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COVID-19 Doldrums and Marketing Performance of Small Scale Business Enterprises in Port Harcourt

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Abstract

The study delved into COVID-19 doldrums and marketing performance of small scale business enterprises in Port Harcourt. The study adopted the descriptive research design. The population of the study comprised managers/owners of small scale food and beverages businesses in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The purposive sampling technique was adopted to obtain a sample size of 200 respondents drawn from the four regions of Port Harcourt, viz, the Akpor axis 50, Port Harcourt main town 50, Obio axis 50 and Rumukwurushi/Eneka axis 50. The 5-point likert scale was used in the questionnaire to obtain data from the respondents. Mean as well as standard deviation was used to answer the research questions at 3.0 mean benchmark, while the regression statistical model was used to test the research hypotheses at .05 significance level. Out of the 200 questionnaires distributed 180 which represented 85% of the copies of the questionnaire were duly returned and completed. The findings showed that there was a significant effect of price inflation on sales growth of small scale business enterprises in Port Harcourt during COVID-19. There was also a significant effect of insolvency on market share growth of small scale business enterprises in Port Harcourt during COVID-19. The study recommended that government, manufacturers and service providers should play a basic role of stimulating production in the midst of any pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19, doldrums, marketing performance, small scale business, enterprise.

Introduction

The complexities in an ever-changing environment determine the efficiency and survival of an organization and unless the organization is fully prepared to move with the prevailing natural and economic trends financially, its efficiency and opportunity for growth and development will be eroded.

The environment of Port Harcourt offers enormous opportunities for the operation of small scale businesses and without urgent socio-economic responses, suffering will be on the increase as a result of COVID-19 lockdown that has come to put lives and livelihoods to jeopardy. The World Bank Group President; David Malpas (2020), opined that the scope and speed with which the COVID-19 pandemic and economic shutdowns have devastated the poor around the world are unprecedented and in modern times.

Grappling with weak recovery from the 2014 oil shock and the GDP growth tapering around 2.3 percent in 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic by the Nigeria government (Chukwu & Ekeruche, 2020) and while the impact of the pandemic will vary from country to country, state to state etc, it will most likely increase poverty and inequalities at a global scale making achievements of SDGs even more urgent (UNDP, 2020).

Globally, the attention given to small scale businesses both within the academia, public/private circle is justified not only because small scale business enterprises provide the logical starting-point for big business, but because they also serve as a spring-board and training ground for big businesses and provides training in the form of apprenticeship (Baadom, 2000).

Basically, small scale business enterprises form an important part of today's economy and their successful operation is very important to the state as well as the nation's health, thus in the past the role of small scale business has been one of distinction and contribution. However, most companies classified as private company falls within the category of small scale business enterprises based on their characteristics viz; owner managers, owners, small market share, Chief Executives can

know and be known. According to Joseph (2020), micro, small and medium enterprises are especially susceptible to economic shocks due to their relatively low savings capacity and will either sink or swim in the current climate of pandemic-induced shock and artificial (but necessary) restrictions on the movement of goods and people. However, as the information about COVID-19 continued to spread, governments all over the world led by the WHO, impressed on the populace to practice social distancing that resulted into Mass self-isolation and a grinding halt in economic activities. Unfortunately, Nigeria being a developing country already face immense pressure with lack of affordable housing for millions of Nigerians, broken healthcare system with inadequate facilities, epileptic power supply, closure of businesses amongst a host of challenges, Joseph (2020) buttressed.

Indeed, the viability of small scale business in any nation is a good indices of economy growth. Reason is that small scale businesses are salient to the economic and social life of the communities they are located and are regarded to as the “big business microcosm” due to its contribution to industrial growth.

It is important to gauge how marketing activities and spending impact on small scale business enterprises in Port Harcourt during the covid-19 lockdown as marketing budget is prone to reduction during such economic downturn. Segued to marketing’s contributory and complimentary role in other areas of organization e.g. Sales, customer service etc. it is obvious that small scale business enterprises is plaque with challenges that has slowed down their return on investment during the lockdown hence the need for a deeper examination of their marketing performance in order to monitor their business progress towards their original goals.

Majority of the small scale business enterprises depends to a large extent on the movement of goods and services to maintain their supply chain and ultimately make profit which due to COVID-19 lockdowns are now starved of their daily cash-flow transactions globally due to this current global health pandemic, small scale business enterprises are now being cut in web of economic shock that has made some to swim or sink with the economic tide under a non-enabling environment of price inflation, insolvency, disruption in supply chain etc. Evidently, small scale business enterprises such as restaurant/bars, saloon/beauty shop, building materials, food stuff etc. had virtually zero revenue during the period of lockdowns in Port Harcourt. With the outbreak of the pandemic and the ensuing lockdown that caused astronomical increase in the prices of food and many other items, capital of most small scale business owners/operators has been used to sustain their families. In view of the foregoing and many others, the researcher is of the interest of finding the implication between covid-19 doldrums and marketing performance of small scale business enterprises in Port Harcourt.

Research Questions

1. What extent does price inflation affect sales growth of small scale business during COVID-19 in Port Harcourt?
2. How does the world insolvency of small scale business in Port Harcourt affect their market share growth during COVID-19 in Port Harcourt?
3. What impact does the disruption in supply chain have on sales growth of small scale business during COVID’19 in Port Harcourt?

Hypotheses

- Ho i: There is no significant effect of price inflation on sales growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID-19
- Ho ii: There is no significant effect of insolvency on market share growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID-19.
- Ho iii: There is no significant effect of disruption in supply chain on sales growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID-19.

Concept of Cóvid’19

David (2020), emphatically defined corona virus disease 2019 (covid’19) as illness caused by a novel corona virus now called severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SAR-COV-2), formerly called 2019-n-cov) which was first identified amid an outbreak of respiratory illness cases in Wuhan city, Hubel province, China. It was first reported to the world Health Organization (WHO) on

December 31, 2019. On January 30, 2020, the WHO declared the covid'19 outbreak a global health emergency. The World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020, declared covid'19 a global pandemic. An illness caused by SARS-cov-2,. Covid'19 is an acronym derived from "corona virus disease 2019". The name was chosen to avoid stigmatizing the virus's origin in terms of population, geography or animal associations.

According to WHO (2020), persons infected with covid'19 virus will manifest such symptom of mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

The primary mode of transmission of covid'19 virus is through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Therefore, it is important to practice respiratory etiquette (e.g. by coughing into a flexed elbow) WHO (2020). In this regard, the best way to prevent and slow down transmission is to be well informed about it(covid'19 virus), its causes and how it spreads. This message is all about to save yourself and others by washing your hands or using an alcohol based rub (sanitizer) frequently and not touching your face, wearing of nose mask or face shield. WHO (2020) advised at this time is "there are no specific vaccines or treatments for covid'19". However, there are many ongoing chemical trials to unraveling and evaluating potential treatments.

The Covid'19 Doldrums

The corona virus pandemic has brought about a global health as well as economic meltdown in investment, trade, employment with adverse effect on business financials goals due to restriction of movement, small scale business owners are now apprehensive of the consequences covid-19 has posed on their businesses as challenges bound in their operations resulting from increased cost of supply chain. It is pertinent that even if covid'19 is kicked-out completely, its impact on business is expected to last longer than imagined.

Imanche, et al (2020) disclosed that economists' scholars are also very keen to point out that SMEs in Nigeria can do better, but are struggling due to weak economic growth and poor government policies. That is the reason why Arefadib and Martin (2020) in Imanche et al (2020) revealed the decrease in oil prices that hitherto resulted in the reduction in value of exports by 36% in Nigeria orchestrated by the economic and social effects of the covid'19.

According to the FATE Foundation Report in <http://www.nairametrics.com>, while almost 50% of businesses were able to recognize opportunities despite the threat occasioned by the pandemic, along the line of new product creation, service expansion and diversification etc. Some business request for assistance and would like support in the area of funding, access to market and business expansion.

Dimension of Covid'19 Doldrums

9. Price inflation:

Generally, inflation simply means an increase in the price of goods and services over a period of time. Specifically, in the view of <http://www.allocadia.com>, (2020), price inflation is the increase in price of a standardized products or services over a specific period of time. Price inflation is demand pool when the amount of money available in circulation in an economic tense to grow larger yearly compare to the supply of goods available for purchase. It is cost push when the cost of inputs to the production process causes an upward push in price.

Taking price inflation from a different perspective, it could be refer to as a situation whereby the price of a goods remains the same over within some years but the amount or quantity of goods received keep decreasing gradually e.g. the quantity in stack of Beloxil crackers biscuit that cost #1 over some years now kept decreasing in weight while price remains constant.

By so doing, the coronavirus outbreak sparked off prices of commodities resulting into questions and volatility in market across the globe. For example, since covid-19 pandemic began, nutrition and livelihood cost has been on the rise. Specifically Nordhagen (2020) revealed that food price has been badly affected. Food price increased due to barriers and lack of transportation, high demand caused by shift in preference towards less perishable food etc.

10. Insolvency:

This is a situation when a company or person is unable to pay debts when they are due. For insolvent companies, it is a sort of liquidation voluntary administration and receivership. For personal insolvency, it lead to Bankrupt and personal insolvency agreement. According to Asic (2020) in March, 2020 the government passed temporary law to help business in financial distress of covid-19 pandemic but the reverse here in Nigeria (Port Harcourt) despite the rumours of COVID-19 stimulus package bailout.

Consequently, small scale businesses in Port Harcourt will go into liquidation and stop trading or go into voluntary administration and be sold as a result of the pandemic. In some cases, the outcome may lead to a company voluntary arrangement (kirks, 2020).

11. Disruption in supply chain:

The interruption of an event, activity or process caused by a disturbance is referred to as disruption. Therefore supply chain disruption could be defined as that disturbance caused by interruption in the production and distribution of goods and services.(Smith, 2019) refers to supply chain disruption as a major breakdown in the production and distribution of a supply chain including events such fine, machine breakdown natural disaster, quality issues and an unexpected surge in capacity.

It can lead to decreased productivity, increased cost, rising customer dissatisfaction etc. To Jaeger (2019), Natural disasters, drought port disruption, cargo theft and industrial are some of the top supply chain risk that should keep executives and chief risk officers on their toes. Covid'19 has disrupted supply chains around the world. There is no doubt that the pandemic has tested the ingenuity, resilience and flexibility of supply chain leaders globally as they have sought to maintain essential operators. Indeed, it is important for operators of small scale business to make rapid decision and take immediate actions to sustain their business in case of future pandemic.

Concept of Small Scale Business

Several business organizations exist in our society. These business organizations are established principally for the purpose of profit making irrespective of their sizes. Some of these organizations are relatively small in size. It is identified in terms of numbers of employees, sales turn over, capital employed or any other physical measure; perhaps because of the changes that would take place in the aggregate economy (Botton Committee of Inquiry on Small Scale, 1971).

In Nigeria and the world over, there is no specific definition of small scale business. The term small scale business, small scale industries and small scale entrepreneurs are used interchangeably to mean a small scale industry firm. Scholars, authors and schools have different ideas as to the difference in capital outlay, number of employees, fixed capital investment, sales turn over, market share, available plants and machineries and level of development which varies from one country to the other (Ayozie et al., 2013). Take for instance:

- In Nigeria, the third National Development plan defined small scale business as a manufacturing establishment employing less than ten people or whose investment in machinery and equipment does not exceed six hundred thousand naira (₦600,000). (A. Olufemi, 1980).
- Small scale business in Nigeria is any manufacturing process or services industry with a capital not exceeding ₦150,000 in manufacturing and equipment alone (The federal government small scale industry development plan of 1980).
- Small scale business are those business enterprises having investment (i.e capital and building and equipment of up to ₦50,000 pre-SAP value and employing not more than fifty persons (The small scale industry Association of Nigeria, 1973).
- The federal ministry of industry defined small scale business as enterprises that costs not more than ₦500,000 (pre-SAP value including working capital to set it up) Ayozie et al (2013).
- Small scale industry as a manufacturing, processing or servicing industry involve in a factory type of production operation employing up to 50 full time workers. In Taiwan, the small scale enterprise is defined as an enterprise with capital investment below Nts 40 million (about US \$1 million) (The Center for Management Development (CMD) of 1982).

Ekhator, (2006), buttressed the position of the United Kingdom regarding any business with an annual turnover of £2 million or less and employing not more than two hundred persons as small scale business. Also, in the United States, the small business administration defines a small business as one that is independently owned and operated and meets the employment or sales standard developed by the agency

In Nigeria, the position of the African Development Bank (ADB), Export stimulation loan (ESL) scheme defines a small and medium scale enterprise as one whose total investment excluding cost of land does not exceed US \$6.35 million. Furthermore, the National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERFUND) defines small and medium scale business enterprise (section 2(b) of Decree No. 2 of 1969 as those with fixed cost of new investment excluding land not exceeding ten million (Ekhator, 2006). The 1989 industrial policy of Nigeria in Ekhator (2006) defines small scale industries as those with total of between one hundred thousand to two million exclusive of land but inclusive of working capital thus recognizing their existence. The above definitions describe the fluidity on the concept of small scale business arising from the result of the structural transformation required in the industrial sector coupled with the attendant production cost.

Concept of Marketing Performance

Marketing performance refers to marketing's result or outputs in comparison with the business objectives. As no business organization can exist without an element of marketing, small scale business enterprises must focus on driving and setting marketing performance criteria in order to provide guide on how their business can optimize their goal.

The American marketing association defines marketing as the performance of business activities that directs the flow of goods and services from producer to the consumer. Based on the traditional view of marketing which characterized business activities performed by individuals and organizations hence the definition by Okwandu and Ekerete (2001) that marketing refers to those activities performed by individuals or organization either profit or non-profit that enable facilitate and encourage exchange to the satisfaction of both parties. This means that if satisfaction is absent in an exchange process, marketing is underperforming. Marketing activities therefore influence intermediate outcome e.g. feelings, thoughts, knowledge etc. which in turn influence financial performance of any business be it small or big.

Marketing performance has two main drivers adopted by business executives in defining success, namely; marketing execution and marketing performance management.

- a. Marketing execution: It is the bedrock of every marketing activity undertaken by a business organization ranging from over-arching global campaigns to individual field events.
- b. Marketing performance management: (MPM): This refers to the organization capacity needed for improving return on investment (ROI) and marketing effectiveness. It ranges from planning, performance, measurement and establishment of predictive analysis. This could be achieved through;
 - Aligning marketing teams to revenue goals and corporate goal.
 - Enabling accountability and measurability etc.

Performance measurement lends support to firms in managing their marketing function by assessing how well marketing activities contributes to stimulating, facilitating, accelerating sales and the overall firm's performance (Michael, 2010). Pertinently, it is obvious that the marketing function of firms is occupied with targeting and the right products and services.

Measures of Marketing Performance:

a. Sales Growth

The percentage growth in the net sales of a business from one fiscal period to another is known as sales growth. Net sales are total sales revenue less returns, allowances and discount (Manasa, 2019). According to Sagemworks (2017), small scale business that made less than \$5 million had a 6.1 percent sales growth on average. Take for instance, a food growth rate is whatever business owners and stakeholders determine to be so. Sale growth is an essential parameter for survival and financial growth of the company. Bhasin (2018) refers to sales growth as a parameter which is used to measure the performance of the sales team to increase the revenue over a pre-determined period of time. A

good sales growth can always be used for the benefit of the employees and company in terms of providing salary raise, acquiring new assets and expansion of the company or product line. A negative growth is an undesirable outcome hinting a wrong strategy or decision.

Some common types of sales growth according to Stockopedia (2020) are as follows:

- Month-on-month sales growth
- Quarterly growth
- Half year sales growth
- Annual sales growth
- Product sales growth
- Customer wise sales growth
- Competitor sale growth

In a nut shell the increase in sales over the specific period of time is a common feature of sales growth. This is important because as an investor, you want to know that the demand for a company's products or services will be increasing in the future (Stockopedia, 2020).

b. Market Share Growth

The position or portion of a market earned by a company or an organization is referred to as market share growth. In order words a company's market share is its total sales of the industry in which it operates. For instance, the purchasing activity of consumers as a whole for Toyota cars is 100% in May. If a certain brand (Toyota Camry) sells up to 60%, it implies that Camry hold 60% market share of Toyota cars. The calculation of market share takes into consideration a company's total sales of the industry in which it operates over that period (Eprime, 2020).

Two Basic Types of Market Share

According to Eprime (2020), there are two basic types of market share, namely; the value or volume market share.

- Value market share: This is the type of market share obtained based on the total share of a company out of our total segment sales.
- Volume market share: This refers to the actual numbers of units that a company sells out of total units sold in the market. The value-volume market share equation is not usually linear; a unit may have high value and low numbers which means that value market share may be low in industries like FMCG where the products are low value, high volume and there and have lots of freebies.

Market share is significant because it is a measure of consumers' preference for a product over other products or market (Eprime, 2020).

Theoretical Review

The theoretical foundations underpinning this study are the Prospect and Game Theories. The prospect theory formulated in 1979 and further developed in 1992 by Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, describes how individuals make choice between probabilistic alternative where risk is involved at different outcome is unknown. The prospect theory assumes that losses and gains are valued differently and thus individuals make different decisions based on perceived gains instead of perceive losses. It is also known as the loss aversions Tversky and Kahneman opined that losses cause a greater emotional impact on an individual than does an equivalent amount of gain. For instance, if a choice is presented in two ways, with both offering the same result an individual will pick the option perceived gain. The prospect theory helps in predicting how entrepreneurs and managers will react during crunches caused by pandemic such as the corona virus.

Games theory was developed by the Hungarian born American John Von Neumann and his Princeton University colleague Oskar Morgenstern, a German-born American Economist in 1944 to solve problems in economics. According to Daniel (2019) it is the process of modeling the strategic interaction between two or more players in a situation containing set rules and outcome They observed that economics is much like a game wherein players anticipate each other's moves and therefore requires a new kind of mathematics. Presently, games theory is a classic theory which is

applicable in almost all the fields. The main significant of games theory is the formulation of alternative strategy to compete with one another (UK Essay, 2017). In the same sense, small scale businesses with the vision of competition are likely to strategize during pandemic.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive research design. The relationships that exist between the dependent and independent variables were described. The population of the study includes all managers/owners of Small Scale Businesses in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The purposive sampling technique was adopted to get 200 sample size as respondents were drawn from the four regions of Port Harcourt, viz, the Akpor axis 50, Port Harcourt main town 50, Obio axis 50 and Rumukwurushi/Eneka axis 50. The 5-point likert scale was used in the questionnaire instrument to obtain responses from the respondents. The mean as well as standard deviation was used to answer the research questions at 3.0 mean benchmark, while the regression statistical model was used to test the research hypotheses at .05 significance level. The reliability of the instrument was tested using Crombach Alpha (SPSS version 23) and .922 greater than .71 was obtained which proved that the questionnaire instrument was highly reliable.

Results

Out of the 200 questionnaires distributed 180 which represented 85% of the copies of the questionnaire were duly returned and completed. The study based its analysis on the returned copies of (180) questionnaire.

Research Question 1: What extent does price inflation affect sales growth of small scale business during COVID-19 in Port Harcourt?

Table 1: The extent price inflation affects sales growth of small scale business enterprises during COVID-19 in Port Harcourt

s/n Items	N=18 0	Mini	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
1. Price inflation brought about increased sales		1.00	5.00	3.0913	1.35924	Agreed
2. Market for commodities is volatile due to price inflation.		1.00	5.00	3.1870	.57972	Agreed
3. There is open communication link between the business and customers.		1.00	5.00	3.2087	1.79857	Agreed
4. There is a shift in product preference due to price inflation.		1.00	5.00	1.7783	.83507	Disagreed
Aggregate Mean				3.01		

Table 1 above reveals that the respondents agreed that that price inflation brought about increased sales with the mean score of 3.0913 and SD 1.35924. In item 2 mean score of 3.1870 and SD .57972 equally showed that the respondents agreed that market for commodities is volatile due to price inflation. In item 3 mean score of 3.2087 and SD 1.79857 showed that the respondents agreed that there is open communication link between the business and customers; whereas in item 4 mean score of 1.7783 and SD .83507 proved that the respondents disagreed that there is a shift in product preference due to price inflation. Thus, the aggregate mean of 3.01 which is greater than 3.00 showed that the respondents agreed to large extent that price inflation affected sales growth of small scale business during COVID-19 in Port Harcourt.

Research Question 1: How does the world insolvency of small scale business in Port Harcourt affects their market share growth during COVID-19 in Port Harcourt?

Table 2: How the world insolvency of small scale business in Port Harcourt affects their market share growth during COVID-19 in Port Harcourt.

s/n items	N=18 0	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
1. Insolvency has caused me to close down my business.		1.00	5.00	2.9783	1.23785	Disagreed
2. I went bankrupt due to my personal insolvency.		1.00	5.00	3.5696	.98101	Agreed
3. Document response procedure is done timely during covi-19.		1.00	5.00	3.7348	1.19098	Agreed
Aggregate Mean				3.02		

Table 2 above shows in item 1 mean score of 2.9783 and SD 1.23785 which shows that the respondents disagreed that insolvency has caused me to close down my business. In item 2 mean score of 3.5696 and SD .98101 imply that the respondents agreed that they went bankrupt due to my personal insolvency. In item 3 mean score of 1.4087 and SD .78072 showed that the respondents disagreed that business is placed on voluntary administration due to business insolvency. Thus, the aggregate mean score of 3.02 greater than 3.00 shows that majority of respondents agreed to how the world insolvency of small scale business in Port Harcourt affects their market share growth during COVID-19 in Port Harcourt.

Research Question 3: What impact does the disruption in supply chain have on sales growth of small scale business enterprises during COVID'19 in Port Harcourt?

Table 3: Impact does the disruption in supply chain have on sales growth of small scale business during COVID'19 in Port Harcourt

s/n items	N=18 0	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
1. Business is placed on voluntary administration due to business insolvency.		1.00	5.00	1.7783	.83507	Disagreed
2. Document response procedure is done timely during covi-19.		1.00	5.00	3.1783	1.23785	Agreed
3. There is free movement of goods and services during lockdown.		1.00	5.00	3.5696	.98101	Agreed
4. There is effective end-to-end visibility with all customers.		1.00	5.00	1.4087	.78072	Disagreed
Aggregate Mean				2.48		

Table 3 above shows in item 1 mean score of 1.7783 and SD .83507 which shows that the respondents disagreed that business is placed on voluntary administration due to business insolvency. In item 2 mean score of 3.1783 and SD 1.23785 shows that the respondents agreed that document response procedure is done timely during covi-19. In item 3 mean score of 3.5696 and SD .98101 proved that the respondents agreed that there is free movement of goods and services during lockdown. In item 4 mean score of 1.4087 and SD .78072 imply that the respondents disagreed that there is effective end-to-end visibility with all customers. Thus, aggregate mean score of 2.48 < 3.00 indicates that majority of the respondents disagreed that how the impact of the disruption in supply chain have on sales growth of small scale business during COVID'19 in Port Harcourt

Test of Hypotheses:

The hypotheses have been tested using the regression statistical model.

H01: There is no significant effect of price inflation on sales growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID'19

Table 4: Test of the effect of price inflation on sales growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID'19

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.585 ^a	.342	.334	1.10950		
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	144.878	3	48.293	39.231	.000 ^b
	Residual	278.205	166	1.231		
	Total	423.083	179			
Coefficients ^a						
Tested items	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error				
1. Price inflation brought about increased sales	3.607	.412		8.750	.000	
2. Market for commodities is volatile due to price inflation.	.372	.129	.159	2.885	.004	
3. There is open communication link between the business and customers.	-.445	.042	-.589	-10.636	.000	
4. There is a shift in product preference due to price inflation.						
5. Price inflation has led to my source of livelihood.	-.262	.092	-.161	-2.858	.005	

Table 4 above shows R value of .585^a, R-square value of .342, adjusted R square value of .334, estimated error estimate of 1.10950 and p-value of .002<.05 shows there is a significant effect of price inflation on sales growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID'19. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant effect of insolvency on market share growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID'19.

Table 5: Test of the significant effect of insolvency on market share growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID'19

Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			
1	.369 ^a	.136	.125	1.15813			
ANOVA ^a							
Model			Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression		47.767	3	15.922	11.871	.000 ^b
	Residual		303.125	174	1.341		
	Total		350.891	179			
Coefficients ^a							
Tested items	Unstandardized Coefficients			Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
1. Insolvency has caused me to close down my business.	1.486	.333		4.457	.000		
2. I went bankrupt due to my personal insolvency.	.441	.085	.349	5.181	.000		
3. Business is placed on voluntary administration due to business insolvency.	.164	.101	.103	1.614	.108		

Table 5 above shows R-value of .369^a, r-square value of .136, adjusted R-value of .125, estimated error of 1.15813 and p-value of .008<.05 which shows that there is a significant effect of insolvency on market share growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID'19. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

H03: There is no significant effect of the disruption in supply chain on sales growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID'19

Table 6: The test of the effect of the disruption in supply chain on sales growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID'19

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.287 ^a	.083	.070	1.19348		
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28.979	3	9.660	6.782	.000 ^b
	Residual	321.912	176	1.424		
	Total	350.891	179			
Coefficients ^a						
s/n item		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t		Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
	1. Document response procedure is done timely during covi-19.	1.354	.485	2.792		.061
	2. There is free movement of goods and services during lockdown.	.298	.070	4.238		.22
	3. There is effective end-to-end visibility with all customers.	.116	.138	.846		.010

Table 6 above R-value of .287^a, R-square value of .083, adjusted R-square value of .070, error estimated value of 1.19348 and p-value of .097 greater than .05 which shows that there is a significant effect of the disruption in supply chain on sales growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID-19. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted.

Discussion of Findings

Test of hypothesis one shows that there is a significant effect of price inflation on sales growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID'19. The respondents agreed that price inflation leads to sales growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during Covid'19. The position of the respondents is supported by <http://www.allocadia.com> (2020) stating that price inflation is demand pool when the amount of money available in circulation in an economic tense to grow larger yearly compare to the supply of goods available for purchase. It is cost push when the cost of inputs to the production process causes an upward push in price, leading to higher sales.

Taking price inflation from a different perspective, it could be refer to as a situation whereby the price of a goods remains the same over within some years but the amount or quantity of goods received keep decreasing gradually e.g. the quantity in stack of Beloxil crackers biscuit that cost #1 over some years now kept decreasing in weight while price remains constant.

By so doing, the coronavirus outbreak sparked off prices of commodities resulting into questions and volatility in market across the globe. For example, since covid-19 pandemic began, nutrition and livelihood cost has been on the rise.

In hypothesis two the test result equally showed that there is a significant effect of insolvency on market share growth of small scale business enterprises in Port Harcourt during COVID'19. The position of the respondents was buttressed by Eprime (2020) stating that the portion or portion of a

market earned by a company or an organization in other words a company's market share is its total sales of the industry in which it operates. For instance, the purchasing activity of consumers as a whole for Toyota cars is 100 in May. If a certain brand (Toyota Camry) sells 60, it implies that Camry hold 60% market share of Toyota cars. The calculation of market share takes into consideration a company's total sales of the industry in which it operates over that period. Market share according Etprime (2020) to is significant because it is a measure of consumers' preference for a product over other products or market.

In hypothesis three, the test result showed that there is no significant effect of the disruption in supply chain on sales growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID'19. Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that subscribed to the fact that disruption in supply chain does not lead to sales growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID'19. Jaeger (2019) aligned with the respondents stating that supply chain disruption can lead to decreased productivity, increased cost, rising customer dissatisfaction etc., Natural disasters, drought port disruption, cargo theft and industrial are some of the top supply chain risk that should keep executives and chief risk officers on their toes.

Covid'19 has disrupted supply chains around the world. There is no doubt that the pandemic has tested the ingenuity, resilience and flexibility of supply chain leaders globally as they have sought to maintain essential operators. Indeed, it is important for operators of small scale business to make rapid decision and take immediate actions to sustain their business in case of future pandemic

Conclusion

The study has established that price inflation leads to sales growth of small scale businesses in Port Harcourt metropolis during Covid-19. It also reached that an effect exists between insolvency and market share growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during Covid-19. The study however aligned that disruption in supply chain does not lead to sales growth of small scale business enterprises in Port Harcourt during COVID'19.

Recommendations

Based on the findings above, the following recommendations were made:

2. Since there is a significant effect of price inflation on sales growth of small scale business in Port Harcourt during COVID'19, government and industries should ensure that production is kept at a stable level, not minding the Covid'19 pandemic. Strategies should be devised for continuous production in order to forestall inflation of prices.
3. Government should provide loans with minimal interest to operators of small scale businesses in Port Harcourt during pandemics.
4. Manufacturers and government agencies should ensure logistics are not tampered with in order to avoid the disruption in supply chain and sales growth of small scale business enterprises in Port Harcourt during COVID'19.

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