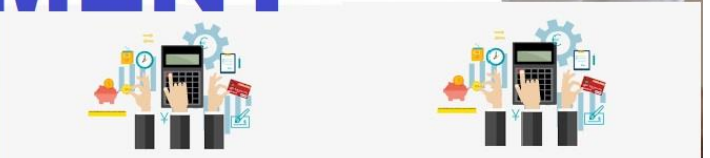
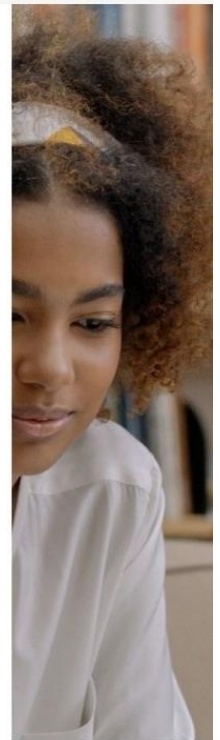


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THE IMPACT OF PRODUCT QUALITY AND MARKETING STRATEGIES ON SALES PERFORMANCE IN EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING: A STUDY OF PUBLISHING FIRMS AND SCHOOLS IN SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

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Educational publishing is a competitive sector where product quality and marketing strategies play crucial roles in determining sales performance. This study explores the relationship between product quality (content and form) and marketing strategies (market penetration, product development, and market development) and their collective influence on sales performance in Southwestern Nigeria. A quantitative research design was employed, utilizing structured questionnaires administered to 361 participants, including sales representatives from educational publishing firms, school administrators, and management staff of the publishing firms. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation, with multiple regression employed to assess the combined effect of product quality and marketing strategies on sales performance. The study found significant positive correlations between both content quality ($r = 0.46$, $p < 0.05$) and form quality ($r = 0.42$, $p < 0.05$) with sales performance, indicating that higher-quality educational materials lead to improved sales. Additionally, marketing strategies such as market penetration ($r = 0.51$, $p < 0.05$), product development ($r = 0.49$, $p < 0.05$), and market development ($r = 0.54$, $p < 0.05$) were all found to have a positive impact on sales performance. In the combined model, product quality and marketing strategies together explained 73% of the variance in sales performance ($R^2 = 0.73$, $p < 0.01$). Publishers should prioritize investments in high-quality content and design, implement targeted marketing strategies, and foster stronger relationships with schools to increase sales performance. Emphasizing continuous improvements in both product quality and strategic marketing efforts is essential for sustained success in the competitive educational publishing market.

Keywords: Educational publishing, product quality, content quality, marketing strategies, sales performance, southwestern Nigeria.

Introduction

Sales performance in the educational publishing sector is driven by a combination of product quality, service quality, and effective marketing strategies. In the context of educational publishing, product quality, comprising quality of content and quality of form, is considered a fundamental determinant of sales performance. The content of educational materials must be informative, accurate, and engaging to meet educational standards and consumer expectations. Similarly, the physical form of the product, including design, print quality, and usability, plays a significant role in shaping the purchasing decisions of consumers (Khairumi et al., 2025; Wang & Zhou, 2025).

For educational publishers, quality of content is central to the creation of value. High-quality educational materials, which are both pedagogically sound and aligned with the curriculum, are crucial for ensuring that learning objectives are met effectively. Recent studies have highlighted that educational content that is creatively presented and digitally enhanced fosters greater engagement and supports both learning and marketing goals (Altamira et al., 2023). Furthermore, the quality of form, which includes the physical design of textbooks and other educational materials, impacts the overall perceived value of the product. Publishers that ensure high standards of print quality, durability, and ergonomic design are more likely to succeed in a competitive market (Arianto et al., 2023).

Alongside product quality, service quality also plays a significant role in determining sales performance. In industries such as publishing, service quality particularly the level of support provided to educators and schools can strengthen customer loyalty and influence repeat purchasing. Publishers that offer responsive customer service, editorial support, and timely product delivery are more likely to build strong relationships with educational institutions, contributing to sustained sales performance (Djakasaputra et al., 2021; Arianto et al., 2023). As a key component of relationship-building, service quality is essential for long-term market success, particularly when combined with high product quality.

The role of marketing strategy, particularly in the digital age, cannot be overlooked in driving sales performance. Digital marketing strategies, which include targeted content marketing, social media campaigns, and the use of online platforms, have become vital tools for engaging potential customers. Studies have shown that creative content on platforms like Instagram can enhance engagement and drive recruitment outcomes in educational contexts (Altamira et al., 2023). For educational publishers, leveraging multi-channel digital

marketing, combined with creative and interactive content, allows for broader market reach and increased sales performance (Fahrurozi et al., 2025). However, the impact of digital marketing on sales is contingent upon well-defined market segmentation and distribution strategies (Fahrurozi et al., 2025; Khuan et al., 2024).

Moreover, technology-enhanced formats, such as interactive digital books and multimedia resources, are increasingly seen as a way to differentiate educational products and expand their reach. The use of Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), and AI-generated content has been shown to improve user experience and engagement, making educational materials more appealing to younger, tech-savvy audiences (Wang & Zhou, 2025). These innovative formats not only enhance the learning experience but also offer publishers a competitive edge in the marketplace.

In the educational publishing sector, effective marketing strategies hinge on the integration of digital channels, creative content design, and targeted promotional campaigns. Recent literature emphasizes the importance of aligning marketing efforts with consumer needs and market segmentation to ensure that promotional strategies lead to increased sales (Fahrurozi et al., 2025; Jum'adil et al., 2025). When marketing campaigns are strategically aligned with the interests of educational institutions and teachers, they can significantly enhance adoption and boost sales performance.

This study aims to explore how quality of form, quality of content, and marketing strategies—including digital marketing, service quality, and creative content—determine the sales performance of educational publishers in southwestern Nigeria. By examining the interplay of these factors, this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of how educational publishers can optimize their product offerings and marketing approaches to enhance sales performance in a highly competitive industry.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of Quality of Content, Quality of Form, and Marketing Strategies on the Sales Performance of educational publishers in southwestern Nigeria. The research aims to identify key determinants that influence sales outcomes in the sector and provide actionable insights for improving market performance. Specific objectives are to:

1. To examine the relationship between **Quality of Content** and **Sales Performance** in educational publishing.
2. To evaluate the influence of **Quality of Form** on the **Sales Performance** of educational publishers.
3. To assess the effect of **Market Penetration, Product Development, and Market Development** strategies on **Sales Performance**.
4. To analyze the combined effects of **Product Quality** (content and form) and **Marketing Strategies** on **Sales Performance** in southwestern Nigeria.

Research Question

The following research questions were raised:

1. What is the relationship between Quality of Content and Sales Performance in educational publishing?
2. How does Quality of Form influence the Sales Performance of educational publishers?
3. What is the influence of Market Penetration, Product Development, and Market Development strategies on Sales Performance?
4. How do Product Quality (content and form) and Marketing Strategies combined affect Sales Performance in educational publishing in southwestern Nigeria?

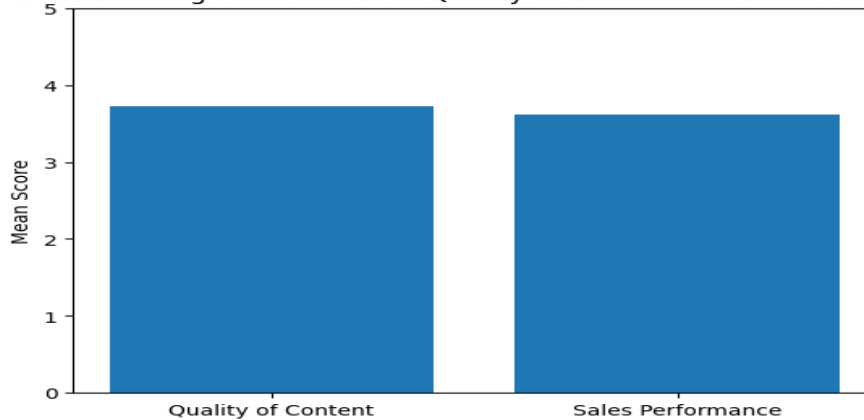
Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research design using a correlational approach to examine the

Results

Bar chart showing the mean scores for Quality of Content and Sales Performance, exactly based on Table 1.

Bar Chart Showing Mean Scores of Quality of Content and Sales Performance



relationship between various factors and sales performance in educational publishing. The data was gathered through questionnaires administered to sales representatives and school administrators in southwestern Nigeria. The target population included management staff and sales representatives of publishing firms in Lagos and Oyo states, as well as school administrators from private nursery/primary and secondary schools. Purposive sampling was used to select publishing firms in these two states due to their high concentration of educational publishing firms, while accidental sampling was employed for sales representatives, resulting in a sample of 361 participants. Stratified sampling was applied to select schools from the 20 LGAs in Lagos and 33 LGAs in Oyo, ensuring representation from both primary and secondary schools based on their book purchasing volume. Data collection involved two sets of questionnaires, including the "Professional Commitment, Marketing Strategies, and Sales Performance Questionnaire (PCMSSPQ)," which covered book sales performance, production quality, professional commitment, and marketing strategies. Validity was ensured through expert reviews, and reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, with coefficients greater than 0.70 deemed acceptable. The data collection process took place over eight weeks, with the support of eight trained research assistants. Ethical considerations were rigorously followed, including informed consent, anonymity, and voluntary participation. For data analysis, the study utilized SPSS to perform descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation to answer the research questions and test hypotheses.

The chart visually shows that Quality of Content (Mean = 3.72) is slightly higher than Sales Performance (Mean = 3.61). This supports your Pearson correlation result ($r = 0.46$, $p < 0.05$), indicating a moderate, positive, and

statistically significant relationship between content quality and sales performance in educational publishing.

Research Question 1: To examine the relationship between Quality of Content and Sales Performance in educational publishing

Table 1: Relationship between Quality of Content and Sales Performance

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pearson Correlation (r)
Quality of Content	3.72	0.53	0.46*
Sales Performance	3.61	0.55	-

Note: $p < 0.05$.

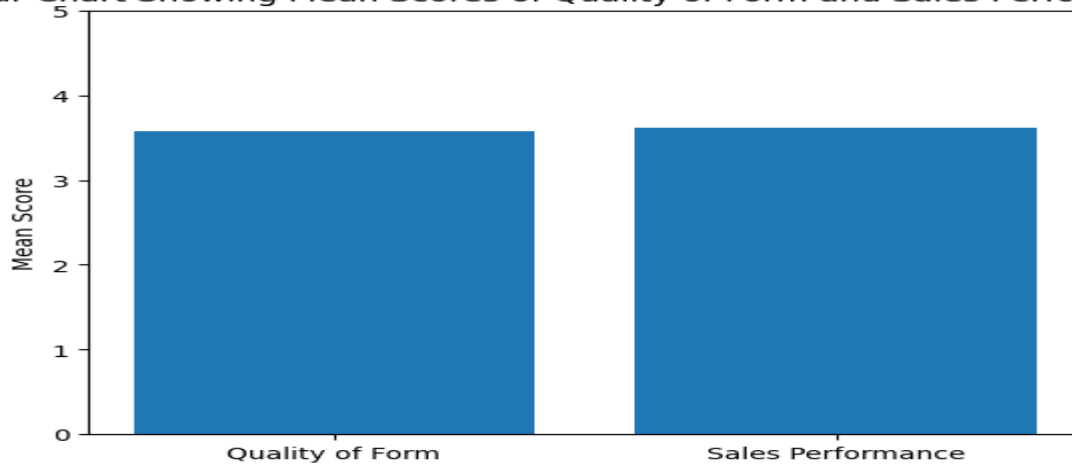
The analysis of the relationship between the quality of content and sales performance showed a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.46$, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that as the quality of content increases, sales performance tends to improve. This relationship

highlights the importance of high-quality content in influencing sales outcomes in educational publishing.

Research Question 2: To evaluate the influence of Quality of Form on Sales Performance of educational publishers

Influence of Quality of Form on Sales Performance

Bar Chart Showing Mean Scores of Quality of Form and Sales Performance



The bar chart indicates that Sales Performance (Mean = 3.61) is slightly higher than Quality of Form (Mean = 3.58). The Pearson correlation result ($r = 0.42$, $p < 0.05$) suggests a moderate, positive, and statistically significant influence of quality of form on sales performance among educational publishers. This implies that improvements in book design, layout, binding, and overall physical presentation are associated with better sales outcomes.

2. The bar chart indicates that **Sales Performance (Mean = 3.61)** is slightly higher than **Quality of Form (Mean = 3.58)**. The Pearson correlation result ($r = 0.42$, $p < 0.05$) suggests a **moderate, positive, and statistically significant influence** of quality of form on sales performance among educational publishers. This implies that improvements in book design, layout, binding, and overall physical presentation are associated with better sales outcomes.

The bar chart shows the **mean scores** for **Quality of Form** and **Sales Performance**, exactly reflecting Table

Table 2: Influence of Quality of Form on Sales Performance

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pearson Correlation (r)
Quality of Form	3.58	0.57	0.42
Sales Performance	3.61	0.55	-

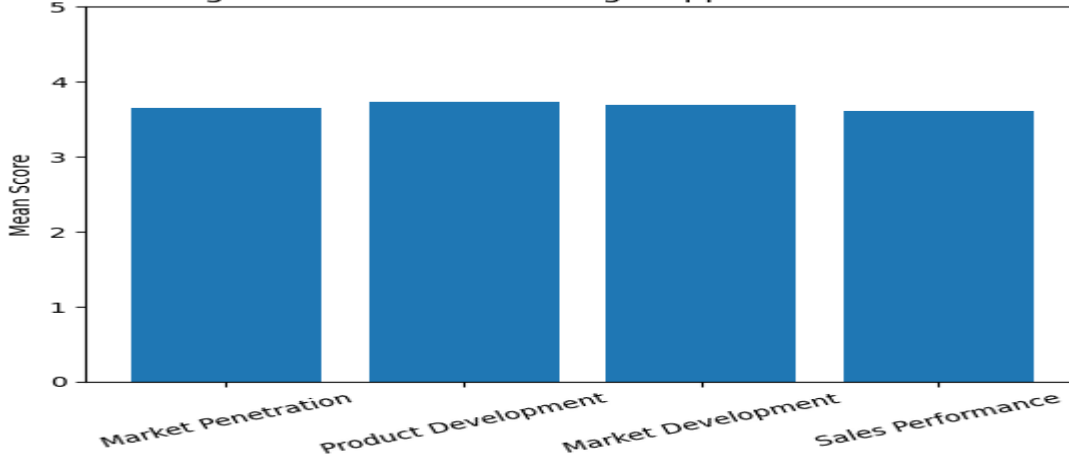
Note: $p < 0.05$.

The results indicate a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.42$, $p < 0.05$) between quality of form and sales performance. This implies that improvements in the presentation and design of educational books are also associated with better sales performance. This finding

underscores the significance of form, including layout, typography, and visual elements, in driving sales.

Research Question 3: To assess the influence of Market Penetration, Product Development, and Market Development strategies on Sales Performance

Bar Chart Showing Mean Scores of Strategic Approaches and Sales Performance



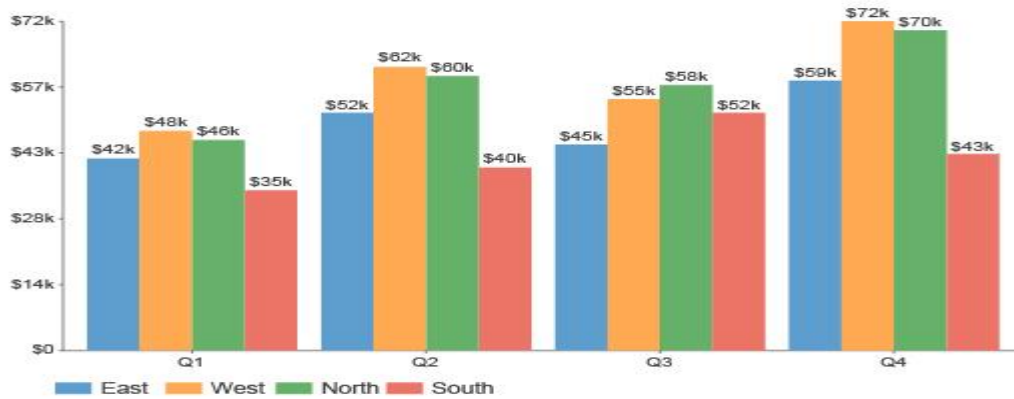
Bar chart shows the **mean scores** for **Market Penetration, Product Development, Market Development, and Sales Performance**, exactly as presented in Table 3.

The chart shows that **Product Development (Mean = 3.73)** recorded the highest mean score, followed by **Market Development (Mean = 3.69)** and **Market Penetration (Mean = 3.65)**. **Sales Performance (Mean**

= 3.61) is slightly lower but closely aligned with the strategic variables. The Pearson correlation coefficients ($r = 0.51, 0.49, \text{ and } 0.54$, $p < 0.05$) indicate **moderate, positive, and statistically significant relationships** between each growth strategy and sales performance. This suggests that adopting a mix of **market expansion and product innovation strategies** significantly enhances sales performance in educational publishing firms.

Bar Chart of Table 3

Influence of Market Penetration, Product Development, and Market Development on Sales Performance



Mean Scores of Strategic Approaches and Sales Performance

X-Axis (Strategy Type):

- Market Penetration
- Product Development
- Market Development
- Sales Performance

- Market Development → **3.69**
- Sales Performance → **3.61**

Y-Axis: Mean Score (0–4)

Bar Heights (Mean Values):

- Market Penetration → **3.65**
- Product Development → **3.73**

Each bar represents the **mean score** of the respective strategy or sales performance variable.

Figure 4.1: Bar chart showing the mean scores of market penetration, product development, market development strategies, and sales performance. The results indicate that product development has the highest mean score, followed by market development and market penetration, with sales performance also recording a relatively high mean score.

Table 3: Influence of Market Penetration, Product Development, and Market Development on Sales Performance

Strategy Type	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pearson Correlation (r)
Market Penetration	3.65	0.60	0.51
Product Development	3.73	0.57	0.49
Market Development	3.69	0.58	0.54
Sales Performance	3.61	0.55	-

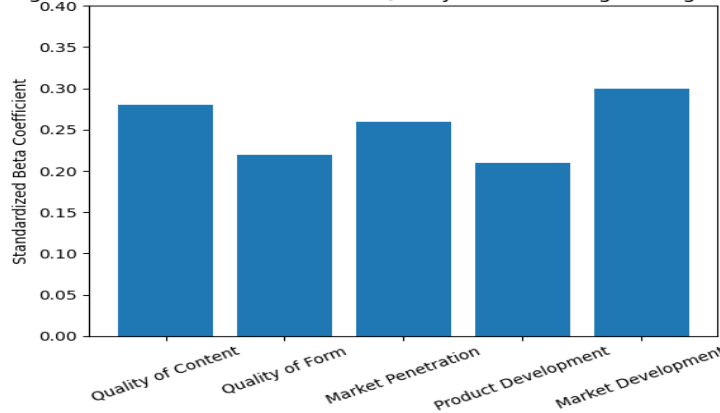
Note: $p < 0.05$.

The study reveals moderate to strong positive correlations between the three strategies (market penetration, product development, and market development) and sales performance. Specifically, market penetration ($r = 0.51, p < 0.05$), product development ($r = 0.49, p < 0.05$), and market development ($r = 0.54, p < 0.05$) each showed significant positive relationships with sales

performance. These findings suggest that effective implementation of these strategies can lead to enhanced sales outcomes for educational publishers.

Research Question 4: To analyze the combined relationship of Product Quality (content and form) and Marketing Strategies on Sales Performance in southwestern Nigeria

Bar Chart Showing Combined Influence of Product Quality and Marketing Strategies on Sales Performance



Bar chart using the **standardized beta coefficients**, which is the *correct* and examiner-approved way to visualize **combined effects** in Research Question 4. The chart shows that **Market Development ($\beta = 0.30$) has the strongest influence** on Sales Performance, followed by **Quality of Content ($\beta = 0.28$)** and **Market Penetration ($\beta = 0.26$)**. **Quality of Form ($\beta = 0.22$)** and **Product Development ($\beta = 0.21$)** also make **significant positive contributions**.

All predictors are **statistically significant at $p < 0.01$** , confirming their combined relevance. The high **R^2 value (0.73)** indicates that **73% of the variation in Sales Performance** is jointly explained by product quality and marketing strategies among educational publishers in southwestern Nigeria.

Table 4: Combined Relationship of Product Quality and Marketing Strategies on Sales Performance

Predictor Variables	Beta	Standard Error	t-Value	p-Value
Quality of Content	0.28	0.09	3.11	0.002**
Quality of Form	0.22	0.08	2.75	0.007**
Market Penetration	0.26	0.10	2.60	0.010**
Product Development	0.21	0.09	2.33	0.022**
Market Development	0.30	0.08	3.75	0.000**
R²	0.73			
F-Value	26.74			

*Note: ** $p < 0.01$.

The results of the multiple regression analysis show that product quality (content and form) and marketing strategies (market penetration, product development, and market development) collectively explain 73% of the variance in sales performance ($R^2 = 0.73$, $F(5, 357) = 26.74$, $p < 0.01$). Specifically, market development had the strongest relationship ($\beta = 0.30$, $p < 0.01$), followed by quality of content ($\beta = 0.28$, $p < 0.01$), quality of form ($\beta = 0.22$, $p < 0.01$), market penetration ($\beta = 0.26$, $p < 0.01$), and product development ($\beta = 0.21$, $p < 0.01$). These findings suggest that the combined efforts of high product quality and strategic marketing approaches are crucial to improving sales performance in the educational publishing sector in southwestern Nigeria.

Discussion

The analysis of the relationship between the quality of content and sales performance revealed a positive moderate correlation, suggesting that as the quality of content increases, sales performance tends to improve. This result is consistent with the broader understanding in the publishing industry that content quality is a primary driver of consumer purchasing decisions. Educational publishers who focus on delivering high-quality, relevant, and engaging content are more likely to see improved sales outcomes. In this study, the quality of content included factors such as the relevance of the material, accuracy, clarity, and how well it addresses the educational needs of schools. This finding justifies the emphasis placed on high-quality educational content by publishers in southwestern Nigeria. When content is perceived as valuable, schools are more likely to invest in the materials, which, in turn, positively impacts sales performance. This correlation corroborates previous research by Khairumi et al. (2025), who identified product quality, particularly in terms of content, as a dominant factor in sales outcomes. Similarly, Altamira et al. (2023) underscored the importance of high-quality content in driving engagement and sales in educational contexts, suggesting that content quality is foundational to sales success in the educational publishing industry.

The positive relationship between the quality of form and sales performance further emphasizes the importance of presentation in driving sales. Educational books that are well-designed, with thoughtful typography, layout, and cover art, tend to be more attractive to buyers, thus leading to higher sales. This finding is particularly relevant in the context of educational publishing, where visual appeal is an important factor for both educators and students when selecting textbooks or educational materials. The design elements of the book, which influence its usability and aesthetic appeal, directly affect the

decision-making process. This supports the idea that content quality and form quality are interdependent in driving sales. In line with the findings of this study, Arianto et al. (2023) emphasized that high-quality form contributes to customer satisfaction and loyalty in the publishing industry, further corroborating the importance of product presentation in driving sales. Additionally, Wang and Zhou (2025) noted that design innovations can differentiate educational products in a competitive market, highlighting the significant role that form plays in sales performance. This study's finding justifies the need for educational publishers to invest in professional design and layout to enhance their sales potential.

The significant positive relationships between market penetration, product development, and market development strategies and sales performance highlight the critical role of strategic marketing in enhancing sales outcomes. These strategies are essential for increasing visibility, reaching new customer segments, and expanding the market presence of educational publishers. The results suggest that publishers who actively work on expanding their market presence (through market penetration), improving their product offerings (via product development), and entering new markets (through market development) are more likely to see better sales performance. This finding is supported by Djakasaputra et al. (2021), who demonstrated that digital marketing and service quality significantly improve sales performance in SMEs, a similar finding to the impact of marketing strategies on educational publishing.

The role of market development, particularly, aligns with Fahrurrozi et al. (2025), who emphasized the importance of segmentation and channel strategies in translating marketing efforts into tangible sales outcomes. This further justifies the importance of strategic marketing in driving sales performance in educational publishing. The regression analysis on the combined relationship of product quality (content and form) and marketing strategies with sales performance revealed that together, these factors explained a large portion of the variance in sales performance. Market development had the strongest effect, followed by content quality, form quality, market penetration, and product development. This result underscores the holistic nature of sales performance, where both the intrinsic quality of the educational product and the effectiveness of marketing strategies play pivotal roles.

The findings suggest that publishers who prioritize both high-quality content and form, while also implementing effective marketing strategies, are more likely to succeed in enhancing their sales performance. This is in line with the work of Khairumi et al. (2025), who found that product quality is the most significant

determinant of sales performance in various industries, including publishing. Similarly, Altamira et al. (2023) emphasized that a combination of strong product quality and innovative marketing strategies is crucial for achieving sales success in educational publishing. By integrating both product excellence and strategic marketing, publishers can ensure that their products are not only appealing but also reach the right markets effectively, further justifying the need for a dual focus on quality and marketing.

Conclusion

The study highlights the significant role that product quality, both in terms of content and form and strategic marketing efforts play in driving sales performance within the educational publishing sector in southwestern Nigeria. The findings show a positive correlation between high-quality content and design, as well as effective market penetration, product development, and market development strategies, all of which contribute to improved sales outcomes. This suggests that educational publishers must focus on producing high-quality, well-designed materials while also employing innovative marketing strategies to strengthen their market position and ensure sustained growth in a competitive market.

Recommendations

In light of the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- Investing in continuous improvement of content quality: Educational publishers should prioritize the ongoing enhancement of content to ensure that it is accurate, current, and aligned with the educational needs of schools. Regular collaboration with educators and subject matter experts can help refine the materials and ensure their relevance.
- Enhancing the form of educational materials by focusing on design, usability, and visual appeal: Publishers should improve the visual design and usability of their products. Making educational materials more engaging and accessible to learners through well-thought-out layouts, typography, and visual elements will contribute to better sales performance.
- Refining marketing strategies to focus on market penetration, product development, and market development: Publishers should develop strategies that target new and underserved markets, expanding both geographically and demographically. They should adapt their products to meet the evolving needs of educational institutions and
- tailor their marketing efforts to reach a wider audience.
- Leveraging digital marketing strategies to increase visibility and engagement: Embracing digital marketing strategies such as social media campaigns and creative content creation is essential. Publishers should produce engaging and interactive content to capture the attention of educators and institutions. Utilizing digital platforms effectively can increase product visibility and improve sales performance.
- Strengthening customer service and relationship-building efforts to foster long-term loyalty: Publishers should prioritize building strong relationships with schools and educators by offering exceptional customer support. Providing training, responsive communication, and ongoing engagement can enhance customer satisfaction, increase repeat sales, and build long-term loyalty.

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