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CHANNEL MEMBER COOPERATION AND MARKETING PERFORMANCE
(A SURVEY OF SELECTED SOFT DRINK FIRMS IN PORT HARCOURT)

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ABSTRACT

This study examines Channel Member Cooperation and Marketing Performance, surveying selected soft drink firms in Port Harcourt. The population of this study is 298 which included employees and management of the companies in Port Harcourt. The sample size of this study was 170 which were obtained through probability sampling using Yaro Yamene formula. The research questions were analyzed using pie chart descriptive statistical tool while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The finding indicates that there was significant relationship between trust and market share, knowledge and sales volume, commitment and profitability. It was concluded that channel member cooperation has a significant relationship with marketing performance. The study therefore recommends that soft drink firms should embrace the concept of channel member cooperation hence it has a relationship with marketing performance.

Key Words: Channel, Member, Cooperation, Marketing and Performance

INTRODUCTION

Channel Member Cooperation simply means that two or more independent companies work jointly to plan and execute supply chain operations with greater success than acting in isolation or alone. Many researchers have proposed equivalent definitions to the collaborative supply Chain, a particular degree of relationship among channel members as a means to share risks and rewards that result in higher business performance that could be achieved by the firms individually. Bowersox (1990) reports that channel member alliances among different firms or organisations offer opportunities in dramatic way to improve customer service which is an index of marketing performance and at the same time, lower distribution and storage operating costs. Narver and Anderson (1996) define a collaborative supply chain as the cooperation among independent but related firms to share resources and capabilities to meet their customers' most extraordinary needs.

Although cooperation is based on a mutual objective, cooperation is a self-interested process in which firms will participate only if it contributes to their own survival and wellbeing. Each member seeks to achieve individual benefits such as eliminating redundant functions, reducing transactions, achieving lower inventory, increasing responsiveness and so forth. Nevertheless, the focus of a mutual objective should be on the outcome and experience of joint offers to end customers. By sharing and leveraging on their resources and capabilities, channel members can exploit profit-making opportunities that they cannot create alone, the logistics capabilities for competitive advantage as delivery reliability, post-sale customer service, responsiveness to target market, delivery speed, presale customer service widespread distribution coverage and low total cost distribution. In return for its contribution, each member of the collaboration shares in the resulting better sales and profits, (Kotler, 2011).

However, most researches have dealt with channel member cooperation and conflict, power, influence of power, in other industries but i think none has done any study on Channel Member Cooperation and Marketing Performance in the Soft Drink Industry in Rivers State. This theoretical gap that exists is the reason for this study. Therefore, this study is timely and expedient because of its benefits.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

Based on the statement of problem the following objectives sufficed:-

1. To determine if trust affects market share of soft drink industry.
2. To determine if knowledge sharing affects sales volume.
3. To determine if commitment of channel members affect profitability of the soft drink industry.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the objective of the study, the following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent does trust affect market share?
2. To what extent does knowledge sharing affect sales volume?
3. To what extent does commitment affect profitability?

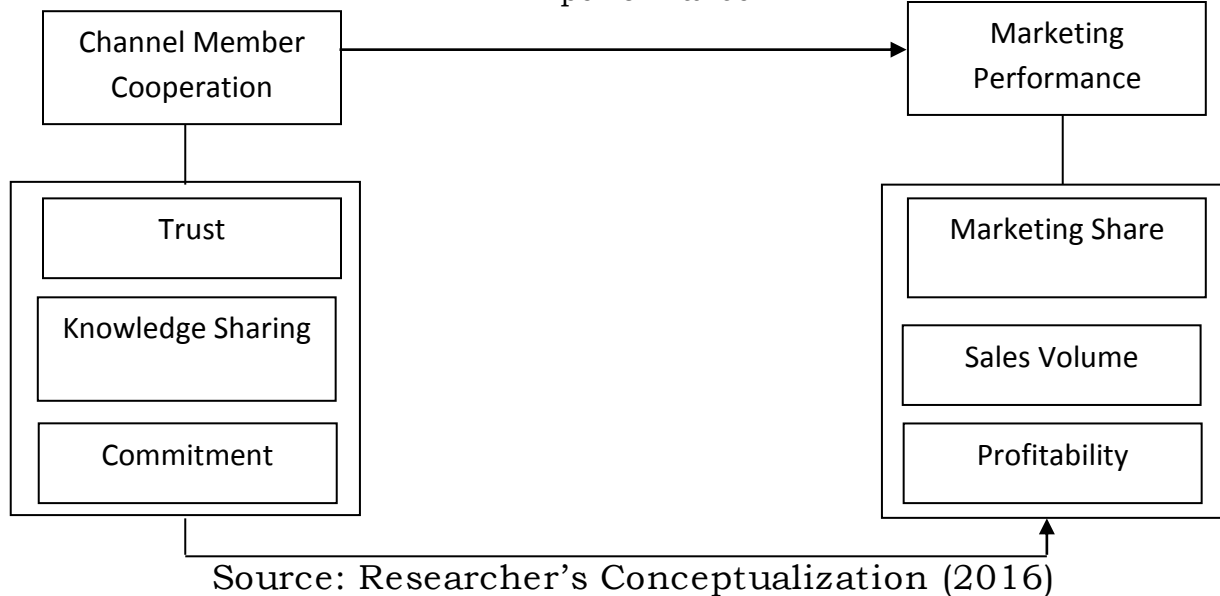
RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between trust and market share.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between knowledge sharing and sales volume.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between commitment and profitability.

Figure 1.1: Operational Conceptual Framework
On the association between channel member cooperation and marketing performance

**LITERATURE REVIEW****Introduction****Channel Member Cooperation Performance.**

Kale (1996), defines channel dependency as the degree to which the target firm needs to maintain a relationship with the source in order to achieve its desired goals. It was further defined by Buchanan, (1992) as the extent to which resources for which there are few of these channels require a substantial level of cooperation to perform the specific tasks necessary to make products and services available. Previous research by Frazier, (1999) has suggested that dependency within relationships is shaped by the exchange of marketing resources. In his study, these resources are defined as various role performances and role performance represents how well a firm performs its expected role in a channel relationship. The level of channel dependency is based on the perceived quality of the manufacturer's role performances or marketing services that support dealer operations, the dealer's available alternatives, and the subsequent financial impact that these performance levels have on dealer operations. These dependency measures represent the foundation for the manufacturer's power, i.e. the ability to influence. Channels members will depend on a manufacturer as long as the manufacturer maintains a differential advantage in the services these members require.

By using channel members to serve their target markets, manufacturers become dependent upon these institutions for the efficient and effective performance of marketing functions. Since channel members can significantly influence a firm's success or failure in the long run, manufacturers are becoming increasingly concerned about the level of performance of the institutions that comprise their marketing channels. Moreover, the level of performance attained by channel members is pivotal if a firm is to achieve a differential advantage (Frazier and Rody, 1991). Past research has not provided an adequate understanding of this phenomenon as it applies to marketing channels. Research on marketing channel performance has been secondary in emphasis and little is known about what influences channel members to perform effectively in selling the products of the firms they represent (Frazier and Gill 1989). This may be partly attributed to the absence of a general agreement over the definition of performance. Terms such as effectiveness and productivity have been used interchangeably, which has made the exact specification of performance difficult. Measuring channel member performance is further complicated because some aspects of channel performance are difficult to quantify and published standards are not available for comparison.

Channel member performance as "the degree to which the channel member engages in behavior that contributes to the fulfillment of the channel leader's objectives". A periodic assessment of channel member performance is crucial to ensure that the marketing channel is progressing towards its goals and objectives. According to the Resource-based theory, a firm's competitive advantage is a function of its valuable, rare and inimitable resource (Barney, 1996). For intermediaries, such resources are often intangible, embedded and knowledge-based such as experience and knowledge of the market, and include skills such as negotiation skills and skills in integrating intra-organizational and inter-organizational activities.

MARKETING PERFORMANCE

Marketing performance are those indices that defines a performing or a successful marketing programme. The indices includes: Customers Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty, Customer Retention, Market Share, Profitability, Sales Volume etc. These indices are very salient if an organization has to remain afloat, without these indicators, it will be difficult to measure or to have metrics of performing organizations.

INDICES OF MARKETING PERFORMANCE

Customers Satisfaction: Kotler (2000), sees customer satisfaction as key to marketing or marketing or organizational performance. Customer satisfaction is very intricate in that it can make or mar an organization's effort. Customer satisfaction is mutually exclusive with profitability, loyalty, market share, retention etc.

Customer Loyalty: A customer does not automatically qualify as a series customer once he or she relates with the company. The story of any relationships starts from the beginning. A customer is said to be loyal when he/she is fully counted to a particular product or brand of a company (Anyawu, 2013).

Customer Retention: The ability of a company to retain its customers determines the degree of customer satisfaction, stability of its market share and the volatility of its marketing expenditure. Gordon (1999) stated that a key principle of relationship marketing and performance index is the retention of customers through 'waging means and practices to ensure repeat purchases.

Market Share: This is also another metrics of marketing performance. It defines or stipulate share of the company's product within an identified target market. It is through the level of market share that will determine the leadership of the market.

Profitability: This is measure by profit after tax (PAT) or it is sales/ turnover less expenses. The essence or the hallmark of any business is to make profit. This profit defines a performing organization.

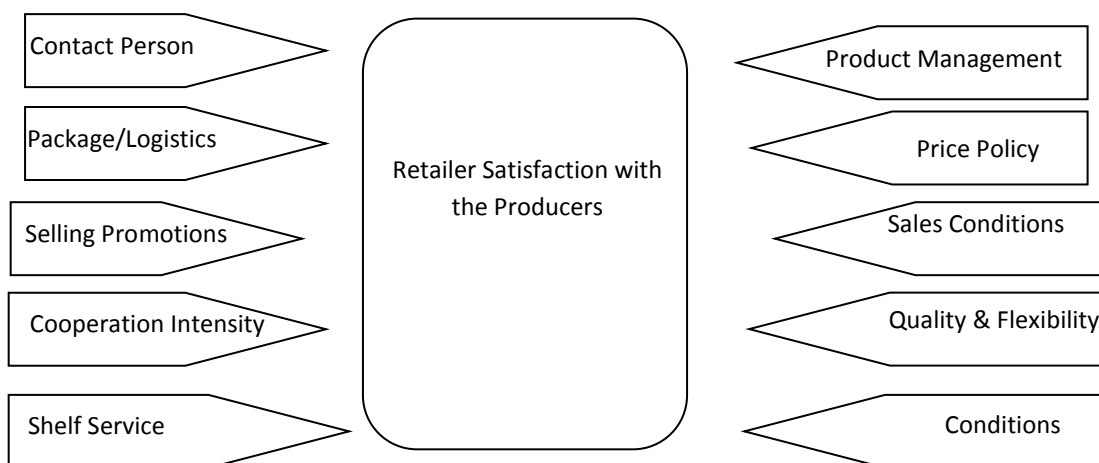
Sales Volume: The volume of sales or turnover is also a key in determining how well an organization is performing. The higher the sales volume, the better the performance (Anyawu, 2013).

FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE THE SATISFACTION OF THE RETAILERS WITH THE PRODUCERS

The wishes, desires and preferences of its current and potential customers are nowadays the heart of the activities of management and marketing (Schellhase, Hardock, Ohlwein, 2000). In order to secure the long – term success of a company, it is important to have satisfied customers. For this reason, customer satisfaction measurement gained more importance both in the specialized literature and in practice. Although satisfaction is a very important issue both for producers and retailers, in practice there are more studies about the satisfaction of the final consumers (Schellhase, Hardock, Ohlwein, 2000). In this sense the satisfaction between the members of the distribution channel has been neglected.

The key question in the satisfaction measurement is about the factors which influence the satisfaction of the channel members. In a survey of Schelhase, Hardock, Ohlwein in the period from January to March, 1995, several large retail companies (Edeka, Metro Rewe, Spar, Tengelmann and Others) were analyzed and there were identified ten factors which influence the satisfaction of the retailers with their producers (Schellhase, Hardock, Ohlwein, 2000). These factors are listed in figure 1

Figure 2: Factors which Influence the Retailer Satisfaction



Source: Adopted After: Schellhase, Hardock, Ohlwein, 2000

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According to this study the main factor which influences the retailer satisfaction is the contact person with its skills and its product and market knowledge. This was stated by 24.1% of the respondents. With a percentage of 11.8%, the packaging and logistics are the second important factor which influences the retailer satisfaction. It can be observed that rapid and reliable reaction of the producers is valued by the retailers. The next important factor is the organization of the sales promotions with 8.3%. Very important at this factor is the good plan and the organization of sales promotions which lead to higher sales volumes. On the fourth place, with 6.3% is the cooperation. Retailers appreciate the smooth course of the process, which can be assured by good cooperation's. Other factors are the shelf service, product management, pricing and contracting, marketing conditions, quality and flexibility of services and conditions (Schellhase, Hardock, Ohlwein, 2000).

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study seeks to explain the methodology adopted in this research work. The study will highlight the manner in which this work will find solutions to the research problems and questions. The population consisted of all the management and employees of Nigerian Bottling Company and 7up. A total of 298 respondents consisting of 110 employees, 128 channel members and 60 management staff. A 4point Likert Scale of Great Extent (GE), Considerable Extent (CE), Moderate Extent (ME), and Little Extent (LE). Spearman Brown Prophecy Formula was used to get a reliability coefficient of 0.81.

The sampling technique to be adopted was probability sampling techniques. But since the population is large, the Yaro Yamene formula was adopted to get the sample size. The formula is seen below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where

- n = Sample Size Sought
- N = Population Size
- l = Theoretical Constant
- e = Level of Significance (0.05)

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{298}{1 + 298(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{298}{1 + 298 (0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{298}{1.745}$$

$$n = 170$$

The sample size will be 170

The data collected was analyzed using two quantitative tools. The simple percentage and the Pearson's Product Moment Collation Coefficient. The formula for PPMC is given as follows:

$$r = \sqrt{\frac{N\sum XY - \sum X\sum Y}{[\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2] [N\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

$$t = r \sqrt{\frac{n - 2}{1 - (r^2)}}$$

Where

r	=	Pearsonian Statistics
N	=	Number of Observation
X	=	Dependent Variable
Y	=	Independent Variables
n = 2	=	Degree of freedom

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Data Administration And Retrieved Rate

Respondents	No. Distributed	No Retrieved	No. Retrieved	Percentage Retrieved
Employees	110	100	10	62.5%
Management	60	60	-	37.25%
Total	170	160	10	100

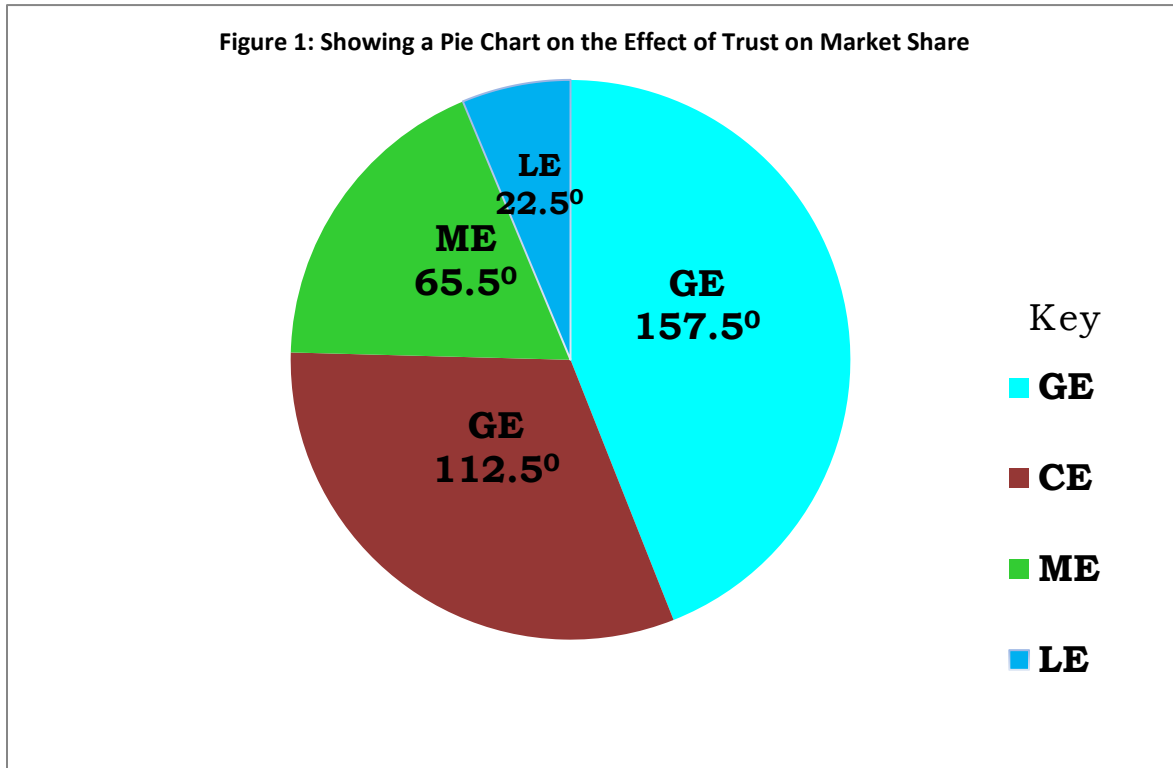
Source: Survey Data, 2016.

From table 1 above, a total of 170 copies of questionnaires were distributed to both Management and employees. Management returned 100 which represent 62.5% and employees returned 60 which represent 37.25%.

Where:	GE	=	Great Extent
	CE	=	Considerable Extent
	ME	=	Moderate Extent
	LE	=	Little Extent

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Research Question (One) 1 The extent trust affect market share.



$$GE = \frac{70}{160} \times \frac{360}{1} = 157.5^{\circ}$$

$$CE = \frac{50}{160} \times \frac{360}{1} = 112.5^{\circ}$$

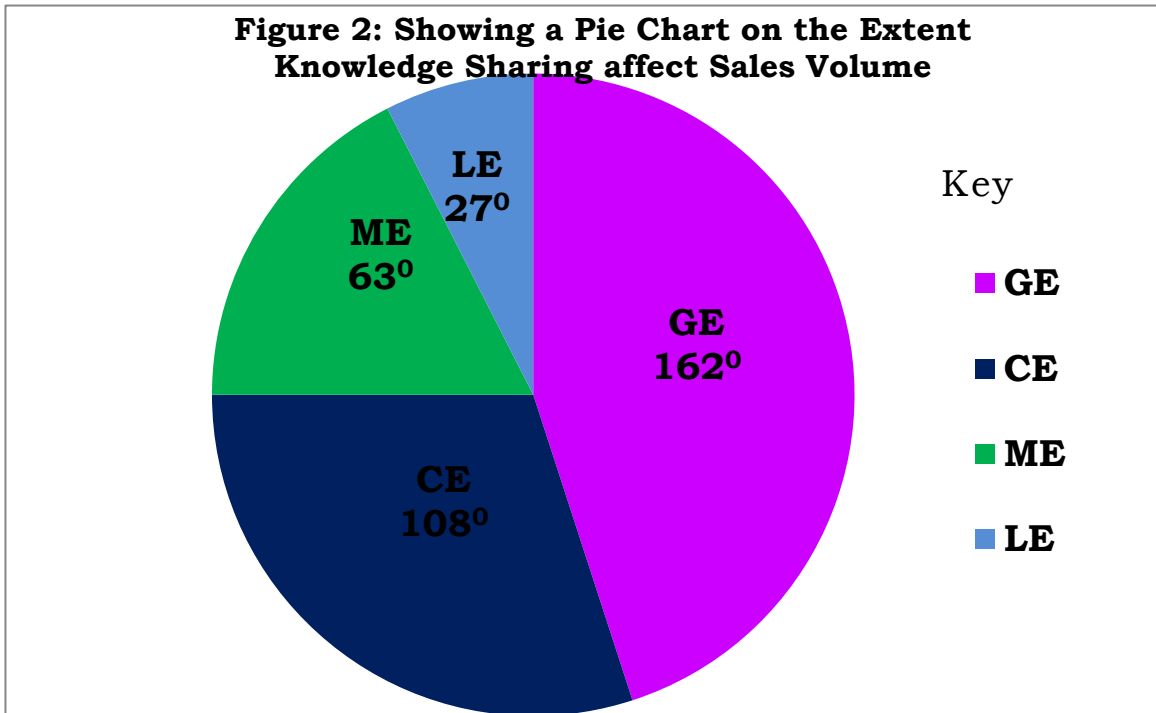
$$ME = \frac{30}{160} \times \frac{360}{1} = 67.5^{\circ}$$

$$LE = \frac{10}{160} \times \frac{360}{1} = 22.5^{\circ}$$

The figure .1 above showed that out of 160 respondents sampled, 70 which represent 157.5⁰ said that trust affect market share to a great extent. 50 which represent 112.5⁰ said it is to a considerable extent. 30 which represent 67.5⁰ said it is to a moderate extent and 10 which represent 22.5⁰ Said it is to a Little extent.

RESEARCH QUESTION (TWO) 2

The extent Knowledge Sharing affect Sale Volume.



$$GE = \frac{72}{160} \times \frac{360}{1} = 162^{\circ}$$

$$CE = \frac{48}{160} \times \frac{360}{1} = 108^{\circ}$$

$$ME = \frac{28}{160} \times \frac{360}{1} = 63^{\circ}$$

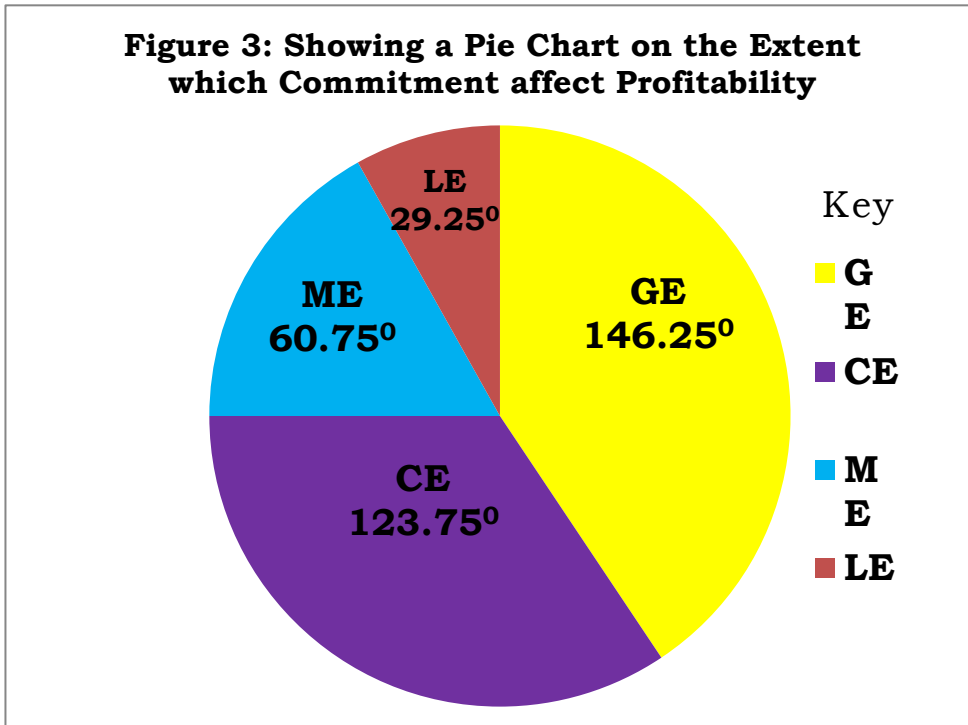
$$LE = \frac{12}{160} \times \frac{360}{1} = 27^{\circ}$$

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From the figure 2 above showed that out of 160 respondents sampled, 72 which represent 162⁰ said knowledge sharing affect sales volume to a great extent. 48 which represent 108⁰ said it is to a considerable extent. 28 which represent 63⁰ said it is to a moderate extent, while 12 which represent 27⁰ Said it is to a Little extent.

Research Question (Three) 3

The extent Commitment affects Profitability



$$\begin{aligned}
 GE &= \frac{65}{160} \times \frac{360}{1} = 142.25^0 \\
 CE &= \frac{55}{160} \times \frac{360}{1} = 123.75^0 \\
 ME &= \frac{27}{160} \times \frac{360}{1} = 60.75^0 \\
 LE &= \frac{13}{160} \times \frac{360}{1} = 29.25^0
 \end{aligned}$$

From the figure 3 above indicates that out of 160 respondents sampled, 65 which represent 146.25⁰ said commitments affect profitability to a great extent. 55 which represent 123.75⁰ said it is to a considerable extent. 27 which represent 60.75⁰ said it is to a moderate extent, and 13 which represent 29.25⁰, said it is to a Little extent.

TEST OF HYPOTHESES

Null hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant relationship between trust and market share.

Alternate hypothesis (H_A): There is no significant relationship between trust and market share.

Statistical tool: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

Level of significance: 0.05.

Degree of freedom: $n - 2$

TABLE 2 SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRUST AND MARKET SHARE

S/NO	EMPLOYEES X	MANAGEMENT Y	XY	X²	Y²
1	30	20	600	900	400
2	20	15	300	400	225
3	10	8	80	100	64
4	15	7	105	225	49
5	15	6	90	225	36
6	10	4	40	100	16
	100	60	1215	1950	790

Source: Survey Data, 2016

$$r = \frac{N\sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{(N\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2)(N\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2)}}$$

$$r = \frac{6(1215) - (100)(60)}{\sqrt{(6(1950) - (100)^2)(6(790) - (60)^2)}}$$

$$r = \frac{7290 - 6000}{\sqrt{(11,700 - 10,000)(4740 - 3600)}}$$

$$r = \frac{1290}{\sqrt{(1700)(1140)}}$$

$$r = \frac{1290}{\sqrt{1938000}}$$

$$r = \frac{1290}{1392.120}$$

$$= 0.926$$

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$$t = r \sqrt{\frac{n-1}{1-r^2}}$$

$$t = \sqrt{\frac{6-2}{1-(0.926)^2}}$$

$$t = \sqrt{\frac{4}{1-0.857}}$$

$$t = \sqrt{\frac{4}{0.143}}$$

$$t = \sqrt{27.97}$$

$$t = 0.926 \times 5.288 = 4.896$$

t – Calculated is 4.896 and at degree of freedom of 4 and at 0.05 level of significance, the t – critical is 2.77.

Decision Rule: Since the t – calculated is greater than the t – critical, we therefore reject Ho, and accept the H_A, (t – calculated is greater than t – critical).

Conclusion: Therefore is significant relationship between trust and market share.

Null hypothesis (H₀₂): There is no significant relationship between knowledge sharing and sales volume.

Alternate hypothesis (H_{A2}): There is no significant relationship between knowledge sharing and sales volume.

Statistical tool: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and t-test is applied when n is less than 30

Level of significance: 0.05.

Degree of freedom: n – 2

TABLE 3: SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND SALES VOLUME

S/NO	EMPLOYEES X	MANAGEMENT Y	XY	X ²	Y ²
1	30	20	600	900	400
2	20	15	300	400	225
3	10	8	80	100	64
4	15	7	105	225	49
5	25	10	250	625	100
n – 5	100	60	1215	1950	790

Source: Survey Data, 2016

$$r = \frac{N\sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{(N\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2)(N\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2)}}$$

$$r = \frac{5(1215) - (100)(60)}{\sqrt{(5(1950) - (100)^2)(5(790) - (60)^2)}}$$

$$r = \frac{6075 - 6000}{\sqrt{(9750 - 10,000)(3950 - 3600)}}$$

$$r = \frac{75}{\sqrt{(-250)(350)}}$$

$$r = \frac{75}{\sqrt{87,500}}$$

$$r = \frac{75}{295}$$

$$= 0.2540$$

$$t = r \sqrt{\frac{n-1}{1-r^2}}$$

$$t = \sqrt{\frac{2-2}{1-(0.2542)^2}}$$

$$t = \sqrt{\frac{3}{1-0.0646}}$$

$$t = \sqrt{\frac{3}{0.9353}}$$

$$t = \sqrt{6.2075}$$

$$t = \underline{2.4914}$$

t – Calculated is 2.4914 and at degree of freedom of 3 and at 0.05 level of significance, the t – critical is 2.44.

Decision Rule: We reject H_0 , and accept the alternative. Hence, t – calculated is greater than t – critical.

Conclusion: We therefore, conclude that there is significant relationship between knowledge sharing and sales volume

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Null hypothesis (Ho₃): There is no significant relationship between commitment and profitability.

Alternate hypothesis (H_{A3}): There is no significant relationship between commitment and profitability.

Statistical tool: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient

Level of significance: 0.05.

Degree of freedom: n – 2

TABLE 3: SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMITMENT AND PROFITABILITY

S/NO	EMPLOYEES X	MANAGEMENT Y	XY	X ²	Y ²
1	30	20	600	900	400
2	20	15	300	400	225
3	10	8	80	100	64
4	15	7	105	225	49
5	15	6	90	225	36
6	10	4	40	100	16
	100	60	1215	1950	790

Source: Survey Data, 2016

$$r = \frac{N\sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{(N\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2)(N\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2)}}$$

$$r = \frac{6(1215) - (100)(60)}{\sqrt{(6(1950) - (100)^2)(6(790) - (60)^2)}}$$

$$r = \frac{7290 - 6000}{\sqrt{(11,700 - 10,000)(4740 - 3600)}}$$

$$r = \frac{1290}{\sqrt{(1700)(1140)}}$$

$$r = \frac{1290}{\sqrt{1938000}}$$

$$r = \frac{1290}{1392.120}$$

$$= 0.926$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 t &= r \sqrt{\frac{n-1}{1-r^2}} \\
 t &= \sqrt{\frac{6-2}{1-(0.926)^2}} \\
 t &= \sqrt{\frac{4}{1-0.0857}} \\
 t &= \sqrt{\frac{4}{0.143}} \\
 t &= \sqrt{27.97} \\
 t &= 0.926 \times 5.288 = 4.896
 \end{aligned}$$

t – Calculated is 4.896 and at degree of freedom of 4 and at 0.05 level of significance, the t – critical is 2.77.

Decision Rule: Since t – calculated is greater than t – critical, we therefore reject Ho, and accept the H_A.

Conclusion: There is significant relationship between commitment and profitability.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Trust affect market share.
2. Knowledge sharing affects sales volume.
3. Commitment affects profitability.
4. Channel member synergy affects marketing performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Soft drinks industry should embrace channel member cooperation strategies hence they increase marketing performance indices.
2. Trust should be intensified hence they impact on market share.
3. Knowledge sharing should be made a focal point, hence it aids in increase sales volume.
4. There should be more commitment by the channel members hence it helps in profitability.

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