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Original Article

A Pilot Study on Entrepreneurial Marketing, Marketing Capability, and Performance of Family Businesses in Nigeria: The Role of Competitive Intensity

Silas Gontur*, Danladi Dyikuk, Zephaniah Mangkut, Luka Yilgwan Wetben

Department of Business Education, Federal College of Education, Pankshin, Plateau State, Nigeria

Corresponding Author's E-Mail: sgontur@gmail.com

Abstract

Introduction: This pilot study investigates the impact of entrepreneurial marketing (EM) and marketing capability (MC) on the performance of family enterprises. With the increasing prominence of family businesses in the global economy, it is crucial to understand how these marketing dimensions influence their performance. Furthermore, the study examines the moderating effect of competitive intensity (CI) on the relationship between EM, MC, and firm performance. **Methods:** A quantitative approach was employed using structured questionnaires distributed via the drop-off/pick-up (DOPU) method. Data were collected from a sample of 73 respondents representing family-owned firms in North Central Nigeria. **Results:** Findings reveal a significant relationship between entrepreneurial marketing, marketing capability, and the performance of family enterprises. Moreover, competitive intensity was found to moderate this relationship, indicating that the effect of EM and MC on firm performance is influenced by the level of market competition. **Conclusion:** The study concludes that family firms can significantly enhance their performance by leveraging entrepreneurial marketing and marketing capabilities, especially in highly competitive environments. It recommends that family businesses develop robust marketing strategies and adaptive capabilities to thrive under competitive pressures. Future research should further examine variables affecting the performance of family enterprises in emerging economies, with particular attention to the expanding landscape of such firms in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Competitive Intensity; Entrepreneurial Marketing; Family Businesses; Firm Performance; Marketing Capability*

Introduction

Family-owned businesses (FOBs) are fundamental contributors to the global economy, known for their resilience, long-term orientation, and dedication to family values. Over recent decades, family businesses have maintained consistent growth, driven by an ability to adapt across generations and sustain community-centred economic value (Poza & Daugherty, 2006). According to De Massis *et al*. (2018), family firms' make up approximately 70% of all businesses worldwide, contribute over 70% of the global GDP, and employ more than 50% of the global workforce. This influence is particularly pronounced in developing nations like Nigeria, where family enterprises account for around 85% of all businesses in Nigeria, generating jobs, income, and stability for local economies (Olusegun, 2022).

The representation of family businesses in Nigeria parallels that of other global regions. It has been acknowledged as a vital component of the nation's economic advancement, poverty alleviation, and job

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creation. Within Nigeria, a considerable fraction of family businesses is classified as small and medium-sized enterprises, actively engaging in manufacturing, retail, and service industries (Dekom, Jingak & Gontur, 2024). A survey executed by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in Nigeria disclosed the presence of 17.28 million FOBs, with 17.26 million identified (Ayobami, Olanireti & Babarinde, 2018). Consequently, the emergence of family businesses in Nigeria is noteworthy, establishing itself as one of the most rapidly evolving segments within the nation’s economy. These family enterprises are omnipresent across various sectors in Nigeria, making substantial contributions to economic advancement and employment generation (Dekom, Jingak & Gontur, 2024).

Despite the contributions of these firms, they are faced with myriad challenges that can hinder their performance, including limited access to resources, technological advancement, and market knowledge (Day, 2011). One of the critical factors influencing the performance of family firms (FP) is the integration of EM and MC. EM characterised by innovation, proactiveness, and risk-taking, empowers firms to identify and capitalise on market opportunities (Hills & Hultman, 2011). Conversely, marketing capability encompasses the skills and resources that enable firms to effectively deliver value to customers and sustainable competitive advantage (Day, 1994). Despite the importance of these variables, there is limited empirical research examining the combined outcome of EM and MC on the performance of family firms in Nigeria. Moreover, Nigerian family firms often operate in a challenging market environment characterised by economic volatility, regulatory issues, and infrastructural deficits, which can complicate their marketing efforts (Jaiyeola, 2021). Understanding how entrepreneurial marketing and marketing capabilities can influence performance in their context is crucial for developing targeted strategies that can enhance the sustainability and performance of family businesses.

In recent years, empirical studies have increasingly examined the consequence of EM and MC on the performance of family firms. EM, which combines entrepreneurial orientation with marketing practices emphasises customer engagement, market innovation, and opportunity-driven strategies, which are crucial for maintaining competitiveness (Egger *et al*., 2020; Gontur *et al*., 2022). Research indicates that EM contributes positively to different business outcomes (Gontur, Goyit & Vem 2023; Mahdi *et al*. 2024; Sulaiman *et al*., 2024). Studies having no significant relationship and mixed results include Crick, Karami and Crick (2021) and Adel, Mahrous & Hammad (2020). Marketing capability is the ability to design and deliver a value proposition that resonates with customers and has also shown a strong association with the performance of small firms owned by family members (Li, Ming & Song, 2024; Tariq *et al*., 2022; Davcik *et al*., 2021). Mu and Zhang (2021) argued that MC and firm reputation are critical to organizational performance, and growth and enhance customers’ satisfaction and behaviours. Other studies on this discourse revealed that marketing capability has no relationship with FP (Gök & Peker, 2017). Resolve past diverse results offer the call to unload the nuance of EM and MC in terms of their limit the condition, concerning situations where these actions do or do not lead to performance. Thus, the purpose of this study is to explore the difficulties of pilot surveys among EM and MC, plus the performance of family-owned businesses (FOBs), by evaluating the moderating effect of CI.

This study seeks to address a gap in understanding how EM and MC interact to influence Nigerian FOB's performance under highly competitive intensity. Although extensive research has examined these relationships in developed economies, limited evidence exists on how such findings apply within the context of Nigeria. This study, therefore, contributes to the literature on FOBs by investigating these dynamics in the Nigerian context. By exploring the moderating role of competitive intensity, this study aims to provide practical insights for FOBs in Nigeria by helping them optimise their strategies to overcome market barriers and achieve sustainable growth.

Theoretical Foundation

The current study's theoretical framework, which is based on the resource-based view (RBV), is strong enough to support the research model and explain how EM influences firm performance. In the field of entrepreneurship and marketing, RBV is commonly utilised as a framework for explaining and projecting competitive advantages and performance outcomes, particularly how internal business resources and capabilities increase organizational competitiveness, thereby enhancing performance outcomes

(Gontur *et al*., 2022). According to Barney (1991), the main proponent of RBV, firms usually perform better because they have access to valuable internal capital and talents that are hard for rivals to emulate and replace. Both theoretical and empirical evidence suggests that effectively integrating EM into firm processes results in sustained superior performance that has a consequence on business success (Gontur, Goyit & Vem, 2023; Sadiku-Dushi, Dana & Ramadani, 2019). Therefore, if used effectively and successfully by small business owners, EM and MC are the firm's abilities that add to the formation of distinctive assets and positional advantage, which affect performance outcomes. Therefore, the study considers EM and MC as internal resources or capabilities that help firms with these intangible assets gain the competitive edge and strategic advantage they want (Zhang, Wang & Song, 2019).

The supporting theory to this study is the dynamic capability view; this is the ability of an organisation to adapt, innovate, and learn more over time, which plays a crucial role in achieving and sustaining competitive advantage (Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997). This theory postulates that markets and industries are dynamic and constantly evolving, necessitating a firm's capacity to effectively manage change and seize new opportunities. In the context of marketing capability and entrepreneurial marketing, dynamic capability theory becomes relevant as it emphasises the importance of flexibility and agility in responding to rapidly changing market conditions (Hills & Hultman, 2011). Entrepreneurial marketing involves being innovative and proactive, aligning well with the dynamic capability perspective. Marketing capability, on the other hand, refers to a firm's proficiency in understanding customer needs, designing effective marketing strategies, and implementing them successfully (Morgan, Vorhies & Schlegelmilch, 2006). Dynamic capability theory underscores that marketing capabilities should not be static but should be adaptable to changing market dynamics, enabling firms to stay competitive.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review and Hypotheses Development

The conceptual review section of the research is prearranged in the following outline. The first section describes the concepts of EM, MC, and FOBs. The second part is made of the hypotheses development.

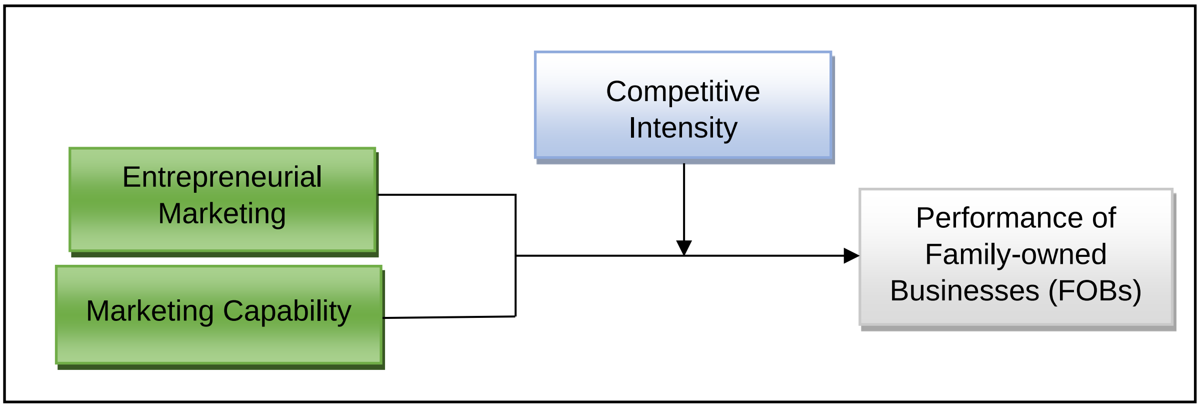

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Firm Performance

Performance has been extensively examined over the years as one of the crucial dependent variables in various academic research and is fundamental to organisational sustainability and development (Chahal, Dangwal & Raina, 2016). This situates performance as a critical topic within the domain of business studies (Akyüz, Isaac & Abdullahi, 2020). The concept of performance is characterised by an inherent openness and a general ambiguity of interpretation, as it tends to be a nebulous term when utilised as a placeholder in scholarly research (Elena-Iuliana & Maria, 2016; Gontur, Goyit & Vem, 2023). Performance is articulated as the outcomes of labour, establishing a robust correlation with the premeditated objectives of an organisation meeting the needs of customers and advanced economic growth (Ittner & Larcker, 1998). Performance can be delineated into two categories: financial and non-financial performance. Financial performance is central to the success of an organisation and relies on financial indicators such as return on assets (ROA), return on sales (ROS), and return on equity (ROE). In contrast, non-financial performance encompasses market-related variables such as marketplace share, customer satisfaction, sales growth, employee satisfaction, plus product innovation (Gontur, Goyit & Vem, 2023).

Measuring the performance of a firm within a dynamic and competitive business landscape poses significant challenges. Al Maskari (2019) describes performance as a metric that is exclusively grounded in financial criteria and is deemed inadequate for evaluating the performance of organisations, particularly in the context of balanced scorecard applications, which are noteworthy in cost accounting. Celtekligil (2020) identified that performance metrics predominantly focused on financial criteria fall short in capturing the essential factors pertinent to organisations. Consequently, firms are compelled to incorporate non-financial indicators into their performance evaluation frameworks. Traditional performance appraisal methodologies exhibit a one-dimensional approach, with financial indicators being the predominant metrics employed. The contributions of financial metrics are inadequate in the context of dynamic environmental conditions. Asikhia and Binuyo (2012) assert that a predetermined standard form of conventional measurement systems is applied uniformly across all departments. To rectify the deficiencies associated with financial performance measurement, alternative frameworks have been developed (Wade & Reardo, 2009). The study of performance measurement has been undertaken by a multitude of scholars across diverse academic disciplines, each presenting their perspectives and methodologies (Mio, Costantini & Panfilo, 2022). Nevertheless, all these efforts aim to address two pivotal enquiries: what factors influence firm performance and how performance can be effectively measured. For the purposes of this study, the researchers have embraced the conceptualisation of firm performance as delineated by Asikhia and Binuyo (2012), which encompasses both financial performance and non-financial performance.

Entrepreneurial Marketing (EM) and Firm Performance

Since its inception in 1982, EM has drawn a lot of interest from academics who are interested in differentiating it from conventional marketing. Several studies suggest that the idea is the marketing strategy used by an enterprise to pursue opportunities in the face of uncertain market conditions and resource limitations (Hacioglu *et al*., 2012). According to this perspective, EM is a substitute marketing approach that was developed in response to the difficult circumstances that small businesses deal with, making it especially suitable for use in small business settings (Gontur *et al*., 2022). According to Alqahtani and Uslay (2018), effectuation facilitates how these main beliefs are implemented even though S-D logic shows numerous key principles of EM".

Hills and Hultman (2011) describe EM “as a spirit, an orientation as well as a process of passionately pursuing opportunities and launching and growing ventures that create perceived customer value through relationships by employing innovativeness, creativity, selling, market immersion, networking, and flexibility” (p. 3). EM is therefore considered a managerial ability relevant to and assessable across all sizes and kinds of enterprises (Acosta *et al*., 2018). A groundbreaking work by Morris, Schindehutte and LaForge (2002) continues to serve as the concept's solid foundation. According to this research, seven (7) components make up entrepreneurial marketing: customer intensity, risk management, resource leveraging, innovativeness, opportunity focus, and proactiveness. Its reach has been expanded and given new dimensions by more recent definitions. The conceptual note by Alqahtani and Uslay (2018) suggests that networking is a significant aspect of EM while extending customer intensity into inclusive attention and value creation to value co-creation. The final two improvements highlight how EM works with stakeholders to foster innovation and form alliances.

Startups are marketing not just to consumers but also to possible investors, according to a previous study on the topic of business models and their ability to draw in business angels (Paoloni & Modaffari, 2022). The overlaps and interactions between current marketing and entrepreneurship concepts are mostly represented by the dimensions of EM. The latter two dimensions, co-creations and customer focus, are drawn from marketing (Hacioglu *et al*., 2012), while the primary five elements, as outlined by

Morris, Schindehutte and LaForge (2002), emanate from an entrepreneurial point of view. When creating a level to assess EM, Eggers *et al*. (2020) suggest that these aspects could instead be divided into four higher-height variables: market driving, which incorporates value creation; customer focus; networking; and EO, which covers innovativeness, proactivity, risk-taking, and value creation. The inner scale framework identified three dimensions of driving change: bootstrapping and risk-taking (Gontur *et al*., 2022; Eggers *et al*., 2020).

Preceding researchers have acknowledged the result of EM on SME performance (Kakeesh, Al-Weshah & Alalwan, 2024; Eggers *et al*., 2020; Sadiku-Dushi, Dana & Ramadani, 2019). For instance, Khaskheli *et al*. (2020) surveyed the mediation role of social media marketing between EM and SMEs' performance in Pakistan and found that four dimensions of EM, such as proactiveness, value creation, innovativeness, and customer focus, play a significant position in improving SMEs performance in Pakistan. In addition, Hanaysha and Al-Shaikh (2022) highlighted that EM dimensions of customer intensity, value creation, innovativeness, resource leverage, and proactiveness are positively correlated with firm performance. It demonstrates that these dimensions of SMEs should be able to make them serve their customer wants and attain superior performance. Similarly, Gontur, Goyit and Vem (2023) pointed out that EM dimensions such as change drive and bootstrapping are absolutely linked to SMEs performance.

Marketing Capability and Firm Performance

One definition of marketing capability is an integrative procedure that applies the organisation's resources to its market-related needs, allowing the firm to fulfil spirited strains and provide value (Day, 2011). Although it has garnered a lot of managerial and academic attention, MC development remains a "black box" in the literature on marketing and entrepreneurship (Carson, O'Connor & Simmons, 2020; Gliga & Evers, 2023). Based on the combination of organizational, human, and physical resources, marketing capability is defined as the firm's capacity to develop and implement a sequence of actions to achieve the desired outcome.

According to Day (1994), one method of improving marketing capabilities is to comprehend consumer behavior based on market research and their interaction. According to Gliga & Evers (2023) and Martin, Javalgi and Ciravegna (2020), FOBs with unique marketing capabilities demonstrate improved business success and return on investment.

Marketing specialists have advocated for better understanding to correctly identify how small businesses advance their market skills; little study has been conducted on how firm abilities grow in the milieu of family businesses (Kevill *et al*., 2021). Despite their scarce resources, FOBs need marketing resources to enhance their marketing competencies and outsmart competitors, which gives them a competitive edge (Carson, O'Connor & Simmons, 2020). Resource-constrained small family businesses must take a more efficient, impromptu, and personalised approach to their marketing initiatives (Sadiku-Dushi, Dana & Ramadani, 2019). The marketing role of FOBs is still mostly dependent on the original owner-entrepreneur. Businesses use marketing capabilities (MCs) as a means to accomplish marketing objectives and offer financial rental fees to establish and maintain a competitive edge (Gliga & Evers, 2023).

MC and FP link have received extraordinary consideration from preceding studies (Morgan, Vorhies & Mason, 2009; Homburg & Wielogos, 2022). Most of this work supports a significant link between market capability and firms' outcomes such as performance (Asikhia, Makinde & Onamusi, 2020; Oduro & Mensah-Williams, 2023). This is based on the fundamental idea that marketing aptitude entails intricate and well-coordinated skill and knowledge patterns (Day, 2011). This suggests that the components of marketing competence rely more on the experiences and mutual understanding of employees (also known as tacit knowledge; Alnawas & Abu Farha, 2020) than on precisely defined and expressed procedures (also known as codified knowledge). This would therefore make it more difficult for rivals to copy the company's marketing strategies, giving SMEs a competitive edge that improves their performance (Morgan, Vorhies & Mason, 2009). MC has been explored in the context of startups and newly established ventures as a basis of lasting superior performance (Martin, Javalgi & Cavusgil, 2017). The aptitude of a firm to generate value and satisfy market-related needs with the application of its necessary resources can be characterised as having marketing skills (Day, 2011).

Moderating Role of Competitive Intensity (CI)

Zhang, Wang and Song (2019) refer to CI as the extent to which competitive actions occur within an industry. The degree of CI can be affected through the deliberate and planned behaviour of rival companies within the sector (Onditi, 2022). A sharp stage of CI arises from various promotional battles, related product offerings, and significant price competition, which reduces chances designed for expansion. Asikhia and Binuyo (2012) argued that an environment of high CI leads to attractive risk and involvement in practices that leverage knowledge and marketplace innovation to keep away from price warfare. Conversely, while rivalry is limited, businesses are able to collaborate with their existing customers and stakeholders to build on the constancy of their success. Though, business stability declines as cutthroat aggression within the industry increases (Onditi, 2022). Companies that outperform their competitors in a dynamic business landscape do so because of their aptitude to effectively execute strategic plans (Fotiadis & Williams, 2018), resulting from their innovative approaches to attracting customers and better fulfilling their needs compared to rivals.

Previous research, including works by Onditi (2022) and Khan and Hussain (2022), has established a correlation linking CI and organisational performance. Nevertheless, while many studies focus on competitive intensity, there are relatively few that explore it as a moderating variable. For example, Onditi (2024) examined the moderating role of CI on the connection between market orientation (MO) and firm performance, finding that CI does moderate the connection flanked by market orientation (MO) but not their financial performance in Kenya. Research by Asikhia and Binuyo (2012) indicated that CI moderates the connection between customer orientation and firm performance, while Martin, Javalgi and Cavusgil (2017) demonstrated that CI affects the link between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and performance of FOBs. Additionally, Khan and Hussain (2022) support the association between EM, MC, and firm performance (FP). Hence, the moderating role of CI is acknowledged. The level of competition increases the likelihood of firms engaging in EM (Whalen *et al*., 2016). Martin, Javalgi and Ciravegna (2020) suggested that the link among MC, EO and SMEs performance is influenced by CI. A brief review of the literature indicates a lack of empirical evidence linking CI with EM, MC, and FP, leading to the proposal that CI will moderate the relationships among these study variables.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The study used a quantitative approach and a cross-sectional survey technique. The use of quantitative techniques and survey design was suitable (Saunders & Lewis, 2017) because the study's primary aim was to investigate how EM and MC influence the performance of family-owned businesses in Plateau State, with competitive intensity acting as a moderating factor between the two independent variables and the performance of family-owned businesses. This method and design facilitate data collection through a questionnaire-based survey.

Data Collection

The sample is made up of owners and managers of family-owned businesses in North Central Nigeria. Additionally, the study employs a non-probability sampling approach. Consequently, convenience sampling was chosen as the methodology for this study. Moreover, the research utilised drop-offs and pick-ups (DOPU), as established by Allred and Ross-Davis (2011) and Gontur *et al*. (2024); this data collection method enables researchers to deliver survey questionnaires directly to respondents. According to Junod and Jacquet (2023), the DOPU method can improve response rates and minimise non-response bias. The cover letter outlined the study's nature and objectives, emphasising the strict confidentiality of the respondents' information. To ensure content validity and clarity, the questionnaire was pretested. The questionnaires were directly administered to study participants through drop-off and pick-up. A total of 73 samples were collected and analysed. Lastly, the gathered data was examined and processed using IBM SPSS version 26 to convert it into valuable information.

Results and Discussion

The respondents' characteristics, as shown in Table 1, show that the majority of the respondents are male; the highest age of respondents is within the age range of 40-49 years old; managers and owners of these family businesses have educational qualifications of National Diploma and Nigeria Certificate of Education, followed by respondents with HND/Degree certification; and the majority of the business owners are sole proprietors.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics

Characteristics	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Gender		
Male	41	56.16
Female	32	43.84
Total	73	100
Age		
20 – 29 years	9	12.32
30 – 39 years	14	19.18
40 – 49 years	28	38.36
50 and above	22	30.14
Total	73	100
Education		
SSCE	13	17.81
ND/NCE	25	34.25
HND/Bachelor	22	30.13
Post Graduate	13	17.81
Total	73	100
Business Type		
Sole Proprietorship	33	45.21
Partnership	24	32.88
Joint Venture	16	21.91
Total	73	100

The scores for the negatively worded questions present a challenge, yet the reliability test outcomes indicate excellent reliability for EM (0.936) and customer intensity (0.827). Marketing capability shows good reliability (0.795), and firm performance demonstrates a reliability of 0.928; overall, the scales exhibit good to excellent internal consistency reliability since all scale values exceed 0.7. The reliability and strength of the variables utilised to assess CI and economic performance of small family firms were evaluated via Cronbach's alpha and factor loading. Researchers cleave to the argument that suitable thresholds for Cronbach's alpha. In the study by Cronbach (1951) proposing a minimum value of 0.5, at the same time as Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) asserted with the mean of a coefficient of 0.7 or higher indicates reliable measures. Bagozzi and Yi (2012) suggested a coefficient value of 0.6 or above but disagreed that a lesser value of 0.5 might also be acceptable. Nevertheless, there has been no agreement among researchers regarding the appropriate lesser boundary for Cronbach's alpha value. This research applied a cutoff point of 0.7 because it exceeds the lower boundary of 0.5 suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994).

The main objective of the research was to carry out a pilot study and to establish the strength and dependability of the instrument measuring the interacting role of CI on the link among EM, MC, and the performance of family enterprises in Nigeria. This research has helped in determining face and content validity and also the consistency of the research instrument. The result of the pilot study revealed that all the variables are reliable because all are above 0.70, and based on the researcher's accepted threshold, it can be concluded that the instrument is reliable and valid.

Table 2: Reliability Test

Scale	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Entrepreneurial Marketing	12	0.935
Marketing Capability	9	0.795
Performance	5	0.928
Customer Intensity	5	0.827

Measurement Scales

EM was adapted from Eggers *et al*. (2020) with 12 items; MC is made up of 8 items adapted from Day (1994), as shown in Table 4. Performance was adapted from the work of Celtekliyil *et al*. (2021). Finally, CI was adapted from Onditi (2022) and consists of five items. Respondents were requested to provide their answers on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree for the variables of MC, CI, and FP. On the other hand, EM was measured on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 'strongly disagree' to 7 'strongly agree'. The complete statements, in addition to their mean and standard deviation, are shown in tables 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Table 3: Measurement for EM

Constructs	Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
EM1	We incessantly attempt to find out other wants of our clients of which they not aware	3.2286	1.4912
EM2	We constantly search for novel business opportunities	4.0000	1.8333
EM3	Our market activities attempt to guide clients to a certain extent rather than react to them.	3.5790	1.8015
EM4	Our rivals in this marketplace know us as the best in creativity	3.7123	1.9327
EM5	We constantly attempt to increase novel goods that must tackle our clients to reorganize their buying habits	4.1507	1.4576
EM6	We constantly monitor our level of commitment to serving customer needs.	3.9313	1. 9099
EM7	We generously converse information concerning our prosperous client knowledge across all business roles.	5.000	1.5093
EM8	We determine consumer satisfaction regularly	4.7534	1.4794
EM9	Within our business enterprise, we make use of people from acquaintances and business associates to obtain well-organised, right-of-entry information.	5.2803	1.6668
EM10	To create a successful offering, we are keen to know the smallest amount, a reasonable stage of danger of important losses.	5.2577	1.6114
EM11	We support the group in our business to take risks by means of innovative thoughts.	5.2912	1.4067
EM12	Our firm is involved in a risky venture to arouse future expansion.	4.9863	1.7755

Table 4: Marketing Capability

Construct	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
MC1	We trust our strategic partners.	3.3699	0.9552
MC2	We are superior in delivering shared commitment and products with our important associates.	3.3836	0.9946
MC3	Our business is first-class at producing, evaluating, and building rapport with clients**.**	3.3465	0.9872
MC4	We are better at gathering knowledge from our important allies.	3.3465	0.9505
MC5	Our firm has the aptitude to initiate brand new goods successfully.	3.4247	0.9416
MC6	Our firms offer quality service to its customers	3.7397	1.0412
MC7	Our business is good at using information coming from the market.	3.3288	1.0548
MC8	Our firm is good at ascertaining customers' needs and what products they will need in the future.	3.3151	1.0121

Table 5: Firm Performance

Construct	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
PE1	Sales are increasing in existing customers	3.8219	1.0716
PE2	Our company achieves it financial goals	3.3836	1.3399
PE3	The firm reaches its profitability target	3.3973	1.3918
PE4	The rate of acquiring new customer is very good	3.2877	1.3589
PE5	The growth in sales in our company is very good	3.4521	1.2806

Table 6: Competitive Intensity

Construct	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
CI1	Rivalry in this sector is very stiff.	3.3699	0.9355
CI2	There are several endorsement conflicts in this sector.	3.3836	0.9948
CI3	No matter which our rivals is able to present, they can compete with no trouble.	3.4658	0.9872
CI4	Price war is a characteristic in our business.	3.3699	0.9503
CI5	We hear of an innovative, aggressive shift approximately each day of the week.	3.4247	0.9416

Table 7 indicates that the constructs are important at level 0.01. The results reveal a moderate connection involving EM and performance of FOBs (r = 0.474, p is greater than 0.05). Gontur, Goyit and Vem (2023) opined that EM has a significant influence on the performance of small- and medium-scale enterprises. It is consistent with the empirical studies of Mahdi *et al*. (2024) and Hanaysha and Al-Shaikh (2022). Thus, hypothesis one is retained. In addition, to facilitate the link, there is a strong relationship involving marketing capability and firm performance (r = 0.658, p is greater than 0.05). Mu and Zhang (2021) found out that marketing capability and product reputation are vital to business performance and client actions. This is in agreement with the findings of Tolstoy, Nordman and Vu (2022) and Dacvix *et al*. (2021), who revealed that market orientation, marketing capability, and technological capabilities have a dominant and positive effect on firm performance, hence providing credibility to the results of H2. Thus, H2 is accepted.

Lastly, there is a weak moderating effect of CI amid EM and FP and a strong moderation of competitive intensity between MC and FP. The lowest correlation is between entrepreneurial marketing and firm performance (r = 0.368, p is greater than 0.05), whereas the highest relationship is between competitive intensity in addition to MC (r = 0.986, p is greater than 0.05). Khan and Hussain (2022); reinforce the relationship among EM, MC and a link with the performance of small enterprises. Onditi (2022) and Yaqub *et al*. (2024) establish that CI moderates the connection among MO, EO, and FP. Therefore, H3 is accepted, which states that CI moderates the association amid EM and MC, in addition to the performance of family firms.

Table 7: Correlations

	Entrepreneurial Marketing	Marketing Capability	Performance	Competitive Intensity
Entrepreneurial Marketing	1	0.365**	0.474**	0.368**
Marketing Capability	0.365**	1	0.658**	0.986**
Performance	0.474**	0.658**	1	0.636**
Competitive Intensity	0.368**	0.986**	0.636**	1

The relationship between firm performance and entrepreneurial marketing and marketing capability is represented by the *R*-value. Intended for additional study, for it to be accepted, the value of *R* must be greater than 0.40. from table 8 the values of *R* are greater than 0.40; EM has a value of 0.476, MC recorded a value of 0.656, and CI (moderator) has the value of 0.638. it shows that the model fit is good. *R*-squared shows that the general difference for the variables might explain a value greater than 0.5, which shows that the conceptual model is competent at recognising the link among these variables. The *R*-squared values of this study are less than 50% because it is difficult to understand human beings, because you can predict the way they behave when compared to natural and physical sciences.

Table 8: Model Summary and Coefficient

Variables	*R*	R- Square	Adj R^2	Standard Error of the Estimate	F	T	Sig
Entrepreneurial marketing	0.476	0.225	0.214	0.68117	20.618	4.541	0.000
Marketing capability	0.656	0.432	0.424	0.75411	54.092	7.355	0.000
Competitive intensity	0.638	0.404	0.396	0.77272	48.139	6.938	0.000

The results revealed that entrepreneurial marketing and marketing capability are significantly related to the performance of family businesses, with competitive intensity serving as a moderating variable in this study. The study is in agreement with the findings of Nursal, Rianto and Bukhari (2022), who found that entrepreneurial marketing (which is made of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and market orientation (MO)) is a major determinant of success in small and medium-scale enterprises. Thus, family firms should adopt innovative marketing strategies to differentiate themselves in the market. For instance, leveraging social media, personalised marketing, and data-driven campaigns can enhance customer engagement and loyalty. The results in hypothesis two showed that marketing capability enhances the performance of small family firms.

This is also in line with the study of Li Ming and Song (2024), which found that ambidextrous marketing capabilities have a significant link with the performance of small and medium-scale enterprises. Finally, even though competitive intensity successfully moderates the association between EM and FP. The results also showed that CI moderates the link between MC and FP. Most of the participants in this study are sole proprietors, so this supports the study of Tijjani, Pulka and Muazu (2020), who argued that the sole proprietorship form of business requires minimal formalities and capital compared to other forms of business types. This lower barrier to entry makes it accessible to individuals with limited resources or entrepreneurial experiences, such as small family firms.

Conclusion

The main objective of the research was to carry out a pilot study to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument measuring the moderating effect of competitive intensity on the association among EM, MC, and the performance of family enterprises in Nigeria. This research has helped in determining face and content validity and also the consistency of the research instrument. The result of the pilot study showed that all the variables are reliable because all are above 0.70, and based on the researcher's accepted threshold, it can be concluded that the instrument is reliable and valid. This work has some limitations; the limited sample may not fully represent the target population, reducing generalisability, and the limited scope often focuses on specific aspects of the research, potentially overlooking broader issues or challenges. Positive pilot outcomes may not always translate to success in the full-scale study due to different conditions of a larger sample size. Subsequently, it is suggested to tackle a similar study dilemma. The sample size of family firms should be expanded across different industries to enhance representativeness and generalisability. The study should also incorporate a longitudinal approach to observe changes in competitive intensity and its impact over time. Lastly, to conduct interviews or case studies to gain deeper insights into how family firms perceive and leverage competitive intensity.

Conflict of Interest

The authors affirm that there are no conflicting objectives.

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