



PACKAGING INNOVATION STRATEGIES AND MARKETING PERFORMANCE OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE MANUFACTURING FIRMS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *This study examined the relationship between packaging innovation strategies and marketing performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study adopted the correlational research design and the positivism research philosophy. The population of this study comprised 30 registered food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The census sampling technique was adopted in this study. The sampling unit was made up of managers of the registered food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. Data were collected from the respondents using a structured questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed statistically while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson Correlation (r) and the SPSS version 24. The findings revealed that packaging design innovation has a significant relationship with sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The study also found a significant relationship between packaging design innovation and market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The study equally discovered a significant a relationship between packaging material innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The study also reported a significant relationship between packaging material innovation and market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. From the findings, it was concluded that packaging innovation strategies such as packaging design innovation and packaging material innovation are significant predictors of marketing performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. Therefore, it was recommended that food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State should adopt packaging innovation strategies as it would improve their marketing performance.*

KEYWORDS: Packaging innovation strategies, Packaging design innovation, Packaging material innovation, Marketing performance, Sales growth and Market share growth.



INTRODUCTION

In the manufacturing industry where there is high level of competition among the key players, companies need to intensify their effort to achieve a good marketing performance. A good marketing performance is characterized by increased sales, higher sales turnover rate, increased market share, increased level of customer patronage, customer satisfaction, as well as customer loyalty and retention (Shih, 2018). Achieving a good marketing performance is one of the major objectives of business firms. Every organization whether small, medium or large strives to achieve a good marketing performance in order to maximize profit and survive in their respective industries. A good marketing performance is the pillar that holds an organization. Without putting up a good marketing performance, an organization will find it difficult to sustain in an industry (Tarus et al., 2017). For this reason, manufacturing companies need to intensify their efforts to achieve good marketing performance in midst of intense competition. To achieve good marketing performance, manufacturing companies need to revisit their packaging system and embrace packaging innovation.

Packaging innovation is the process of changing the packaging design, pattern, style, colour, size and materials to give the product pack a new look and make it more attractive to customers (Purnomo et al., 2025). It involves the development of new product pack or the modification of the pack without altering the product itself. Packaging innovation brings about a set of meaningful and valuable difference to the existing product pack to give it a new look and make consumers to develop the feelings that the product has been improved upon in terms of its functional performance (Loucanova et al., 2017). This type of innovation does not affect the product itself but only the product pack which customers can see, feel and touch. Even though the physical product did not change, the minor changes or modification of the pack can attract more consumers to the brand. Companies in the manufacturing industry embark on packaging innovation to draw the attention of consumers towards their brand and improve their market competitiveness (Kalathiswaran & Thangam, 2025). Patel (2023) stated that companies innovate their product pack because they want customers to see their brand as being unique and superior to what other competitors offer.

Packaging innovation is a strategic tool for improving the marketing performance of firms. According to Branska et al (2025), packaging innovation captures the attention of consumers, generate more sales, increase market share and improve the overall marketing performance of firms. When a company modifies its product pack, it gives the product a new look that will make consumers to believe that the product has been improved upon. This will make consumers to buy the product and become less sensitive to other competing brands. Churchfield (2016), opined that packaging innovation is highly essential for companies because consumers often get tired of seeing the same old things. According to him, consumers often look out for something new, something different and something unique which can grab their attention. New packaging design, new packaging materials and new packaging colour can make a product to become more visible and noticeable when arranged alongside with other competing brands in shelves (Abatan et al., 2024). Thus, a company that innovate its product package is more likely to capture the attention of prospective consumers, generate more sales and improve its marketing performance. It is against this backdrop that this study examines the relationship between packaging innovation strategies and marketing performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State.



Statement of the Problem

One of the major challenges facing manufacturing firms in Nigeria is how to consistently improve their marketing performance in the midst of competition. A close observation shows that many manufacturing firms in Nigeria are experiencing poor marketing performance as their sales and market share are declining. Several efforts have been made by these firms to improve their marketing performance over the years. However, despite the efforts made by these firms to improve their marketing performance, their sales and market share are still low. The poor marketing performance of manufacturing firms could be attributed to poor packaging system. Recently, some food and beverage manufacturing firms in Nigeria have adopted packaging innovation as a way of improving their marketing performance. Several studies (e.g. Hellstrom & Nilsson, 2011; Chelumbrun, 2014; Barutcu & Gokkaya, 2023; Pranevicius, 2018), have examined the importance of packaging innovation in business organizations but none of these studies relate packaging innovation to marketing performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. Most of these previous studies relate packaging innovation to consumer preference and customer patronage of brands while studies that relate packaging innovation to marketing performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State are absent or scanty. This has created a gap in literature which this study is set to fill from the Nigerian perspective.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of packaging innovation strategies and marketing performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms is shown in Figure 1 below:

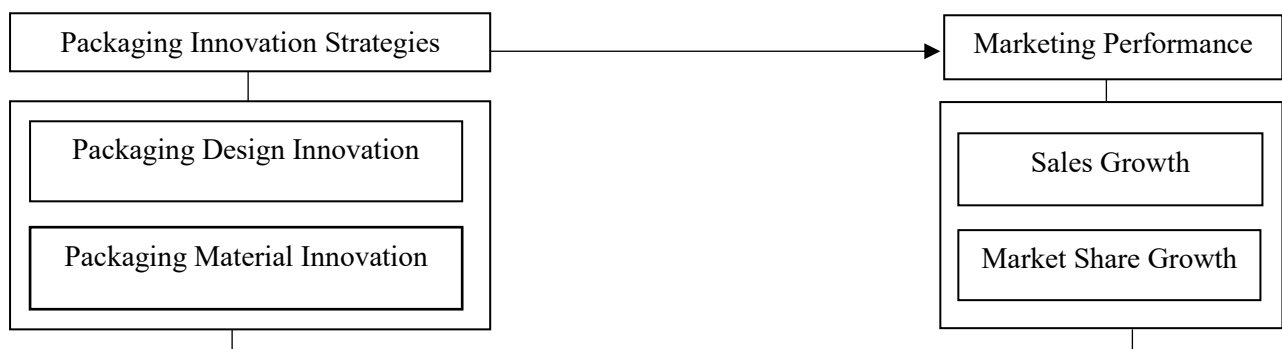


Fig 1: Conceptual framework of packaging innovation strategies and marketing performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Source: *Author's Conceptualization*

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between packaging innovation strategies and marketing performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. To achieve this broad aim, the study intends to:

- ascertain the relationship between packaging design innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State;



2. explore the relationship between packaging design innovation and market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State;
3. determine the relationship between packaging material innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State;
4. ascertain the relationship between packaging material innovation and market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to address the objectives of this study:

1. What is the relationship between packaging design innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does packaging design innovation relate to market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State?
3. What is the relationship between packaging material innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State?
4. To what extent does packaging material innovation relate to market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were postulated to guide this study:

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between packaging design innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between packaging design innovation and market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between packaging material innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between packaging material innovation and market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Concept of Packaging Innovation

According to Kalathiswaran and Thangam (2025), packaging innovation is the modification of product package to give it a new look and make it more attractive and appealing to customers. This type of innovation can take the form of a new pack design, new shape, new colour and new size. Packaging innovation can make a product to gain much attention or attraction and improve the brand competitiveness in the marketplace. Through packaging innovation, a product can become more visible and noticeable in shelve when arranged alongside with other



similar and competing brands (Carli et al., 2018). Hellstrom and Nilsson (2011), opined that a new packaging design makes a product to become more visible and eye-catching, thereby generating curiosity among potential customers to try the product. Jackman et al, (2025), stated that new packaging improves shelf visibility, create positive perception about a product, and eventually motivates consumers to try the product. A good number of companies have embraced packaging innovation. Coca-Cola Company is a typical example of companies that have adopted packaging innovation. The company keeps innovating its packaging materials, bottle size, caps and label print (Brown, 2012). Eastlack et al, (2018), opined that packaging innovation is the most important strategy for winning the battle of consumer attention. According to them, new packaging will draw consumer attention and make them to want to try the product at first sight.

Dimensions of Packaging Innovation

There are several dimensions of packaging innovation in literature, however, this study focuses on packaging design innovation and packaging material innovation.

Packaging Design Innovation

Packaging design innovation is the changes or modification of the packaging style of a product or brand (Barutcu & Gokkaya, 2023). Changing or modifying packaging design is highly necessary to give a product a new look and gain the attention of prospective customers. When a company modifies its packaging design, it will create a positive feeling about the product in the consumers' minds and this will motivate them to try the product (Geambasu, 2017). Abatan et al, (2024), stated that new packaging design reinforces, reminds and makes consumers to believe in the brand. Through packaging design innovation, consumers are reminded about the core value of the brand and what the brand represents (Branska et al., 2025). Loucanova et al, (2017) urged companies whose brands are losing visibility in shelves to embark on packaging design innovation to make their brands more visible and noticeable again. New packaging design is capable of drawing the attention of consumers to the brand, create a purchase intention and finally actual purchase. When a company introduces a new packaging design, it will send a positive message about the brand to the public and this will trigger sales and market share growth of the firm (Patel et al., 2023).

Packaging Material Innovation

Packaging material innovation refers to the changes of an existing packaging material to give the pack a new look that is attractive to consumers (Higgins, 2010). Innovating packaging materials is highly essential for companies that are seeking to attract more consumers to their products. According to Loucanova et al, (2017), new packaging material attracts consumers to a product brand and make them to feel that the brand possesses unique quality that is distinguish from other similar brands arranged in shelves. Some products are idiosyncrasy and in such case, it is essential for the packaging materials to release preservatives or aromas that grab consumer's attention (Geambasu, 2017). Packaging material innovation creates a solution that protects the product from outside factors such as oxygen, light and humidity (Churchfield, 2016). Purnomo et al., (2025), noted that new packaging material makes a product to wear a new look different from what it looks like before. Such materials send a message about the company and make the product to gain market acceptance. Packaging material innovation is embarked upon by companies to meet sustainability needs of consumers (Anthony, 2010). For



example, the food industry has embraced the use of new packaging materials for environmental reason, utilizing biodegradable polymers to enclose their products and this packaging material has the potential of reducing waste and greenhouse gas emission.

Concept of Marketing Performance

Marketing performance refers to the market outcomes of a firm which can be measured through sales growth, market share, competitive advantage, customer satisfaction and loyalty (Jayapal & Omar, 2017). Ritala (2012) defined marketing performance as the rate at which a firm's products or services are patronized by customers and the portion of the market which the firm has been able to capture. Ogunnaike et al. (2014), stated that the marketing performance of a firm shows how consumers react to its product or service's offerings. A higher marketing performance is an indicator that the consumers are satisfied with the products/service rendered and vice versa. Every company wants to consistently improve their marketing performance since it is a sure way to maximize profit and achieve business goals. When a company's marketing performance is improved, it will manifest in the profit margin of the organization (Ogunnaike et al., 2014). Santos and Brito (2012), stated that a high marketing performance is an indication that the company is enjoying a competitive advantage over its rivals. It also implies that the company is enjoying greater sales, market share, customer loyalty and increased profit margin (Santos & Brito, 2012).

Measures of Marketing Performance

Marketing performance can be measured using various indicators. However, this study measures marketing performance using sales growth and market share growth.

Sales Growth

Sales growth refers to the increase in the quantity or amount of goods and services sold by a company at a given period of time (Kotler & Armstrong, 2014). Sales growth helps companies to increase their profitability and ensure organizational stability (McKinsey et al., 2016). An increase in sales means a corresponding increase in revenue for the company and this lead to increase in shareholders' dividend (Reibstein et al., 2016). By selling more products from year to year, company increases its profit margin and expands its business operations. Sales growth indicates that the company is doing well against its competitors in the marketplace. Cross (2012), stated that sales growth is a crucial competitive factor because it demonstrates to investors that the company is competing favourably in the marketplace. When an investor looks at the financial statement of a company, he or she concentrates more on the sales figure to know whether the company's sales is growing consistently from year to year.

Market Share Growth

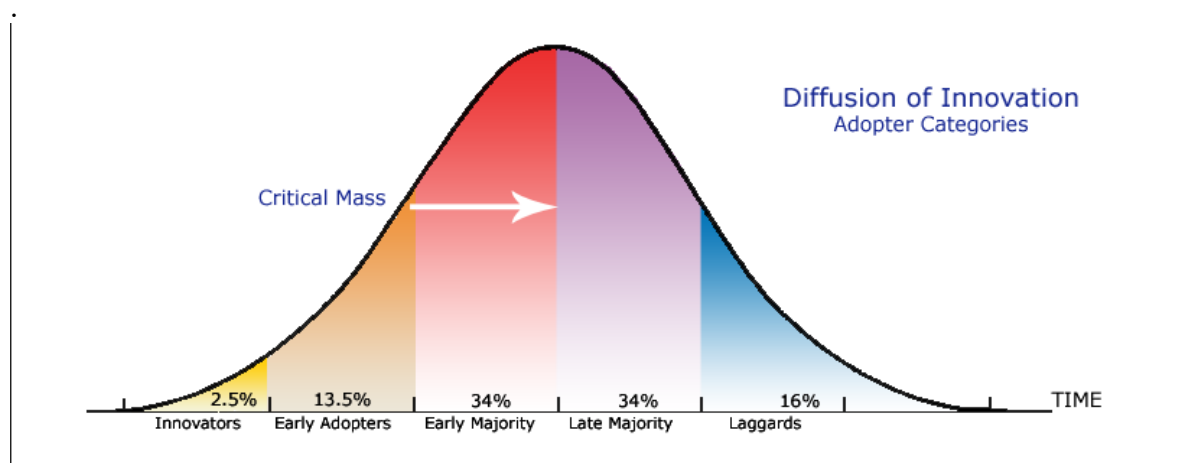
Market share growth is the increase in the percentage or proportion of the total available market or market segment served by a company over a period of time (Kotler & Armstrong, 2014). Increasing market share is one of the most important goals for a company because it has a direct impact on revenue (Ellickson, 2015). In many instances, market share growth is often considered as an important asset for competing firms because it helps to increase revenue and enhance business growth. However, a company that experiences a decline in its market share will have a serious problem on the long-run (Santos & Brito, 2012). Uchegbulam et al., (2015), stated that companies whose market share is below a certain level will not be profitable and

may cease from operation anytime soon. However, a company whose market share is growing from year to year grows its revenue faster than its rivals in the same industry. When the market share of a company increases from year to year, it enables the company to expand its operation and increase profit.

Theoretical Review

This study is anchored on the diffusion of innovation theory which was developed by Roger in 1962. This theory emerged from communication and it is one of the oldest social science theories. Diffusion of innovation theory explains how innovation spread through a specific population. Rogers (1962), described diffusion of innovation as the process by which an innovated product, package or service is communicated over time to a given population in a social system. According to Rogers, five crucial factors influence the spread of a new idea, product, package or service. They are: the innovation itself, adaptors, communication channels, time and a social system. The innovation needs to be adopted widely in order to sustain itself. Within the adoption rate, there is a point where the innovation reaches its peak. Moore (1991), stated that this point lies at the axis between the early adopters and the early majority. Between the niche appeal and the mass adoption lies the tipping point which is also known as “the chasm” (Moore et al., 2009). The adopters call under the categories of 1) innovators; 2) early adopters; 3) early majority; 4) late majority; and 5) laggards (Rogers, 1962). The five categories of adopters are shown in the bell-shaped curve in figure 2 with their percentages as estimated by Rogers (1962):

Fig. 2: Innovation of Diffusion Theory



The diffusion of innovation theory is relevant in explaining how packaging innovation spreads among food and beverage manufacturing firms. This theory explains that packaging innovation has gained momentum among food and beverage manufacturers in a social system. The packaging innovation idea is communicated to food and beverage manufacturers until a saturated point is reached. The major factors that influence the spread of packaging innovation idea include: the innovation itself, adaptors, communication channels, time and a social system. In order to sustain itself, packaging innovation needs to be adopted widely by food and beverage manufacturing firms in fast changing environment. When the adoption rate reaches its peak point, it means that the packaging innovation idea has gained momentum among food and beverage manufacturers and their marketing performance will improve.



Empirical Review

Some related empirical studies have been conducted on packaging innovation strategies and marketing performance of firms. For instance, Purnomo et al., (2025), empirically examined the effect of product packaging innovation, branding, and technological capability on MSME performance. Their study adopted the explanatory research design and the quantitative research approach where a structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 40 fresh noodle producers in Madiun Residency Area, Indonesia. The data collected were analysed statistically using percentage and frequency tables while the hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis and the SPSS version 25. The findings revealed that product packaging innovation has significant and positive impact on the performance of MSMEs.

Barutcu and Gokkaya (2023), explored innovation in packaging design and its relationship with consumer attitude towards upcycled packaging product and purchase intention. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design and quantitative research approach where a structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 392 consumers in Turkey. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, mean, standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson correlation, multiple regression analysis and the SPSS software program version 20.0. The findings revealed that there is positive relationship between green consumer values, environmental awareness, sustainable packaging awareness, attitudes towards sustainable packaging and intention to purchase upcycled packaging products. The study also revealed that when attitude towards sustainable packaging and sustainable packaging awareness increase, there is a corresponding increase in consumer intention to purchase upcycled packaging products.

Marinac (2013), explored packaging innovation strategies of food and beverage firms in the United States of America. The study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design where data were collected from managers in 23 food and beverage firms in the US using a structured questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using percentage and frequency tables while the hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis and SPSS version 21.0. The findings revealed that packaging innovation enhance customer patronage of food and beverage brands in the United States of America.

Anthony (2010), carried out a study to determine the extent of managing packaging innovation for increased customer preference for food and beverage brands. Their study adopted the survey research design where a structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 20 food and beverage firms in Nairobi County. The data collected were analyzed using tables, graphs, charts while the hypotheses were tested using linear regression analysis. The findings revealed that packaging innovation positively influence customer preference for food and beverage brands.

Sims (2016), explored the effect of packaging innovation on consumer purchase decisions of food and beverage brands in Kenya. The study adopted the survey research design where data were collected from 34 managers drawn from 120 retail outlets in Kenya. The researcher used a structured questionnaire as the main instrument for data collection while percentage tables and Chi-square were used for data analysis. The findings revealed that packaging innovation significantly influence consumer purchase decision in retail outlets in Kenya.



Branska et al. (2025), examined circular packaging innovation from business and consumer perspectives. Their study employed the survey research design and the quantitative research approach where data were collected from 60 SMEs owners and 200 consumers in two separate phases using online questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using percentage and frequency tables while the hypotheses were tested using ANOVA, Chi-Square and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The findings revealed that consumers are the main drivers of packaging innovation. The study also revealed that the most appropriate packaging innovation preferred by businesses is replacing non-recyclable packaging materials with 100% recyclable or biodegradable alternatives. The barriers to packaging innovation are unacceptable product prices, consumer unwillingness to engage in collection, sorting and return of packaging materials.

Gap in Literature

From the literature reviewed, it was observed that a significant number of studies have been conducted on packaging innovation strategies of firms in the food and beverage industry but none of these studies relate packaging innovation strategies such as packaging design and packaging material innovation to marketing performance (sales growth and market share growth) of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Nigeria particularly in Rivers State. This has created a wide gap in literature which this study intends to bridge.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the correlational research design and the positivism research philosophy. The population of this study consisted of all the 30 registered food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State (<https://www.directory.org.ng>). Since the study population is researchable and manageable, the census sampling technique was adopted. The sampling unit was made up of managers of the 30 registered food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The managers include branch managers, marketing managers, packaging managers, and innovation managers of the firms. A sample size of 120 managers was selected purposively from the 30 registered food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State on the basis of 4 managers per company. A structured questionnaire was used as the main instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was structured on a 4 point rating scale such as Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The questionnaire was validated through face and content analysis and its reliability was determined using the Cronbach Alpha method. After validity and reliability test, 120 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents and 108 copies were collected from them. The data collected were presented in tables and analyzed statistically while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson Correlation (r). The correlation analysis was carried out with the aid of the SPSS version 25.0.

Results and Discussion

The result of the SPSS correlation analysis carried out on packaging innovation strategies (packaging design innovation and packaging material innovation) and marketing performance (sales growth and market share growth) of food and beverage manufacturing firms are presented in the tables below:



Table 1: Result of correlation analysis between packaging design innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms

			Packaging Design	Sales
			Innovation	Growth
Pearson (r)	Packaging Innovation	Design	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
			Sig. (2 tailed)	.793**
			N	.001
	Sales Growth	Correlation Coefficient	.793**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.001	.
		N	108	108

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-Generated Output

Table 1 indicates that packaging design innovation is strongly and positively correlated to sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms ($r = .793^{**}$) and this correlation is statistically significant at 0.01 level. As a result of this we then reject the null hypothesis (H_{01}) and accept the alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between packaging design innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Table 2: Result of correlation analysis between packaging design innovation and market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms

			Packaging Design	Market Share
			Innovation	Growth
Pearson (r)	Packaging Innovation	Design	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
			Sig. (2 tailed)	.648**
			N	.001
	Market Share Growth	Correlation Coefficient	.648**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.001	.
		N	108	108

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-Generated Output

Table 2 reveals that packaging design innovation has a strong and positive correlation with market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms ($r = .648^{**}$) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level. Based on this result, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This means that we then accept that there is a significant relationship between packaging design innovation and market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State.



Table 3: Result of correlation analysis between packaging material innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms

			Packaging Material Innovation	Sales Growth
Pearson (r)	Packaging Material Innovation	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.836**
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.	.001
		N	108	108
	Sales Growth	Correlation Coefficient	.836**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.001	.
		N	108	108

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-Generated Output

Table 3 shows a very strong and positive correlation between packaging material innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms ($r = .836^{**}$) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This means that we then accept that there is a significant relationship between packaging material innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Table 4: Result of correlation analysis between packaging material innovation and market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms

			Packaging Material Innovation	Market Share Growth
Pearson (r)	Packaging Material Innovation	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.811**
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.	.001
		N	108	108
	Market Share Growth	Correlation Coefficient	.811**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.001	.
		N	108	108

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-Generated Output

Table 4 indicates that packaging material innovation has a very strong and positive correlation with sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms ($r = .811^{**}$) and this correlation is statistically significant at 0.01 level. As a result of this, we then reject the null hypothesis (H_{04}) and accept the alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between packaging material innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State.



DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study discovered a significant relationship between packaging design innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. This finding was derived from the result of the SPSS correlation analysis carried out on the two variables in Table 1. The result revealed that packaging design innovation is strongly and positively correlated to sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms ($r = .793^{**}$) and this correlation is statistically significant at 0.01 level. As a result of this we then rejected the null hypothesis (H_{01}) and accepted the alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between packaging design innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. This finding is supported by Raza and Siddiqui (2019), and Kesinro et al., (2015) as both studies revealed that packaging design innovation has significant impact on sales growth of firms.

This study also found a significant relationship between packaging design innovation and market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. This finding emerged from the result of the SPSS correlation analysis carried out on the two variables in Table 2. The result showed that packaging design innovation has a strong and positive correlation with market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms ($r = .648^{**}$) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level. Based on this result, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This means that there is a significant relationship between packaging design innovation and market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. This finding is consistent with the research conducted by Higgins (2010) and Eastlack et al (2018) as both studies revealed that packaging design innovation significantly enhance the market share of firms.

This study reported a significant relationship between packaging material innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. This finding was deduced from the result of the SPSS correlation analysis carried out on the two variables in Table 3. The result shows a very strong and positive correlation between packaging material innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms ($r = .836^{**}$) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This means that there is a significant relationship between packaging material innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. This finding is supported by Barber (2010), Sajuyigbe et al., (2012), and Rizwan et al., (2014), as their studies revealed that packaging material innovation has significant impact on sales performance of firms.

Finally, it was discovered that a significant relationship exists between packaging material innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. This finding was emanated from the result of the SPSS correlation analysis carried out on the two variables in Table 6. The result revealed that packaging material innovation has a very strong and positive correlation with sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms ($r = .811^{**}$) and this correlation is statistically significant at 0.01 level. As a result of this, we then rejected the null hypothesis (H_{04}) and accepted the alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between packaging material innovation and sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. This finding is consistent with the findings of Higgins (2010) and Mitul and Bhavesh (2012) as both studies revealed that innovative packaging materials helps companies to increase their market share.



CONCLUSIONS

Considering the rapid changes in the business environment and the intense competition in the food and beverage industry, it becomes imperative for food and beverage manufacturing firms in Nigeria to adopt packaging innovation in order to improve their marketing performance. The results of this study have proven that packaging design innovation is significantly related to sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The study also found a significant relationship between packaging design innovation and market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The study equally revealed that packaging material innovation is significantly related to sales growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. A significant relationship was also reported between packaging material innovation and market share growth of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State. From the findings, it was concluded that packaging innovation strategies such as packaging design innovation and packaging material innovation are significant predictors of marketing performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study provides the following recommendations:

1. That, food and beverage manufacturing firms in Nigeria particularly those that are experiencing poor marketing performance should adopt packaging innovation strategies as it would improve their marketing performance.
2. That, food and beverage manufacturing firms in Nigeria particularly those whose sales volume is declining should innovate their packaging design and materials as it would attract more customers to their brand and achieve sales growth.
3. That, food and beverage manufacturing firms in Nigeria particularly those whose market share is low should adopt packaging design and material innovations as it would draw consumer attention to their brand and increase their market share.
4. That, food and beverage manufacturing firms in Nigeria particularly those that intend to innovate their packaging materials should switch to sustainable packaging materials since consumers have become more conscious about the environment and purchase products that are packaged in reusable, recyclable and biodegradable materials.
5. Finally, it is recommended that food and beverage manufacturers in Nigeria should not increase the prices of their products simply because they innovate their packaging materials or design as this could discourage consumers from patronizing their products, thereby affecting their marketing performance.



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