by innovativeness, risk-taking, pro-activeness, and may be performed without resources currently controlled.

Jones and Rowley (2011) Entrepreneurial marketing is considered more proactive, more innovative, more opportunity and growth oriented, and more willing to take risks than conventional marketing. Hills and Hultman (2011) Entrepreneurial marketing is considered more proactive, more innovative, more opportunity and growth oriented, and more willing to take risks than conventional marketing. Hacioglu et al, (2012) We define entrepreneurial marketing as a process with an entrepreneurial spirit (marketing by founder- entrepreneur) Ionita (2012) Entrepreneurial marketing is a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value, guided by intellectual logic and used in a highly uncertain business environment.

Miles et al., (2014) Entrepreneurial marketing draws on the work of both marketing and entrepreneurship scholars by focusing on how individuals and management teams accept risk to innovatively and proactively leverage resources to create value in the market. Whalen et al., (2015) Entrepreneurial marketing is a combination of innovative, proactive and risk taking activities that create, communicate and deliver value to and by customers, entrepreneurs, marketers, their partners and society at a large.

Kraus, et al (2010) Entrepreneurial marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders, and that is characterized by innovativeness, risk taking, pro activeness, and may be performed without resources being controlled. The entrepreneurial marketing concept is focused on innovations and the development of ideas in line with an intuitive understanding of market needs. Collinson and Shaw (2001) Entrepreneurial marketing is characterized by a responsiveness to the marketplace and a seemingly intuitive ability to anticipate changes in customer demands.

Morris, et al (2002) Entrepreneurial marketing is proactive identification and exploitation of opportunities for acquiring and retaining profitable customers through innovative approaches to risk management, resource leveraging, and value creation. Hills and Hultman, 2015 Entrepreneurial marketing (EM) has been viewed as a marketing practice that is suitable for businesses that are operational in frequently changing environment. Makmur et al. (2018); It involves the marketing practice of enterprises seeking opportunities in a market clouded with uncertainty and limited resources. Hills and Hultman (2015) Entrepreneurial marketing is the proactive identification and exploitation of opportunities for acquiring and retaining profitable customers through innovative approaches to risk management, resource leveraging, and value creation.

Richard Cantillon in (1730) introduced the theory of entrepreneurship into the literature as the people who provided capital (money providers) were differentiated from those who needed capital (entrepreneurs). Cantillon used entrepreneur to mean a self-employed person with a tolerance for the risk he believed was inherent in providing for one's own economic wellbeing. This reflected the industrialization occurring throughout the world. Many of the inventions developed during this time were reactions to the changing world, such as the inventions of Eli Whitney and Thomas Edison, who were developing new technologies and were unable to finance their inventions themselves. Whereas Whitney financed his cotton gin with expropriated British Crown property, Edison raised capital from private sources to develop and experiment in the fields of electricity and chemistry. Both Edison and Whitney were capital users (entrepreneurs), not providers (venture capitalists).In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in most cases, entrepreneurs were not distinguished from managers (Ely & Hess, 2017).

- *Dimensions of Entrepreneurship Marketing*

Morris, et al (2002) identified seven dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing: proactiveness, opportunity focus, innovativeness, calculated risk-taking, resource leveraging, customer intensity and value creation. In the same vein, Kraus, et. al., (2010) identified four dimensions of

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Entrepreneurial marketing; Creating customer relationship; delivering value; communicating value and innovativeness.

- *Innovation*

The onset of innovation is creativity. Innovation is the successful implementation of the generated creative ideas. Innovation is the heart of entrepreneurship because without innovation there is no entrepreneurship. Innovation is simply deviating from the norm and doing it in a new and different way to make life better for the populace. Hellriegel, et al (2005) also described innovation as the process of creating and implementing a new idea, which can take different forms. Innovation is regarded as a key business process that organizations are using to achieve competitive advantage. Innovations are currently a fundamental prerequisite of competitiveness (Ariguzo et. al., 2018).

Innovativeness involves the tendency to engage in and support new ideas, novelty, experimentation and creative processes (Mohammad, et al 2013). Successful companies are currently the ones that implements innovative strategies, invests in research, development and innovations. The basic precondition for the creation and use of innovation in the enterprise is a well formulated and implemented innovative strategy. Innovativeness is a central component in an entrepreneurial orientation as posited by Nazdrol & Breen (2011). Lumpkin and Dess (2001) credited Schumpeter with being amongst the first to emphasize the role of innovation in the entrepreneurial process, in the form of a process of creative destruction, by which wealth was created when existing market structures were disrupted by the introduction of new goods or services reallocating resources from existing businesses to new businesses and growth.

Hacioglu et al., (2012) stated that innovation can be a requirement for companies to compete and survive and it is a vital aspect for small-scale companies that have limited resources. According to Utami (2020) said that innovation is defined as opening the door to global and international competitiveness through the creation of markets with unique new products, providing the necessary resources to develop products through learning and creating value. New values that shape a competitive environment, meanwhile, Ruthnasiri (2015) states that innovation is an idea, action or item that is considered new by a certain person or group to be applied or adopted by subjective measurement according to the views of the individual who captures it. From the theory above, it can be concluded that the measurement indicator in seeing the innovations carried out by the company is to find out whether the company is always trying to create markets, marketing ideas, or new products.

Drucker (2007) introduced the concept of knowledge-based innovation as the super star of entrepreneurship. Such innovations could be scientific, technical or social in nature. Knowledge Based Innovation require careful analysis of all the necessary factors and clear focus on the strategic position which entails developing systems, market focus and occupying the strategic position for effective business performance. According to DeepaBabu and Manale (2016) innovations are three types; technological, product, and administrative innovativeness. Likewise, innovation in businesses can be classified into; product, market innovation and technological innovation. Innovativeness in this case refers to provision of solutions to both routine and non-routine problems. It is the business's ability to engage in new ideas or thinking creatively that an idea can generate future economic benefits to the business (Kihara, et al 2016).

- *Value Creation*

Dimension orientation of value creation is a key component of entrepreneurship and implies the addition of value in every possible things in the marketing strategies as well as adding value to customers or adding value to consumer‘s offer (Morris et al., 2002). Alertness to and investment in new ways to create and capture value are key characteristics of businesses that pursue entrepreneurial strategy (Kuckertz et. al., 2017). The proximity of the market causes entrepreneur marketers to often have decision-making process that is closely related with customer‘s culture. They make decision based on the feedback of customers or information gathered throughout the direct or face-to-face interaction with customers. This information enables them to implement marketing strategies and their communication effectively. Some entrepreneur marketers rely on their experience when making decision about new products and services because they believe that their experience helps them make competent marketing decision.

Morris et. al., (2002) pointed out that the focal point of entrepreneurial engagement is innovative value creation, on the assumption that value creation is a prerequisite for transactions and relationships. The task of entrepreneur is to fine-tune untapped sources of customer value and create unique resources to produce value.

It was argued that because of the superior ability to identify and exploit opportunities, entrepreneurial marketing processes are better able to identify attractive entrepreneurial opportunities and exploit them by leveraging innovation to enhance the offering's benefits and or decrease the offering costs resulting in superior value for the customer (Miles & Darroch, 2004).

Value creation is an essential condition for exchange to occur; successful firms emphasize the value creation activities best suited to their strategic intent within their competitive niche (Miller & Floricel, 2004). While traditional marketing has placed more focus on the transaction and customer relationship, entrepreneurial engagement placed emphasis on value creation to satisfy customer's needs and wants profitably (Morris et. al., 2002).

Gupta (2004) opined that value creation concept is closely related with internal activities in creating of value for the customers. The organization internal activities include design, product, market, delivery and other activities which support the creation of a product.

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O'cass and Ngo (2012) argued that designing a value offering that matches customers' expectations provides the means to gain a marketplace advantage. In designing its value offering, the entrepreneurial firm needs to give significant attention to interpreting and responding to what value it perceives customers are looking for. By doing this better than competitors, the firm can obtain an advantage. Through the delivery of superior value. Slater, (2014)

Day and Wensley (2008) argued that superior performance requires affirm to achieve positional superiority based on the provision of superior customer value. The key task for managers then, is to decide how to gain such advantages (through offering specific types of value in the value proposition), especially those that distinguish their offering from competitors (Day et al 2008)

Marketing through networks is an important concept in entrepreneurial marketing. Marketers rely on networks to obtain information that can be used to identify untapped sources of customer value. They can create new value by using existing technology to serve customers in an unconventional manner (Kumar, et al 2000) or using emerging technology to better satisfy customers' current needs. Entrepreneurial marketers gather market information and gain access to potential customers through their networks (Tolstoy, 2009). Networks can help businesses to deliver superior quality products to their customers and create entrepreneurial capital and a competitive advantage over their competitors.

➢ *Business Sustainability*

Sustainability in business refers to a company's strategy to reduce negative environmental impact resulting from their operations in a particular market. An organization's sustainability practices are typically analyzed against environmental, social, and governance (ESG) metrics. Businesses are seeing both pressure and opportunity to establish sustainability goals if they haven't already. Even in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic environment

A sustainable business strategy is a business strategy that incorporates economic, environmental, and social factors into an organization's policies, practices, and processes to create long-term benefits for the organization and its employees while being mindful of conserving and protecting resources. In business, sustainability refers to doing business without negatively impacting the environment, community, or society as a whole.

Sustainability in business generally addresses two main categories:

- The effect business has on the environment
- The effect business has on society

The goal of a sustainable business strategy is to make a positive impact on at least one of those areas. When companies fail to assume responsibility, the opposite can happen, leading to issues like environmental degradation, inequality, and social injustice.

Sustainable businesses consider a wide array of environmental, economic, and social factors when making business decisions. These organizations monitor the impact of their operations to ensure that short-term profits don't turn into long-term liabilities.

Many successful organizations participate in sustainable business practices, however, no two strategies are exactly the same. Sustainable business strategies are unique to each organization as they tie into larger business goals and organizational values. For instance, sustainability in business can mean:

- Using sustainable materials in the manufacturing process
- Optimizing supply chains to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Relying on renewable energy sources to power facilities
- Sponsoring education funds for youth in the local community
- Sustainability entails the use of the resources and the environment to meet the present needs, while at the same time not depriving future generations the ability to meet their needs (Chapin, Carpenter, Kofinas & Folke).

Sustainability strategy in a business context, therefore, refers to corporate methods and approaches to tailor their current activities in line with future needs and challenges. Baumgartner (2016) holds that sustainability strategies explain how issues of sustainability are practically tackled, which usually forms a part of the competitive organizational strategy in profit-oriented firms. Kurapatskie and Darnall (2012) provide an elaborate definition that at the firm level, sustainability is the capability to minimize as much as possible the impact of its business operations on the immediate natural environment while meeting the current and potential stakeholders' needs. This means that by being a nexus of relationships, companies can meet the concerns of their numerous stakeholders by adopting several sustainability measures. Many studies demonstrated that sustainability strategies have the potential to mitigate the shortfall in production and also to develop new business methods to increase output (Yegbemey, Yegbemey & Yabi, 2017; Bui & Villiers, 2017). It also leads to a competitive advantage by minimizing the adverse effects of environmental challenges (Wijethilake, 2017).

➢ *Dimensions of Business Sustainability*

- *Market Share*

A company's market share is its portion of total sales in relation to the market or industry in which it operates. Market share is the percent of total sales in an industry generated by a particular company. Market share is calculated by taking the company's sales over the period and dividing it by the total sales of the industry over the same period. This metric is used to give a general idea of the size of a company in relation to its market and its competitors. The market leader in an industry is the company with the largest market share.

Market share shows the size of a company, a useful metric in illustrating a company's dominance and competitiveness in a given field. Market share is calculated as the percentage of company sales compared to the total share of sales in its respective industry over a time period. A company's market share can influence its operations significantly, namely, its share performance, scalability, and prices that it can offer for its product or services.

Market share is a key indicator of a company's competitiveness. When a company increases its market share, this can improve its profitability. This is because as companies increase in size, they too can scale, therefore offering lower prices and limiting their competitors' growth.

In some cases, companies may go so far as operating at a loss in some divisions in order to push out the competitors or force them into bankruptcy. After this point, the company may increase its market share, and further increase prices. In financial markets, market share can greatly affect stock prices, especially in cyclical industries when margins are narrow and competition is fierce. Any marked difference in market share may trigger weakness or strength in investor sentiment. Firms can achieve market share by selling more to existing customers. focusing your customer service and marketing efforts on retaining customers. expanding your customer base to include similar people who are not currently customers. selling through new channels or into new markets.

- *Competitiveness*

Competitiveness refers to the capability and performance of the firm to supply or sell goods and services in an identified market in competition with other firms (Armitage, 1999) and in the process integrate social, economic, and environmental dimensions (Jiang & Shen, 2013). Hence, Business competition cannot be avoided. With competition, the company is faced with various opportunities and threats both internally and externally. For this reason, every company is required to understand what is happening in the market and what the consumer wants, changes in the business environment so that they can compete with other companies. Therefore the company must strive to minimize its weaknesses and maximize its strengths. Thus the company is required to choose and establish strategies that can be used to face competition.

In literature, competitiveness has been described as multidimensional and relative concept that changes with context and time. It embraces different approaches, from classical theories of mercantilism, which introduced the notion of trade rivalry between nations, to absolute advantages of notions, the theories of competitive and comparative advantages and up to neoclassical critiques of international competitiveness of countries. It constitutes a major economic objective in the current context of globalization, rapid technical change and frequently invoked by policy makers worldwide. The competitiveness defines economic strength of an entity with respect to its competitor and their perspective towards the country, industries and enterprise. There is no agreed definition of national competitiveness. However, according to Wilfred, organizational competitiveness refers to its ability to create more economic value than other competing firms. On the other hand, enterprise competitiveness refers to its ability to design, produce and/or market products superior to those offered by their competitors, considering the price and non-price product qualities. The organizational competitiveness relates to continuous presence in markets, profit making and the ability to marry production to demand. The organization is said to be competitive over its rivals, if there are dynamic, able to respond to any changes with versatility, flexibility, innovative and able to create economic value than its competitors. The organization that seeks to build competitive advantage has to well manage its core processes and resources-human, operations, technology, finance and strive for low cost leadership. The industrial competitiveness is assessed based on a number of indicators, mainly total productivity, Innovation, market share, profitability, finance and investments, ability to export, business environment and entrepreneurship, public administration and sustainability, product quality, price, growth rate, and the enterprises' cost leadership ability and overall ability to turn input into output in the most efficient and economical way.

Competitiveness is derived from the word Entrepreneurial marketing. To compete means to strive for the same object, position, or reward that another person is striving for. Competitiveness refers to the skill or ability to contend with rivals for the same objective or prize. Competitiveness does not necessarily mean an ability to beat all your rivals but rather, the thirst and willingness to be involved in competition; to staying in competition and not be booted out or totally outclassed. Businesses compete among themselves for the best workers, raw materials, customers etc. They all try to use various means to stay competitive to retain or gain customers.

Nowadays, it is increasingly believed that an important key in winning competition is providing more value and satisfaction to the company's customers through standardized products and providing quality services at competitive prices. To design market offerings that deliver more value than competitors in the same market, companies must understand customers and develop strong relationships with customers. The offer is also called competitive advantage where companies have an edge over competitors that are obtained by offering greater value to consumers than competitors offer. Companies must understand competitors and the character of customers through a situation analysis to achieve maximum competitive advantage. Lancaster and Massingham (2018) stated that competitive advantage is an advantage gained through the application of competitive strategies that aim to establish a favorable and sustainable position towards market forces that determine industrial competition. Competitive advantage can arise when an organization does its business differently from its competitors who have no knowledge of the business's activities (Kotler, 2000). Competitive advantage is considered as an objective of strategic plan (Porter, 1985). A business is considered having competitive advantage when

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its creating much economic value than its competitors (Karanja & Osmani, 2013).

Competitive advantage in a business is indicated by its sustainability, the analysis of items that are measured through firstly, the existence of strategies which cannot be imitated and implemented by the current or future competitors, secondly, the strategies giving competitive advantage cannot be copied nor imitated by rivals. The current study operationalized competitive advantage by market share, customer perception and innovation (Sultan, 2007). "

- *Firm Factor*

Firm factor can be defined as a unit of industry and the technical production unit which determines the quality to produce a given product. A firm is said to be an organization that takes inputs (land, capital, labour, and material) and turns them into output, using the technology and resources available to them. Productive activities require the employment of economic resources. Which we refer to as factors or element of production.

However, in neoclassical economics the firm is referred to as the production function. Production function is an important tool in the analysis of economic growth. Production function depicts a process of physical transformation of inputs into outputs. Production function is a technical device representative of a real world technological relationships. A firm can only maximize profit if only it achieves technical efficiency. "Performance in manufacturing firms is measured in terms of a firm's profit margins, volume of sales and employment opportunities created as a result of the firm's products and services being sold in the market place Kiganane, (2013), Venkatraman (1987) describe firm performance as, how well or badly a firm is performing both financially and non-financially as well as the size of the firm. Kaplan and Norton (2008) argue that financial indications as one of the critical measures of firms performance.

- *Firm Size*

According to Stephan, U. & Vujid, S.(2015), firm size is a primary factor in determining the profitability of a firm due to the concept of economies of scale in the neo classical view of the firm Phillip, P. A & Moutinho. L . (2002).showed that in today's world firm size is very critical to performance due to the phenomenon of economies of scale. Essentially, it means larger manufacturing entities can obtain cost leadership relative to smaller firms. Firm size is seen by manufacturing companies as a resource in obtaining sustainable competitive advantage in terms of profit and market share. A firm size can be considered in two different but distinct ways, in terms of sheer organizational size or industry market share. Although size and market share are conceptually different, they are correlated empirically. Hofer (1975) identified size as an indices of firm factor that moderates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing practices and competitiveness.

Ramasamy, et al, (2005) further observed that the relationship between firm performance and firm size was ambiguous and cautioned need for industry specific consideration.Haron, M,. and ArulChellakumar, J. A. (2012) observed that the nature of the relationship that exists between firm size and firms profitability is an essential matter that may shed some light on the factors that enhance profits in firms. The link between firm size and performance has been contentious. Gibrat (1931) posits that firm's growth rate is independent of its size. Pervan, M. & Visid, J. (2012) in their study reviewed that larger and older firms were less productive, but found the evidence less than conclusive. In more recent studies, however, a positive relationship has been established between the size of the firm and profit Abbasi, et al (2015) in their study found that firm size, both in terms of total assets, total sales, has a positive effect on the profitability of footwear manufacturing firms in south east Nigerian.Wu,(2006) argued that larger firms have stronger competitive capability due to their superior access to resources. Barney (1991), posits that a firm is said to have a competitive advantage when it is implementing a value creating strategy not simultaneously being implemented by any current or potential competitor. He further acclaimed the firms competitive advantage potentials depends on the value, rareness and imitability of its resources and capacities. Porter (1989) stressed that for a firm to gain competitive advantage they will have to employ: cost leadership, differentiation and focus. Competitive advantage can be can be used within the firms strategy to achieve organizational goals.Wu (2006).averred that the impact of size on firm's performance and profiting can either be positive or negative. Serrasquerior (2008) added that larger firms have some level advantage on scale of economics which guarantees for more efficient production. Fiegenbaum et al (1991) agued in the a similar vein that larger firms are more stable and has the capacity of generating greater sales and production that will enhance capital cost savings with the economics of scale.

Consequently, the size of a firm plays a vital role in determining the extent of relationship the firm enjoys within and outside its operating environment. The larger a firm is the greater the influence it has on its stakeholders Vis versa. These larger firms generate more profit thereby showing a positive relationship between size and performance of a firm. Whether in terms of total assets, total sales, total operations firm size has been proven to have a huge impact on the profitability and competitiveness of footwear manufacturing firms in southeast.

- *Firm Assets*

An asset is a resources with economic value that an individual, firm, or a country owns or are under there controls with the expectation that it will provide a future benefit. Assets are classified as current, fixed, financial and intangible. They are bought in order to increase a firms operation, value or benefit. Firms asset can be tangible (such as buildings, equipment and machinery (OECD, 2011) or intangible (capital expenditures on marketing, marketing communication, marketing strategies, brand equity, brand loyalty, human capital, innovation, research and development, expenditure for market development (Mansfield,1984; Lynch & Black, 1998;) employee training and job skills (Webster, 2000) e.t.c. Prior studies have examined the link between intangible investment and a firm's performance. Bassi et al. (2002) suggested that a firm's profitability is associated with human resource management in which employee training is a key element of a firm's economic value. A firms performance and profitability outcomes depends more on effective intangible assets, rather than tangible assets. "

Therefore, a firms intangible assets "plays a pivotal role in improving a firm's profitability, growth, Gamayuni (2015) generate profit, and driving a firm's business strategy. They enable firms to obtain competitive advantage, better performance (Davcik & Sharma, 2016) and have a significant impact on firm's value.

In the rapidly changing and competitive modern business environments, firms strive to acquire strategic assets that can be the foundation for generating and preserving the competitive advantage of companies. A firm's strategic assets can come in many forms. One of the fundamental strategic assets is also arguably intangible because intangible assets can provide a firm with vital and valuable competitive advantages.

- *Entrepreneurial Marketing and Business Sustainability*

In entrepreneurial marketing, entrepreneurs tend to be innovation-oriented (that is driven by ideas and intuition rather than customer-oriented), that is driven by assessment of market needs. This innovativeness of entrepreneurial orientation would promote change and creative behaviours, which encourage active exchange of ideas, increase information flows and novelty in new product development. Cooper (2000) opined that innovativeness is a critical determinant of business competitive advantage. Vande et al (2009) stated that innovativeness has become a pre-requisite for a business's competitive advantage and survival. It seems particularly vital to small entrepreneurial businesses with limited resources.

The extent to which a successful organization places innovation in its marketing activities can evolve from the highly innovative new market knowledge. Businesses may choose to focus on innovative means of marketing since the business may not have the resources to meet or maintain industry standards.

Thus being innovative help businesses expand new businesses and sell business opportunities and successfully compete in the market. This helps businesses establish a dominant competitive position and can afford a newcomer business an opportunity to gain an edge in the market. Businesses which are effectively innovators are likely to sustain very well in the dynamic and competitive markets in as such as it's in line with an intuitive understanding of market needs (Stokes, 2000). Innovations and creativity are conditions inherent in the role of entrepreneurship and reflects a business desire to develop methods that may result in new products, services or technological processes. According to Olannye et al., (2016) innovation comes in many different forms; technological innovativeness consists primarily of research and engineering efforts aimed at developing new products and processes. Product-market innovativeness may include market research, product design and innovations in advertising and promotion. Innovation hence provides an important resource that contributes to business's competiveness. Innovativeness is a critical determinant of a business's performance.

As well as understanding the importance of customers to the long-term survival of the business, businesses that adopt entrepreneurial marketing strategy also understand the importance of value creation that is, the need to provide customers and stakeholders with something of value, even more, valuable than that offered by competitors. Value propositions can be enhanced by either increasing the offering's set of benefits (such as product, service, personal, or image-related benefits) or decreasing the total cost(including monetary, time, energy, and psychic costs) to the customer of the acquisition, use, and disposition of the offering (Kotler, 2003). Again, because of the superior ability to identify and exploit opportunities, businesses that adopt entrepreneurial marketing strategy are better able to identify attractive entrepreneurial opportunities and exploit them by leveraging on innovation to enhance the offering's benefits and/or decrease the offering's costs, resulting in a superior value for the customer. Value creation, central in the definition of entrepreneurial activity, is also integral to the marketing orientation of a business (Slater & Narver 2014).While value creation is an essential condition for exchange to occur, successful businesses emphasize the value creation activities best suited to their strategic intent within their competitive niche. Entrepreneurs achieve better results when they find new ways to create or discover value. According to Li, Huang, et al (2009) entrepreneurial orientation is positively related to business performance.

- *Theoretical Review*

The study was anchored on the marketing orientation theory

- *Marketing Orientation Theory (MO)*

Theory Influence of MO in an organizations performance has been a matter of research enquiry many years. It is an organization's response to the external environment – how the firm deals with customers and competitors (Kumar et al, 1998). Hills, Hultman and Miles (2008) found that marketing processes in entrepreneurial marketing did not follow traditional marketing mix variables of price, place, promotion, and product. Instead entrepreneurial marketers live continuously with the market, their vision and customer preferences present in their minds, constantly thinking of how to improve customer value. We take cognizance of overlying concepts of marketing orientation as an important contributor to business and new venture performance (Jones & Rowley, 2011). Furthermore, we acknowledge the significance of the interaction between entrepreneurship, innovation and marketing as a means to venture performance and performance (O'Dwyer, et al 2009). Distinct but complementary views of MO have emerged in the literature namely: MO as a corporate culture

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that puts customers' interests first (Deshpande & Farley, 1998), MO as a combination of customer orientation and competitor orientation (Day & Wensley, 1988; Narver & Slater, 1990) and MO as the generation and dissemination of, and responsiveness to, market intelligence information (Kohli & Jaworski 1990). Market orientation is seen as an organizational behavior that develops capabilities to acquiring market intelligence, disseminating them within the company, and responding by developing products that fulfill market needs, all of which can result in a firm's performance (Tajudin ,et al 2012). An additional view is system-based perspective. It conceptualizes marketing orientation in terms of different organizational activities. The management system is divided into five subsystems: organization, information, planning, controlling, and human resource. Unlike production orientation and sales orientation, marketing orientation balances customer intensity, product quality and aggressive promotion. A firm practicing marketing orientation will exhibit three behavioral components: a customer orientation, a competitor orientation, and inter-functional coordination along with two decision criteria a long-term focus and profitability (Narver & Slater, 1990). Customer orientation is the sufficient understanding of one's target buyers to be able to create superior value for them continuously. It requires that a seller understand a buyer's entire value chain (Day & Wensley, 1988). Competitor orientation on the other hand requires that the organization must consider not only how well its products suit customer needs but how well it performs relative to its competitors (Hsieh, et al 2008). Companies must gather intelligence on the short and long-term strengths, weaknesses, capabilities and strategies of both the key current and the key potential competitors (Hsieh et al., 2008). The analysis of competitors' long-term capabilities, strengths and weaknesses is a key factor in determining MO and culture. Finally, inter-functional coordination is the coordinated utilization of company resources in creating superior value for target customers. Organizational resources often have conflicting perspectives, priorities, and strategies (Nakata & Sivakumar, 2001). Academics and practitioners have long argued that synergy among organizational members is needed so value for customers is continuously created (Day, 1994; Jaworski & Kohli, 1993, Alhakimi & Baharun, 2009). A culture of integrating all functions toward creating customer value should lead to MO within the organization and successful implementation of the marketing concept (Harrison & Shaw, 2004).

- *Generic Strategy Approach*

The" generic strategy approach explains that firms can gain competitive advantage by adopting any of these three competitive strategies namely; cost leadership, differentiation (which is the focus of this study) or focus strategy. Porter (1990) cost leadership strategy denotes that a firm can gain a competitive advantage in the market by producing goods at the lowest possible costs than its competitors. Porter explains that a company that enjoys the advantage by producing goods at a lower cost than its competitors would end up selling its products at a cheaper price and this will not only increase sales turnover and market share of the company, but would also enhance its profit margin.

In Porter's second strategy of differentiation, Porter explains that a company can gain a competitive advantage by differentiating its product from competitors' offerings i.e. on the basis of quality, attributes, features, packaging or price. According to Porter, once a company is able to differentiate itself from competitors by offering product with unique features, it will attract more customers and this will increase sales, market share and profit margin of the company. In Porter's third strategy (focus strategy), Porter explains that a company can gain a competitive advantage by focusing on a geographical segment of the market and offers products that will meet the needs of that segment. The motive here is to better serve the chosen segment or niche market by offering unique products that will meeting the needs of the defined segment far better than anyone else (Porter, 1990).

The three generic strategies developed by Porter reflect the ideology of the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) approach. From a technical point of view, a firm who compete on the basis of cost leadership and differentiation recognizes its strength on these areas and take advantage of the opportunities to gain a competitive advantage in these areas which posed a threat and weakness to its competitors who are disadvantage in these areas. The low cost, differentiation and focus are suitable competitive strategies that can helps a firm gain competitive advantage over its rivals in the same industry.

The Porter's generic strategies are very relevant in explaining the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing practices and firm competitiveness in the footwear manufacturing sector. The approach supports the notion that if a firm in the footwear manufacturing sector differentiates its products from competitors' own through entrepreneurial marketing, it will enhance its competitiveness by increasing customer patronage and customer satisfaction.

- *Diffusion of Innovations Theory (DIT)*

Diffusion of Innovations Theory (DIT) explains the process by which innovations are adopted by users. According to Rogers (1995), diffusion is the process by which new ideas are communicated to members of a social system over a period of time through different channels.

Diffusion of Innovations theory (Rogers, 1995) assumes that the consumer moves through five stages before arriving at the decision to purchase or to reject a new idea or product. These stages include: awareness, interest, evaluation, trial and adoption (rejection) of the new idea (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007; Armstrong & Kotler, 2003). Awareness stage demonstrates the time the consumer gets to know of the innovation but lacks sufficient information about it. Awareness often takes place through exposure to the innovation through various channels of communication. Upon trying out the innovation on limited basis and evaluating its performance against expectations, the

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consumer makes a lasting decision of either adopting or rejecting the innovation altogether.

Schiffman and Kanuk (2010) posited that innovations do not always have equal potential for consumer acceptance; some innovations are readily accepted, others take longer while yet still some are rejected altogether thus have no chance of adoption. Diffusion process introduces five characteristics that help in consumer approval of innovations including relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability (Rogers, 1995; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010; Armstrong & Kotler, 2003). Relative advantage relates to how prospective customers feel an innovation is outstanding compared to alternatives. Compatibility relates to how prospective consumers recognize an innovation as coherent with their desires, beliefs and principle. Complexity is how an innovation is difficult to understand or use. Trialability relates to how innovation can be tested in small bits while observability is the easiness with which a product's values and characteristics can be perceived, visualized or expressed to prospective consumers (Olgha et al., 2017).

The diffusion innovation theory denotes individuals' or business intention to adopt a technology as a modality to perform a traditional activity (Simon & Senaji, 2016). The motivating factor that drives individuals' or business entity's intention to adopt modern technology to perform traditional activities is relative advantage which is expected to be gain. This theory is more concerned about the manner in which technological idea is put to use. It explains how individuals and business organizations intend to use modern technology to perform their operations. Olannyei, et al (2017) stated that innovation diffusion theory tends to describe the manner in which individuals and corporate organizations accept technology as a modality to perform their traditional operations. It is all about the intention of the individuals or organization to embrace modern technology to perform their activities efficiently.

The Diffusion of Innovations theory is very relevant in explaining the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing practices and firm competitiveness in the footwear manufacturing sector. "The approach supports the notion that if a firm in the food and beverage sector comes up with innovative product packaging and designs, that it will enhance its competitiveness by increasing customer patronage and customer satisfaction.

- *Empirical Review*

Kamau (2016) carried out a study to determine the influence of entrepreneurial marketing orientation on competitive advantage among mobile service providers in Kenya. The research aimed at determining the influence of entrepreneurial marketing (EM) on competitive advantage (CA) among mobile service providers (MSPs) in Kenya. It was based on a population of about 30.4 million MSPs, with sample size n=291 obtained from a systematic random sample of customers visiting MSP's customer service centers in Nairobi on a cross-sectional survey. The research design was explanatory with a mixed research method including both quantitative and qualitative items in questionnaires, four explanatory variables (entrepreneurial orientation (EO), market orientation. (MO); strategic orientation (SO) and resource leveraging (RL) were adopted from reviewed literature to develop a conceptual framework on EM as a means to develop a marketing function that is alert to opportunities for creating, promoting, and delivering value to consumers so as to cause favourable CA to the MSP. Data collected were analyzed using SPSS version 23.0 and reported using descriptive and inferential statistics. The correlation coefficient was used to determine any relationship between the research variables while multiple linear regressions models were used to describe the nature of these relationships. He found that except for resource leveraging, all the hypothesized explanatory variables had a significant contribution to competitive advantage (p=0.05).

Nwaizugbo and Anukam (2014) empirically carried out a study to determine the assessment of entrepreneurial marketing practices among small and medium scale enterprises in Imo State Nigeria: prospects and challenges. The study seeks to explore with empirical evidence the extent of overlap, similarities, and dissimilarities between entrepreneurial practices and the marketing concepts among Small to Medium size Enterprises (SMEs) in Owerri, Nigeria. It inquires and assesses approaches to marketing practices entrepreneurs apply. They employed Primary data collection tools consisting of structured instruments for personal interviews and guide for focused-group discussion (FGD) and the questionnaire was used to collect survey data. Secondary data were sourced from firms' records, periodicals, and related literature. The study through convenient sample investigated twenty (20) SMEs and found that traditional marketing is structured and its framework requires certain conditions to thrive-formal planning and theoretical structures. Entrepreneurial marketing (EM) improvises and does not seek for a perfect condition to grow a firm. Thus, the highlights of the interface between entrepreneurship and marketing as discussed in the findings on the areas of differences, similarities, overlap, and collaboration will give practitioners, academics and scholars greater synergetic leverage over unstable marketplace in the application of marketing and entrepreneurial processes for greater results.

Otika and Udoka (2019) empirically carried out a study to determine the effect of entrepreneurial marketing practices and competitive advantage of small and medium enterprise in Enugu State. Their study adopted a descriptive research design with the aid of survey method where questionnaires was used to collect data from 356 owners and managers of 3,252 registered small and medium sized enterprise in Enugu State. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the bio data of the respondent while multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis using SPSS version 2010. The result showed that risk taking, opportunity focus has a significant relationship with competitive advantage.

Mohammed and Rusinah (2017) in their study, the impact of entrepreneurial orientation on competitive advantage moderated by financing support in SMEs in Iraq. The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and competitive advantage (CMA) and to investigate the moderated role of financial support (FNC) between the influences of entrepreneurial orientations on CMA. The study adopted a quantitative approach using survey instruments. The used sample size of 680 from a total manager population in 3526 SMEs working in Kurdistan Region Government (KRG) in Iraq. The total number of usable questionnaires was 580. Structural equation modeling was employed to examine the relationship between the variables. The statistical result showed that entrepreneurial orientations significantly influenced on CMA. The results also highlight that FNC had a moderated role in the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and CMA in SMEs in Iraqi KRG.

Abdul and Kanu (2020) empirically carried out a study to determine the rewards and challenges of entrepreneurial marketing among small and medium enterprises. " The study adopted a triangular method which afforded the researcher to gather information from primary and secondary sources. The qualitative research approach was adopted and questionnaires were used to collect data from 25 managers and owners of small and medium enterprises in UK. The researcher finds out that entrepreneurial marketing enables entrepreneurs to think strategically and contribute positively to the success and marketing performance of their enterprises. Furthermore, entrepreneurial marketing helps to generate sales, grow and survive in modern day competition, increase market share, increase revenue, improved efficiency and enhance customer relationship. The study also enumerated some challenges as follows: limited marketing and managerial knowhow, narrow customer base, lack of expertise etc.

- *Gap in Literature Reviewed*

From the empirical studies reviewed under this study. It revealed that majority of the studies were carried out on entrepreneurial orientation and market orientation in manufacturing firms and firms' performance. None of the study has been carried out under the framework of entrepreneurial marketing and business sustainability of shoe making firms in Rivers State, hence the present study attempt to fill the gap in literature

- *Summary of Literature Reviewed*

The present chapter reviewed studies related to the concept of entrepreneurial marketing practices (independent variable) under innovation and value creation. Business sustainability the dependent variable which has its measures as market share and competitiveness. The study was anchored on marketing orientation theory and supported by Contingency Theory propounded by Lawrence and Lorsch (1967), From the literatures reviewed under this study it was discovered that majority of the studies were carried out on entrepreneurial orientation and market orientation in manufacturing firms and firms performance. None of the study has been carried out under the framework of entrepreneurial marketing and business sustainability of shoe making firms in Rivers State. This study was designed to fill this gap in literature.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study employed correlational research design. Correlational research design involves the collection of data in order to objectively determine the link between variables. The population of this study consisted of seventy (70) managers identified from fifty (50) registered shoe manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The sample size of thirty (30) were selected at random for the purpose of the study. Questionnaire was instrument of data collection. The reliability of the instrument was tested through SPSS Conbach's Alpha and it stood at 0.97 higher than Nunnally's (1978) benchmark of 0.7. Pearson Product Moment Correlations was employed to analyze the hypotheses with the aid of SPSS analytical tool version 22.

➢ *Data Presentation and Analysis*

- *Test of Hypothesis One*

✓ *Ho_1:* There is no significant relationship between innovation and market share of shoe making firms in Rivers State

Table 1 Pearson Product Moment Correlation on Innovation and Market Share Correlations

		Innovation	**Market share**
Innovation	Pearson Correlation	1	.500**
	Sig.(2 tailed)		.000
	N	30	30
Market share	Pearson Correlation	.500**	1
	Sig.(2 tailed)	.000	
	N	30	30
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

From table 1 above it can be seen that the correlation of agricultural products is 0.500 and the significant level is 0.01 (p=0.01) This shows that the p-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.01. Where therefore reject the null hypothesis and concluded that there is strong (0.500) relationship between innovation and market share of shoe making firms in Rivers state

- *Testing of Hypothesis Two*

✓ *Ho_2:* There is no significant relationship between value creation and competiveness of shoe making firms in Rivers State

Table 2 Pearson Product Moment Correlation on Value Creation and Competiveness Correlations

		Value Creation	**Competiveness**
Value Creation	Pearson Correlation	1	.600**
	Sig.(2 tailed)		.000
	N	30	30
Competitiveness	Pearson Correlation	.600**	1
	Sig.(2 tailed)	.000	
	N	30	30
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Table 2 above shows that the correlation of value creation is 0.600 and the significant level is 0.01 (p=0.01) This shows that the p-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.01. Where therefore reject the null hypothesis and concluded that there is strong (0.600) relationship between value creation and competiveness of shoe making firms in Rivers State

- *Summary of the Hypotheses Test*

Table 3 Summary of the Hypotheses Test

S/N	HYPOTHESES	STATUS
1.	There is no significant relationship between innovation and market share of shoe making firms in Rivers State	REJECTED
2.	There is no significant relationship between value creation and competiveness of of shoe making firms in Rivers State	REJECTED

IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Analysis of hypothesis one which stated that There is no significant relationship between innovation and market share of shoe making firms in Rivers State was rejected with strong correlation of 0.500. This confirms Utami (2020) assertion that innovation is defined as opening the door to global and international competitiveness through the creation of markets with unique new products, providing the necessary resources to develop products through learning and creating value.

Result from the analysis of hypothesis two which stated that There is no significant relationship between value creation and competiveness of of shoe making firms in Rivers State was rejected with positive correlation of 0.600. This empirically relates to the findings of Morris et. al., (2002) who pointed out that the focal point of entrepreneurial engagement is innovative value creation, on the assumption that value creation is a prerequisite for transactions and relationships

➢ *Conclusion*

Sustainable businesses recognize change by understanding that the consumers ares becoming increasingly concerned about these challenges to a sustainable world. These changes create market opportunities for sustainability-focused businesses. The market opportunity includes the opportunity to address concerns about sustainability by providing new products and services that reduce energy and natural resource use.

Entrepreneurship as a mind-set, or kind of behavior, lends itself well to sustainable business practices. For sustainable business practice, entrepreneurship uses innovative ways to improve consumers perception by providing new goods, services, or methods that reduce detrimental activities while also generating profits for the entrepreneur. Hence entrepreneurship is highly relevant to consumers and organizations interested in sustainability.

➢ *Recommendations*

In view of the findings and conclusions of the study, the followings are recommended:

- That, entrepreneurial managers' should always come up with new innovations because innovation drives manufacturing activities; it enables a firm to compete favourably in its industry and increase its sales volume.
- That, entrepreneurial managers' should always learn to discover new sources of customer value and create unique combinations of resources to produce value. Shoe manufacturing managers should always fine-tune untapped sources of customer value and create superior value for customers.
- That, footwear manufacturing firms should focus more on the customers. A customer oriented firm will create customer satisfaction which will in turn boost competitive advantage for maximum profitability.

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