

THE IMPACT OF MARKET, LEARNING, AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATIONS ON NIGERIAN SMES' PERFORMANCE

Kabiru Sa'ad Sa'id^a, Asmat-Nizam Abdul-Talib^b, Rohail Hassan^b

^aDepartment of Business Administration, Federal University Dutse, Nigeria

^bOthman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Drawing on the resource-based view theory, the present study investigates the impact of market, learning, and entrepreneurial orientations on Nigerian SMEs' performance. A cross-sectional questionnaire technique was applied to gather data. The surveys were distributed to 551 owners and managers of SMEs in Kano, Nigeria. A total of 271 usable responses were used for the final data analysis. The results showed that learning and entrepreneurial orientations have a significant effect on Nigerian SMEs' performance. However, market orientation was found not significant in influencing the performance of SMEs. Managers could use the finding in formulating strategies of their SMEs, especially by demonstrating learning and entrepreneurial orientations.

Keywords: Strategic Orientations, Market Orientation, Learning Orientation, Entrepreneurial Orientation, SMEs performance, Nigeria.

Paper Type: Research paper

INTRODUCTION

Omonona et al. (2024) defined small and medium enterprises as registered economic activities characterized by size/category, employment, and income or turnover. The enterprises that employ 10-49 employees and have a turnover between 25 and 100 million are considered small, while enterprises that employ 50-199 employees and generate a turnover between 100 and 1000 million are regarded as medium-sized. Additionally, the turnover must be based on Nigerian currency (Sa'id et al., 2019; SMEDAN, 2013). Previous studies reported the contribution of SMEs in providing employment, income distribution, and promoting the economic fortune of the country (Kabir et al., 2025). Specifically in Nigeria, SMEs accounted for more than 96.9% of the total enterprises, provided about 87% of the employment, and contributed a significant proportion to GDP at 46% as well as export earnings at 6.21% (Kabir et al., 2025; Pwc, 2024; Sa'id et al., 2025).

However, due to economic globalization and increased competition among enterprises, for SMEs to survive, strategic orientations are becoming important and most relevant (Hernández-Linares et al., 2018; Jeong et al., 2019). Recent studies revealed that enterprises have focused on multiple strategies to overcome strong competition and globalisation effect (Kabir et al., 2025; Majeed et al., 2025; Yuwono & Lena, 2025). It has been established that for an enterprise to prosper, it must harmonize its processes to establish a market position and depend on its resources or capabilities to fit the internal and external business environment to attain competitive benefits and business efficiency (Rajeh et al., 2024; Irwin et al., 2018). To realise these objectives, enterprises need to concentrate on their strategic orientations. This is because the strategic orientation offers a strategic direction for the organisation to manage its operations to attain better performance (Arzubiaga et al., 2018; Majeed et al., 2025).

SMEs' contribution to sustainable economic development largely depends on their ability to adopt multiple strategic orientations (Hyder & Lussier, 2016; Ullah, 2019; Wang, 2016). However, despite their significant contribution to the socio-economic well-being, they still lack strategic orientation (Marques et al., 2023; Ra'ed et al., 2018). In this regard, much research has been carried out to investigate the factors of SME performance (Distanont & Khongmalai, 2018; Eggers et al., 2018; Samba et al., 2018), including strategic orientation. Specifically, studies have considered the influence of strategic orientation dimensions, such as market, learning, and entrepreneurial orientation, on SMEs' performance (Kajalo & Lindblom, 2015; Ra'ed et al., 2018). However, such studies tended to consider strategic orientation separately (Irwin et al., 2018; Smirnova et al., 2018), limiting our knowledge of how different dimensions could influence SME performance in combination. Also, the integration of various dimensions in a single model has practical implications for SMEs to employ a synergistic view of the market, learning, and entrepreneurial orientation on SMEs' performance (Aloulou, 2019; Lonial & Carter, 2015; Pacheco et al., 2024). Recently, studies have examined the dimensions simultaneously within one framework (Al-Ansaari et al., 2015; Hakala & Kohtamäki, 2011; Ra'ed et al., 2018). However, the number of such studies is small. Hence, this research adds to the current literature on the role of strategic orientation dimensions in enhancing SME performance.

Research on strategic orientation tends to be conducted in large enterprises (Real, Roldán, & Leal, 2014) and developed countries (Pacheco et al., 2024; Smirnova et al., 2018). Such research raises the issue of applicability and generalisability of their findings to SMEs and those located in developing countries because of SMEs resource limitations (Rajeh et al., 2024; Su et al., 2015) and differences in culture and infrastructure that could affect enterprise behaviour and operation (Blazkova & Ondrej, 2018; Kajalo & Lindblom, 2015) in economies at different stages of advancement. Additionally, studies on strategic orientation have ignored many strategically essential countries, such as Brazil and India, as well as Sub-Saharan Africa (Gupta & Batra, 2016; Wales et al., 2013), and the contribution of the integrated effect of strategic orientations on the survival of enterprises in developing countries is yet to be understood. Hence, our knowledge of the role of different contexts in determining SME performance and behaviour can be enhanced, since studies addressing the factors of SMEs' performance in developing countries (Ra'ed et al., 2018) are limited despite most business activities is dominated by SMEs, our research is warranted.

Informed by the theoretical gaps in the existing body of knowledge, our study is conducted to achieve the following: (1) to investigate the impact of market orientation on SME performance, (2) to examine the impact of learning orientation on SME performance, and (3) to examine the influence of entrepreneurial orientation on SME performance. In addition to the theoretical significance, the study findings are expected to assist owners/managers in formulating and implementing different strategic orientations that may help them enhance their organisational performance. Toward this end, the paper is arranged as follows. Next comes a review of the related literature, followed by a depiction of the method and materials employed in this study. Next, the analysis and findings are presented. The discussion on the findings, the research implications, the research limitations, and suggestions for further research are offered next.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Resource-based Theory

The conceptual framework of this study is developed on the resource-based view (RBV) (Barney, 1986, 1991; Penrose, 1959). According to RBV, organisational resources that are valuable, rare, and difficult to duplicate could help enterprises to be competitive (Barney, 1991). Particularly, the advocates of RBV assert that idiosyncratic resources could affect an enterprise's performance if they satisfy two criteria. First, the resources must be valuable to enable the enterprise to have a competitive advantage. Second, not every enterprise in the same competitive environment has resources. The enterprise's ability to combine these strategic resources will put it ahead of its competitors. This research posits that strategic orientations, namely, market, learning, and entrepreneurial orientations, can be regarded as valuable assets for SMEs. Strategic orientation means the main method of identifying the actions that an enterprise takes to attain financial and non-financial performance and competitive benefit (Karami & Tang, 2019; Lonial & Carter, 2015; Ra'ed et al., 2018).

Many SMEs face financial and human resources constraints (Al-Hakimi et al., 2023; Su et al., 2015; Wang, 2016). Those in developing countries must also deal with a turbulent business environment (Engelen et al., 2015). However, the synergistic impact of strategic orientations could help SMEs overcome financial and human resource constraints and the dynamic environment by identifying and exploiting opportunities that could help SMEs achieve superior performance. Applying RBV theory to support this study has concurred with prior studies (Jiang & Liu, 2018; Soltani et al., 2018). Therefore, this study argues that strategic orientations, namely market, learning, and entrepreneurial orientation, are important internal resources that could enhance the performance of SMEs.

Furthermore, RBV philosophy advocated that market-oriented approaches are rare, valuable, and difficult to copy. That's a firm's own skills that make it hard for others to imitate and become a competitive advantage. RBV believes that market orientation increases firm performance (Aklilu & Kero, 2025; Kiessling et al., 2016). Similarly, learning orientation is a set of tools used to introduce new products in response to environmental change (Lonial & Carter, 2015) learning orientation boosts performance and reveals new business ideas (Real et al., 2014). Applying RBV

learning orientation is a valuable, rare, scarce, and non-substitutable resource that gives a competitive benefit to a firm (Barney, 1991).

Equally, entrepreneurial orientation is valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable. That firm possesses competencies that have given it a competitive benefit. Hence, entrepreneurial orientation improves SME performance through the lens of RBV. Seconding the resource-based view, it gave firms a competitive advantage through the practice of proactive innovation, risk-taking, nature of the enterprises. Aklilu and Kero (2025) asserts that a strategic orientation method helps a firm attain its business objectives, grasp its dream, and gain competitive benefits. Strategic orientation increases performance and upholds competition, according to several studies (Imran et al. 2019).

Studies have either considered each dimension individually or in combination to investigate the impact on SME performance. Scholars argue that combining multiple strategic orientations could have a substantial influence on the performance of enterprises (Gruber-Muecke & Hofer, 2015; Kajalo & Lindblom, 2015). However, past studies have reported mixed results of the effect of individual or multiple strategic orientations on SME performance. Some studies discovered that multiple strategic orientations have a direct impact on performance (Kropp et al., 2006; Ra'ed et al., 2018; Susanto et al., 2023). Meanwhile, some studies found that the combination of strategic orientations has no substantial positive effect on performance (Lonial & Carter, 2015; Voss & Voss, 2000). Instead, each strategic orientation influences performance differently (Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019).

Furthermore, in this study, market orientation was described as firm intensity to obtain, spread and respond to customers' information through the activities of the customer and competition orientation, as well as inter-functional coordination (Ra'ed et al. (2018). Equally, learning orientation refers to a firm's ability to adapt new knowledge through the activities of commitment to learning, open-mindedness, and shared vision to achieve superior performance (Sinkula, Baker, & Noordewier, 1997). In addition, to focusing on customer needs through monitoring competitors' actions and engaging with customers to learn what an enterprise could effectively offer to the market requires entrepreneurship accordingly, the study viewed entrepreneurial orientation as the approach, practices and decision-making system directed to firms' intensity to identify novel opportunities through activities of innovation proactiveness and risk-taking (Mamun et al., 2018). This study considered that integration of critical strategic variables could improve SMEs' performance.

Market Orientation and SMEs Performance

The basic tenet of market orientation is the belief that the key to business success depends on the enterprise's resolution on its capability to recognise and meet the desires, wants, and aspirations of consumers in the target markets (Zakaria & Abdul-Talib, 2010; Sa'id, Talib, & Hassan 2019). Nakos et al. (2019) stress that market orientation is also a culture in which an enterprise attempts to offer superior value to the market by emphasising buyer needs and lasting profit. Additionally, Ishii and Kikumori (2024), market orientation has directly related to the provision and maintenance of superior value to customers, which, in turn, could achieve better performance.

Market orientation is fundamental to the successful execution of marketing strategies since the present turbulent environment requires that enterprises constantly offer higher quality goods and services to consumers (Kiessling et al., 2016; Sa'id, Talib, & Hassan, 2019a). As such, a market-oriented enterprise could be prosperous since it can outshine competitors because of its capability to quickly identify and react to the buyer's needs via the efficient management of its resources (Creek et al., 2023; Day, 1994). Chuang (2018), posits that the conduit of creating superior value to customers depends on the enterprise's ability to identify unsatisfied customer needs and use available internal resources and skills to create products that will satisfy such needs ahead of opponents. Based on this paradigm, it is considered that market orientation is an organisational resource that could be difficult to duplicate (Hernández-Linares et al., 2018). Similarly, Mamun et al. (2018) suggest that the difficulty of duplicating market orientation explains why many enterprises could not develop and maintain a market-oriented culture. RBV philosophy advocates that market-oriented approaches are rare, valuable, and difficult to copy. That's a firm's own skills that made it hard for others to imitate and become a competitive advantage. RBV believes that market orientation increases firm performance (Aklilu & Kero, 2025; Barney, 1991).

Many empirical studies found that being market-oriented substantially enhances business performance (Abdul Talib, 2005; Al-Hakimi et al., 2023). In summary, market orientation has a significant effect on enterprise performance (Gruber-Muecke & Hofer, 2015; Kirca et al., 2005; Ra'ed et al., 2018). Hence, the following hypothesis is offered.

H1: Market orientation has a significant positive influence on SME performance.

Learning Orientation and SMEs Performance

Learning orientation refers to a commitment to learning shared vision and open-mindedness, which could improve the deployment of important capabilities and resources (Kuivalainen & Cadogan, 2004; Marques et al., 2023; Sinkula et al., 1997). Scholars consider learning orientation an important strategic orientation that SMEs could utilise to attain a competitive market position (Farrell et al., 2008; Salavou et al., 2004; Slater & Narver, 1995). Real et al. (2014) contend that learning orientation drives the performance of SMEs even though past studies tended to suggest the impact of learning on performance among multinational companies. Considering the size of SMEs and their limited financial capacity, they could not invest in R&D activities. SMEs could only generate new knowledge by focusing on commitment to learning shared vision and open-mindedness (Eshlaghy & Maatofi, 2011; Marques et al., 2023).

Learning orientation allows an enterprise to outshine competitors since it is a valuable resource (Barney, 1991). Learning orientation is valuable to the enterprise since it could identify environmental opportunities and challenges by monitoring environmental changes. For instance, a learning-oriented enterprise could effectively comprehend changes in consumer needs ahead of its opponents (Day, 1994; Eris & Ozmen, 2012). This could lead to greater outcomes, such as new product development, higher customer retention, and an increase in growth and profit (Karpacz & Wojcik-Karpacz, 2024; Slater & Narver, 1995). The rareness of learning is another important attribute because most business enterprises are incapable of employing generative

learning, i.e., leaning that creates a new idea. This is because they usually emphasise adaptive learning, i.e., learning within routine organisational activities (Slater & Narver, 1995). In addition, learning orientation could be difficult to imitate because effective enterprise learning has social complexity. Specifically, learning orientation is a conduit of maintaining competitive benefit since it cannot be substituted easily. When competitors might try to imitate the learning-oriented enterprise, the complexity of enterprise learning indicates the hardness of engendering tactically the same valuable assets (Hernández-Linares et al., 2018). Therefore, RBV could be applied to describe learning orientation on firm performance since it is recognized as valuable, rare, scarce, and non-substitutable resources. Similarly, past study stresses that assets or resources that are valuable, rare, and difficult to imitate provide competitive benefits to the enterprise, even if they could be substituted (Barney, 1986, 1991; Hernández-Linares et al., 2018).

Real et al. (2014) and Karpacz and Wojcik-Karpacz (2024), maintains that learning orientation is a strategic resource that could enhance the generation of new knowledge and capabilities within the enterprise. Since SMEs are closely associated with their customers, they could easily learn what customers need and respond to those needs (Eshlaghy & Maatofi, 2011). Therefore, learning orientation is a mechanism to maintain competitive benefits and performance in a turbulent business environment (Eshlaghy & Maatofi, 2011; Nnko et al., 2024). Moreover, it has been found that learning orientation has a direct influence on performance (Frank et al., 2012; Karimi & Ahmadpour Daryani, 2017). Hence, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H2: Learning orientation has a significant positive influence on SMEs' performance

Entrepreneurial Orientation and SME Performance

Entrepreneurial orientation is a strategic orientation that focuses on the decision-making process that gives the enterprise a strategic direction (Hakala & Kohtamäki, 2011). Entrepreneurial orientation refers to the enterprise's strategy, procedures, and practices used to give value to the products and services to satisfy customer demands, which could increase performance (Ferri et al., 2009; Mamun et al., 2018). In entrepreneurial literature, entrepreneurial orientation consists of many elements (Lechner & Gudmundsson, 2012). Innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking are regarded as the key elements (Aloulou, 2019; Mamun et al., 2018). The enterprise's ability to identify and utilise the opportunity is one of the determinants to achieve superior performance (Tang & Tang, 2012) and is usually related to an enterprise through proactiveness, innovativeness, and risk-taking behaviour that SMEs exhibit in the process of operating business activities (Aloulou, 2019). Therefore, SMEs that cannot predict future changes and take responsive actions may not survive in a turbulent business environment. Consistently, a direct and significant association between entrepreneurial orientation and performance has been reported (Brouthers et al., 2015; Gruber-Muecke & Hofer, 2015; Gupta & Batra, 2016; Karami & Tang, 2019). Similarly, past study stresses that entrepreneurial orientation is an asset or resource that is valuable, rare, and difficult to imitate, providing competitive benefits to the enterprise, even if they could be substituted (Barney, 1991; Hernández-Linares et al., 2018; Kabir et al., 2025). Thus, the following hypothesis is formulated.

H3: Entrepreneurial orientation has a significant positive influence on SME performance.

METHODOLOGY

Sample and Procedure

We collected primary data from SMEs operating in Kano State of Nigeria, for the empirical study. The participants' information was obtained from the Small and Medium Enterprises Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), which listed around 8,286 firms in Kano. Kano is selected for this study because it is the most commercial centre in the northern region, and in terms of manufacturing and marketing it is also among the top states (PwC, 2024). To ascertain generalizability, the sampling frame covered all categories of firms from several industries (e.g., manufacturing, information and technology, trade and commerce, agriculture and tourism, hotel and restaurant and other firms). A systematic sampling technique is employed to choose respondents based on industry type, and then a respondent is randomly chosen (Saunders et al., 2023). Based on the recommendation by scholars, research assistants were employed to obtain valid, reliable, and high-quality data. The questionnaire was quickly retrieved because we promised to offer a customized report to those respondents who completed and returned timely. This procedure gives a total of 296 completed and returned questionnaires. Twenty-five of these questionnaires were removed due to univariate outliers (Hair et al., 2020) and, therefore, not included in the further analysis. The final analysis, therefore, depends on the respondents from 271 valid data points with a response rate of 49%. Moreover, the non-response bias test between the early responses and late responses (Armstrong & Overton, 1977) showed that the two groups did not differ significantly. Table 1 provides a demographic description of the participants.

Measures

The surveys were adapted from previous literature, with a few amendments where necessary. A total of 13 itemized questions were used from the work of Laukkanen et al. (2013) to gauge market orientation. Moreover, twelve items were adapted from the work of Farrell et al., (2008) with a few rewordings to fit the study scope and measured learning orientation. To measure entrepreneurial orientation, twelve items were adapted from the work of Wolff, Pett, and Ring (2015) with a few alterations to match the study scope. The SMEs' performance is a multidimensional construct, which could be gauged with subjective or objective measures. This study is designed on SMEs across different sectors and is hence based upon adopted subjective indicators of enterprise performance from the study conducted by Spillan and Parnell (2006). Precisely six items were adapted to measure SMEs' performance. The seven-point Likert scale (strongly disagree, disagree, moderately disagree, neutral, moderately agree, agree and strongly agree) was used for the independent and dependent variables.

Table 1: Respondents Profile

Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Frequency
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	211	77.90	77.90
Female	60	22.10	100
<i>Position</i>			
Owner	66	24.40	24.40
Manager	78	28.80	53.10
Owner/Manager	116	42.80	95.90
Other	11	4.10	100
<i>Duration</i>			
Below 5 years	42	15.50	15.50
6-10 years	78	28.80	44.30
11-15 years	78	28.80	73.10
16 years to above	73	26.90	100
<i>Industry</i>			
Manufacturing	69	25.50	25.50
Trade and Commerce	49	18.10	43.50
ICT	25	9.20	52.80
Agriculture and Tourism	36	13.30	66.10
Transportation	35	12.90	79.00
Film and Multimedia	20	7.40	86.30
Hotels and Restaurants	35	12.90	99.30
Others	2	0.70	100
<i>Workforce</i>			
10-49 employees	147	54.20	54.20
50-199 employees	124	45.80	100

Because self-reported data were gathered from a single source, evaluating common method variance (CMV) is important to ascertain that the variance in the data was not explicated by one single factor (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The present study employed Harman's single-factor test recommended by Podsakoff et al. (2003). In determining CMV, this method indicates that all concerned constructs are subjected to exploratory factor analysis, and the outcome of the unrotated factor solution is then determined to ensure the number of factors that are compulsory to account for the variance in the variables. The rule states that if a significant amount of CMV is present, the outcome of the factor analysis will either be a single factor or that a single factor will account for the majority of the covariance in the predictor and a criterion variable (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The outcome of the unrotated exploratory factor analysis demonstrated 14 factors that explained an aggregate of 68.89% of the variance, with the initial (biggest) determiner explicating 31.11% of the total variance, which was below 50% (c.f. Kumar, 2012). The outcome indicated that no single determiner amounted to the bulk of covariance in the exogenous latent variable and

dependent variables (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Based on the above results, it was deduced that the data were free from CMV.

Evaluation of Measurement Model

The succeeding analysis used the partial least squares technique employing SmartPLS (Ringle et al., 2015) version 3.0 to evaluate the inner model (validity and reliability) and outer model (testing the association among variables). The evaluation of the inner model involved ascertaining the convergent and discriminant validity of the model. Following the suggestion of Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2017), this study employed factor loading and average variance extracted (AVE) to assess convergent validity. This result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 shows the item loading, composite reliability (CR), and AVE of the latent constructs. All indicator loadings greater than the suggested value of 0.70 (Hair Jr. et al., 2017) were maintained. Items EO07, EP03, EP05, EP06, LO06, LO08, LO09, MO06, MO07, and MO08 had a value smaller than 0.70. Hair et al. (2017) recommend that item loadings ranging between 0.40 and 0.70 be deleted only when such deletion could increase CR and AVE's value. In the present study, indicator loadings less than the threshold figure were maintained because they supplemented the CR that was greater than 0.70 and the AVE that was greater than 0.50 (Table 2). However, items MO01, MO02, MO03, MO04, MO13, LO01, LO02, LO03, LO04, LO05, LO07, LO10, LO12, EO08, EO10, and EO12 were removed due to lower loading. Furthermore, all four constructs attained the threshold figure for CR and AVE after the following item deletion. As a result, the constructs satisfied the reliability, and convergent validity of the model evaluated.

After the affirmation of convergent validity, we assessed discriminant validity. Discriminant validity specifies that a construct is unique in gauging a construct, so it cannot be similar to other constructs (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017). We followed Fornell-Larcker's rule of thumb and evaluated the discriminant validity of the latent constructs. Also, HTMT, a measure of the correlation among the variables, parallels the de-attenuated variable value creation used in the study for discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2020). Using the value of 0.9 as a yardstick, we concluded that there was no issue of discriminant validity; hence, all the variables satisfied the above-mentioned criteria rule of thumb. Table 3 shows the discriminant validity of the variable used in this study.

Evaluation of Structural Model

To evaluate the structural model, we followed Hair et al. (2014) and used the reported R^2 , beta value, and the corresponding t-values. The bootstrapping method with a sample of 5,000 was employed to get the t-value. Additionally, Hair et al. (2014) recommend reporting the effect sizes (f^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2). Also, PLS-SEM was employed to check the hypotheses of the present study.

Table 2: Convergent Validity and Reliability

Construct	Items	Loading	CR	AVE
Entrepreneurial Orientation	EO01	0.732	0.905	0.514
	EO02	0.723		
	EO03	0.743		
	EO04	0.730		
	EO05	0.720		
	EO06	0.712		
	EO07	0.681		
	EO09	0.708		
	EO11	0.702		
Enterprise Performance	EP01	0.757	0.863	0.513
	EP02	0.790		
	EP03	0.651		
	EP04	0.722		
	EP05	0.670		
	EP06	0.699		
Learning Orientation	LO06	0.692	0.772	0.511
	LO08	0.698		
	LO09	0.659		
	LO11	0.754		
Market Orientation	MO06	0.676	0.881	0.516
	MO07	0.687		
	MO08	0.697		
	MO09	0.707		
	MO10	0.749		
	MO11	0.790		
	MO12	0.714		

Table 3: Discriminant Validity

Fornell-Larcker criteria					
EO	0.717				
EP	0.629	0.716			
LO	0.405	0.390	0.678		
MO	0.622	0.571	0.372	0.718	
Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)					
EO	-				
EP	0.733	-			
LO	0.530	0.522	-		
MO	0.845	0.677	0.504		

EO = Entrepreneurial Orientation; EP = Enterprise Performance; LO = Learning Orientation; MO = Market Orientation

Figure 1 and Table 4 present the association between the exogenous variables and the criterion variable based on the PLS-SEM analysis. The structural model revealed no significant direct association between market orientation and performance of SMEs ($\beta = 0.153$; $t = 1.522$; $p = 0.064$). Hence, H1 was not supported. Conversely, learning orientation has a direct significant association with SMEs' performance ($\beta = 0.162$; $t = 2.744$; $p = 0.003$). Similarly, entrepreneurial orientation has a significant positive relationship with SMEs' performance ($\beta = 0.444$; $t = 4.364$; $p = 0.001$). Thus, H2 and H3 were supported.

Table 4: Path Coefficient and Hypotheses Testing

Path	Mean	STDEV	T Stat	P Values	Decision	R ²	F ²	Q ²
MO->EP	0.153	0.097	1.522	0.064	Not supported	0.425	0.012	0.199
LO->EP	0.162	0.057	2.744	0.003	Supported		0.035	
EO->EP	0.444	0.102	4.364	0.000	Supported		0.108	

EO = Entrepreneurial Orientation; EP = Enterprise Performance; LO = Learning Orientation; MO = Market Orientation

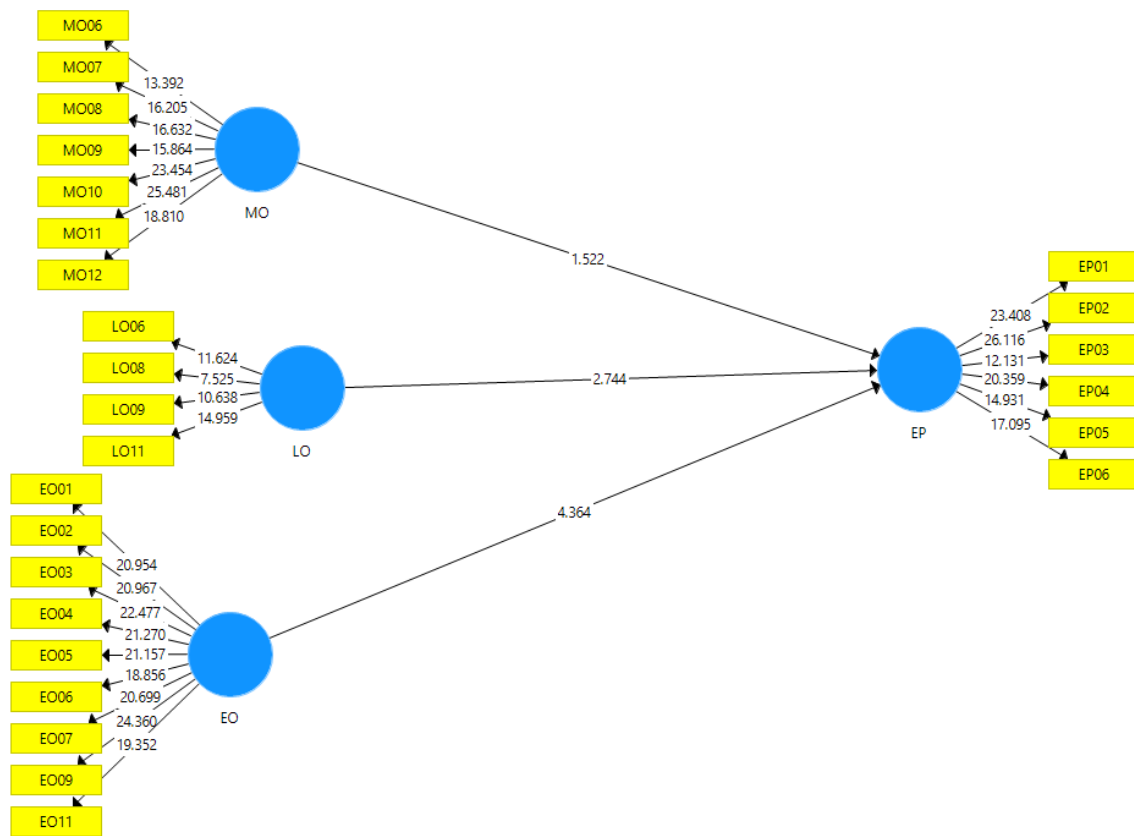


Figure 1: Result of the Path Analysis

DISCUSSION

The aim of the study is to determine the association among the dimensions of strategic orientation and performance of SMEs in Nigeria. Market orientation was found to have no significant

positive influence on the performance of SMEs. Such a finding is contrary to past studies (Al-Ansaari et al., 2015; Kirca et al., 2005; Laukkanen et al., 2013; Ra'ed et al., 2018). Earlier studies considered market orientation as the most valuable dimension of strategic orientation that influences SME performance because market orientation focuses on providing and preserving higher value for customers and being concerned about the interests of stakeholders (Aklilu & Kero, 2025). Our finding also contradicts past research that found a negative connection (Ho et al., 2017). Our findings could be explained as follows: Despite the importance of market orientation for SMEs, it might be difficult to implement because SMEs have resource constraints. For example, most SMEs do not have the resources and technological capabilities to study customer needs, monitor competitor actions, and coordinate activities to achieve the desired performance outcome (Kabir et al., 2025; Su et al., 2015; Wasim et al., 2024).

As expected, entrepreneurial orientation was found to enhance SME performance significantly. This finding concurs with previous studies (Brouthers et al. 2015; Karami & Tang, 2019; Karimi et al. 2017). Entrepreneurial orientation supports innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking of SMEs. It could modify customer behaviours and result in establishing a new marketplace. Entrepreneurial orientation could be a mechanism for survival because the enterprise could use it to attain a competitive position through the creation of innovative goods, resulting in superior performance (Buli, 2017; Rajeh et al., 2024). Hence, entrepreneurial orientation enhances enterprise transformation and renewal and can help cultivate new competencies and establish new businesses within the current venture.

Consistent with our expectation, learning orientation showed a significant positive effect on SME performance, reinforcing past studies (Nkrafar & Momeni, 2017; Wolff et al., 2015). The finding suggests that the SMEs' degree of open-mindedness to accept new ideas, commitment to learning, and shared vision is an important mechanism to increase performance (Lonial & Carter, 2015; Sinkula et al., 1997). Learning-oriented enterprises could sense market changes in customer preferences faster than their competitors (Lonial & Carter, 2015). The finding also supports the RBV theory. Resources that are valuable, rare, and difficult to imitate are critical for SME triumph and economic advantage (Barney, 1991).

Implications for Sustainable Business Practices

This study aimed to comprehend how SMEs can perform better in a competitive business environment, and we did this by explaining the association between three important research variables: market, learning, entrepreneurial orientation, and enterprise performance. All these concepts, and individually, has been an issue of investigative attempt in recent years. Nevertheless, knowing how the variables, market, learning and entrepreneurial orientation relate especially to SME performance is essential for these two reasons. Firstly, SME performance is a major factor in economic growth and development; hence, it is crucial to have a comprehensive understanding of which ways SMEs can perform better. Secondly, from a managerial angle, SME performance could enhance long-term survival by protecting a small enterprise from the unavoidable environmental dynamism that is evident periodically. Therefore, appropriate knowledge of the association of the factors that are antecedents to performance and how they

should be managed effectively and successfully will be of utmost importance for both business managers and academic researchers. We hold that the study outcome contributes to both of these fields.

The key theoretical contribution this study makes to the body of knowledge is to demonstrate and analytically prove the idea that enterprise cultural values through learning orientation and action behaviours by entrepreneurial orientation is significantly related to SME performance. The finding of the study reveals that SMEs operating in Nigeria should avoid depending on one strategic orientation for attaining higher performance. Also, SMEs need to take into cognizance that the method that combines two or more strategic orientations increases performance. The study also contributes practically that the best strategy formulation for improving SMEs' performance in an emerging nation like Nigeria should be an integration of several orientations, since two orientations, learning and entrepreneurial, contributed substantially to SMEs' performance. This concurs with the opinion of Hakala and Kohtamäki (2011) that, depending on a single strategic orientation in the absence of others could lead to the poor performance of a business. Consequently, managers need to decide regarding different strategic orientations and adopt the most appropriate to organizational objectives.

Lastly, owner-manager should note that despite the non-significant effect of market orientation on SMEs' performance, due to their limited resources. These shortcomings could be reduced through owner-managers reserving their spending on more crucial areas of their productions that can offer better customer value, as against to being 'inefficient' in utilization of their limited resources. Owners-managers should also remember that when their customers' need are rapidly changing, this can provide advantages, rather than disadvantages, to display their marketing-oriented behaviors, so that managers or marketers can satisfy, and surpass, such customers' expectations. Therefore, owner-managers should frequently scan their environment for methods to exploit these benefits to enhance their performance for a sustainable business.

CONCLUSION

The study has adequately answered the main research question and empirically tested the relationship between the combined effect of strategic orientations, namely, market, learning, and entrepreneurial orientation, on the performance of SMEs. The main conclusion of the study underscores that entrepreneurial orientation and learning orientation enhance the performance of SMEs. However, the study discovered that market orientation has a non-significant effect on SMEs' performance in Nigeria. Accordingly, the study's findings conclude that managers of SMEs can overcome their shortage of resources by utilizing knowledge and information, or limited available resources, they might have to meet their customer needs.

The interpretation of the study findings needs to be done carefully. The first relates to the issue of generalizability. As the data were collected from Kano, which is one of 36 states in Nigeria, any effort to generalise beyond this scope should be made with care. Another study limitation is that only three types of strategic orientations were employed such as market, learning, and entrepreneurial, to portray the strategic orientations of SMEs. Despite, they are most widely

applied in the available literature, there are many other orientations. Equally, the study is limited to only SMEs, and hence the result cannot be applied to large organisations. Thus, further studies are recommended to use other organisations in order to get a sample from large companies to advance the generalizability of the outcome.

Despite the study limitations, the finding offers several opportunities for advanced research. Further researchers are recommended to go after other strategic variables postulated to affect SME performance, such as alliance, technological, and employee orientation. Hence, our theoretical understanding of a comprehensive strategic orientation could be ascertained. Additionally, future research could be conducted on larger industries, with larger samples, employing dyadic surveys and different geographical areas. A longitudinal study could also be explored to determine the causal association of the variables

REFERENCES

- Abdul-Talib, A. N. (2005). *Differences in market-oriented behaviour levels accross firms' domestic and export marketing operation: a study of antecedents and consequences*. Aston University.
- Aklilu, T. B., & Kero, C. (2025). Managing open innovation: the roles of strategic orientation and dynamic capabilities, evidence from Ethiopian SMEs. *Innovation and Development*, 15(1), 177–206.
- Al-Ansaari, Y., Bederr, H., & Chen, C. (2015). Strategic orientation and business performance. *Management Decision*, 53(10), 2287–2302.
- Al-Hakimi, M. A., Saleh, M. H., Borade, D. B., Hasan, M. B., & Sharma, D. (2023). Competitor orientation and SME performance in competitive environments: the moderating effect of marketing ethics. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, 15(6), 1490–1511.
- Aloulou, W. J. (2019). Impacts of strategic orientations on new product development and firm performances: Insights from Saudi industrial firms. *European Journal of Innovation*, 22(2), 257–280.
- Arzubiaga, U., Iturralde, T., Maseda, A., & Kotlar, J. (2018). Entrepreneurial orientation and firm performance in family SMEs: the moderating effects of family, women, and strategic involvement in the board of directors. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 14(1), 217–244.
- Barney, J. B. (1986). Organizational culture: Can it be a source of sustained competitive advantage? *The Academy of Management*, 11(3), 656–665.
- Barney, J. B. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. In *Journal of Management* 17(1), 99–120.
- Blazkova, I., & Ondrej, D. (2018). Investigating the differences in entrepreneurial success through the firm-specific factors: Microeconomic evidence from the Czech. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, 11(2019), 154–176.
- Brouthers, K. D., Nakos, G., & Dimitratos, P. (2015). SME entrepreneurial orientation, international performance, and the moderating role of strategic alliances. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, 39(5), 1161–1187.
- Buli, B. M. (2017). Entrepreneurial orientation, market orientation and performance of SMEs in

- the manufacturing industry: Evidence from Ethiopian enterprises. *Management Research Review*, 40(3), 292–309.
- Chuang, S. H. (2018). Facilitating the chain of market orientation to value co-creation: The mediating role of e-marketing adoption. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 7, 39–49.
- Creek, S. A., Maurer, J. D., & Kent, J. K. (2023). Perceptions of market orientation in emerging economy entrepreneurship: evidence from crowdfunding orientation. *International Journal of Emerging Markets*, 19(11), 4006–4028.
- Day, G. S. (1994). The capabilities of market-driven organisation. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(4), 37–52.
- Distanont, A., & Khongmalai, O. (2018). The role of innovation in creating a competitive advantage. *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences*, 1–7.
- Eggers, F., Niemand, T., Filser, M., Kraus, S., & Berchtold, J. (2018). To network or not network - Is that really the question? The impact of networking intensity and strategic orientation on innovation success. *Technological Forecasting & Social Change*, 155, 119448.
- Engelen, A., Gupta, V., Strenger, L., & Brettel, M. (2015). Entrepreneurial orientation, firm performance, and the moderating role of transformational leadership behaviors. *Journal of Management*, 41(4), 1069–1097.
- Eris, E. D., & Ozmen, N. O. T. (2012). The effect of market orientation, learning orientation and innovativeness on firm performance: A research from Turkish logistics sector. *International Journal of Economics Science and Applied Research*, 5(1), 77–108.
- Eshlaghy, A. T., & Maatofi, A. (2011). Learning orientation, innovation and performance: Evidence from small-sized business firms in Iran. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 19(1), 114–122.
- Farrell, M. A., Oczkowski, E., & Kharabsheh, R. (2008). Market orientation, learning orientation and organisational performance in international joint ventures. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 20(3), 289–308.
- Ferri, P. J., Deakins, D., & Whittam, G. (2009). The measurement of social capital in the entrepreneurial context. *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Place in the Global Economy*, 33(2), 138–151.
- Frank, H., Kessler, A., Mitterer, G., & Weismeier-sammer, D. (2012). Learning orientation of SMEs and its impact on firm performance. *Journal of Marketing and Competitiveness*, 6(3), 29–41.
- Gruber-Muecke, T., & Hofer, K. M. (2015). Market orientation, entrepreneurial orientation and performance in emerging markets. *International Journal of Emerging Market*, 10(3), 560–571.
- Gupta, V. K., & Batra, S. (2016). Entrepreneurial orientation and firm performance in Indian SMEs: Universal and contingency perspectives. *International Small Business Journal*, 34(5), 660–682.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate Data Analysis* (7th ed.). Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Hair, J. F., Howard, M. C., & Nitzl, C. (2020). Assessing measurement model quality in PLS-SEM using confirmatory composite analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 109(November 2019), 101–110.
- Hakala, H., & Kohtamäki, M. (2011). Configurations of entrepreneurial- customer- and

- technology orientation: Differences in learning and performance of software companies. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research*, 17(1), 64–81.
- Hernández-Linares, R., Kellermanns, F. W., & López-Fernández, M. C. (2018). A note on the relationships between learning, market, and entrepreneurial orientations in family and nonfamily firms. *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 9(3), 192–204.
- Ho, K. L. P., Nguyen, C. N., Adhikari, R., Miles, M. P., & Bonney, L. (2017). Exploring market orientation, innovation, and financial performance in agricultural value chains in emerging economies. *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge*, 3(3), 154–163.
- Hussaini, J., Shah, F. A., & Khan, M. A. (2016). Does organizational learning orientation matter? Investigating the impact of learning orientation on SMEs performance. *Sarhad Journal of Management Science*, 2(2), 1–11.
- Hyder, S., & Lussier, R. N. (2016). Why businesses succeed or fail: A study on small businesses in Pakistan. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, 8(1), 82–100.
- Irwin, K. C., Landay, K. M., Aaron, J. R., McDowell, W. C., Marino, L. D., & Geho, P. R. (2018). Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and human resources outsourcing (HRO): A “HERO” combination for SME performance. *Journal of Business Research*, 90(May), 134–140.
- Ishii, R., & Kikumori, M. (2024). Export market orientation , performance and international partner selection: word-of-mouth referral versus direct contact. *International Marketing Review*, 41(7), 117–139.
- Iyer, P., Davari, A., Zolfagharian, M., & Paswan, A. (2018). Market orientation, positioning strategy and brand performance. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 81, 16–29.
- Jeong, Y. min, Ali, M., Zacca, R., & Park, K. (2019). The effect of entrepreneurship orientation on firm performance: A multiple mediation model. *Journal of East-West Business*, 25(2), 166–193.
- Jiang, X., & Liu, H. (2018). Entrepreneurial orientation, network resource acquisition, and firm performance: A network approach. *Journal of Business Research*, 87, 46–57.
- Kabir, I., Naqshbandi, M. M., Abubakar, Y. A., & Said, T. F. (2025). National culture and entrepreneurial orientation in a hostile environment: A study of informal enterprises in Nigeria. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 00(00), 1–25.
- Kajalo, S., & Lindblom, A. (2015). Market orientation, entrepreneurial orientation and business performance among small retailers. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 43(7), 580–596.
- Karami, M., & Tang, J. (2019). Entrepreneurial orientation and SME international performance: The mediating role of networking capability and experiential learning. *International Small Business Journal*, 37(2), 105–124.
- Karimi, A., & Ahmadpour Daryani, M. (2017). Effect of corporate entrepreneurship on firm performance in Iranian ASMEs: The mediation role of knowledge creation and learning orientation. *Journal of Agricultural Science and Technology*, 19(2), 261–277.
- Karpacz, J., & Wojcik-Karpacz, A. (2024). The relationship between learning orientation, firm performance and market dynamism in MSMEs operating in technology parks in Poland: an empirical analysis. *Central European Management Journal*, 32(2), 216–232.
- Keskin, H. (2006). Market orientation, learning orientation, and innovation capabilities in SMEs: An extended model. *European Journal of Innovation Management*, 9(4), 396–417.
- Kiessling, T., Isaksson, L., & Yasar, B. (2016). Market Orientation and CSR: Performance

- Implications. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 137(2), 269–284.
- Kirca, A. H., Jayachandran, S., & Bearden, W. O. (2005). Market orientation: A meta-analytic review and assessment of its antecedents and impact on performance. *Journal of Marketing*, 69(2), 24–41.
- Kropp, F., Lindsay, N. J., & Shoham, A. (2006). Entrepreneurial, market, and learning orientations and international entrepreneurial business venture performance in South African firms. *International Marketing Review*, 23(5), 504–523.
- Kuivalainen, O., & Cadogan, J. W. (2004). The effect of environmental turbulence and leader characteristics on international performance: Are Knowledge-based firms different? *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, 2(1), 35–50.
- Laukkanen, T., Nagy, G., Hirvonen, S., Reijonen, H., & Pasanen, M. (2013). The effect of strategic orientations on business performance in SMEs: A multigroup analysis comparing Hungary and Finland. *International Marketing Review*, 30(6), 510–535.
- Lechner, C., & Gudmundsson, S. V. (2012). Entrepreneurial orientation, firm strategy and small firm performance. *International Small Business Journal*, 32(1), 36–60.
- Lonial, S. C., & Carter, R. E. (2015). The impact of organizational orientations on medium and small firm performance: A resource-based perspective. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 53(1), 94–113.
- Majeed, M., Tijani, A., Ofori, K. S., Abubakari, A., & Ampong, G. O. A. (2025). Impact of strategic orientation on sustainable competitive advantage: the mediating role of organizational capabilities. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 11(1), 2457230.
- Mamun, A. Al, Mohiuddin, M., Fazal, S. A., & Ahmad, G. Bin. (2018). Effect of entrepreneurial and market orientation on consumer engagement and performance of manufacturing SMEs. *Manufacturing Research Review*, 41(1), 133–147.
- Marques, R., Guerra, D. A., & Camargo, M. E. (2023). Mediation of learning orientation on market orientation and business performance: evidence from Brazilian Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 31(2), 590–610.
- Mutlu, H. M., & Aksoy, H. (2014). Strategic orientations, firm capabilities, and export performance: An empirical analysis in Turkey. *International Journal of Economic Practices and Theories*, 4(2), 2247–7225.
- Nakos, G., Dimitratos, P., & Elbanna, S. (2019). The mediating role of alliances in the international market orientation-performance relationship of smes. *International Business Review*, 28(3), 603–612.
- Nasir, W. M. N. bin W. M., Al Mamun, A., & Breen, J. (2017). Strategic orientation and performance of SMEs in Malaysia. *SAGE Open*, 7(2), 2158244017712768.
- Nikraftar, T., & Momeni, S. (2017). The effects of entrepreneurial orientation, market orientation and learning orientation on performance of ICT business. *International Journal of Management Concepts and Philosophy*, 10(4), 378.
- Nnko, E., Ismail, I. J., & John, E. (2024). Learning orientation and response of micro and small food agro-processing enterprises to the customers' needs in Tanzania. *Cogent Business and Management*, 11(1), 2334058.
- Omonona, T., Amadi, G., & Liverpool-tasie, L. S. O. (2024). *A Review of the 2021-2025 national policy on micro , small and medium scale enterprises (MSMEs) in Nigeria.*

- Ozkaya, H. E., Droge, C., Hult, G. T. M., Calantone, R., & Ozkaya, E. (2015). Market orientation, knowledge competence, and innovation. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 32(3), 309–318.
- Pacheco, A., Ferreira, J. M., Sim, J., Veiga, P., & Caputo, A. (2024). University entrepreneurship: entrepreneurial orientation, networks, market orientation, and sustainable development. *Management Decision*, 62(13), 456–881.
- Penrose, E. (1959). *The theory of the growth of firm*. Oxford University Press.
- Pwc. (2024). *PwC's MSME survey 2024: Building resilience* (Issue July).
- Ra'ed, M., Al-Henzab, J., Tarhini, A., & Obeidat, B. Y. (2018). The associations among market orientation, technology orientation, entrepreneurial orientation and organizational performance. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 25(8), 3117–3142.
- Rajeh, J., Mohammed, H., & Al, E. (2024). Impact of entrepreneurial orientation, marketing capability, and market orientation on business sustainability and corporate reputation. *Discover Sustainability*, 5(1), 273.
- Real, J. C., Roldán, J. L., & Leal, A. (2014). From entrepreneurial orientation and learning orientation to business performance: Analysing the mediating role of organisational learning and the moderating effects of organizational size. *British Journal of Management*, 25, 186–208.
- Sa'id, K. S., Abdul-Talib, A.-N., & Hassan, R. (2019). The role of access to capital and the component of strategic orientations on smes performance: A conceptual framework. *International Journal of Business, Economics and Law*, 19(5), 311–321.
- Sa'id, K. S., Kassim, S. I., Gawuna, M. S., & Sani, A. A. (2025). The effect of sales promotion , coupons and discounts on firms ' performance : The Nigeria beverage industry experience. *Jurnal Aplikasi Manajemen, Ekonomi Dan Bisnis*, 9(2), 165–186.
- Sadiku-Dushi, N., Dana, L. P., & Ramadani, V. (2019). Entrepreneurial marketing dimensions and SMEs performance. *Journal of Business Research*, 100, 86–99.
- Salavou, H., Baltas, G., & Lioukas, S. (2004). Organisational innovation in SMEs: The importance of strategic orientation and competitive structure. *European Journal of Marketing*, 38(9–10), 1091–1112.
- Samba, C., Knippenberg, D. Van, & Miller, c. C. (2018). The impact of strategic dissent on organizational outcome: A meta-analytical intergration. *Strategic Maanagement Journal*, 39(2), 379–402.
- Saunders, M. N. ., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2023). *Research Methods for business students* (Ninth edit). Pearson Education Limited.
- Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2013). *Research Methods for Business: A Skill-Building Approach* (6th ed.). John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Sinkula, J. M., Baker, W. E., & Noordewier, T. (1997). A framework for market-based organizational learning: Linking values, knowledge, and behavior. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 25(4), 305–318.
- Slater, S. F., & Narver, J. C. (1995). Market orientation and the learning organization. *Journal of Marketing*, 59(3), 63–74.
- SMEDAN. (2013). *Smedan and National Bereau of Statistics Collaborative Survey: Selected Findings*.
- Smirnova, M. M., Rebiazina, V. A., & Frösén, J. (2018). Customer orientation as a multidimensional construct: Evidence from the Russian markets. *Journal of Business Research*,

- 86, 457–467.
- Soltani, Z., Zareie, B., Milani, F. S., & Navimipour, N. J. (2018). The impact of the customer relationship management on the organization performance. *Journal of High Technology Management Research*, 29(2), 237–246.
- Spillan, J., & Parnell, J. (2006). Marketing resources and firm performance among SMEs. *European Management Journal*, 24(2–3), 236–245.
- Su, Z., Xie, E., & Wang, D. (2015). Entrepreneurial orientation, managerial networking, and new venture performance in China. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 53(1), 228–248.
- Suliyanto, & Rahab. (2012). The role of market orientation and learning orientation in improving innovativeness and performance of small and medium enterprises. *Asian Social Science*, 8(1), 134–145.
- Susanto, P., Padang, U. N., & Hoque, M. E. (2023). Entrepreneurial orientation and performance of SMEs: the roles of marketing capabilities and social media usage. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, 15(2), 379–403.
- Tang, Z., & Tang, J. (2012). Entrepreneurial orientation and SME performance in China's changing environment: The moderating effects of strategies. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 29(2), 409–431.
- Ullah, B. (2019). Financial constraints, corruption, and SME growth in transition economies. *Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance*, 75, 120–132.
- Visnjic, I., Wiengarten, F., & Neely, A. (2016). Only the brave: Product innovation, service business model innovation, and their impact on performance. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 33(1), 36–52.
- Voss, G. B., & Voss, Z. G. (2000). Strategic orientation and firm performance in an artistic. *Journal Marketing*, 64, 67–83.
- Wales, W. J., Gupta, V. K., & Mousa, F.-T. (2013). Empirical research on entrepreneurial orientation: An assessment and suggestions for future research. *International Small Business Journal*, 31(4), 357–383.
- Wang, Y. (2016). What are the biggest obstacles to growth of SMEs in developing countries? An empirical evidence from an enterprise survey. *Borsa Istanbul Review*, 16(3), 167–176.
- Wasim, M., Ahmed, S., Kalsoom, T., Saud, M., & Rafi-ul-shan, P. M. (2024). Market orientation and SME performance : Moderating role of IoT and mediating role of creativity Market orientation and SME performance : Moderating role. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 62(2), 938–965.
- Wolff, J. A., Pett, T. L., & Ring, J. K. (2015). Small firm growth as a function of both learning orientation and entrepreneurial orientation: An empirical analysis. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 21(5), 709–730.
- Yuwono, M. A., & Lena, E. (2025). Implementation of enterprise risk management as a strategy for increasing competitive advantages: Study at companies in central Kalimantan. *Journal of Business Management and Accounting*, 15(1), 55–78.
- Zakaria, N., & Abdul-Talib, A. N. (2010). Applying Islamic market-oriented cultural model to sensitize strategies towards global customers, competitors, and environment. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 1(1), 51–62.
- Zikmund, W. G., Babin, B. J., Carr, J. C., & Griffin, M. (2010). *Business Research Methods* (8th ed.).

South-Western, Cengage Learning.

***CORRESPONDING AUTHOR**

Kabiru Sa'ad Sa'id can be contacted at: kssaid24@gmail.com

CITATION

Sa'id, K. S., Abdul-Talib, A. N., Hassan, Rohail. (2025). The impact of market orientation, learning orientation, and entrepreneurial orientation on the performance of Nigerian SMEs. *Sohar University Journal of Sustainable Business*, 1(2). 1-20.

Note: The views and findings presented in this article are solely those of the authors. Sohar university and editorial team bear no responsibility for the content, accuracy, or any consequences arising from the use of this publication.