Dutse Business Review (DBR): Volume 1, Issue 1 (2026) *ISSN Print: 3156-4062* *eISSN:3156-4852*

Analysis of Competitive Factor and the Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Kano State

Dr Adams Ibrahim Attarh.
Faculty of Management Science
Department of Business Administration
Federal University, Dutse.
adamsibrahim2011@gmail.com
08033176730

Abdulmutalib Mohammad Nurudeen
nurudeenabdulmutalib@gmail.com
08038559324

Abstract

This paper will analyze how three major competitive variables pricing strategy, product quality, and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) affect SMEs performance in Kano state, Nigeria, as per the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory. The major goals were to determine the individual impacts of each of these factors on the performance of SMEs as per profitability, growth of sales, market share, and customer satisfaction. The survey research, which was in a quantitative design, gathered data on 356 owners/managers of registered SMEs. Results showed that all three competitive aspects have strong positive influences on the performance of SMEs with product quality as the most influential factor ($\beta = 0.394$, $p < 0.001$), then CRM ($\beta = 0.375$, $p < 0.001$), and pricing strategy ($\beta = 0.337$, $p < 0.001$). These results assert that SMEs in Kano State that are able to plan and implement pricing flexibility, high quality of their products and good customer relationship practices realize much better performance results despite operating in resource limited environment. The paper has arrived at the conclusion that reinforcing these internal strengths is a viable avenue of ending the stagnation and high failure rates among Kano SMEs, integrating them into powerful economic growth engines. In line with this, SME owners are advised to consider market-oriented pricing and simple quality management regimes, engage in low-cost CRM practice and government agencies and development partners should offer specific training and support interventions to develop these essential competitive capabilities throughout the industry sector.

Keywords: *SME Performance, Pricing Strategy, Product Quality, Customer Relationship Management*

I. Introduction

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are one of the key factors in economic growth, innovation and job creation in emerging markets such as Nigeria. The SMEs help in the local entrepreneurship and community development in Kano State, one of the most populous and commercially dynamic regions in Nigeria, where the sector of manufacturing, trade, and agriculture is supported by SMEs (Agboola & Ayo, 2024; Ali and Anwar, 2021). These enterprises require the competitive factors that are innovation, marketing strategies, pricing, customer relationship management (CRM) and resource-based capabilities to succeed in dynamic markets. The studies point to the fact that

successful competitive practices can increase the performance of a firm by expanding its market share, profitability, and sustainability (Distanont, 2020; Farida and Setiawan, 2022; Lestari et al., 2020). The given analysis is dedicated to the effect of these factors on the SME performance within Kano State in particular based on the resource-based view (RBV) theory according to which specific resources and capabilities create a sustainable competitive edge (Barney, 2001; Lubis, 2022).

Ideally, SMEs in Kano State would use competitive factors to perform optimally, in terms of high levels of innovation adoption, strategic pricing, strong CRM, and resource maximization. This would help them to outsmart their competitors, capitalize on changes in the market and take advantage of chances like digital transformation and global trade integrations. Research evidence suggests that in cases where SMEs have applied marketing innovations and innovative pricing methods, they have achieved better profitability and customer loyalty and their growth has been long-term (Adamu et al., 2020; Agboola & Ayo, 2024; Ali and Anwar, 2021). Moreover, the joint participation of competitive intelligence and quality management practices would also perfectly place these enterprises in developing strong operations, as witnessed in a number of Nigerian settings (Irenaus et al., 2021; Udofia et al., 2021).

However, many SMEs in Kano State face serious challenges that affect their performance. Most of them do not have access to important business tools such as modern marketing strategies, innovation resources, and customer relationship management (CRM) systems (Garba, 2024). These challenges are made worse by inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, and intense market competition. As a result, many SMEs experience low profits, slow growth, and a high risk of business failure. Studies conducted in Nigeria have shown that poor pricing strategies, weak customer relations, and a lack of strategic planning are major reasons for the poor performance of SMEs, especially in regions with economic conditions similar to Kano State (Afolayan, 2021; Garba, 2024; Mwito, 2024; Oyewobi et al., 2023). In addition, many SMEs do not fully understand the importance of competitive factors such as pricing strategies, product quality, and customer relationship management. This often leads to poor business performance and, in some cases, business failure.

Unless these issues are addressed, the SMEs in Kano State might suffer a grave fate and run out of business, more people will lose their jobs, and contribute fewer to the state GDP, effectively halting the economic growth of the region. Chronic ineffective performance can also result in a poverty trap, a lack of innovation platforms, and exposure to external shocks such as economic crunch or international competition. Literature cautions that lack of focusing on competitive aspects may undermine positions on the market and result in unsustainable operations as observed in the larger African and emerging market environments (Entebang, 2021; Kuzminski et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2023).

This research fills the gap in the lack of knowledge regarding the relationship between competition factors and the performance of SMEs in Kano State. Although the previous studies have considered the competitive factors in different contexts, there is little empirical evidence on the impact of pricing strategy, product quality, and customer relationship management on SME performance in the context of the Kano State. Thus, the research is aimed at offering an empirical data on the impact of such competitive aspects on SME performance in order to provide an insightful contribution to business owners and policymakers.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

i. To examine the effect of pricing strategy on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Kano State.
ii. To determine the influence of product quality on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Kano State.
iii. To analyze the influence of customer relationship management on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Kano State.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Small and Medium Enterprises Performance

SME performance can be explained as the capability of small and medium enterprises to realise their proclaimed goals in their profitability, share, increase in sales and their overall performance in the organisation. Entebang (2021) opines that SME performance in Nigeria has both financial and non-financial aspects, such as revenue generation, customer satisfaction, employee productivity, and competitive positioning. Lestari et al. (2020) highlighted that innovation, business strategy, and competitive advantage are several factors that affect the performance of SMEs. Some of the most important performance indicators that are used in measuring performance within the SMEs include assessing sales volume, profit margins, the ability to generate returns on the investment and expansion in the market. Oyewobi et al. (2023) have also pointed out that the adoption of modern technologies and business practices that promote efficiency in operations also affects the performance of the SMEs.

The economic development of any nation depends on the performance of SMEs, especially in developing economies such as Nigeria where the business has a huge share of the workforce and the GDP. Udofia et al. (2021) emphasized the fact that quality management practices can directly and indirectly influence the integrated performance of medium-scale manufacturers. On the same note, Niyi Anifowose, Ghasemi, and Olaleye (2022) concluded that total quality management has a strong impact on SME performance mediated by the innovation speed. The performance of SMEs ought to be measured in a holistic manner and this should take into account internal organizational aspects as well as external environmental factors that influence businesses.

2.2 Competitive Factor of Micro Business Enterprise

Competitive factors are those strategic factors that facilitate enterprises to acquire and maintain competitive edge over their competitors in the market. Lee (2021) described competition factors as those qualities that make an organization stand out of the crowd of other organizations and help it achieve better performance. As per Asghari et al. (2020), competitive intelligence entails the identification and analysis of the factors that affect the effectiveness of organizations within the competitive aspects. Kuzminski et al. (2020) examined different aspects affecting competitiveness of manufacturing firms and determined strategic positioning, the use of resources, and market responsiveness as the important competitive factors. In the case of SMEs, the competition factors also hold special significance since these businesses are usually under-equipped in terms of resources and have to use their abilities wisely to outcompete their competitors.

2.2.1 Pricing Strategy

The pricing strategy can be defined as the methods and approaches of businesses to determine the prices of their products and services in a way that would ensure high profitability and competitiveness at the same time. As Ali and Anwar (2021) stressed, pricing policies play a crucial role in consumer buying behaviors and the business success in general. Mwito (2024) found that pricing strategies have a direct impact on the development of small and medium enterprises as they determine the sales, profit margins, and market positioning. As Agboola and AYO (2024) discovered, the impact of innovative pricing strategies within the agricultural SMEs in Nigeria is substantial in regard to the profitability of the enterprises. Proper pricing strategies help SMEs to strike a balance between the maximization of revenues and customer value perception that will eventually lead to improved performance of the business.

2.2.2 Product Quality

Product quality is the features and characteristics of a product which will identify the ability of a product to meet the needs and expectation of the customer. Zhou and Li (2020) revealed that quality management practices have a significant influence on the firm performance of the Chinese small and medium manufacturing firms. Niyi Anifowose et al. (2022) state that total quality management practices help to improve the performance of the SME by increasing its operational efficiency and customer satisfaction. Oluwaseun et al., (2022) noted the mutual support of the product development and performance of SMEs and that quality products are one of the factors that lead to customer loyalty and an increase in repeat purchases. Quality of products is a basic competitive element distinguishing enterprises and affecting customers preferences.

2.2.3 Customer Relationship Management

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has been explained to be the strategies, practices, and technologies employed by an organization in managing and analysing interactions with customers in the customer lifecycle. Khan et al. (2022) discovered that customer relationship management has a significant influence on the customer loyalty mediated by customer satisfaction. Ladokun et al. (2023) affirm that there are notable impacts of CRM dimensions on the performance of SMEs in Nigeria. Marolt et al. (2020) have discussed the adoption of social customer relationship management in micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, and noted its significance in competitive advantage. Good CRM helps SMEs to develop good customer relationships, increase customer retention as well as creating good word of mouth referrals.

2.2.4 Competitive Factor and the Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises

The connection between SME performance and competitive factors has been an issue that has received a lot of attention in the management literature. It was determined by Farida and Setiawan (2022) that business strategies and competitive advantage are influential factors in the performance of firms and innovation results. Yasa et al. (2020) argue that promotional strategy has an impact on marketing performance mediated by the competitive advantage, which implies that competitive positioning is essential to converting the strategic initiatives into the performance outcomes. Distanont (2020) noted that innovation builds the competitive advantage which in turn boosts the performance of the organization.

Competitive factors allow SMEs to stand out in the market and record better performance as compared to the competition. Nte et al. (2020) analyzed the concept of competitive intelligence

and competitive advantage within pharmaceutical companies, discovering that competitive practices have substantial relations to the results of firms. Based on the stakeholder theory, Waheed and Zhang (2022) showed that corporate social responsibility and ethical practices generate sustainable performances in competitive performance. Irenaus, Ikechukwu, and Ndubuisi (2021) concluded that competitive intelligence has a positive impact on organizational performance of the SMEs in South East Nigeria.

The synergies of several competitive factors become integrated to boost overall performance of the SMEs. Garba (2024) notes that marketing strategies have a lot of influence on the performance of small and medium scale enterprises in Nigeria. Amin (2021) presented the information that marketing strategies affect the performance of SMEs in Abuja, and the strategic approaches to the competitive positioning are significant. Wu et al. (2023) highlighted the importance of competitive intelligence operations and dynamic capabilities in the context of business accommodation and improvement of the performance of SMEs.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.3.1 Resource-Based View

This study has its theoretical basis in the Resource-Based View (RBV). The RBV suggests that the strategic utilization of valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable resources and capabilities are what make firms attain sustainable competitive advantage (Barney 2001). As described by Lubis (2022), RBV works on enhancing the strategic capacity of a company by using the resources efficiently and concentrating on the fact that organizational resources and capabilities are the main determinants of a competitive advantage and performance. According to the theory, the performance of SME can be improved through growth and exploitation of their own competitive advantages in terms of pricing policies, quality of their products, and customer relationship management abilities.

El Nemar et al. (2025) have created a framework to implement RBV to SMEs, which shows that resource-based strategies play a role in the sustainable competitive advantage. Dionysus and Arifin (2020) established that strategic orientation is an important factor in an organizational performance according to the RBV approach. In this study, the RBV implies that the SMEs within Kano State developing and implementing competitive factors successfully as a strategic resource will have better performance results. The theory reiterates the fact that internal resource development and strategic capability building is vital to compete.

2.4 Empirical Review of Related Studies

A number of empirical researches have studied the connection between competitive factors and SME performance in various countries: Adamu, Hussin, and Ismail (2020) studied how marketing innovation has an impact on the performance of small and medium business in Nigeria. The study conducted a survey using survey methodology and regression analysis and discovered that marketing innovation has a significant and positive impact on the performance of SMEs. The research suggested that SMEs ought to adopt new marketing behaviours as a way of improving competitiveness. Waweru and Karihe (2021) investigated how the customer relationship management strategies impact on the performance of medium enterprises in Kenya. The results showed that customer retention, customer acquisition and customer satisfaction are CRM strategies that determine the performance of the enterprise to a great extent. The research has found

out that, successful application of CRM leads to an improvement in the competitive positioning as well as business performance.

Gebremicael and Murthy (2024) evaluated the impact of pricing strategy on organizational performance in the Ethiopian brewery industry. The paper has determined that pricing strategies such as penetration pricing, premium pricing and competitive pricing have a great influence on the performance of the organization. The researchers suggested effective alignment of pricing with the market conditions.

The article by Lestari et al. (2020) explored antecedents and the effects of innovation and business strategy on performance and competitive advantage of SMEs in Indonesia. The research discovered that innovation and business strategy play a significant role in gaining competitive advantage and thus performance of the SME. The results highlighted the mediating factor of competitive advantage. Zhou and Li (2020) investigated the relationship between supply chain practices and quality management and the performance of firms in the small and medium manufacturing industry in China. The research found that the quality management practices have both positive and significant impact on firm performance and suggested quality-oriented approaches to the SME competitiveness.

The researchers conducted a study by Khan et al. (2022) to examine how customer relationship management and reputation of companies influence customer loyalty mediated by customer satisfaction. The research established important positive impacts of CRM on customer loyalty reinstating the significance of relationship management on business performance. Distanont (2020) investigated the use of innovation in developing competitive advantage in Thai businesses. The research determined that the level of innovation practices is a major contributor to competitive advantage that translates to increased organizational performance. The results justified the idea of continuous innovation in the success of SMEs.

III. METHODOLOGY

The research assumed a survey research design because it sought to investigate the correlation between the performance of SME and competitive factors in Kano State. The survey type was deemed suitable as it enables one to gather a quantitative amount of data on a huge number of respondents based on standardized tools (Oyewobi et al., 2023). This study had a population of 1,794,358 registered SMEs in Kano State. The study was going to use a sample of 384 SMEs using the Taro Yamane formula. Multi-stage sampling method was used and stratification was done based on the sector of SMEs after which a random sample of the enterprises was taken under each stratum. The structured questionnaire used to gather data was based on a five-point Likert scale and the questions were divided into sections that dealt with pricing strategy, product quality, customer relationship management and SME performance indicators.

The questionnaire has been justified by means of expert check and pilot testing whereas its reliability was determined by means of Cronbach alpha coefficient with positive values over 0.70 in all of its constructs. The data gathering process took place during a period of eight weeks, and the questionnaires were given to the SME owners and managers directly. Both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to analyze the obtained data. Mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions were employed to describe the characteristics of respondents and measurement of variables. Pearson correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis are the

inferential statistics that were used to test the hypothesized relationships between competitive factors and SME performance.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A total of 384 questionnaires were distributed to owners/managers of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Kano State. Out of these, 356 were retrieved and found usable, representing a response rate of 92.7%. The high response rate is attributable to the direct administration and follow-up strategy adopted during data collection.

Table 4.1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	289	81.2
Female	67	18.8
Total	356	100
Age		
18–30	74	20.8
31–40	168	47.2
41–50	89	25.0
Above 50	25	7.0
Total	356	100
Educational Qualification		
SSCE/OND/NCE	112	31.5
HND/BSc	189	53.1
MSc/PhD & above	55	15.4
Total	356	100
Years of Business Operation		
Less than 5 years	98	27.5
5–10 years	176	49.4
Above 10 years	82	23.1
Total	356	100
Sector		
Manufacturing	124	34.8
Trading/Retail	156	43.8
Services	76	21.4
Total	356	100

As revealed in Table 4.1, the respondents were mainly male (81.2%), which demonstrates that there were few female respondents in the research, with the majority being in the economically active age group (31 years to 40 years), which constituted (47.2) indicating that the businesses are mostly run by young and middle-aged entrepreneurs. Educational profile indicates that the respondents had fairly educated business population since more than half of them had HND/BSc qualifications (53.1%). Regarding business experience, business maturity and stability were moderate as close to 50 percent of the firms had been in operation of 5-10 years (49.4%). The sectoral distribution indicates that the trading/retail businesses experienced the highest

representation (43.8%), then it is manufacturing (34.8%) and services (21.4%) which implies that commercial trading is the dominant enterprise among the respondents.

Table 4.2: Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Pricing Strategy	1			
2. Product Quality	0.614**	1		
3. Customer Relationship Management	0.572**	0.598**	1	
4. SME Performance	0.683**	0.721**	0.692**	1

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings indicate that all the competitive factors have positive and significant correlations with SME performance ($r = 0.683$, 0.721, and 0.692 respectively; $p < 0.01$). The strongest association with performance was observed with product quality then with CRM and pricing strategy.

4.4 Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the three hypotheses.

Table 4.3: Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.812	0.659	0.655	0.441

The model explains 65.9% of the variance in SME performance ($R^2 = 0.659$), indicating a good fit.

Table 4.4: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	112.45	3	37.48	192.76	0.000b
Residual	68.42	352	0.194		
Total	180.87	355			

The overall model is statistically significant ($F = 192.76$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 4.5: Regression Coefficients

Independent Variable	Unstandardized β	Std. Error	Standardized β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.412	0.186		2.21	0.028
Pricing Strategy	0.368	0.054	0.337	6.81	0.000
Product Quality	0.429	0.061	0.394	7.03	0.000
Customer Relationship Management	0.351	0.048	0.375	7.31	0.000

The results show that all three null hypotheses were rejected, indicating significant positive effects on SME performance in Kano State: pricing strategy ($\beta = 0.337$, $t = 6.81$, $p < 0.001$), product quality ($\beta = 0.394$, $t = 7.03$, $p < 0.001$), and customer relationship management ($\beta = 0.375$, $t = 7.31$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that improvements in these competitive factors significantly enhance the performance of SMEs in the state.

4.5 Discussion of Findings

The results indicate that pricing strategy influences the performance of SMEs in Kano State with a positive impact that is significant. This is in line with Gebremicael and Murthy (2024), who

determined that proper pricing strategies (penetration, competitive, and premium prices) were instrumental in improving the performance of organizations within the brewery industry of Ethiopia, and with Agboola and Ayo (2024), who concluded that innovative pricing strategies played an important role in enhancing the performance of the agricultural SMEs in the Nigerian market. Equally, Ali and Anwar (2021) and Mwito (2024) affirmed the fact that pricing directly affects the level of consumer purchase, sales and SME development. The outcome is indicative of the proposal that market-oriented and value-based pricing strategies in Kano SMEs make them better placed to attain greater profitability and market share.

The quality of products was found the most influential predictor of SME performance, which aligns with the results of Zhou and Li (2020), who indicated that the quality management practices had the largest effect on the firm performance among Chinese manufacturing SMEs. Similar to Niyi Anifowose et al. (2022) and Udofia et al. (2021), the total quality management practices were shown to increase operational productivity and integrated performance of medium-scale manufacturers by innovating and satisfying customers. Within the Kano scenario, a focus on product quality is indicative of the growing need by the customers to have trustworthy and standard-based products, especially in the trade and manufacturing industries.

Customer relationship management (CRM), also turned out to have a significant effect on SME performance, which aligns with Waweru and Karihe (2021), who revealed that CRM strategies (customer acquisition, retention, and satisfaction) positively affect the performance of the medium enterprises in Kenya, and with Khan et al. (2022), who have found that CRM has an impact on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction. Nigerian evidence entitled Ladokun et al. (2023) that CRM dimensions have a significant positive impact on the performance of SMEs. The implication of the finding is that Kano SMEs that invest in relationship-building practices, complaint handling, and personalised services have increased customer retention, repeat purchase and positive word-of-mouth, which lead to sustained performance.

The three competitive factors can explain almost 66% of the variation in the SME performance, and they support the theory of the Resource-Based View (RBV) that the special internal resources and capabilities, in this case, in terms of strategic pricing, high-quality products, and effective CRM are sources of sustainable competitive advantage and high performance (Barney, 2001; Lubis, 2022; El Nemar et al., 2025). The findings also correlate with previous Nigerian and African studies (Adamu et al., 2020; Garba, 2024; Irenaus et al., 2021; Lestari et al., 2020) that the matters of competitiveness are of utmost importance to SME success even in limited resources settings.

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The paper has clearly indicated that competitive criteria that are pricing strategy, product quality and customer relationship management are potent drivers of performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Kano State. These factors do not exist individually but they support each other to develop a sustainable advantage in a very competitive and resource-limited environment. Those SMEs that strategically enhance these internal strengths are more likely to adapt to changes in the market, retain their customers as well as to develop steady growth despite infrastructural and financial pressure. The results confirm that the Resource-Based View theory is relevant in the Kano context, as the high performance is primarily due to the efficiency with which enterprises create and utilize their distinct strategic resources as opposed to external circumstances.

The solution to the current gaps in the sphere of strategic pricing, quality consciousness, and customer engagement is a viable road to turn the tide of stagnation and high-rate failures experienced by a great number of SMEs in the state. On the one hand, the provision of these competitive factors in a deliberate fashion, SMEs in Kano State can become the survival-oriented businesses and develop into robust, expansion-focused companies that can make a significant contribution to their workforce, innovations, and the overall economic success of the area. The facts above are a reminder that there is a critical need among business start ups and the facilitating institutions to focus more attention on capability-building initiatives that transform these competitive aspects into the daily business reality.

5.2 Recommendations

i. SMEs in Kano State should adopt competitive and value-based pricing strategies to improve profitability and market performance.

ii. SMEs should prioritize product quality improvement through effective quality control and continuous product enhancement to increase customer satisfaction and business performance.

iii. SMEs should strengthen customer relationship management practices by improving customer service, complaint handling, and customer retention strategies to enhance performance.

References

Adamu, U. G., Hussin, S. R., & Ismail, N. A. (2020). Effect of marketing innovation on performance of small and medium enterprises in Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, *11*(12), 353-370.

Afolayan, K. A. (2021). *Effect of Product Innovation on the Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Ilorin Metropolis* (Master's thesis, Kwara State University (Nigeria)).

Agboola, A. O., & AYO, M. F. (2024). Effect of innovative pricing strategy on agricultural small and medium scale enterprises profitability in Nigeria. *International Journal of Management Science and Business Analysis Research*.

Ali, B. J., & Anwar, G. (2021). Marketing Strategy: Pricing strategies and its influence on consumer purchasing decision. *Ali, BJ, & Anwar, G.(2021). Marketing Strategy: Pricing strategies and its influence on consumer purchasing decision. International journal of Rural Development, Environment and Health Research*, *5*(2), 26-39.

Amin, H. J. (2021). Influence of marketing strategies on the performance of SMEs: Evidence from Abuja SMEs. *Journal of Economics and Business*, *4*(1).

Asghari, S., Targholi, S., Kazemi, A., Shahriyari, S., & Rajabion, L. (2020). A new conceptual framework for identifying the factors influencing the effectiveness of competitive intelligence. *Competitiveness Review: An International Business Journal*, *30*(5), 555-576.

Barney, J. B. (2001). Resource-based theories of competitive advantage: A ten-year retrospective on the resource-based view. *Journal of management*, *27*(6), 643-650.

Dionysus, R., & Arifin, A. Z. (2020). Strategic orientation on performance: The resource based view theory approach. *Jurnal Akuntansi*, *24*(1), 136-153.

Distanont, A. (2020). The role of innovation in creating a competitive advantage. *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences*, *41*(1), 15-21.

El Nemar, S., El-Chaarani, H., Dandachi, I., & Castellano, S. (2025). Resource-based view and sustainable advantage: a framework for SMEs. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, *33*(6), 798-821.

Entebang, H. (2021). SME firms performance in Nigeria: Competitive advantage and its impact. *International journal of Research studies in management*.

Farida, I., & Setiawan, D. (2022). Business strategies and competitive advantage: the role of performance and innovation. *Journal of open innovation: Technology, market, and complexity*, *8*(3), 163.

Garba, A. (2024). Effect of marketing strategies on the performance of small and medium scale enterprises in Benue State. *World Journal of Innovative Research*, *8*(2), 59-64.

Gebremicael, K. W., & Murthy, K. R. (2024). Effect of Pricing Strategy on Organization Performance: Evidence from Ethiopia's Brewery Industry. *Финансы: теория и практика*, *28*(3), 84-93.

Irenaus, O. N., Ikechukwu, E. O., & Ndubuisi, P. O. (2021). Competitive intelligence and organizational performance in small and medium enterprises in South East Nigeria. *International Journal of Research in Management*, *11*(1), 43-64.

Khan, R. U., Salamzadeh, Y., Iqbal, Q., & Yang, S. (2022). The impact of customer relationship management and company reputation on customer loyalty: The mediating role of customer satisfaction. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, *21*(1), 1-26.

Kuźmiński, Ł., Jałowiec, T., Maśloch, P., Wojtaszek, H., & Miciuła, I. (2020). Analysis of factors influencing the competitiveness of manufacturing companies. *European Research Studies Journal*, *23*(2).

Ladokun, I., Oyewole, F., Ola, T. O., & Egunjobi, G. (2023). Effect of Customer Relationship Management (crm) Dimensions on SMES Performance: Evidence From Oyo Stata, Nigeria. *International Journal of Business Economics and Management Science*.

Lee, Y. (2021). Extraction of competitive factors in a competitor analysis using an explainable neural network. *Neural processing letters*, *53*(3), 1979-1994.

Lestari, S. D., Leon, F. M., Widyastuti, S., Brabo, N. A., & Putra, A. H. P. K. (2020). Antecedents and consequences of innovation and business strategy on performance and competitive advantage of SMEs. *The journal of Asian finance, economics and business*, *7*(6), 365-378.

Lubis, N. W. (2022). Resource based view (RBV) in improving company strategic capacity. *Research Horizon*, *2*(6), 587-596.

Marolt, M., Zimmermann, H. D., Žnidaršič, A., & Pucihar, A. (2020). Exploring social customer relationship management adoption in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. *Journal of theoretical and applied electronic commerce research*, *15*(2), 38-58.

Mwito, R. M. (2024). *Influence of pricing strategies on growth of small and medium enterprises in Imenti North Sub-County, Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, KeMU).

Niyi Anifowose, O., Ghasemi, M., & Olaleye, B. R. (2022). Total quality management and small and medium-sized enterprises'(SMEs) performance: Mediating role of innovation speed. *Sustainability*, *14*(14), 8719..

Nte, N. D., Omede, K. N., Enokie, B. K., & Bienose, O. (2020). Competitive Intelligence and Competitive Advantage in Pharmaceutical Firms in Developing Economies: A Review of Lagos State, Nigeria. *Journal of Management, economics, and Industrial Organization*, *4*(1), 76-99.

Oluwaseun, O. A., Oladele, K. J., Olubusayo, F. H., Paul, S. O., Esitse, D. A., Akintunde, A. O., & Izegbuwa, T. N. Exploring the Interrelatedness between Product Development and Performance of SMEs in Southwest Nigeria.

Oyewobi, L., Adedayo, O. F., Olorunyomi, S. O., & Jimoh, R. A. (2023). Influence of social media adoption on the performance of construction small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Abuja–Nigeria. *Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management*, *30*(9), 4229-4252.

Udofia, E. E., Adejare, B. O., Olaore, G. O., & Udofia, E. E. (2021). Direct and indirect impact of quality management on the integrated performance of medium-scale manufacturers. *The TQM Journal*, *33*(6), 1589-1609.

Waheed, A., & Zhang, Q. (2022). Effect of CSR and ethical practices on sustainable competitive performance: A case of emerging markets from stakeholder theory perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *175*(4), 837-855.

Waweru, B., & Karihe, J. (2021). Effect of customer relationship management strategies on performance of medium enterprises. *Journal of Business and Strategic Management*, *6*(2), 63-83.

Wu, Q., Yan, D., & Umair, M. (2023). Assessing the role of competitive intelligence and practices of dynamic capabilities in business accommodation of SMEs. *Economic Analysis and Policy*, *77*, 1103-1114.

Yasa, N., Giantari, I. G. A. K., Setini, M., & Rahmayanti, P. J. M. S. L. (2020). The role of competitive advantage in mediating the effect of promotional strategy on marketing performance. *Management Science Letters*, *10*(12), 2845-2848.

Zhou, H., & Li, L. (2020). The impact of supply chain practices and quality management on firm performance: Evidence from China's small and medium manufacturing enterprises. *International Journal of Production Economics*, *230*, 107816.