

Impact of Entrepreneurial Marketing on Organisational Performance of Small Business Enterprises in Yola, North-East of Nigeria

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Abstract

The causal relationship between entrepreneurial marketing (EM) and organisational performance has produced mixed findings in the developed context. This study examined the impact of EM on the organisational performance of small business enterprises (SBEs) in Yola, a region in Northeast Nigeria grappling with the onslaughts of Boko Haram insurgency. This quantitative research adopted a descriptive survey research design as the most appropriate and relevant strategy while relying on the primary data. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire. In the absence of a sample frame in the target population, a sample size of 400 SBEs was selected purposively based on the research eligibility criteria. Out of this sample, 257 SBEs filled and returned the questionnaires. Descriptive statistics, factor analysis and regression analysis were undertaken to analyse the data collected. Based on the four hypotheses tested, the results indicated significant positive impacts of entrepreneurial orientation (EO), market orientation (MO) and innovation orientation (IO) on the organizational performance of SBEs, while customer orientation (CO) had an insignificant negative impact. The study concludes that EM practices have a significant positive impact on the overall organisational performance of SBEs in Yola, Nigeria. The study recommends that SBE managers or owners review their implemented entrepreneurship-oriented strategy measures, formulate and implement effective measures, place increased emphasis on the CO measure and engage all their employees in EO and CO to increase the effectiveness of EM practice.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Marketing, Entrepreneurship Orientation, Market Orientation, Innovation Orientation, Organisational Performance and Small Business Enterprises.

JEL classification: M21, M31, L25, L26, L32.

1. Introduction

Globally, small business enterprises (SBEs) have been recognised as key drivers of economic growth and development. They contribute more than 50% of the total employment and represent approximately 90% of the total businesses (Worldbank, 2019). In emerging economies, registered small businesses contribute up to 40% of gross domestic product (GDP), and 7 out of 10 jobs are created by SBEs (Worldbank, 2019). In Nigeria, the crucial roles of SBEs are undeniable, as they represent the hub for job opportunities and contribute a large component to GDP (Eniola and Entebang, 2015). According to the 2013 collaborative survey of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) and National Bureau of Statistics, 48% of Nigeria's GDP is from SBEs, and they contributed up to 7.27% of export earnings. According to Price Waterhouse and Coopers (2019), SBEs represent 96% of businesses and 84% of employment in Nigeria. These facts signify the need to focus on small business enterprises, as they have not only been providing social needs but also been the key drivers of entrepreneurship end enterprise development. This may be the reason governments and private institutions are focusing much attention on SBEs. According to the World Bank report (2019), the Development Bank of Nigeria (DBN) funded small businesses

with US \$243.7 million, and 70% of the beneficiaries were women in 2019. These trends explain why the interventions and policies of the federal government of Nigeria are geared towards developing more SBEs and improving the performance of the established SBEs. SBEs are considered independent and non-subsidiary organisations or firms that engage fewer employees. The number of employees for SBEs varies across nations and contexts. The European Union (EU) defines SBEs as enterprises with fewer than 250 persons and an annual sales turnover not above 50 million Euros. According to the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), SBEs are enterprises with an annual turnover not exceeding ₦500,000. All SMEs are generally categorised based on assets, employment and annual turnover.

Entrepreneurial marketing (EM) is one of the strategies used by SBEs to achieve organisational performance through the implementation and improvement of EM dimensions, namely, entrepreneurial orientation (EO), market orientation (MO), innovation orientation (IO) and customer orientation (CO) practices (Rowley and Jones, 2009; Kowalik and Danik, 2019). According to Schindehutte and Morris (2010), entrepreneurial marketing (EM) refers to the proactive identification and exploitation of opportunities by entrepreneurial marketers for the purpose of acquiring and retaining profitable customers (including prospects) through the deployment of innovative approaches to risk management, resource leveraging and value creation. Therefore, EM can be seen as a new marketing approach that emphasizes that opportunities are continually co-created by entrepreneurs through the development and communication of value propositions (Whalen and Akaka., 2015) or marketing aimed at growth and innovation (Mwangi and Bwisa, 2013). From the different perspectives above, EM is an entrepreneurial practice and acts that does not conform to traditional marketing practices; rather, it is change-focused, proactive, and does not just react to change; it also initiates change. EM deals with several issues, such as severe resource constraints, a limited geographic market presence, lack of economies of scale, a limited market image, little market share or brand loyalty, inadequate specialized management expertise, time scarcity with a given task, and a mixture of personal and business goals, which traditional marketing does not take into consideration (Whalen and Akaka, 2015). As important as the above EM features are, they are the major challenges for SBEs in developing contexts because marketing is performed differently by firms.

It has been found that EM research involves large firms receiving less attention than SBEs because it is believed that established large enterprises face stronger and more important internal issues than marketing-related issues (Bettiol et al., 2011). Comparatively, the concept of EM is linked with marketing activities that challenge established market conventions (Babor and Robaina, 2013). However, traditional marketing is more customer-centered than opportunity-driven, such as entrepreneurial marketing (Crick, 2018). In EM, marketing is integrated with innovativeness, and this is the hallmark of entrepreneurship. Therefore, the mechanisms for EM value creation are regarded as innovative and deviate from traditional marketing practices. Additionally, EM takes risk-taking, customer interfaces and resource leveraging into consideration (Morrish et al., 2010).

According to Kraus et al. (2012), researchers have established a strong foundation for EM from its conceptualization stage to birth, and the debate is still ongoing even though scholars have yet to come up with a common consensus on EM. Additionally, marketers need deeper knowledge and skills on how to redefine their marketing strategy, leveraging EM as an alternative technique for improving the effectiveness of traditional marketing (Ahmadi and O'Cass, 2015). EM is also very useful for SBEs because they face more intense entrepreneurial challenges. Specifically, SBEs operate in a very dynamic environment consisting of a decreased ability to forecast, increased risk, and small business enterprise boundaries (Schmengler and Kraus, 2010). Traditional marketing is therefore inappropriate for

entrepreneurial firms, especially small business enterprise competitiveness amidst rivalry. EM can be seen as a new paradigm that assimilates critical aspects of entrepreneurship and marketing into a comprehensive concept, thereby allowing SBEs to carry out marketing entrepreneurially. It has been argued that firms with EM practices are advantaged competitively. Therefore, it is critical for small business enterprises to understand which EM practices are most effective for improved performance.

SBEs today in Nigeria are gaining much attention in business ecosystems because of their vital contribution to the national economy. The managers and employees within SBEs use innovative and creative marketing as strategies to compete in the product and service markets. Thus, it is expedient for business managers to adopt a marketing strategy that ensures the development and application of entrepreneurial innovativeness, proactiveness, and entrepreneurial opportunity recognition. Based on the above, this research examines the impact of entrepreneurial marketing on the performance of SBEs in Yola, northeastern Nigeria.

Despite the fact that EM research is still at its birth stage, more than 95% of the relevant studies reviewed have been conducted in developed countries. However, in developing countries such as Nigeria, research on EM at both the national and organisational levels is still very limited but is emerging. The findings from this research will be of immense benefits to governments, interested private sectors, especially SBE managers and owners, to understand and improve the EM of SBEs. The key research problem, stated in a broad question, is: What is the impact of entrepreneurial marketing on organisational performance of SBEs in Nigeria? In this study, the dimensions of EM and their impact on organisational performance were examined.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. EM and small business enterprises performance

EM is important for the survival of SBEs in the competitive global business environment. A number of studies have confirmed that EM is being adopted by SBEs to create value for customers. The significant positive impact of EM on SBEs was affirmed in Bangladesh (Hoque and Awang, 2019). In a study in Saudi Arabia, the EM dimensions were found to have a positive effect on organisational performance (Rashad, 2018). Luo (2014) stated that the shift by SBEs from traditional marketing strategy to EM is because the latter impacts performance. Considering that marketing is a strategic issue of importance to the success and growth of SBEs, EM was introduced as a modified marketing theory to help SBEs overcome issues related to opportunities, resources, innovation, and risk (Hoque and Awang, 2019). From the foregoing, there is a consensus among scholars that EM is a potent strategy for SBEs to gain competitive advantage and improve performance. Therefore, it could be hypothesised that there is a significant positive impact of EM on SBE performance in Yola, Nigeria.

2.2. Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and organisational performance

A number of scholarly articles have focused on the impact of EO components on organisational performance. For instance, Osei-Bonsu (2020) found that innovations, proactiveness and risk-taking help firms to attract and retain loyal customers and lead the market. Due to the positive influence of EO on the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization, different organizations encourage entrepreneurial attitudes among their employees to exploit opportunities in the operating environment (Brettel et al, 2014). Furthermore, Azharet et al. (2010) stated that proactiveness, innovativeness, and readiness to take risks are vital factors for an organization to gain a competitive advantage. The need for

EO strategy is becoming more serious, as it can be seen as one of the main aptitudes for business enterprises to cope with numerous challenges in the dynamic, uncertain and turbulent business environment (Verma and Sarkar, 2018). Despite the fact that most studies have confirmed that EO has a positive impact on the organization outcome and growth, very few studies have reported contrary findings (Kim and Khoe, 2009). Based on the previous findings and arguments, it could be hypothesised that *H0: There is no significant impact of entrepreneurial orientation on organisational performance of small business enterprises in Yola, Nigeria.*

2.3. Innovation orientation (IO) and organisational performance

Different studies on the relationship between organisational performance and performance have been carried out in both developing and developed countries, but few have been found in developing countries. The higher the IO of an organization is, the higher the growth, customer satisfaction, and profitability/return on investment (Dobni, 2010). Similarly, Azar and Ciabuschi (2017) also found a significant positive impact of technological innovation, market and distribution innovation on product innovation, sales performance and profit level. Talke et al. (2011) reported that new products with higher technologies and market newness have the highest performance. In Chinese manufacturing firms, it was found that innovation orientation has a positive moderating impact on new product performance (Zhang and Duan, 2010). Based on the outcomes of the empirical studies above, it could be hypothesised that *H0: There is no significant impact of innovation orientation on organisational performance of small business enterprises in Yola, Nigeria.*

2.4. Market orientation (MO) and organisational performance

Different studies have emphasised how crucial MO is to organisational performance. The findings are mixed and inconclusive, but most researchers agree that MO has a significant positive impact on performance. Some studies found that MO had no significant positive impact on return on investment, market share or return on equity (Wurjaningrum and Hartami, 2020). However, some recent studies found a significant positive impact of different measures of MO on organisational performance. Osuagwu (2015) stated that in other African developing countries other than Nigeria, MO is one of the strategies implemented by SBEs for leveraging and achieving efficiency and effectiveness. He added that MO is used in developed countries to access relevant global markets, reduce product development periods and beneficial interactions with relevant stakeholders, especially clients/customers, and to improve their productivity. In Indonesia, Azizi and Sudhartio (2020) found that competitor orientation, customer orientation and inter-functional coordination have a significant impact on ventures' performance. Based on the insightful findings from previous studies, it could be hypothesised that *H0: There is no significant impact of market orientation on organisational performance of small business enterprises in Yola, Nigeria.*

2.5. Customer orientation (CO) and organisational performance

MO and CO seem to be one concept, but many researchers, such as Rowley and Jones (2009) and Yadav and Bansal (2020), argued that there is a clear entrepreneurial distinction between the two concepts. CO is an important factor that is taken seriously by marketers. Several decades back, Christensen and Bower (1996) reported that customer power has significantly contributed to the failure of leading firms during a period of industry discontinuity

(innovation). In other words, CO inhibits innovation because research and development (R&D) departments listen too closely and carefully to their customers (customer-led marketing philosophy), thereby leading firms to maintain the status quo and not benefit from emergent technologies and new materials (Matsuo, 2006). Despite the limitations and cautions, CO has been acknowledged to influence organisational performance and long-term profitability (Mateias and Brettel, 2016). Conceptually, CO is defined as the process of identifying customers' needs, acting accordingly and making sure it is visible. Organisations adopt a customer-oriented approach to merely gain customers' trust and loyalty, which leads to organisational comfort and growth (Mukerjee, 2013). Organisational capabilities that are associated with the application of a CO are customer response, customer relating and market sensing. Many empirical studies have examined the relationship between CO and organisational performance. Wang et al. (2019) found that effective organisational leadership instils CO, which enhances organisational performance. For organizations to achieve strong customer relationship management (CRM), entrepreneurial managers should enhance CO. Moreover, Mateias and Brettel (2016) found a positive impact of CO on firm performance. In Nigeria, Asikhia (2010) found a significant positive impact of CO on organisational performance in the SBEs. Based on these empirical findings, it could be hypothesised that *H0: There is no significant impact of customer innovation on the organisational performance of small business enterprises in Yola, Nigeria.*

3. Research methods

For the purpose of this study, the selected SBEs are full-time operating and registered businesses under the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) with less than 50 paid employees and not exceeding 2 million naira of annual turnover. This definition is specific to Yola, North-East of Nigeria; it does not reflect the characteristics of typical Nigerian SBEs in terms of their capital base and number of employees. This research adopts a quantitative research method to generate objective findings from practitioners (SBEs). In the absence of a sample frame in the target population of SBEs, a sample size of 400 registered and full-time operating SBEs were considered using a random sampling technique. Thereafter, questionnaires were self-administered physically and using the Google form. A total of 257 responses were obtained from SBEs' owners, managers, marketers and any other personnel who fully understood their marketing activities. Data collected in a quantitative manner using Likert scale measurement through structured questionnaires were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The reliability coefficients of the study measures of EM practices and OP measures were 0.817 and 0.803, respectively. Similarly, Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity coefficients showed alpha coefficients of 0.817 for EM practices and 0.803 for EM performance, which indicated good internal consistency. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was finally used to explicate the relationships.

4. Findings and discussion

4.1. Factor analysis

The research identified twelve EM factors from fifteen components. These include (EO: pro-activeness, risk-taking, autonomy, and competitive aggressiveness; IO: product innovation, technology innovation, processes innovation channels/networks distribution innovation; MO: competitor orientation, inter-functional coordination, market intelligence generation and networks and relationship; and CO: customer responsiveness, customer intensity and customer value creation). The performance of EM practices of the selected SBEs

were grouped into non-financial performance (NFP) with 7 components (market share, marketing effectiveness, employee commitment, competitive image/reputation, job satisfaction, competitive position, and customer satisfaction) and financial performance (FP) with 5 components (profitability, customer growth, turnover, return on assets and efficiency). Relevant questions were framed around the 12 EM factors and 12 performance metrics.

4.2. Regression analysis

4.2.1. EM practices, Financial and Non-Financial Performance

The R-values for entrepreneurial marketing and financial performance on one hand and non-financial performance on the other were 0.32 and 0.409, respectively, which is a good indication that the level of prediction depends on the statistical significance results. The ANOVA result also showed a good fit for the data. $F(1, 254) = 29.015$ and $p\text{-value}(0.00) < 0.05$ for EM and financial performance (FP); $F(1, 254) = 51.113$ and $p\text{-value}(0.00) < 0.05$ for EM and Non-Financial Performance (NFP) indicate that EM practices statistically and significantly predict SBEs' FP and NFP measures. The unstandardized coefficient B shows that FP and NFP increase by 0.245 and 0.649, respectively, when SBEs improve EM by one. Therefore, the regression equation is $FP = 0.245 EM$ and $NFP = 0.649EM$. It can, therefore, be concluded that there is a significant positive impact of EM practices on the financial and non-financial organisational performance of SBEs in Yola, and this finding is supported by previous studies, such as the study of Hoque and Awang (2019).

4.2.2. Customer Orientation, Entrepreneurial Orientation, Market Orientation, Innovation Orientation and Financial Performance

The ANOVA test for CO, EO, MO and IO and financial performance showed a good fit for the data (where $F(4, 250) = 14.49$ and $p\text{-value}(0.00) < 0.05$), which indicates that EM practices statistically predict SBEs' financial performance measures significantly. The unstandardized coefficient, B, for CO, EO, MO and IO was equal to -0.060, 0.020, 0.90 and 0.152, respectively (Table 1). This means that for each effort made by SBE to improve its EO, MO and IO, there is an increase in financial performance of 0.020, 0.90 and 0.152, while FP decreases by 0.060 (although it is not significant $\text{sig}(0.126) > 0.05$ due to CO). Respondents who are mostly managers indicated strong customer orientation in their organizations. This negative impact of CO may be due to ineffective implementation of CO by employees resulting in poor customer responsiveness and customer intensity. SBEs' management is, therefore, advised to formulate customer-oriented strategies and review the implementation of customer-oriented activities to ensure their effectiveness. Based on this factor analysis of CO, EO, MO and IO and FP, the following is the regression equation:

$$V = 12.778 - 0.060x + 0.02y + 0.90z + 0.152w$$

where V = financial performance, X = CO, Y = EO, Z = MO and W = IO.

Table.1 Coefficients for Financial performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	12.778	1.469		8.697	.000	9.884	15.671
CO	-.060	.039	-.123	-1.536	.126	-.138	.017
EO	.020	.013	.117	1.518	.130	-.006	.047
MO	.090	.033	.186	2.741	.007	.025	.154
IO	.152	.042	.254	3.637	.000	.070	.235

4.2.3. Customer Orientation, Entrepreneurial Orientation, Market Orientation, Innovation Orientation and Nonfinancial Performance

ANOVA shows that CO, EO, MO, and IO statistically predict nonfinancial performance measures (NFP), $F(4, 250) = 46.547$ and $p\text{-value}(0.00) < 0.05$. It can, therefore, be seen that the regression model is a good fit for data. The unstandardized coefficients show how NFP varies with EM practices. The unstandardized coefficients, B, (Table 2) for CO, EO, MO, and IO were equal to -0.216, -0.047, 0.236, and 0.446, respectively. This means that, for each effort made by SBE to improve its MO and IO, there is an increase in NFP of 0.236 and 0.446, respectively, while NFP decreases by -0.216 and -0.047 as a result of CO and EO, respectively. Respondents who are mostly managers indicated strong commitment towards CO and EO in their organizations. This simply shows that SBEs in Yola have serious challenges in implementing CO and EO. SBEs' management is, therefore, advised not only to formulate customer-oriented strategies but also to follow up with their implementation by employees. Based on this factor analysis of CO, EO, MO, and IO and financial performance, the following is the regression equation:

$$V = 12.778 - 0.060x + 0.02y + 0.90z + 0.152w$$

Where, V = NFP, X = CO, Y = EO, Z = MO and W = IO.

Table 2. Coefficients for non-financial performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error				Beta	Lower Bound
(Constant)	30.557	2.561		11.930	.000	25.512	35.601
CO	-.216	.069	-.211	-3.152	.002	-.351	-.081
EO	-.047	.023	-.130	-2.002	.046	-.093	-.001
MO	.236	.057	.236	4.149	.000	.124	.348
IO	.446	.073	.359	6.112	.000	.303	.590

4.3. Test of Hypotheses

Table 3. Hypotheses testing

Research Hypotheses		P- Value	Conclusions
H₀ : There is no significant impact of Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) on organisational performance of small business enterprises (SBEs) in Yola, Nigeria.	H_{0(a)} : There is no significant impact of EO on the financial performance of SBEs	0.130 >5%)	H _{0(a)} was supported.
	H_{0(b)} : There is no significant impact of EO on non-financial performance of SBEs	0.046 <5%)	H _{0(b)} was not supported.
H₀ : There is no significant impact of Innovation Orientation (IO) on organisational performance of SBEs in Yola, Nigeria	H_{0(a)} : There is no significant impact of IO on the financial performance of SBEs	0.000 <5%	H _{0(a)} was not supported
	H_{0(b)} : There is no significant impact of IO on non-financial performance of SBEs.	0.000 < 5%	H _{0(b)} was not supported.
H₀ : There is no significant impact of Market Orientation (MO) on organisational performance of SBEs in Yola, Nigeria.	H_{0(a)} : There is no significant impact of MO on the financial performance of SBEs	0.007 < 5%	H _{0(a)} was not supported.
	H_{0(b)} : There is no significant impact of MO on non-financial performance of SBEs	0.000 < 5%	H _{0(b)} was not supported.
H₀ : There is no significant impact of Customer Orientation (CO) on organisational performance of SBEs in Yola, Nigeria.	H_{0(a)} : There is no significant impact of CO on the financial performance of SBEs.	0.126 >5%	H _{0(a)} was supported.
	H_{0(b)} : There is no significant impact of CO on non-financial performance of SBEs.	0.002 < 5%	H _{0(b)} was not supported.

4.4. Discussions

Generally, it was found that there is a significant positive impact of entrepreneurial marketing (EM) on overall organisational performance and that it also has a significant positive impact on both the financial and non-financial performance of selected SBEs. It can, therefore, be stated that SBEs, in their EM practices based on EO, MO, IO, and CO, have twelve dominant components among fifteen components in achieving efficiency and effectiveness. Specifically, MO and IO had a significant positive impact on both the financial and nonfinancial performance of the selected SBEs. This implies that SBEs in Yola are more market- and innovation-oriented than entrepreneurial- and customer-oriented SBEs. EO had no significant positive impact on financial performance and a significant negative impact on nonfinancial performance. The descriptive analysis indicates that proactiveness, risk-taking and competitive aggressiveness in their marketing activities are at average extent, which results in poor financial performance measures (such as profitability, growth, turnover, return on assets) and non-financial performance measures (such as market share, marketing effectiveness, employee commitment, competitive image/reputation, job satisfaction, competitive position, and customer satisfaction). CO has a significant impact on the organisational performance of the selected SBE. It has no significant negative impact on financial performance, while it has a significant negative impact on non-financial performance. This result on CO is shown in the descriptive analysis, which indicates that the objectives of SBEs in Yola are driven primarily by customer satisfaction to an above average extent, but their strategy for competitive advantage based on the understanding of customers' needs and their proactiveness in measuring satisfaction are below the average extent. Eibe Sørensen. (2009) found a negative impact of CO on enterprise performance as a result of high cost for CO implementation, while the descriptive findings of SBEs in Yola shows the negative impact is the result of poor implementation or negligence of customer responsiveness, customer intensity, and customer value creation in their marketing activities, which are on average below the average extent. Generally, the findings of this study have support from different findings, as reviewed. Filser et al. (2014) and Rank et al. (2013) found a positive influence of EO on the effectiveness and efficiency of organizations because managers imbibed entrepreneurial attitudes in their employees, which helped to explore and exploit opportunities around them. Zhang and Duan (2010) found a significant positive impact of IO on the organisational performance of SBEs. The result of this study is also in line with Osuagwu's (2015) argument that market orientation is one of the strategies used by small business enterprises to achieve effectiveness and efficiency.

The structural equation modeling results show that efforts made by SBEs in Yola to improve its EO, MO, and IO dimensions increase financial performance by 0.020, 0.90 and 0.152, respectively, and decrease financial performance by 0.060 due to weak CO. Moreover, the efforts made by SBEs to improve their MO and IO dimensions, increase non-financial performance by 0.236 and 0.446, respectively, and decrease non-financial performance by -0.216 and -0.047 due to poor formulation and implementation of the CO dimension of the marketing strategy.

5. Conclusions, Implications and Limitations

The study that sets out to investigate the impact of EM on the organisational performance of SBEs in Yola, a region in Northeast Nigeria, found that EM practices have a significant positive impact on the overall organisational performance. Of the eight formulated null hypotheses, two were accepted, while six were rejected. Specifically, it was found that EO, IO and MO have a significant positive impact on non-financial performance of SBEs. Similarly, IO and MO have a significant positive impact on the financial performance of SBEs. However,

EO and CO do not have a significant positive impact on the financial performance of SBEs. The reasons for the negative impact of EO and CO on financial performance may be context specific.

The divergence between EO and financial performance presumes that the SBEs in Yola are less entrepreneurial-oriented in their marketing activities. The implication of this is that the EO strategy of SBEs is poorly formulated. The managers of SBEs need to focus on EO measures, namely, proactiveness, risk-taking, competitive aggressiveness in their marketing activities for the purpose of boosting their financial performance parameters (such as profitability, growth, turnover, return on assets, and efficiency). At present, the EO strategy non-financial performance is good and sound. The divergence between CO and financial performance presumes that the SBEs in Yola are less customer-oriented in their marketing activities. The implication of this is that the CO strategy of SBEs is poorly formulated in relation to financial performance. The managers of SBEs need to focus on CO measures, namely, customer responsiveness, customer intensity and customer value creation. Despite the insightful practical and managerial implications, this study has three research limitations. First, the study focused solely on SBEs in Yola, Adamawa; hence, the scope of the data is limited because it leaves out micro and large businesses; hence, the findings cannot be generalised as representative of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), as the term MSMEs has its own unique definition and measurement. Second, the finding on the impact of EM on the organisational performance of SBEs in Yola, Northeast Nigeria, cannot be generalised as representing the trends in Nigeria. Finally, the use of purposive sampling constitutes another limitation because it is often viewed as non-random and subjective. This study is appropriate and preferred because of the lack of a sampling frame for SBEs in Yola, and the study required practitioner opinions from the managers of SBEs who are knowledgeable and experienced about the phenomenon of the EM-organizational performance nexus being investigated. Despite the three limitations explicated, the study is unique and distinct, as it opens space for further studies on the impact of EM on organisational performance.

6. Recommendations

In view of the foregoing findings, the following recommendations are critical for improving the entrepreneurial marketing practices of SBEs in Yola, North-East of Nigeria.

- i. The managers of SBEs should review their EO strategy measures (proactiveness, risk-taking, competitive aggressiveness) in relation to financial performance measures to keep their businesses afloat and competitive.
- ii. Managers are advised to place more emphasis on CO measures (especially customer responsiveness, customer intensity and customer value creation in its marketing activities) in relation to both financial and non-financial performance for business continuity.
- iii. It expedient managers of SBEs to train all employees on EM, including empowering them on how to leverage EO and CO to boost financial and non-financial performance.

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