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MUSIC APPEAL STRATEGY AND MARKET PERFORMANCE OF LOCALLY-BASED RESTAURANTS IN OWERRI, IMO STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between music appeal strategy and market performance in locally-based restaurants in Owerri, Imo State. Using a survey research method, data were collected from 40 management staff members across ten selected restaurants. A structured questionnaire was utilized to gather information on staff perceptions regarding the impact of music on customer experiences and market performance. The analysis revealed significant correlations between music appeal strategy and various performance metrics, including repeat purchases and profit margins. Specifically, music appeal strategy was found to have a strong positive relationship with repeat purchases ($r = 0.572$) and a moderate relationship with profit margins ($r = 0.462$), while its relationship with sales volume was weak ($r = 0.054$). The findings underscore the critical role of music in shaping customer behavior and enhancing the overall dining experience. Based on these results, recommendations are made for restaurant owners to strategically curate music selections and adapt them to different dining occasions to maximize customer satisfaction and profitability.

KEYWORDS: Music Appeal Strategy, Market Performance, Repeat Purchase, Profit Margin, Sales Volume.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Businesses owners are becoming intentional and desperate about displaying their products or services in a way to attract their target customers particularly with the reality of the fierce competition that defines the business milieu nowadays. An increasing number of marketing strategies involve the use of music and it is highly effective. The influence of music on

marketing is both obvious and discreet, music selection can provide customers with an increased understanding of a product (Brodsky, 2011).

There is a growing interest among restaurateurs in using music to enhance customers' perceptions of the service environment in order to influence their behaviors in different types of foodservice settings (Caldwell & Hibbert, 2002). Researchers contend that the atmosphere in local restaurants goes beyond the food and decorations to include factors like distinctive colors, lighting, scent, and background music that is associated with the origin of the cuisine (Ariffin, Bibon, & Abdullah, 2012; & Ting, 2015). Among these factors, music was identified as one of the most critical determinants of the atmosphere of various restaurants (Stroebele & Castro, 2006; Su, 2011). Moreover, background music was found to play an important role in purchasing and food choice decision-making processes among consumers (Jacob, 2006).

However, researchers found that background music played in the waiting areas decreases customers' tension and anxiety (Schubert, 2007) and increases customers' actual spending at the restaurant. Music appeal had a significant impact on customers' positive and negative emotions, and these emotions mediated the relationship between the restaurant atmosphere and customers' behavior intentions. Background music has been found to be an effective cue in accessing the physical environment of restaurants which further predicts restaurant patrons' quality evaluation and behaviors (North et al., 2003; Wilson, 2003). Music played in restaurants has been found to extend the dining time (Wansink& Van Ittersum, 2012), increase food consumption and spending (North et al., 2003; Stroebele & Castro, 2006), and encourage the purchase of higher-priced items. Wilson (2003) found that playing different types of music in a restaurant resulted in different perceptions of the restaurant's atmosphere. According to hospitality scholars, customers who dine in local restaurants are not only interested in local food but also seeking an authentic cultural experience (Gaytan, 2008; Sukalakamala& Boyce, 2007). Customers utilize this opportunity to learn about the culture of origin of the food and further expand their cultural knowledge (Sukalakamala& Boyce, 2007; Tsai & Lu,2012). Many local restaurants in the U.S. have used the concept of authenticity to both showcase the personality and enhance the reputation of the restaurant (Lu, Gursoy, & Lu, 2015). Local food and atmosphere were found to be critical attributes of local restaurants and assisted them in their role as "cultural ambassadors" to communicate ethnic culture to local consumers (Wood & Munoz, 2007). On the other hand, as consumers become more

familiar with local cultures and expect an enjoyable dining experience at local restaurants, the success of restaurants will no longer solely be based on the food itself (Jang et al., 2011). Researchers identified that the decor of the local restaurant, costumes, music played, and service style all contributes to the experiential encounter of the customer in restaurant environment (Jang, 2009; Tsai & Lu, 2012). Among these atmospheric factors, music was identified as a representation of ethnic culture and had been found to positively influence consumers' perceptions of the service environments (George, 2000; & Jang et al., 2011).

Music can be powerfully evocative. For service-based businesses, where customer evaluations of the service encounter can be key in establishing and maintaining competitive advantage (Hartline et al., 2000). Music has been used for its benefits across the service sector. For example, music can be essential in establishing a desired mood for a restaurant and enhancing multisensory experiences. Other service-based industry like the hospitals have used music as an agent of health promotion and healing. The use of music has contributed to more relaxed hospital environments where patients are less agitated and visitors self-report lower levels of stress (Routhieaux and Tansik, 1997). Also, in an effort to attract younger consumer segments, hotels have begun looking for innovative ways to incorporate live music into their marketing plans (McIntyre, 2015). Airports offer frazzled passengers a respite and an improved customer experience by providing live music (Zipkin, 2017).

Extant studies have corroborated the intuitions of practitioners by demonstrating that music can have positive effects on consumer behavior. Research has found that ambient or background music provides pleasure and arousal for consumers (Garlin and Owen, 2006; Turley and Milliman, 2000) and has direct implications for revenues, gross margins and profits (Chebat et al., 2000). Specifically, the use of ambient music has been found to increase sales (Areni and Kim, 1993; Mattila and Wirtz, 2001), influence purchase intentions (Areni and Kim, 1993; North and Hargreaves, 1998), increase and decrease perceived shopping time and waiting time (Yalch and Spangenberg, 1993; Kellaris and Kent, 1992) and influence dining speed (Milliman, 1986).

Music has often been used for emotional regulation purposes (Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham, 2007; Saarikallio, 2011) and has proved effective for stress management and for improving overall well-being (Casey, 2013; Thayer et al., 1994).

Statement of the Problem

Service industries, especially locally-based restaurants, are facing stiff competition in a market where retaining customers is part of their core strategy to gain a competitive advantage. Restaurants, by nature of what they do and the industry in which they operate, are expected to create and maintain a long and lasting relationship with their clients. However, it has been observed with dismay the biggest challenge of these restaurants has been the inability to retain customers. This is due to the increasing popularity of chain locally-based restaurant in Owerri in recent time. Customers are constantly seeking value for their money, where products and services are supposed to meet or exceed their expectations, satisfied customers are likely to pledge their loyalty while dissatisfied customers may defect to competitors and share their unpleasant with family and friends (Abd-Rashid et al., 2014) which eventually may affect patronage, sales volume and profit margin of the business negatively. The competitive nature of this business therefore, makes it imperative for operators to constantly seek new ways to improve their services, as well as map out strategies to provide memorable experience to retain their patrons. Thus, there is need to investigate how music appeal strategy influences market performance of locally-based restaurants in Owerri, Imo State. The study therefore, focuses on achieving the following objectives:

- To determine how music appeal strategy relates to sales volume.
- To ascertain how music appeal strategy influence repeat purchase.
- To examine how music appeal strategy affects profit margin.

Premise to the study objectives, the following Hypotheses are formulated:

H_01 : There is no significant relationship between music appeal strategy and sales volume.

H_02 : There is no significant relationship music appeal strategy and repeat purchase.

H_03 : There is no significant relationship music appeal strategy and profit margin

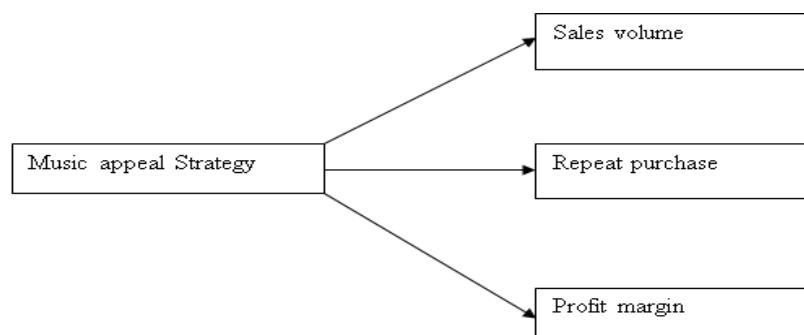


Fig. 1: Operational Framework.

Theoretical Foundation

Elaboration Likelihood Theory

Elaboration Likelihood Theory (ELT: Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) is a dual-process theory that explains how people are persuaded through two distinct routes: the central route and the peripheral route. The central route involves thoughtful consideration of message content, while the peripheral route relies on external cues, such as emotional appeals or aesthetics, which do not require much cognitive effort. Music, however, typically influences consumers through the peripheral route. As Coulter and Punj (2004) explain, background music in retail settings or advertisements functions as a peripheral cue that bypasses deep cognitive processing, directly affecting consumer attitudes and emotions. This makes music a powerful tool for enhancing brand perception and influencing impulsive purchases, thus driving sales volume and increases profit margin. For example, Baker, Levy, and Grewal (1992) suggest that ambiance music affects consumers' mood and perceived quality of the shopping environment. When consumers are exposed to music that resonates with them emotionally, they are more likely to form positive associations with the brand, leading to increased sales and possibly higher repeat purchase rates. The peripheral route of persuasion, in this case, influences consumers without requiring them to engage in extensive cognitive effort.

Furthermore, the peripheral route of persuasion, as posited by ELT, is particularly relevant in competitive markets where consumers are bombarded with information. Alpert and Alpert (1990) highlighted that music used in advertisements could act as a salient, attention-grabbing cue, cutting through the noise of competing messages and increasing product recall. This heightened brand awareness can contribute to greater market performance through higher sales volumes and long-term profitability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Music Appeal Strategy

Music appeal is a powerful marketing tool that enhances consumer engagement, evokes emotions, and can lead to positive brand associations and purchase intentions. Researchers have analyzed music's impact on consumer behavior, indicating that it plays a key role in advertising effectiveness and brand perception. According to Alpert and Alpert (1990), music has a unique ability to evoke emotions, which can positively impact consumer attitudes towards advertisements. Lavack, Thakor, and Bottausci (2008) examined how congruity between music and brand image can strengthen brand recall and favorability. Their findings

suggest that music that aligns with the brand's image can create a cohesive and memorable brand experience, thereby increasing the ad's effectiveness. Further, MacInnis and Park (1991) analyzed music's role in enhancing brand recall and recognition. Their study found that background music can improve ad recall and lead to better brand recognition, particularly when the music is closely linked to the ad's message.

Music is instrumental or vocal sounds, or both, that are combined. Music is also defined as a form of art, where emotions are expressed through harmonic frequencies (Bowling, Gill, Choi, and Purves; 2009). Hultén, Broweus, and van Dijk (2009) defines music as "a sense of expression to create a long-lasting impression on customers". Music can win the customers' loyalty in the long term and clarify the brands' identity to create experiences and associations related to the brand. Popular music has become an important part of marketing (Klein, 2016). According to Huron (1989) there're six identified ways how music can increase the effectiveness of advertisements, this includes: entertainment, structure/continuity, lyrical language, memorability, targeting, and authority establishment. By *entertaining*, the music builds effectiveness by making it more attractive by engaging the audience. *Continuity* is important when building a converging picture of an ad. Sometimes the visual images are not fully connected to each other, and that is the point when music steps in. Music is used to strengthen or emphasize dramatic moments. *Lyrical language* is the polarity between speech and song by alternating be-tween spoken language and lyrical language. Companies build ad *memorability* by making memorable songs, jingles. It is studied that melodies effect on the human mind more than photographs or visual images do. *Targeting* means focusing the advertisement on a specific audience. Brands need to find their main audience and consider how to captivate their interests. To *establish the authority*, companies need to use the music to enhance an ad's credibility. Often actors and actresses to create group authority, since the target audience may then associate themselves with age, social class or status, race, or sex. Music help in gaining consumer attention and making their stay more memorable.

In the context of restaurants, the physical environment and atmospherics are widely recognized as important criteria in evaluating service quality, while facility aesthetics, spatial layout, color, lighting, and music all serve as related cues (Ha & Jang, 2012; Heung & Gu, 2012). Music as a cue influence customers' perceptions and behaviors, Music appeal strategy can be used as types of advertising appeals as it has a certain intrinsic value and can help in increasing the persuasiveness of the advertisement. It can also help capture attention and

increase customer recall. It has a universal appeal that is often attributed to its ability to make us feel a certain way, and to change are currently feeling. In fact, music appeal is often said to be the language of emotion.

Academic research has demonstrated that ambient music can be an important tool for managing customer behavior. Studies have confirmed that music provides pleasure and arouses consumers emotion (Bruner, 1990; Garlin and Owen, 2006; Meng and Choi, 2017; Ryu and Jang, 2007).

Knoeferle et al. (2017) found that fast music strongly increased spending under high density/customer crowding conditions. Customers purchased more items despite the negative effects of high customer density. Moreover, Bailey and Areni (2006) demonstrated that waiting time was perceived as shorter when familiar as opposed to unfamiliar music was played. Hui et al. (1997) found that music led to approach behavior toward a service organization and music with positive valence triggered more positive emotional responses toward waiting. Similarly, Vida et al. (2007) found that music which is perceived to fit store image has a positive effect on length of shopping time, which indirectly influences consumers' expenditure.

Market performance

Market performance is a critical aspect of business strategy and financial health, often reflected through sales volume, repeat purchases, and profit margins. These factors are interconnected, each influencing the overall success of a business in a competitive environment. Market performance evaluate how well a company or product competes in the market, typically measured through metrics such as sales growth, market share, customer loyalty, and profitability. Venkatraman and Ramanujam (1986) were among the first to highlight that market performance encompasses both financial and non-financial measures. Financial performance includes profit margins and sales volume, while non-financial performance is seen in customer satisfaction and loyalty. Neely et al. (1994) expanded on this by stressing the importance of linking market performance with strategic objectives. They argued that performance metrics should not only track immediate financial outcomes but also long-term value creation through brand equity and market positioning.

Academic researchers and business practitioners' interest to discover more about marketing performance concept have grown crucial (Eusebio et al., 2006; Nwokah & Maclayton, 2006). Marketing performance is influenced by many factors such as competition, innovations,

market share, economic trend, government regulation and more. These factors interact with one another, making market performance complex and unpredictable. Business owners are constantly adopting innovative industry trends and practices in order to meet consumer needs (Nwokah, 2009). The need for uniqueness is a trait at the individual level of consumer (Cheema & Kaikati, 2010; Tian et al., 2001), the kind of need that leads to the desire for a unique product or service (Simonson & Nowlis, 2000), which is a different product or service from the others. This desire affects the willingness of consumers to do positive word-of-mouth marketing related to the product or service they use (Cheema & Kaikati, 2010).

Sales Volume

Abah and Olohiliye (2015) stress that sales volume indicates the quantity of different items sold or the number of customers who have sought for the services offered by a firm in a given time period such a year or a fiscal quarter. Sales volume measurement is a vital part of the performance evaluation of the sales force who are responsible for selling the products of the firm (Abah & Olohiliye, 2015). Generally, sales people are incentivized on the basis of their ability to meet their target. Since, a major part of the variable pay component depends on achieving the target, sales volume is an important metric in sales and marketing in businesses (Abah & Olohiliye, 2015). Hanmaikyur, (2016) submitted that "sales volume refers to the amount a company derives from sales compared to a previous corresponding period of time in which the later sales exceed the former". It is however, an increase in a company's sales over a particular period of time, usually given as a percentage. Sales volume is considered positive for a company's survival and profitability. It is an important measure of business performance.

Sales volume influences factors that range from internal motivation to promotion and retention of talented employees that upgrade the production and consumption process in service industry (Ashaghian, 2012 as cited in Apollos et al., 2022). Depending on the industry structure, sales volume may also provide additional market power which firms can use to increase performance (Fazli et. al., 2013 as cited in Apollos et al., 2022). This is the quantity or number of products sold or services provided by a company in a particular period of time. Sales volume can be seen as the volume of goods sold in number or quantity of units during the normal operation. According to Quarshie (2010), increased sales volume helps company to acquire healthy revenue. Increased quantity sales mean increased production hence that also helps in increased contribution margin. Moreover, increased sales volume helps to reach

break-even earlier which helps the company gain profits from their operation as early as possible (Quarshie, 2010). Businesses therefore, focus on increasing their sales volume to achieve economies of scale, driving down per-unit costs and enhancing profitability.

Repeat Purchase

Repeat purchases reflect customer satisfaction and loyalty, both of which are essential for sustainable business growth. If consumers are satisfied with the product brand, it means they will recommend the products to others and will not patronize the other alternative brand rather they will make repeat purchase, (Benneth, 2004). In repeat purchase it is aimed that the customer may have the tendency to re – visits the service provider again (Hellier & Rickard, 2003). Lin and Liang (2011) define repeat – purchase intention as “the degree to which customers are willing to purchase the same product or service and it is a simple, objective, and observable predictor of future buying behavior”. Consumer repeat – purchase intention is more important to company’s profitability (Jones & Sasser, 1995). Repeat customers are the core source of profit for any business in the world (Gupta & Kim, 2009). Businesses that encourage repeat purchases benefit from lower customer acquisition costs, as retaining existing customers is cheaper than acquiring new ones. This customer loyalty, in turn, enhances the stability of sales and long-term profitability.

Profit Margin

Businesses cannot survive without profitability, and a highly profitable business rewards its owners with a considerable return on their investment. According to Adefulu (2015), business managers are responsible for increasing firm’s profitability; by subjecting each process under scrutiny, the aim is to point out changes that improve profitability. Profit margin is the ability of a company to use its resources to generate revenues in excess of its expenses. In other words, this is an organization’s capability of generating profits from its operations (Pustelnik & Hallberg, 2013). Profit margin is the primary goal of all business ventures. Asimakopoulos et al., (2013) explains that without profit margin a restaurant business will not survive in the long run. So, measuring current and past profit margin and projecting future profit margin is very important. Stierwald (2010) contends that profit margin is one of the four building blocks for analyzing financial statements and company performance as a whole. The other three are efficiency, solvency, and market prospects. Restaurant managers use these key concepts to analyses how well the restaurant is doing and the future potential it could have if operations were managed properly (Stierwald, 2010). According to Gituma (2017), the two

key aspects of profit margin are revenues and expenses. Revenues are the business income. This is the amount of money earned from customers by selling products or providing services.

Al-Nimer and Yousef (2015) explains that expenses are cash used for employee payment, rent, utilities, and other necessities in the production process. Therefore, profit margin looks at the relationship between the revenues and expenses to see how well a business is performing and the future potential growth a organization might have (Al-Nimer & Yousef, 2015). Profit margin is measured by an income statement that maintains a record of income and expenses over an interval of time (Adefulu, 2015). According to Meriläinen (2015) profit margin is expressed in dividing net income by revenue. Net income or net profit is the remaining amount after subtracting company expenses from total revenue.

Music Appeal Strategy and Market Performance

Music appeal has been a critical component in marketing strategies, especially in influencing consumer behavior. The way music interacts with consumers' emotions, cognition, and purchasing patterns has been explored by various scholars over time. This study synthesizes key insights from research examining the impact of music appeal on sales volume, repeat purchase, and profit margins. The use of music in advertising can significantly enhance sales volume by creating an emotional connection with consumers. According to North, Hargreaves and McKendrick (1999), music creates a positive shopping environment that enhances mood and encourages consumers to spend more time in stores, which often translates into higher sales. Their study revealed that when music was congruent with the store's brand image, sales increased by approximately 38%.

Similar, Alpert and Alpert (1990) emphasized the emotional response evoked by background music in advertisements. They found that music with strong emotional appeal leads to greater message retention and brand recall, which can ultimately boost immediate sales. Their findings suggest that music tempo and genre can influence not only mood but also consumer purchasing decisions. Sweeney and Wyber (2002) examined the role of music in creating a lasting impression, leading to customer loyalty and repeat purchase. Their research demonstrated that when consumers enjoy the music played business environment, they tend to associate the positive experience with the brand, which increases their likelihood of returning to make repeat purchases. This phenomenon, known as "musical branding," creates a mental association between the music and the brand, strengthening long-term consumer

loyalty. Furthermore, Yalch and Spangenberg (2000) research indicated that customers who felt more comfortable in the business settings due to the music were more likely to become repeat buyers, as they associated the environments with a pleasant shopping experience.

The profit margin of a company can be indirectly influenced by the strategic use of music, especially in driving sales and enhancing customer retention. Bruner (1990) highlighted the financial benefits of carefully selecting music that aligns with the target market. His study found that when businesses invest in music that appeals to their specific audience, the overall purchasing behavior improves, leading to higher profit margins. Another study by Gorn (1982) showed that music's effect on consumer preference could also influence the price consumers are willing to pay for products. In his research, Gorn concluded that music positively affects product evaluation, which can justify premium pricing strategies, thereby increasing profit margins. For instance, slower, more sophisticated music has been linked to higher willingness to spend, as consumers perceive the environment as more upscale.

The literature apparently, reveals a significant relationship between music appeal strategy and market performance indicators such as sales volume, repeat purchase, and profit margins. From enhancing consumer mood and increasing time spent in business environment to fostering customer loyalty and justifying premium pricing, music plays an essential role in shaping consumer behavior.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Cross sectional survey was adopted for this study to prove adequate representation of sample elements.

Population and Sample

The study subject comprises of ten registered locally-based restaurants in Owerri, as at the time of data collection, identified through TripAdvisor (<http://www.tripadvisor.com/Restaurants>). The study focused on the management staff of these restaurants, specifically targeting four staff members from each establishment. These individuals are directly involved in the management of the restaurants and have close interactions with their employees and customers as well, making them well-suited to provide insights into how music impacts customer experiences and market performance. In total, 40 staff members (4 staff \times 10 restaurants) were included in the survey sample.

Table 3.1: Names and Addresses of the selected registered local-based restaurants in Owerri.

S/N	Names of Restaurant	Restaurants Adress
1.	Jevinik Restaurant Owerri	19 Umes Eroni Street, Owerri 321111 Nigeria
2.	Hungry Man	Concorde Ave. Near Port Harcourt Road, Owerri 321111 Nigeria
3.	Rennys Foods	Ekwema Crescent 45 Owerri club 118 Wetheral, Owerri, Owerri 460222 Nigeria
4.	Chukas Place Restaurant and Bar	17 Achike Udenwa Avenue, Opposite Imo Trade and Investment Center, Owerri Nigeria
5.	Sunic Foods	107 Wetheral Rd., Owerri 460211 Nigeria
6.	Big Mummy Kitchen	God's Grace Avenue, Federal Housing Umuguma Road, Owerri Nigeria
7.	Joseph's Pot	120 Ikenegbu Owerri
8.	Fresh Pot Kitchen	23 Nkwere street, Work Layout, Owerri.
9.	Ibari Ogwa	F282+CHV, Port Harcourt Road, New Owerri
10.	Ogwa Kitchen	World Bank, Ikenna Nziimiro Avenue off Port Harcourt Road, Owerri.

Sources:<http://www.tripadvisor.com/Restaurants>

Data Collection Instrument

Data was collected using a structured questionnaire designed to gather information on the operational staff's perceptions of music appeal strategy and its effect on market performance.

Measurement Scale

The questionnaire utilized a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to measure respondents' attitudes and perceptions regarding the role of music in influencing market performance. This scale will facilitate the quantification of data and enable the analysis of relationships between music appeal strategy and market performance metrics.

4.0 Data Analysis

Spearman's rank-order correlation was employed. This non-parametric statistical method is suitable for assessing the strength and direction of the association between the ranked variables of music appeal strategy and various performance indicators (e.g., sales volume, repeat purchases, and profit margins). The results will provide insights into how music influences the market performance of local-based restaurants in Owerri.

4.1 RESULT AND FINDINGS

Test of Hypotheses

In analyzing the relationships between music appeal strategy (MAS) and market performance indicators such as sales volume (SV), repeat purchase (RP), and profit margin (PM), we can assess the validity of the proposed hypotheses.

		Correlations				
			MAS	SV	RP	PM
Spearman's rho	MA	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.054**	.572 **	.462 **
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	40	40	40	40
	SV	Correlation Coefficient	.054**	1.000	.642 **	.389 **
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	40	40	40	40
	RP	Correlation Coefficient	.572 **	.642 **	1.000	.705 **
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	40	40	40	40
	PM	Correlation Coefficient	.462 **	.389 **	.705 **	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	40	40	40	40

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

Keywords: *MAS- Music Appeal Strategy*

SV- Sales Volume

RP-Repeat Purchase

PM-Profit Margin

Hypothesis 1 (H01) posits that there is no significant relationship between music appeal and sales volume. The Spearman correlation coefficient between MAS and SV is found to be **0.054**, with a corresponding p-value of **0.000**. Given that the p-value is less than the significance level of 0.01, we reject the null hypothesis (H01). This indicates a statistically significant relationship between music appeal and sales volume. However, the correlation coefficient suggests that this relationship is very weak, implying that while music appeal may have some impact on sales volume, it is not a strong determinant.

Hypothesis 2 (H02) states that there is no significant relationship between music appeal and repeat purchase. The analysis reveals a Spearman correlation coefficient of **0.572** between

MAS and RP, with a p-value of **0.000**. Since this p-value is also below the 0.01 threshold, we reject the null hypothesis (H02). This outcome indicates a significant and strong positive relationship between music appeal and repeat purchase, suggesting that as the appeal of the music played in the restaurant increases, so does the likelihood of customers making repeat purchases. This finding emphasizes the role of music in enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Lastly, **Hypothesis 3 (H03)** proposes that there is no significant relationship between music appeal and profit margin. The correlation coefficient between MAS and PM is **0.462**, with a p-value of **0.000**. The p-value being less than 0.01 leads us to reject the null hypothesis (H03). This suggests a significant relationship between music appeal and profit margin, indicating that a higher appeal of music is associated with improved profit margins in the restaurants. The results highlight the potential of music as a strategic tool for enhancing financial performance in the dining experience.

4.2 Summary of Findings

The analysis of the relationship between music appeal strategy (MAS) and key market performance indicators—sales volume (SV), repeat purchase (RP), and profit margin (PM)—provided several significant insights into how music influences restaurant operations.

Firstly, a weak yet statistically significant relationship was identified between music appeal strategy and sales volume. The Spearman correlation coefficient was calculated at **0.054**, with a p-value of **0.000**. While this indicates that there is a measurable connection between music appeal and sales volume, the strength of this relationship is not substantial enough to suggest that music is a primary driver of sales. This finding implies that other factors may play a more pivotal role in influencing sales figures in the restaurant context.

In contrast, the correlation between music appeal strategy and repeat purchases was much stronger, with a coefficient of **0.572** and a p-value of **0.000**. This strong positive relationship suggests that music appeal significantly impacts customer behavior regarding repeat visits. As the appeal of the music played in the restaurant increases, the likelihood of customers returning also rises. This highlights the importance of music in creating a positive dining atmosphere that fosters customer loyalty and satisfaction.

Finally, the study revealed a significant relationship between music appeal strategy and profit margin, with a correlation coefficient of **0.462** and a p-value of **0.000**. This finding indicates that higher music appeal is associated with improved profit margins, suggesting that restaurants could benefit financially from investing in carefully selected music that resonates with their clientele.

The findings underscore the critical role of music in shaping customer experiences and influencing market performance in locally-based restaurants. While music may not have a strong impact on sales volume, its effects on repeat purchases and profit margins are substantial. Restaurant owners and managers should strategically consider their music selections to enhance customer engagement and drive profitability.

5.0 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations can be made for locally-based restaurants in Owerri, Imo State, to optimize the impact of music appeal on their market performance.

- 1. Curate Music Playlists:** Restaurants should invest time and resources in curating playlists that align with their brand identity and target customer demographics. This includes selecting genres and songs that enhance the dining atmosphere and resonate with customers' preferences. Engaging with customers to gather feedback on music choices can help ensure that the selections are appealing and effective.
- 2. Adapt Music to Different Times and Occasions:** The ambiance of a restaurant can vary depending on the time of day and the type of service being provided (e.g., lunch, dinner, special events). Implementing flexible music strategies that adapt to these different settings can enhance customer experiences. For instance, more upbeat music may be appropriate during busy lunch hours, while softer tunes could create a relaxed environment for dinner service.
- 3. Train Staff on the Importance of Music:** Operational staff should be educated about the significance of music in enhancing customer experiences and influencing repeat purchases. Training sessions can include discussions on how to effectively manage music volume, transitions between songs, and customer interactions in relation to the music played.
- 4. Monitor Customer Reactions:** Restaurants should establish a system to monitor and evaluate customer reactions to the music played. This can be achieved through informal

conversations, feedback forms, or surveys. Gathering data on customer preferences can guide future music selections and help assess the impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty.

5. **Leverage Music for Marketing:** Restaurants can utilize music as a marketing tool by incorporating it into promotional activities. For example, hosting live music events or themed music nights can attract customers and create a unique dining experience. Highlighting these events in marketing materials can enhance visibility and draw in new patrons.
6. **Analyze Financial Impact Regularly:** Restaurants should regularly analyze the correlation between music appeal and financial metrics, such as sales volume and profit margins. This ongoing assessment can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of music strategies and inform adjustments as needed.
7. **Consider Professional Consultation:** If resources permit, restaurant owners may consider consulting with music specialists or employing a sound branding agency. These professionals can provide tailored advice on music selection, acoustics, and overall ambiance, ensuring that the music effectively supports the restaurant's goals.

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