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Sales Integration and Business Performance in the Telecommunication Industry in Nigeria

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Abstract
The purpose of this explanatory research is to evaluate the association between sales integration and business performance in the telecommunication industry in Nigeria. This study used a structured questionnaire to elicit responses from respondents from the Telecommunication firms in Nigeria. Returned copies of questionnaire were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics was used to determine the mean and standard deviation of the distribution, while the Spearman rank order correlation co-efficient was used to ascertain the associations between the sales integration and the dimensions of business performance in the telecommunication firms in Nigeria. The results of the study reported herein, shows that sales integration associates with business performance in the Nigeria Telecommunication firms. It is the recommendation of this paper that managers of Nigerian Telecommunication firms should strengthen their practice of Sales Integration strategy as a paradigm shift from the isolated functional dependence. The study reported in this paper can be carried out in other industry; and also, in other culture to ascertain whether the same, similar or different outcomes can be achieved.

Introduction

The telecommunication facilities in Nigeria are handled by Nigerian communications commission (NCC), which is a parastatal in the ministry of communications. It was established by Decree No. 75 of 1992, which deregulated the telecommunications industry in Nigeria and is charged with the responsibility of regulating private telecommunications services, promoting fair competition as well as facilitating entry into the telecommunications market (TechTalkAfrica.com, 2013). Accordingly, the major players in the telecommunication industry in Nigeria are MTN Nigeria, Airtel, Globacom and Etisalat,(TechTalkAfrica.com, 2013), operating on the 900/1800 MHz (Megahertz) spectrum.

However, the telecommunication industry in Nigeria is confronted with various operational challenges to power and run the existing base of over 20,000 telecom towers (kumar, 2012). In his argument, Kumar (2012) notes that Nigeria is one of the countries with the lowest levels of grid power availability–at an average of 5 hours of availability per day. He went further to argue that the country's MNOs and tower companies are forced to shift to alternate sources for primary and backup power, with diesel generators being the default choice for backup power at the moment. This has in effect distorted efficient service delivery and hence impacting on the business performance of the firms in this industry. Thus, this study will examine the impact of sales integration and business performance in telecommunication firms in Nigeria. The next section discusses the theoretical foundations of the study.

Theoretical foundation of sales integration.

The marketing-sales relationship is considered a special one and as such has been receiving increasing attention in marketing literature (Gaunzi and Troilo, 2007; Homburg, *et al* 2008, Rouzies *et al*, 2005). Indeed, it is considered as one of the components of market driven organizations (Day, 1994). In the marketing/sales relationship, suggestions are rife as to the definition and placement of both in the organization. Under the marketing concept regime, both marketing and sales are subsumed under the marketing organization (Homburg, et al 2008), while Dewsnap and Jobber, (2002); Le Meunier Fitzhugh and Piercy (2007) perceived marketing and sales as marketing, in which case, customers do not differentiate between marketing and sales departments and both are considered as having the same responsibilities (Le Meunier-Fitzhugh *et al*, 2007).

However, considering the importance of the two in Managerial practice, marketing and sales have been treated as separate functions (Homburg, *et al*, 2008). To some marketing pundits, marketing is considered as product focused and long term focused while sales function is considered as customer focused and short term focused (Cespedes, 1993; Homburg *et al*, 2008; Rouzies *et al*, 2005). From a broader perspective however, marketing structure is based on major customers and markets, and integrates all sales, products and other marketing activities including marketing strategy, distribution and marketing communication, while the function of sales is to stimulate demands for products (Le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy, 2007). The sales function is therefore seen as a subordinated consummating marketing activity that gives finality to all other efforts from product design to manufacture and distribution (Didia, 2007). The marketing-sales relationship is seen as the extent to which activities carried out by the two functions are supportive of each order (Rouzies *et al*, 2005) it is in addition, the extent to which the interface can conduce to general involvement, information quality and harmony in the exchange of responsibilities (Song *et al*, 2000).

It is indeed this type of integration that is envisaged to produce greater results. In fact coordinating the sales and marketing function can improve the effectiveness of activities undertaken by the functional areas (Rouzes *et al* 2005). The need for greater integration and coordination between marketing and sale has been recognized. In international surveys of senior executives from a wide range of business to-business industries, sales and marketing interface was mentioned as one of the organizational changes that would do the most to improve sales performance and as one of the most important issues facing sales and marketing managers (Miller and Gist, 2003; Rouzes, 2004). This paper has noted earlier that marketing and sales integration are of the components of market driven organizations (Day, 1994), justifying the inclusion of interfunctional coordination in Nwokah (2006, 2008) and Nwokah and Maclayton (2006) argument of the conceptualization of market orientation construct by Narvar and Slaughter (1990). This paper however agrees with Rouzies *et al* (2005) motion that marketing-sales integration is the extent to which activities carried out by the two functions are supportive of each other. In this context, supportive of each other implies the functions/activities must be consistent and congruent with each other, for instance helping to realize each other's goals and objectives.

For instance, the timing of activities must be coordinated, in thoughts or sequence. Thus, the timing of a salesperson's visit to a customer to introduce a new product must be coordinated with marketing's launch of the advertisement campaign for the product. Both activities are consistent in that they have the same goal, and they support each other and each activity makes the other more effective (Rouzes *et al*, 2005).

In theory, the lack of consensus on the appropriateness of words creates a lag in the understanding of concepts and constructs. The term integration is used differently and might mean different things to writers (Kahn and Mentzer 1998). One stream in the literature sees it as an integration process that stresses activities which enhance interdepartmental communication, (Griffin and Hauser 1996). Therefore any marketing manager that is pruned to this integrative process will favour a structure that facilitates diffusion of market information (Kahn and Mentzer, 1998). Here marketing management focuses on establishing collective goal, mutual respect and teamwork between departments. This view of integration in essence is about relationships and building esprit de corps (Kahn and Mentzer 1998). Indeed the view per se is not the main issue. Whether it is the integrative process view or the collaborative process view, it is important either or both lead to higher level of business performance (Kyckling, 2010).

In spite of some frictions that exist (Rouzies, *et al* 2005), the marketing and sales jobs are quite different, yet essential and must work cooperatively in order to deliver customer value. Levitt (1960) identified the functions of marketing and sales long time ago. The salespeople attempt to get the customer to buy what the company happens to have, whereas the marketing's job is to get the company to have what the customer wants to buy. The job of persuading customers to buy is different from identifying what customers would want to buy, then securing cooperation from the rest of the organization to produce it.

He further contends that selling is preoccupied with sellers need to convert his product to cash while marketing is satisfying the needs of the customer by means of the product and the whole cluster of things associated with creating, delivering and finally consuming it,(Levitt, 1960). The substance of their collaborative interface is stressed by Cespedes (1995) in asserting that because sales importance of generating cash flows is undeniable, it still defines the substance and outlines most of companies' marketing programs. Marketing and sales integration is very beneficial to the organization because of the successful outcomes of the relationship (Kyckling 2010). This integration leads to the building of long term orientation in terms of strategy, long term decisions across hierarchical levels and functional units, including successful communication in relevant issues. Effective communication between marketing and sales is seen to decrease the amount of interdepartmental conflicts because shared market intelligence improves understanding and enhances performance (Le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy, 2007a, Le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy, 2007b).

Evidently, extant literature has shown positive performance outcomes from marketing and sales relationship. The relationship has been associated with the achievement of different performance objectives including market objectives, organizational objectives and financial objectives (Smith, *et al* 2006). Specifically, when cooperation between marketing and sales is working smoothly, companies achieve remarkable improvements in performance metrics such as cost of sales, sales cycles and marketing-entry costs (Nwokah, 2006). Nwokah and Maclayton, (2006) suggest that market performance is affected positively by effective marketing-sales relationship. Grant's (2009) study on marketing-sales relationship found a positive impact of the relationship on business performance. Conversely, it is claimed that lack of proper alignment between marketing and sales actually result in damaging business performance (Kotler *et al* 2006). In addition, Patterson (2007) named longer sales cycles, missed quotas, bad productivity and bad sales efficiency as consequences of lack of alignment between marketing and sales. The concept of business performance is discussed next.

The concept of business performance

The dependent variable of this study is business performance which in our view is predicted by Total Integrated marketing. It is a construct that helps to determine the well-being and status of firm and requires a multidimensional scale in its measurement because it involves multidiscipline and cross functional aspects of the organization (Nwokah, 2006). Performance measurement is described as a process of organizational processes and applications designed to optimize the execution of business strategy (Nwokah, 2006). The essence of this excursive is to check on the outcome of strategy implementation and appraisal to identify areas of improvements.

There are scholarly opinions in the evaluation of business performance. Nwokah and Maclayton (2006) suggest that business performance is the achievement of financial and operational business goals. Business performance helps to determine the status of an organization as compared to its competitors. Several indicators are used in knowing the performance status of a firm. Business achievements or attributes are identified as strong financial result satisfied customers and employees, high levels of individual initiative, productivity and innovation, aligned performance measurement and reward systems. Slater and Naver (1994) used ROI, sales growth and market share in the evaluation of market performance.

In their work, Nwokah and Maclayton (2006) argued that the current business performance is operationalized by 12 items notably, sales growth, customer retention, ROI, market share, getting important and valuable information, ability to obtain bank, ability to obtain better terms in loan, ability to obtain governmental approval, shorten the time for governmental approval, contact with important persons, ability to secure local resources (electricity, human resources) and lastly motivating employees. These away of suggested indicators leave the issue of performance measures open ended. The Nigerian Telecommunication industry is ridden with competition. This study therefore used market share and sales growth as business performance metrics in the Nigeria telecommunication industry.

Business Performance is a construct that helps to determine the status of an organization as compared to its competitors. Performance is defined as the act of performing; of doing some things; using knowledge as distinguished from merely possessing it, and any recognized achievement (Oxford Dictionary, 2000). Epstein, (2004) suggests that performance can refer to either the 'ends' (results) or the 'means' (actions) that produced the ends. Profit, which is an ends performance, is seen as historic in nature because it occurs before being reported. Slater and Naver, (1994) used Return on Investment (ROI), sales growth and market share as measures of Business Performance. Equally, Yan et al (2000) suggest that a current business performance measures includes 12 items viz; sales growth, customer retention, return on investment, market share, getting important and valuable information, ability to obtain loan, ability to obtain governmental approval, contact with important persons, ability to secure local resources and motivation. From the long list above, it appears there is no agreement or end to business performance indicators. However, suffice it to say that Business Performance can be finance-based (profits): market-based (market share) or a combination of these. In the same vein Venkatramen *et al*, (1986) opine that business performance is the achievement of financial and operational business goals. In line with these views, we are considering organizational profits and market share as indicators of business performance in the TIM construct of Nigeria Telecommunication Industry because, ultimately, market share and profit seem to be prime indicators of organizational success and performance.

Sales growth

Sales growth is described as a very strong indicator of marketing and thereby business performance. The competitiveness of business organizations are evaluated by the rate of sales growth. Innovations or inventions impact on profits positively via sales growth. Sales growth therefore is particularly a meaningful indicator of the financial performance of a firm (Nwokah, 2008). Sales growth is achieved by annual addition to previous sales figures. Precisely, the amount of a company derives from sales compared to a previous, corresponding period of time in which the latter sales exceed the former. However this increment may or may not be equally. In a general note how, it indicates a relative measure of changes in sales over recorded periods. These periods are either affected by price or volume or both. Other controllable or uncontrollable factors may affect variation in sales figures e.g. seasonal variations, income level, quality, changes in taste, changes in technology, company's values etc.

Market Share

Market share is the percentage or proportion of the total available market or market segment that is being served by a company. McGrath and Micheal (2007:46) argued that "market share is a subset of a market formed by the supply/demand equilibrium for the marketer's specific offering and the level or incidence of market access created by the marketer's distribution channels for that offering and the level of incidence of market recognition (awareness) of a given marketer and/or that marketer's distribution channels as a source of supply for the said offering." Market share is indeed the share of the industry's market potential that is retained by a firm in that industry. It is expressed by the proportion of the market that the firm is able to capture (Neely, 1998). It equally expresses the company's sales revenue realized from that market, or as a company's unit sales volume (in a market) divided by total volume of units sold in that market stated as:

$$\text{Market Share} = \frac{\text{Firm's Sales}}{\text{Total Market Share}}$$

Market share is adjudged one of the best measures of business performance because it abstracts from industry-wide micro-environmental variables (Nwokah and Maclayton, 2006). Other measures include economies of scale, ROI, ROA, profit, sales growth, reputation and increased bargaining power.

While retaining customers, Mack (1996) suggests three ways to follow in increasing market share viz: tailor products, prices and packaging for major customer segments; the management structure of the organization must change so that regional executives play a larger role in responding to local markets and major customer segments; and separate brand families when distribution models are deployed to serve specific segments of the markets. Market share as a measure of business performance is achieved mostly through customer satisfaction and retention. For this to happen, Mack (1996) suggests the following; reinforced customer loyalty by making present customer feel they are part of the business, providing a focal point of differentiation and thus giving prospective customers a reason to choose their brand; optimizing media presence so that the effect of our total communication programmes are greater, and finally brand image should motivate the company and stakeholders. The overview of the Nigeria telecommunication is discussed next.

Telecommunication

Nowadays, it is no longer news that access to and the effectiveness of telecommunication infrastructure enhances business performance. On a micro level, firms are known to have leveraged on telecommunications to build global business empires and at the national level there is a causal link between good telecommunication and economic growth. Telecommunication is the science and technology of sending and receiving information such as sound, visual images or computer data over long distances through the use of electrical, radio, or light signals, using electronic devices to encode the information as signals and to decode the signals as information (the American Heritage Science Dictionary 2009). It also means communication between parties at a distance from one another especially by the use of telephone. The telecom solution expert (2009) defines it as the transmission of information, as words, sounds, or images, usually over great distances, in the form of electromagnetic signals, as by telegraph, telephone, radio, or television. This capability of transmitting or communicating at a distance has made telecommunication an imperative for successful business operation. It is indispensable in negotiating and acquiring inbound resources and moving outbound goods and services. A business needs to communicate with all its publics for different purposes and reasons to remain relevant. The next section discusses the methods and findings of this study.

The study

This explanatory study adopted a correlational type of investigation to ascertain the association between sales integration and business performance in a non-contrived setting. The unit of analysis was the different units/departments of all the telecommunication firms in Nigeria. This cross-sectional survey had a minimal interference with the process of the study (Bryman and Bell, 2003, Nwokah and Ahiauzu, 2008).

The study sample is made up of the major Global System for Mobil communication(GSM) network providers operating on the 900/1800 MHz spectrum, viz; MTN Nigeria, Globacom, Etisalat, and Airtel, (Jidaw.com, 2009; TalkTechAfrica.com, 2013). According to the Front Desk Officer at NCC, these major companies have spectrum specific frequencies and enjoy separate dialing, large market base, different services, and wider reach which in all provide them with distinctive competitive edge. Other minor operators use Code Division Multiple Access, (CDMAs), which employs engineering technique known as Multiplex,(that allows a group of firms to run signals using common channels) in serving their Niches. Bearing in mind that not all category of workers of these major companies are intellectually and officially qualified to understand and attend to the research instrument because some of the issues require knowledge of strategic decisions, the sample elements comprised all the managers or units heads of the 28 departments/basic work units, of the four (4) major and functional telecommunication companies in Nigeria.

In this study structured questionnaire was used as the source of the primary data. The preference for this method is hinged on the survey design of this study. Copies of questionnaire were therefore distributed to the 28 units/ department heads of the four, (4) major telecommunication firms. The unit/department heads are deemed appropriate because of the strategic content of the instrument which could only be responded to by the unit heads because of their positions in the firms.

Reliability

The study instrument was adapted from Paiva *et al*, (2009), Dominique *et al* (2010) and Monagh (2009). For domestication, the instrument was further subjected to test through academic scrutiny and pilot study. The instrument was further subjected to reliability test with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 with a thresh hold of 0.7 Cronbach Alpha set by Nunally's (1978). Table 1 shows the reliability results of the variables

Table 1 Reliability test of sales integration and business performance.

Sales Integration	0.808
Sales Growth	0.765
Market Share	0.744

Source: SPSS 20.0 outputs based on 2014 field survey data

As can be seen in Table 1, all the dimensions used in this study are reliable and thus, are used for further statistical analysis.

Findings with Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive analysis of sales integration is expressed in five items questions. The descriptive study of the five items is discussed next.

Table 2 Sales Integration.

S/N	Items	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Our staff are aware of the responsibilities and requirements of the sales department and its role in accomplishing marketing objectives	4.75	0.44
2	Marketing depends on sales forecast in planning and setting of marketing objectives	4.95	0.22
3	Staff always provide requisite detailed information as and when required by marketing	4.90	0.31
4	Staff communication and cooperation with marketing has led to harmony and improved productivity.	4.95	0.22
5	The adherence to timelines in responding to marketing challenges has enhanced business performance.	4.85	0.37

As can be seen in Table 2, the result of the descriptive analysis on sales integration based on responses from the five items on the research instrument indicates that respondents are aware of the existence of a sales department and the role it plays in accomplishing marketing objectives with the mean score of 4.75. Respondents were of the opinion that marketing depends on sales forecast in planning and setting marketing goals and this accounts for the high mean score of 4.95. Statistics result on the third item indicates that sales staff recognizes the need for prompt information in the success of marketing activities and provides same when required. This accounts for the high mean score of 4.90 of this item. Item four has a very high mean score of 4.95 which is indicative of respondents' consensus that sales department communication and corporation with marketing leads to organizational harmony and improved productivity. Respondents agreed on the fifth item that adherence to timelines in responding to marketing challenges has a critical role to play in achieving business performance. The mean score of 4.85 authenticates this perspective.

Association between Sales Integration and Business Performance

The result of the Spearman Rank Order Correlation on the association between Sales Integration and Business Performance is presented next.

Table 3 Correlation Matrix for Sales Integration and Business Performance

Spearman Rank Order Correlation

			Sales Integration	Market Share	Sales Growth
Spearman's rho	Sales Integration	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.734**	.630**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.003
	Market Share	Correlation Coefficient	.734**	1.000	.479*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.033
	Sales Growth	Correlation Coefficient	.630**	.479*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.033	.

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

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Survey Data, 2014 and SPSS version 20.0 statistical Output

The result shown on table 3 indicates the existence of a significant association between sales integration and market share and sales growth. Sales integration is significantly associated with market share (rho = 734, p = 0.000 < 0.05). And sales integration is also significantly and positively associated with sales growth (rho: 630, p = .003< 0.05). By this result, the association between Sales Integration and the measures of Business Performance is significant and positive at the level of 0.05.

The result of the Spearman Rank Order Correlation in table 3 indicates a significant and positive association between sales integration and all the measures of Business performance of market share and sales growth. The result shows that there is a statistically significant and positive association between sales integration and market share, (r = .734, P = .000 < 0.01). This correlation coefficient represents a high correlation implying marked association. In clear terms, this means that sales integration is a prerequisite for marketing and business success. The sales of an organization translate into revenue for the firm. It is an obvious indication that the activities of the organization are successful, an acceptance by the consuming public without which all the other efforts will be tantamount to nothing. The result clearly shows that the respondents are aware of this all important role of sales and the teeth it gives to marketing efforts through integration.

Table 3 similarly shows the existence of a statistical and significant association between sales integration and sales growth, (r = .630, P = 0.003 < 0.05). The correlation coefficient represents a moderate correlation signifying a substantial association. This means that sales integration with marketing enhances sales growth. When sales activities are properly aligned and fully integrated, it leads to the attraction and retention of the customs of more consumers that conduces to sales growth.

Sales growth indicates the acceptance of the organization's marketing an effort which is generally enhanced by sales integration. Therefore, the integration of sales and marketing holds a great potential for the achievement of market share improvement and sales growth. On this note this study found that:

1. The telecommunication companies in Nigeria understand and appreciate that with the strategy of functional integration of marketing and sales, customers are satisfactorily served arising from better cooperation and communication, leading to increased market share.

2. The telecommunication companies in Nigeria understand and appreciate that the strategy of sales integration offers better customer value that results to sales growth.

Discussion

Significant and Positive Association between Sales Integration and Business Performance

One of the findings of this study is that managers of the Nigerian Telecommunication firms have adopted and are using sales integration strategy as a means of achieving business performance.

This finding implies that sales integration has become functionally relevant and therefore contributes to the achievement of marketing business goals which validates marketing- sales special relationship that has received increasing literary attention (Gaunzi and Troilo, 2007; Hombury, et al 2008). This special relationship between marketing and sales is considered a major component in market driven organizations that result in competitive advantage (Day, 1994). Rouzies et al (2005) had aptly described this relationship as the extent to which activities carried out by the two functions are supportive of each other, and in the views of Song et al, (2000), the extent to which the interface can conduce to general involvement, information quality and harmony in exchange of responsibilities. This marketing/sales integration is strongly noted to be very beneficial because of the successful outcomes of the relationship in terms of business performance (Kyckling, 2010).

In the light of this, the study argues that the essence of sales integration is to drive and enhance the growth of the company market share by ensuring that needs and wants identified by marketing are actually sold as to many customers as possible thus sustaining its competitiveness.

Jensen (2007) and Smith, et al (2006) argue that marketing-sales relationship has been associated with the achievement of market objectives including market share. Kotler et al (2006) stressed that when cooperation between marketing and sales is working smoothly; companies achieve remarkable improvements in performance metrics such as market share and sales circles.

This study reveals that there is a strong and positive association between sales integration and market share potentials which is in tandem with the above perspectives. Rouzies et al (2005, p 115) further contend that "sales – marketing integration is a dynamic process in which the two functional areas create more value for their firms by working together than they would create by working in isolation" our findings point to this reality. The managers of the telecommunication firms have leveraged on the benefits of this integration to push their market share. Fundamentally, marketing has been historically occupied with activities and functions aimed at satisfying the needs of the customer by means of the product and the whole cluster of things associated with creating, delivering and consuming it, while selling is preoccupied with seller's need to convert his product into cash (Cespedes, 1995).

Put in these contexts, the need for sales-marketing integration which the managers have adopted as a strategy becomes as apparent as it is urgent for its celebrated outcomes.

It is in this vein that Guenzi and Troili, (2007:98) noted that "with means of both qualitative and quantitative research it has been indicated that market performance is positively affected by effective marketing-sales relationship". Borders (2006:362) were unequivocal in asserting that "marketing – sales relationship also has an effect on business performance which can be positive, neutral or negative". In our researched case this effect is positive.

Our findings equally established a strong and positive correlation between marketing-sales integration and sales growth. Of course any company that adopts this strategy as the telecommunication firms, the first beneficiary is increment in sales. From a broader definitional perspective, the work of Le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy (2007) elucidates this contention, as it states that, marketing structure is based on major customers and markets and integrates all sales, products and other marketing activities including marketing strategy, distribution and marketing communication, while the function of sales is to stimulate demands for products that translates into sales growth.

The coordination of the sales and marketing function can indeed improve the effectiveness of activities undertaken by these functional areas (Rouzes et al, 2005). In an international surveys of senior executives from a wide range of business to business industries, sales and marketing interface was mentioned as one of the organizational changes that would do the most to improve sales performance and as one of the most important issues facing sales and marketing managers (Miller and Gist, 2003; Rouzes, 2004). This cooperation and interface creates underlying challenges and responsibilities which ensure that sales people get the customer to buy what the company happens to have and the marketers to get the company to have what the customers want to buy (Levitt, 1960). These roles are quite distinct and must be performed in a manner that underscores collaborative endeavours. The substance of this collaborative interface is noted by Cespedes (1995) in asserting that because sales importance of generating cash flows is undeniable, it still defines the substance and outlines most of the companies marketing programme that conduce to sales growth specifically as noted earlier when cooperation between marketing and sales is working smoothly, companies achieve remarkable improvements in performance metrics such as cost of sales, sales cycles and market-entry costs (Krohmer, et al, 2002; Kotler et al, 2006). It is strongly noted in extent literature that the absence of this integration results in damaged business performance, longer sales cycles, missed quotas, bad productivity and bad sales efficiency.

Consequently, sales integration as practiced by the telecommunication firms in Nigeria has the potential and indeed provides the leverage for the achievement of business performance metrics. Most of the operational issues in the organization, such as cash flows, innovation, differentiation, and brand equity and customer retention are affected by marketing and sales and essentially marketing and sales are jointly responsible for generating revenue and profits for the organization (Smith et al, 206; Patterson, 2007).

Based on the foregoing avalanche of literary perspectives and this study's reported empirical realities, it would be pertinent and correct to assert that sales integration strategy results to higher business performance and superior profits (Kotler et al, 2006) arising from sales growth and increase in market share. This study therefore concludes that:

1. As managers of Nigerian Telecommunication firms operate and practice sales integration strategy, their potential for market share increases is greatly enhanced.
2. As the managers of Nigerian telecommunication firms operate and practice sales integration strategy their potential for increased sales growth is enhanced.

Recommendation/ Suggestion for further study

The cardinal purpose of this study was to empirically ascertain the association between Sales Integration and Business Performance in the Nigerian Telecommunication industry.

Pursuant to this research data were appropriately gathered, hypotheses tested, findings made, conclusions drawn and implications stated. Based on these, this study recommends that the managers of Nigerian Telecommunication firms should strengthen their practice of Sales Integration Strategy as a paradigm shift from the isolated functional dependence. The marketing-sales interface facilitates the consummation of business performance metrics. This study can be carried out in other industry; and also, in other culture to ascertain whether the same, similar or different outcomes can be achieved.

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