

**Supply Chain Management Practices and Its Effect on Competitive
Advantage: A Case of Heineken Beverage Share Company**



**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Business Administration**

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College of Business and Economics, School of
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this MBA thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university, and all sources of material used for this thesis / dissertation have been duly acknowledged.

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This MBA thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as Thesis Advisor.

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ACRONYMS

SCM	Supply Chain Management
SCMP	Supply Chain Management Practice
LSCM	Logistics and Supply Chain Management
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
SSCP	Strategic Supply Chain Practice
CR	Customer Relationship
IS	Information Sharing
IQ	Information Quality
LP	Lean Practice
CA	Competitive Advantage
Sc	Share Company
RBV	Resource-Based View
EDI	Electronic Data Interchange
JIT	Just in Time

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ABSTRACT

Since competition now exists between supply networks rather than organizations, effective management of the supply chain (SCM) has emerged as a potentially significant method of ensuring competitive advantage. This study aimed to investigate the effect of supply chain management practices on competitive advantage in the case of Heineken Beverage Company. There are five dimensions to supply chain management practices: strategic supplier partnerships, customer relationships, level of information sharing, quality of information sharing, and internal lean practices, which determine how these supply chain management practices affect competitive advantage in their five dimensions (cost, quality, delivery time, flexibility, and creativitycommitment) at the Heineken beverage company. To accomplish the goals of this research, the study used both an explanatory and a descriptive research design. The primary data was collected from 124 employees of Heineken Beverage Company. Data was collected from primary sources through a questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlational analysis, and multiple regression analysis in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25 data analysis. The study found that supply chain management practices, i.e., customer relations, level of information sharing, and lean practices, have a positive and significant effect on the competitive advantage of Heineken Beverage Company. In addition, the result shows that strategic supplier partnerships and the quality of information sharing have a positive but insignificant effect on the company. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the company enhance its supply chain management practices to further strengthen its competitive advantage, so Heineken beverage, in particular, has to increase its relationship with customers and set standards for reliability, responsiveness, and other standards. and needs to put more effort into enhancing its relationship with key suppliers by including key suppliers in planning and goal-settingactivities, in new product development processes, in continuous improvement processes, and by supporting them to improve their product quality, as well as by exchanging information with trading partners that helps the establishment of businessplans. The company, also, needs to improve to reduce setup time.

Key Words: Supply chain management; SCM Practice; Competitive advantage

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers background of the study, statement of the problem, general and specific objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study and organization of the study.

1.1. Background of the Study

Early in the 1980s, the complex and dynamic business environments in various industries led to the development of supply chain management (SCM). It was developed in response to the growing demand for comprehensive analysis of business operations, marketing channels, and resource allocation inside, across, and between firms in order to maximize performance in the marketplace for the final customers.

During the past few years, many manufacturing and distribution companies have now viewed supply chain management as one of their most important strategic disciplines for both company survival and competitive advantage. In order to compete and increase supply chain surplus on a global scale. It is now essential to understand and practice supply chain management (Anderson, 2008). Companies all over the world are embracing supply chain management as the newest methodology to lower costs, boost customer satisfaction, more effectively use resources, and generate new revenue. Businesses now have to prioritize and invest in their connections with customers and suppliers due to intense competition in today's global marketplaces, the introduction of products with short life cycles, and the rise in customer expectations (Simchi-Levi, 2000).

Supply chain management's objective is to analyze and oversee supply chain networks. This idea's justification is the potential for cost savings and improved customer service. An important objective is to increase a company's competitiveness in the global market despite fierce competition and quickly shifting customer needs (Langley, Coyle, Gibson, Novack, & Bardi, 2008). For organizations, establishing a seamless relationship with suppliers and customers is essential, which is why supply

chain management has grown to be a serious issue in many industries by controlling the supply chain, improvements can be accomplished.

It is important to manage and maintain relationships with distributors, customers, suppliers, and the firm itself. The rationale is that, mistakes in supply chain system procedures can lead to a reduction in product quality and a company's ability to compete. One aspect that enables a business to differentiate itself against its competitors and contains capabilities that enable an organization to stand out from them is competitive advantage (Li, 2006). A competitive advantage may be attained by providing customer with value, and the value is made visible by providing goods and services that are distinct from those of rivals and are less expensive.

SCM practices impact not only overall organizational performance, but also competitive advantage of an organization. They are expected to improve an organization's competitive advantage through *cost, quality, delivery time, flexibility, and creativity commitment*. Prior studies have indicated that the various components of SCM practices (such as strategic supplier partnership) have an impact on various aspects of competitive advantage (such as price/cost). For example, strategic supplier partnership can improve supplier performance, reduce time to market, and increase the level of customer responsiveness and satisfaction (Frohlich, 2011).

The performance of the supply chain is affected by different factors. One of the most important factors influencing the performance of supply chain is strategic supplier alliances (Narasimhan, 2008). Effective partnerships with suppliers can be a critical factor to guide supply chain management (Li Suhong, 2006) The other factor is having good relationships with customers, which are needed for successful implementation of SCM programs (Moberg, 2012) Close customer relationship allows an organization to differentiate its product from competitors, sustain customer loyalty, and dramatically extend the value it provides to its customers (Magretta, J, 1998). Furthermore, Wang et al., (2008) stated that integration and coordination across supply chain can be well provided through information sharing. Supply chain partners that exchange information regularly are able to work together as a single key. They are better able to understand the needs of the final consumer and hence are able to respond quickly to changing market (Li

Suhong, 2006) Power, (2005) also state that the failures can occur in case of information delays, shortage or distortion across the supply chain. Additionally, while information sharing is important, the significance of its impact on SCM depends on the extent of quality of information shared, when and how it is shared, and with whom (Holmberg, 2010) and Chizzo, 1998). According to (Moslem, 2013) internal lean practice is the other factor that affects supply chain performance. Lean production is a production system that aims to optimize production process by reducing waste and other inefficient factors.

Generally, this study sought to analyze the effect of supply chain management practices such as strategic supplier partnerships, customer relations, information sharing, quality of information, and lean practices on competitive advantage, with the goal of developing a framework that supports effective management practices of a company's supply chains, which can be viewed as an alternative to improving the competitive advantage of the company. Thus, the study aims to evaluate how supplychain management practices affect the company's competitive advantage.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Supply chain management is an inclusive set of actions that are employed in an organization in order to gain a competitive advantage. Bridge Field Group (2006) defines supply chain as "a linked set of resources and processes that begins with the sourcing of raw materials and extends through the delivery of finished goods to end customers. "It involves the integrated planning, coordination, and control of all business processes and activities along the supply chain to satisfy the needs of all supplychain stakeholders and provide higher customer value at lower overall supply chain costs. Supply chain management is also viewed as a systemic and strategic coordination of operational functions between supply chain partners working within a chain as well as within a given company.

Many organizations have begun to recognize that SCM is the key to building sustainable competitive edge. Despite this increased attention, the literature has not been able to offer much way of guidance to help the practice of SCM (Petrovic-Lazarevic, 2007).

Mutangana, Paul (2019), conducted research on the effect of supply chain management

practices on competitive advantage and organizational performance at Uganda Crown Beverages Limited. The finding shows that supply chain management practices have a positive impact on the competitive advantage of the company.

Ethiopia is one of the least developed countries with a high unemployment rate. The government of the country has been exerting great effort to put Ethiopian economy on a high growth path to reduce poverty and the unemployment rate. Among them, manufacturing takes the lion's share. But this sector has been characterized by many structural constraints, such as low productivity, low value, and a lack of international competitiveness. Albeit these constraints, limited research has been accomplished in the area of supply chain management and its practices in Ethiopia, of which the Harari Region is one. Despite the efforts made to review literature related to Ethiopia's beverage industry's existing supply chain practices, not enough information could not be found. The majority of supply chain management research has been done in developed nations, which have varying economic, political, technological, social, legal, and cultural standings. Taking these research findings as they are and applying them might be challenging as Ethiopia has a different status than other nations in terms of its economy, politics, society, law, and culture.

In the study area, the way the SC is controlled, from suppliers to customers is traditional in a way that the connection is only buy-and-sell or transactional. Even if SC existed by default, it is not scientifically managed and implemented. It is observed that each SC partner is working independently to increase their own level of competitiveness, as a result of which their efforts are not as successful as they could be. Nowadays, implementing supply chain management strategies that increase competitive advantage has become one of the key elements for enhancing corporate operations. A review of the studies conducted locally on supply chain management practices shows that Sentayehu Tesfaye (2018) conducted research on the effect of supply chain management practices on competitive advantage: In the case of the national alcohol and liquor factory in Ethiopia, he found that information sharing and customer relation management have a strong impact on the company's competitive advantage but are inversely related; however, there was no discussion of how to improve customer relation management and information sharing in the company. Abiy Lemma (2015) conducted research on implication of supply chain

management to competitiveness a case in BGI Ethiopia plc. The findings of the study shows; Even if the firm is having difficulties implementing a successful and high-quality supply chain management, the outcomes indicate that SCM has a positive effect on BGI Ethiopia's competitiveness. The gap of the study, is that it did not study each variable of competitive advantage, as *Frolich and Dixon* (2001) mention cost, quality, delivery, flexibility, and service as competitive priorities. But the study only considers cost, quality, and differentiation as competitive variables.

Therefore, this study focused on how supply chain management practices relate to the competitive advantage of the Heineken Beverage Company's Harar branch.

1.3. Research Questions

The research paper answered the following research questions:

- what is the effect of strategic supplier partnership on Heineken beverage share company's competitive advantage?
- what is the effect of customer relation on Heineken beverage share company's competitive advantage?
- what is the effect of information sharing on Heineken beverage share company's competitive advantage?
- what is the effect of information quality on Heineken beverage share company's competitive advantage?
- what is the effect of lean practice on Heineken beverage share company's competitive advantage?

1.4. Objective of the study

1.4.1. General Objectives

The study's general objective was to investigate how supply chain management practices affect Heineken beverage share company's competitive advantage.

1.4.2 The specific objectives

- To assess the effect of strategic supplier partnerships on Heineken Beverage's competitive advantage

- to investigate the effect of customer relations on Heineken Beverage's competitive advantage.
- to assess the level of information sharing on Heineken's competitive advantage.
- to investigate the effect of information quality on Heineken beverages share company's competitive advantage.
- to assess the effect of lean practices on Heineken Beverage's share company's competitive advantage.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study will benefit managers who want to learn more about the effect of supply chain management practices on the competitive advantage of the company. The findings of this study could help establish a highly competitive advantage that would allow them to form strong relationships with key suppliers and customers. Also, academicians, researchers, policymakers, and business practitioners in the case company will benefit from the findings of this study. This study, which is being conducted in the field of supply chain management practices on Heineken beverage share company's competitive advantage, will help the company create and effectively apply supply chain management practices. Furthermore, the findings of the study will contribute to the limited body of existing literature on the effect of supply chain management practices on competitive advantage; they can also be viewed as an additional empirical finding to the existing body.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The scope of this study was limited to identifying the effect of supply chain management practices on competitive advantage in the case of Heineken Harar Beverage Company. Geographically, the study was carried out in Heineken Beverage Share Company, which is located around Harare city. Moreover, the scope of methodology is limited to conducting a survey through questionnaires. Strategic supplier partnerships, customer relationships, level of information sharing, quality of information sharing, and internal lean practices are the supply chain management practices that the researcher has chosen. which are independent variables, and using five parameters, the competitive advantage is taken into account as the dependent variable. Cost, quality, delivery time, flexibility, and creative commitment.

1.7. Organization of the study

The first chapter contains the introductory section, which includes the study's background, problem statement, objectives, significance, and scope. This chapter also raises questions that are to be answered by the study. The second chapter includes a theoretical and empirical review relevant to the study. Chapter three includes the methodological part. This chapter explains in detail how the research is going to be conducted, including the research design, source of data and data collection method, sample and sampling technique, and data analysis. The fourth chapter includes a discussion and analysis of the findings. The last chapter, Chapter 5, encompassed the summary, conclusion, and recommendation of the study.

1.8. Definition of Terms and concept of the Study

Supply chain management (SCM): All phases involved in directly or indirectly completing a customer request are included in a supply chain. In addition to the manufacturer and suppliers, the supply chain also consists of transporters, warehouses, retailers, and the actual customers. (Chopra and Meindle, 2001).

Competitive advantage (CA): The ability of a business to establish a strong position against competitors is what is known as a competitive advantage. (McGinnis & Vallopra, 1999).

Strategic supplier partnership (SSP): A long lasting relationship of an organization with its suppliers. It helps individual participating business entities to be competent on their strategic and operational capabilities Change et al., (2017), Youn et al. (2013).

Customer relationship (CR): Refers to all sets of activities done in order to build long term relationship with customers, managing customer complaints and improving as well as sustaining customer satisfactions Chang et al. (2017).

Level of information sharing (IS): The degree to which important and proprietary information is shared with supply chain partners is referred to as the level of information sharing. (Mockza et al 1998).

Quality of information sharing (IQ): Aspects of information sharing's quality include its accuracy, timeliness, adequacy, and credibility. (Moberg, 2002; Monckza.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter includes a review of academic sources on a specific subject. It provides a comprehensive view of current knowledge, enabling the identification of relevant theories, empirical reviews relevant to the study's subject, and gaps in the body of existing research. This research conceptualizes and develops five dimensions of SCM practice, the definition and concept of supply chain management and competitive advantage, and other theoretical explanations about supply chain management practices and their contribution to gaining competitive advantage by focusing on previous research in this field as well as current reviewed literature relevant to this study.

2.1. Concepts and Definitions of Supply Chain Management

2.2. Theoretical Literature Review

In the early 1980s, a U.S. industry consultant first used the term "supply chain management." However, the concept of a supply chain in management was of great importance long before, in the early 20th century. Supply Chain Management (SCM) has become part of the senior management agenda since the 1990s. Executives are becoming aware that the successful coordination, integration, and management of key business processes across members of the supply chain will determine the ultimate success of the single enterprise (Van der Vorst, 2000). During the previous decade, the applicability of SCM has been extensively investigated in a variety of application domains, and a number of supply chain management definitions are available. Bridge Field Group (2006) defines supply chain as "a linked set of resources and processes that begins with the sourcing of raw materials and extends through the delivery of finished goods to end customers. "SCM is the integrated planning, coordination, and control of all business processes and activities in the supply chain to deliver superior customer value at less cost to the supply chain as a whole while satisfying the requirements of other stakeholders in the supply chain.

According to Christopher (2005), SCM is obviously the supply chain, which represents a network of organizations that are involved, through upstream and downstream

linkages, in the different processes and activities that produce value in the form of products and services in the hands of the ultimate consumer.

Chopra & Meindl (2007) believe that "a supply chain consists of all parties involved, directly or indirectly, in fulfilling a customer request." Within each organization, such as a manufacturer, the supply chain includes all functions involved in receiving and fulfilling a customer request. These functions include, but are not limited to, new product development, marketing, distribution, finance, customer service, information management, and transportation.

As Li et al. (2006) described, SCM is a concept whose goal is to integrate both information and material flows seamlessly across the supply chain as an effective competitive weapon. Supply chain processes employ a combination of people, systems, and technology and are performed by the firm itself or in collaboration with external supply chain partners (Nikos, 2007). It involves the active streamlining of a business's supply-side activities in order to increase customer value and achieve a competitive advantage in the market. Companies can cut excess costs and deliver items to customers faster by managing the supply chain. (Ayers, 2001) suggest that a supply chain is a "life cycle process comprising physical, informational, financial, and knowledge flows whose purpose is to satisfy end-user requirements with products and services from multiple linked suppliers." According to this definition, the supply chain encompasses processes that cover a broad range of activities, including sourcing, manufacturing, and selling physical products and services; it also includes (depending on the logistics flows) transporters, warehouses, retailers, and consumers themselves. A supply chain is broadly defined as all of the linked individual organizations that, by direct or indirect means, lead to the delivery of a service or a good to a customer (Chopra and Meindl, 2004).

Companies that seek to strengthen their competitive position by reducing their order-to-delivery cycle are looking to supply-chain management to help them achieve that goal. SCM allows for the identification of bottlenecks that can slow down activities along the supply chain because it encompasses all procedures involved in producing and delivering a product to the customer (Vereecke & Muylee, 2006). to achieve the most significant improvement in the overall product cycle. Today, supply chain management includes services such as computer systems, warehouse design project

management, operational improvements, distribution management, operational analysis and design materials handling, and computer simulation. For businesses to become more profitable and maintain their competitiveness in the global market, knowledge and expertise in supply chain management are crucial.

The modern evaluation of SCM practices includes supplier partnership, outsourcing process, cycle time compression, continuousness of process flow, sharing of technology and information, and customer relations (Tan, Kannan, & Handfield, 1998). The objective of SCM (supply chain management) is to integrate information and material flows flawlessly through the supply chain as a competitive arm to achieve profitability Aamir, M., & Zaman, K. (2011). Generally speaking, supply chain management can be thought of as a systemic and strategic coordination of operational functions between supply chain partners working within a chain as well as within a given company, with the goal of enhancing the long-term performance of each company that is a part of the chain as well as of the chain as a whole.

2.2.1. Resource-Based View Theory

The company's resource-based view (RBV) suggests that firm activity may be seen as an attempt to acquire an advantage over competitors. Competitive advantage is attained by utilizing internal business capabilities rather than external variables. According to the RBV, a company's internal resources lead to higher performance, which eventually results in a competitive advantage. (Barney, 1991; Sanders et al., 2011).

According to Barney (1991), firm resources include assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm attributes, information, and knowledge, among others. Resources must also have specific characteristics in order to create a competitive advantage for enterprises, according to the resource based logic, which suggests that they rely on both tangible and intangible resources that are thought to be heterogeneous and immobile, and resources must be rare, valuable, imitable, and non-substitutable. requires a distinctive combination of these resources and capabilities to register meaningful gains in performance.

Therefore, these resources must be combined to optimize their collective generation of capabilities such as low price, high product quality, high delivery dependability, and a shorter time to market (Tuan & Yoshi, 2010). In the context of SCM practices in the real environment, RBV can be used to understand the link between SCM practices and

competitive advantage. That is how the application becomes one of the organization's resources and contributes to SCM excellence performance (Shamsuddine et al., 2013). When companies implement a value-creating strategy that competitors are not using, this creates superior performance relative to competitors.

2.3. Supply Chain Management Practices

SCM practices are defined as the set of activities undertaken by an organization to promote effective management of its supply chain (Koh, S. L., Demirbag, M., Bayraktar, E., Tatoglu, E., & Zaim, S., 2007); as the approaches applied in the integration, management, and coordination of supply, demand, and relationships in order to satisfy customers in an effective way (Wong et al., 2005). It is an inclusive set of actions that are employed in an organization in order to enhance its internal supply chain. Supply chain management practices enable businesses and management to continuously enhance supply chain performance in all areas. Several authors and scholars have mentioned various methods for supply chain management. According to Croom et al. (1998), the latest evolution of supply chain management practices includes supplier partnerships, outsourcing, cycle time compression, continuous process flow, and information technology sharing. Tan et al. (2004) use purchasing, quality, and customer relations to represent supply chain management practices in their empirical study. (Alvarado & Kotzab, 2001) include in their list of supply chain management practices concentration on core competencies, use of inter-organizational systems such as EDI, and elimination of excess inventory levels by postponing customization toward the end of the supply chain.

Tan et al. (2002) identifies six aspects of supply chain management practice through factor analysis: supply chain integration, information sharing, supply chain characteristics, customer service management, geographical proximity, and JIT capability. (Chen & Paulraj, 2004) use supplier base reduction, long-term relationships, communication, cross-functional teams, and supplier involvement to measure buyer-supplier relationships.

Mentzer et al. (2002) identify the concept. Supply chain management is defined as including an agreed vision and goals, information sharing, risk and award sharing, cooperation, process integration, a long-term relationship, and agreed supply chain leadership. Thus, the literature portrays supply chain management practices from a

variety of different perspectives with a common goal of ultimately improving organizational competitive advantage. In reviewing and consolidating the literature, five distinctive dimensions, including strategic supplier partnership, customer relationship, level of information sharing, quality of information sharing, and lean practice, were selected for measuring supply chain management practice. The five constructs address the supply chain's upstream (strategic supplier partnership) and downstream (customer relationship) sides, information flow across the supply chain (level and quality of information sharing), and internal supply chain process. The alignment of people, processes, supply chains, demand, and technology help the organization optimize resources, opportunities, and performance (Drucker, 2000). Supply chain management practices provide a way to foster continuous improvement and help firms address today's challenges and capitalize on tomorrow's opportunities (Fleming, Coffman & Harter, 2005).

2.3.1. Strategic supplier partnership

This is defined as the long-term relationship between the organization and its suppliers. It is designed to leverage the strategic and operational capabilities of individual participating organizations to help them achieve significant ongoing benefits (Tan KC, et al., 2005). Responding to the challenges of a competitive world through supply chain management is an important concept that makes a firm capable of dealing with its supply partners effectively so that long-term positive relationships can be established (Sambasivan et al., 2013). Partnerships in the supply chain led to improved corporate performance, increased information flow, and minimal ambiguity. Building a strategic alliance with suppliers is the key to managing the supply chain. Through strategic supplier partnerships, organizations can work closely with suppliers who can share responsibility for the success of the products (Li et al., 2005). Such strategic supplier partnerships should enable successful supply chain management. Suppliers participating early in the product-design process can offer more cost-effective design choices, help select the best components and technologies, and help in design assessment Tan, K. C., Lyman, S. B., & Wisner, J. D. (2002).

2.3.2. Customer relationship

Since the early 1920s, the value of customer relationship management has been a known concept. Customer relationship: comprises the entire array of practices that are employed for the purposes of managing customer complaints, building long-term

relationships with customers, and improving customer satisfaction (Lambert, D.M., & Cooper, M.C. 2000). A close customer relationship allows an organization to differentiate its product from competitors, sustain customer loyalty, and dramatically extend the value it provides to its customers (Magretta, 1998). The effective deployment of SCM programs depends on having positive connections with all supply chain participants, including customers. As discussed in Niknia (2007), the main customer relationship goals are identifying new business opportunities, reducing missed opportunities, reducing customer defection, creating customer loyalty, improving customer service, improving organization appearance, reducing costs, and increasing revenue. Customer relationship management has long been recognized as an internal component of an organization 's marketing strategy to increase sales and profits. The CRM strategy seeks to improve advantages for customers and create strong relationships with them. Customer relationship management (CRM) is an approach and set of technologies that try to include all of a company's contacts with present, past, and potential customers with the intention of "enhancing" those customers' relationships with that firm. In other words, the objective of CRM is to acquire sufficient data about a customer and make effective use of it in order to maximize that customer's positive interactions with the business and, thus, raise sales for that business.

2.3.3. Level of information sharing

Information sharing has two aspects: quantity and quality. Both aspects are critical for SCM practices and have been treated as separate constructs in previous SCM studies (Moberg, 2002; Monckza, 1998). The extent to which critical and proprietary information is communicated to one's supply chain partner is referred to as the level (quantity aspect) of information sharing (Monckza et al., 1998). Information sharing is a vital component of successful supply

chains. According to Lee & Whang (2000), information sharing is defined as the transfer of product-related information such as inventory levels, delivery schedules, order status, and performance. The correctly conveyed information acts as a linkage between members of the supply chain and is thus used to coordinate all the activities within the chain smoothly.

Poor information sharing between partners in a supply chain will result in poor coordination that will lead to many serious problems such as high inventory levels,

inaccurate forecasts, low resource utilization, and high production costs. Indeed, information sharing is highly considered as the way to reduce demand uncertainty (Lee and Whang, 2000; Lee, 2002). Many studies have reported that information sharing can bring many benefits to both suppliers and buyers, such as inventory reduction, and reduced manufacturing costs (Gu & Dong, 2016). The way companies share information whatever the confidential level or not; determines the success of the collaboration. The nature of information to be across the supply chain differs based on the degree of integration, institutional trust and availability of infrastructure that facilitate the practice. Therefore, an informatics perspective is vital in the supply chain since information flow is an integral part of SCM and material flow is closely dependent on information flow.

2.3.4. Quality of information sharing

Quality of information sharing includes such aspects as the accuracy, timeliness, adequacy, and credibility of information exchanged (Moberg, 2002; Monckza. 2002). While information sharing is important, the significance of its impact on SCM depends on what information is shared, when and how it is shared, and with whom (Chizzo, 1998; Holmberg, 2000). It appears that there is a built in reluctance within organizations to give away more than minimal information (Berry et al. 1994) since information disclosure is perceived as a loss of power. Given these predispositions, ensuring the quality of the shared information becomes a critical aspect of effective SCM (Feldmann and Muller, 2003). Based on Li et al. (2005), organization needs to review their information as a strategic asset and ensure that the information flows with minimum delay and distortion. In addition, Li et al. (2005) also notes that information shared must be accurate so that the best SCM solution will be obtain. 18 Effective use of relevant and timely information by all the functional elements in the supply chain is considered as a competitive factor and distinctive (Ahmadi, 2005).

While information sharing is important, the significance of its impact on SCM depends on information by all functional elements within the supply chain as a key competitive and distinguishing factor. The empirical findings of Child house and Towill (2003) reveal that simplified material flow, including streamlining and making highly visible all information flow throughout the chain, is the key to an integrated and effective supply chain. Providing and transforms raw material to a product or service and delivers

it to the customer is activities that is done in the supply chain. Overall planning of supply and demand, raw material procurement, production planning, inventory control, warehousing, distribution of products and management of information is activities in the supply chain. Hence manufacturing organization in the supply chain should be able to consider inventory demand and according to the number products in stock identified a fraction number the product and do production planning. The work of Tan et al. (1998), in which most of the indicators of information quality is adopted, does not incorporate completeness as the indicators of information quality which is the key for quality of information in reality of the case organization. Therefore, for the purpose of the study, information quality is conceptualized as accuracy, timeliness, adequacy, information exchanged reliability and completeness.

2.3.5. Internal lean practices

The term lean“ is used to refer to a system that uses less input to produce at a mass production speed, while offering more variety to the end customers. Elimination of waste is a fundamental idea within the lean system. The core thrust of lean practices are that these practices can work synergistically to create a streamlined, high quality system that produces finished products at the pace of customer demand with little or no waste. Today, lean is evolving into a management approach that improves all the processes at each level of an organization (Mwale, 2014). Internal lean practices refer to consume less system resources uses with the same speed mass production and offers greater variety to customers. In other way internal lean practices as Lean production associated with continuous pursuit of improving the processes, a philosophy of eliminating all non-value adding activities and reducing waste within an organization. One of the fundamental ideas in internal lean practices is removed surplus (Devika et al., 2016). The most famous of internal lean practices can be mentioned timely and lean produce. Production of lean and timely is production system that its aims are to optimize processes and production process by reducing waste and other inefficient factors. Internal lean practices understanding for the study is waste elimination regarding to setup time, continuous improvement and just in time.(Mustefa, 2014).

Lean has gained popularity in a wide range of industrial sectors, beyond manufacturing, all around the world (Garza-Reyes et al., 2012). It is nowadays considered the most influential new paradigm in manufacturing enhancing the competitiveness of

organizations. Lean is focused on identifying and eliminating waste throughout a product's entire value stream, extending not only within the organization but also along its entire supply chain network. Thus, the concept of lean supply chains has been widely studied in the academic literature (e.g. (Keitany & Riwo-Abudho, 2014). In most of the cases, these studies suggest that lean principles and practices enable the effective management of supply chains. This evidence contributed in considering this dimension as part of the SCM practices construct developed for this study.

2.4. Challenges of Supply Chain Management

Most SCM-related problems mainly arise from uncertainties and an inability to coordinate several activities and partners (Turban, 2000). Fawcett (2001) identified the top ten barriers to supply chain management as: inadequate information sharing, poor or conflicting measurements, inconsistent operating goals, organizational culture or structure, resistance to change, lack of trust, poor alliance management practices, lack of supply chain vision (understanding), lack of managerial commitment, constrained resources, and no employee dedication or empowerment. Companies are currently working to reduce costs while maintaining service levels in order to remain competitive in the market. Minimizing lead times is essential for providing customers with the features they desire at the degree of service they are willing to pay for. Uncertainty Suppliers, manufacturers, and consumers are the basic components of SCM. In a supply chain that contains several sources of uncertainty, manufacturers typically engage in a very complex relationship with their suppliers. Generally, Davis (1993) identified three major sources of uncertainty: manufacturing, demand, and supply uncertainty.

- **Manufacturing uncertainty:** The manufacturing factors responsible for late delivery and a decline in customer satisfaction include machine breakdowns that cause output to be delayed and poor process design that results in a production bottleneck or creates low-quality products.
- **Demand uncertainty:** unpredictable orders from unreliable customers can easily lead producers to generate incorrect projections, which lead to excess inventory or a lack of supply.

- **Supply uncertainty:** Usually, suppliers don't follow through on dates they've committed to, potentially because of poor material quality, broken machines, a lack of natural resources, and so on.

According to Wilding (1998), one key issue known to affect the effectiveness of a supply chain is uncertainty. Demand forecasts are a major source of supply chain uncertainty and can be affected by a variety of variables, including pricing, competition, technical advancements, customer confidence, and more. Delivery timing is also subject to uncertainty because it depends on a variety of variables, including road conditions, traffic, and machine problems that could delay shipments.

According to Levi, Kaminsky, and Levi,. (2003) , some factors interfere with uncertainty; they emphasized the difficulty of matching supply and demand, the impact of inventory and forecasting, and finally, factors other than those that embrace demand as a source of uncertainty, such as delivery lead times, manufacturing yields, transportation times, component availability, and so on, can also have a significant supply chain effect.

2.5. Competitive advantage

A competitive advantage is a long-term advantage that a company has over its competitors that allows it to succeed in the market. It is the result of critical management decisions and consists of capabilities that allow an organization to differentiate itself from its competitors (Croorn 5, et al., 1998).CA develops from the value a company can create for its customers or buyers using the dimensions of price or cost, quality, delivery time, flexibility, and creative commitment. Companies that have CA always have the ability to understand changes in market structure and can choose effective marketing strategies. It is an advantage achieved by a company over its competitors by offering more value to consumers, either through lower prices for products or services or by providing additional benefits and better services (Attiany, 2014).

Koufteros et al. (2003) describe a research framework for competitive capabilities and define the following five dimensions: competitive pricing, premium pricing, value-to-customer quality, dependable delivery, and production innovation. These dimensions are also described by Tan KC et al. (2002). In addition, recent studies have included

time-based competition as an important competitive priority. Research by Stalk (Croom S, 1998) identifies time as the next source of competitive advantage. Price/cost, quality, delivery time, flexibility, and creativity commitment have been chosen for this study.

2.5.1 Competitive advantage (CA) factors

- **Cost:** This is the ability of the company to efficiently achieve the cost of manufacture, which contains several features such as overhead, portfolio, and new value. The most important cost precedence strategies are to achieve and reduce manufacturing costs by standardizing and ensuring successful, error-free production processes. Also, a cost-effective alternate explanation to the difficulty of dimensional information estimation permits the generation of determining information that is more important in the engineering of manufactured parts (Malapelle et al., 2017). Furthermore, Cicellin et al. (2019) note that the low-cost service business model characterizes an innovation that is showing excessive potentiality since it is abstracted to include in the income calculation not only financial returns but also social results.
- **Quality:** Organizations strive to provide quality products that other organizations cannot keep up with. Quality means the suitability of the design characteristics of the product to the employment function or that they are appropriate for use and based on understanding customer requirements. Recently, Cao et al. (2019) explain that the business is capable of creating rapid decisions and responding rapidly, so it could answer changing customer requirements as soon as possible and decrease sequence time in all features of an organization to deliver better value to its customers while also refining the quality of its processes and leading to CA. Additionally, good quality is observed as a platform for attaining CA in areas such as cost, distribution, cycle time, and flexibility management, which leads to a decrease in procedure alteration, which leads to fewer scraps and reworks (Phan et al., 2011).
- **Delivery time:** The delivery time is important for CA. Furthermore, this is primarily due to higher levels of competence and effectiveness available to customers, as novel technologies enable businesses to recognize and observe their product delivery time while ensuring a consistent and effective sequence of services to their customers in order to evaluate the CA over delivery time

(Annarelli et al., 2019). Furthermore, Modak and Kelle (2019) identified working delivery time in the SC's online sales channel as one of the marketing practices used to attract customer requests and considered the role of delivery time in performance.

- **Flexibility:** Flexibility is the foundation for attaining CA for an organization by responding quickly to variations that may happen in work design and to suit the customer's request. Furthermore, flexibility shows the organization's capability to adapt processes to other approaches. This may imply altering process performance as well as the manner and timing of operations. Customers' essential factors to deliver four necessities include: To begin, product flexibility refers to a process's ability to transport new products. Secondly, the elasticity of the mix, which means the ability of processes to produce a mix of products, Thirdly, elasticity of scale, which means the capability of procedures to alter the level of productivity or the level of manufacturing action to deliver diverse sizes of products, Finally, innovation means the examination and utilization of knowledge by IT to increase the potential for flexibility in product novelty. Besides, several organizations grow more explorative product novelties in order to increase the flexibility of marketplace performance (Seo et al., 2015). Furthermore, Phan et al. (2011) stated that flexibility is documented as the core of industrial competences for manufacturing organizations, which includes flexibility to alter capacity and flexibility to alter capacity at actual minimum cost with small manufacturing series time and new product growth time.
- **Creativity commitment:** creativity is an innovative CA. It is the ability of an organization to continue to develop and improve production processes for existing products and/or to continue to develop and increase production processes to produce new products. Chiu and Yang (2019) note that environmental issues can inspire innovative procedures and enable creativity. However, the controlling effects of creativity elements in the relationships between IT acceptance and service novelty and between IT acceptance and CA are important for all organizations (Baum & Bird, 2010).

2.6. Empirical Review

There are several previous academics that have focused on the relation between supply chain management practice(s) and competitiveness from various perspectives/dimensions. The following discussion includes some of these studies' findings:

➤ Strategic supplier relationships

In today's dynamic and competitive environment, supplier relationship management (SRM) is crucial for companies to assure the supply of consistent and frequent deliveries. Ghaith M. Al-Abdallah¹, Ayman B. Abdallah¹, and Khaled Bany Hamdan¹ (2014) conducted research on the effect of supplier relationship management on the competitive performance of manufacturing firms by using five main practices: supplier quality improvement, trust-based relationships with suppliers, supplier lead time reduction, supplier collaboration in new product development, and supplier partnership and development. The results show that a strategic supplier relationship has positive and significant effect on the competitive advantage of the company.

➤ Customer relation

CRM is an interactive approach that achieves an optimum balance between corporate investments and the satisfaction of customer needs in order to generate maximum profits (Geib, Reichold, Kolbe, & Brenner, 2005). Nagwan Alqershi, Abdussalaam I. Ismail, Hussein Abualrejal, and Shahrul N. Salahudin (2020) conducted research on the effect of customer relationship management (CRM) on the competitive advantage (CA) of small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in Yemen. The study uses three dimensions of CRM, namely TCM, KM, and CRMO, and the findings from the data analysis indicate that there is a positive and significant relationship between CRM and competitive advantage.

➤ Level of Information Sharing

V.C. Pandey, S.K. Garg, and Ravi Shankar (2010) conducted a study on the effect of information sharing on the competitive strength of Indian manufacturing enterprises. It suggests that information sharing has a positive and significant effect on the

competitive strengths of the manufacturer in terms of parameters like cost effectiveness and service level.

➤ **quality of information**

Budi Norman, Yanuar; Mulyani, Sri; Sukmadilaga, Citra; Winarningsih, Srihadi The year 2021 conducted research on information quality as a key factor in improving the competitive advantages and performance of engineering, procurement, and construction companies. The study examines the effect of information quality on competitive advantage and company performance. Supply chain partners coordinate their processes through information sharing in order to gain a competitive advantage. The study thus showed that the quality of information has a positive and significant effect on competitive advantage.

➤ **Lean practice**

Internal lean approaches refer to utilizing fewer system resources while maintaining a high rate of production and providing customers with more options. Michael Andrew Lewis (2000) investigated lean production and sustainable competitive advantage. The purpose of this paper is to determine what impact it has had on the overall competitive positions of adopter firms. According to the research, if a company can effectively use the productivity gains that lean production generates, it can provide a competitive advantage. Lean production is ambiguous in practice, and this implies that the process of implementing it might result in the creation of strategic resources that support long-term competitive advantage.

2.6. Conceptual Framework

The central aim of this study is to look at the effect of supply chain management practices on the competitive advantage of an organization. Based on the study's objective, the following conceptual model is framed from empirical and theoretical literature reviews. As it was described previously in the related literature review parts, competitive advantage can be affected by factors such as strategic supply partnerships

(SSP), customer relations (CR), level of information sharing (IS), quality of information sharing (QI), and lean practices (LP) as independent variables. On the other hand, competitive advantage is a dependent variable, and there are five elements for competitive advantage measurement, such as Cost, quality, delivery time, flexibility, and creative commitment.

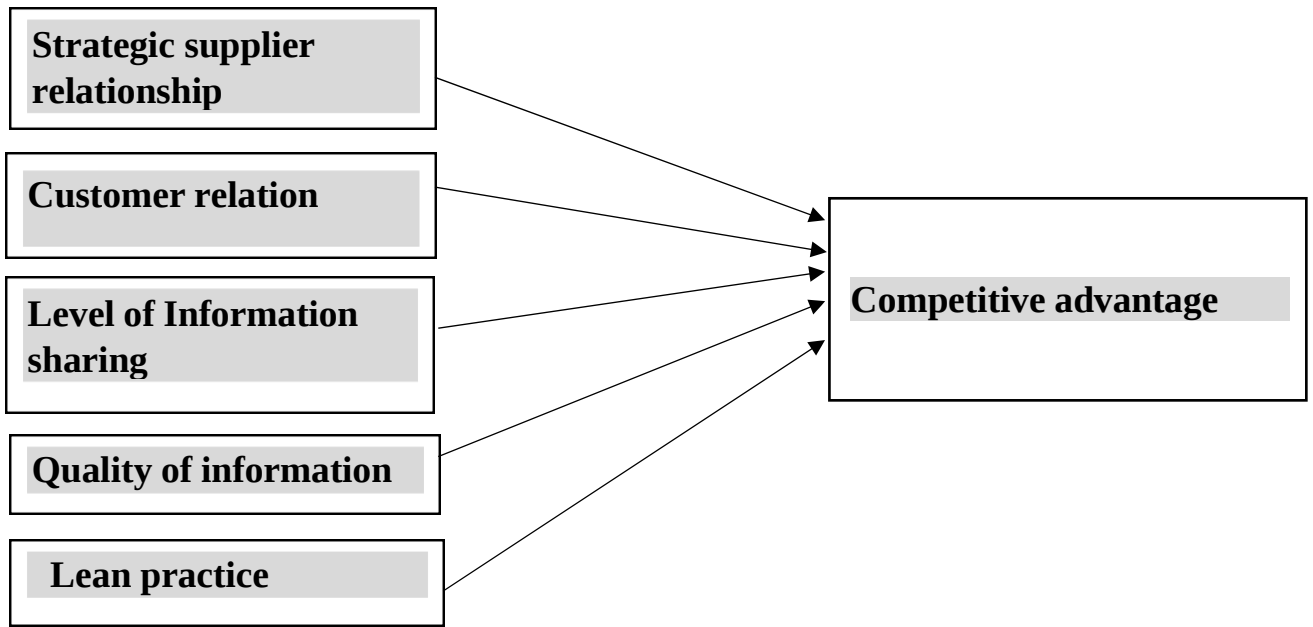


Fig 2. 1 Conceptual frame work for the stud Source: The Conceptual Framework of the study, adopted from Mohammad Ali Enayati Shiraz, Elham Ramezani (2014)

2.7. Research Hypotheses and variables

- H1: there is significant and positive effect of strategic supplier relationship on competitive advantage.
- H 2: there is significant and positive effect of customer relation on competitive advantage.
- H 3: there is significant and positive effect of level of Information sharing on Competitive advantage
- H 4: there is significant and positive effect of the information quality on competitive Advantage.
- H 5: there is significant and positive effect of lean practice on competitive advantage.

Table 2. 1 Research Hypotheses and variable

	Expected relationship	Sign	Sources
Competitive advantage	strategic supplier relationship	Positive	Ghaith M. Al-Abdallah1, Ayman B. Abdallah1 & Khaled Bany Hamdan1(2014)
	customer relation	Positive	Geib, Reichold, Kolbe, & Brenner, 2005). Nagwan Alqershi, Abdussalaam I. Ismail, Hussein Abualrejal & Shahrul N. Salahudin (2020)
	level of Information sharing	Positive	V.C. Pandey,S.K. Garg,Ravi Shankar (2010)
	information quality	Positive	Budinorman, Yanuar; Mulyani, Sri; Sukmadilaga, Citra; Winarningsih, SrihadiThe (2021)
	lean practice	Positive	Michael Andrew Lewis (2000)

CHAPTER THREE

3. Research Methodology

Research methodology is characterized by procedures and methods for arriving at results and findings and tools for proofing or disproving such knowledge (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). It can also be described as the study of knowledge-acquisition method. Its aim is to give the work plan of a research.

3.1. Research design and approach

Because the primary focus of the research was the effects of supply chain management practices on Heineken Beverage Company's competitive advantage, the studies used both an explanatory and a descriptive research design. Descriptive research designs are preferred to better describe the group of individuals over the set of variables, and explanatory research designs are those that are applied in order to measure and understand the casual relationships among two or more different groups. These studies are concerned with looking for hypotheses or ideas that can be tested. The independent variable refers to the antecedent phenomenon, while the dependent variable relates to the consequent phenomenon. The research used quantitative methods while conducting the study, i.e., to collect, organize, and analyze the data to answer the research question. Therefore, in order to accurately describe the effect and relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable, explanatory research studies were employed. This study has investigated the supply chain management practice in the case of Heineken Beverage Company's competitive advantage. Accordingly, the approach used to conduct this research was an inferential research design. The survey research design method was used. It involves using a questionnaire to collect data from respondents.

3.2. Types and Source of Data

According to Catherine (2007), data can be collected as either primary or secondary. The study used both primary sources and secondary sources. The secondary data sources that this research has included are annual reports of the Heineken beverage share company, journals, business reviews, articles, published and unpublished reports, and information accessed from the internet. The questionnaire has three parts: the first part explains the purpose of the questionnaire with respondents' personal information

such as gender, age, occupation, educational qualification, and work experience in a company; the second section aims to collect information on independent variables; and the third section aims to collect information on dependent variables. The independent variables are strategic supplier partnerships, customer relationships, level of information sharing, quality of information sharing, and internal lean practices. The dependent variable, on the other hand, is competitive advantage. The questionnaire was prepared by using five (5) Likert-scale approaches (i.e., from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree").

3.3. Population and sampling techniques

3.3.1. Target population

Parahoo (1997) defines population as the total number of units from which data can be collected, such as individuals, artifacts, events, or organizations. This study's target population consisted primarily of employees from the logistics and supply chain management department, the production department, and the sales and marketing department at Heineken Brewery Sc.

Table 3. 1Sampling Frame of the Study

departments	Number of employees
Logistics and supply chain management	90
production system	83
Sale and marketing	7
Total	180

3.3.2. Sampling techniques

The careful design of the sample size and the right selection of sampling techniques are important to ensure the representativeness of the sample, which can be dependable to generalize the information obtained from the sample to the whole population of the study (Kothari 2004). In this research, both probability and nonprobability sampling techniques were utilized. One of the probability sampling methods is stratified random

sampling, in which a research organization may divide the total population into several non-overlapping, homogenous departments (strata). The departments were divided into three categories: logistics and supply chain management, production, and marketing and sales, and then we randomly selected final participants from the categories for the study.

3.4. Sample size determination

To determine the sample size and representative of the target population, the study used the mathematical formula adopted from Krejci and Morgan, 1970

Thus, the formula used to calculate the sample size is

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot P \cdot Q \cdot N}{e^2 (N-1) + Z^2 \cdot P \cdot Q}$$

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5 \times 180}{0.05^2 (180-1) + 1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}$$

Z = Z score level of confidence of the estimate (in the case of 95% = 1.96).e =

Marginal error, 5%

P = proportion of the sample successfully collected =P=0.5

Q = failure of sample (1-0.5) = 0.5

N = population of the staff sample

n= sample size

Since the population isn't the same in every branch, the man of science proportionate and distributes.

The sample as follows, $n_1 = \frac{nN_1}{N}$

Where, n=total number of samples

n_1 = sample in each branch, and

N= total population

N_1 =total population in each sample

Table 3. 2 Proportional sample size of departments

No of department	Total employee	No of sample selected
Logistics & Supply Chain Management department	90	62
Production departments	83	57
Marketing and sales department	7	5
Total	180	124

3.5. Data Collection tools/instrument

Questions about supply chain management practices and their effect on competitive advantage were adapted and distributed directly to the participants selected as a study sample. A five-point Likert scale questionnaire was utilized to make it comfortable for the participants to reply to the questions based on their level of agreement. The format for the first range of the Likert scale is as follows: from 1 to 5, or from strongly disagreeing to strongly agreeing.

3.6. Data Collection Procedure

As stated in the above paragraph, the researcher used a structured questionnaire to collect data. Questionnaires were developed in an English and an Amharic version to facilitate easy understanding of the questions by respondents according to their language preferences in order to get accurate and reliable data. Questionnaires were distributed for the respondents, and then questions were collected from them. The employees who didn't answer were reminded, and late questioners were gathered. At last, the questions were coded for study of their usability and for the next data analysis.

3.7. Method of Data Analysis

After the data were collected, inferential statistical techniques were employed to analyze the data. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 25. The statistical tools will align with the objectives of the research. Inferential statistics, specifically Pearson's correlation, were used to demonstrate the relationship, its strength or degree, and the direction of associations between variables. The other inferential statistic used was regression analysis, which shows the interdependence of independent variables and

dependent variables. As a result, the strength of the relationship between variables and the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable, as well as their statistical significance, were evaluated. The relationship between these variables was measured using multiple regression analysis.

3.8. Validity and Reliability

Concepts like validity and reliability were used to assess the quality of the research. Validity is concerned with a measure's accuracy, whereas reliability is concerned with its consistency.

➤ Validity

The extent to which a measuring instrument measures what it is designed to measure is known as its validity (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Validity is concerned with two key issues: whether the measurement tools are accurate and whether they are truly measuring what they want to measure. To establish validity, a range of knowledge-related questions were asked of respondents in the questionnaires. In order to ensure that the questions are representative, they are based on the data acquired throughout the literature research. Consistency in how the questions are administered helps further verify the validity of the content. For clarity and the subjects' ease of comprehension, the questions were written in straightforward language.

➤ Reliability

Another important test for measuring instruments in research is the reliability test. Reliability refers to the extent to which the research findings can be replicated if another study is undertaken using the same research methods (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). This means that the measure (data collection instruments) should yield the same result when used again, or that a different researcher should acquire a similar result using the same measuring instrument (Saunders et al., 2007). Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha-score computation (Shukla, 2008). For most research, it is advised to use a reliability rating of 0.7 or higher to indicate that the research instrument is reliable (Sekaran, 2003; Robert, 2006). Thus, the reliability test variables of this research are summarized as follows:

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.905	39

Source: researcher's survey data, (2022)

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of item
SSP	0.722	6
CR	0.703	5
LIQ	0.727	5
LIS	0.791	5
LP	0.704	3
CA	0.785	15

Source: researcher's survey data, (2022)

Table 3. 3. Reliability Cronbach's alpha

3.9. Ethical Consideration

Participants of the study were informed to participate voluntarily and their privacy and anonymity would be kept in secret and would be used for only academic purpose. According to Creswell (2012), "as the researcher anticipate data collector, the need to respect the participants and sites for the research". In the study there should be maintain objectivity, courtesy and no falsification, alteration or misrepresentation of data for political or other purposes. Moreover, the use of offensive, discriminatory or other unacceptable languages were avoided in the formulation of question.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1. Response Rate

In this section, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used for the purpose of analysis and presentation of results. It also presents a discussion of the final results and the process through which the results were obtained. A total of 124 questionnaires were distributed to the selected employees of Heineken Beverage Company. Out of these questionnaires, 8 questions were not filed properly and were not collected, while 116 were filled out properly and collected. As a result, the overall response rate was 94.3 percent, which is acceptable for data analysis and discussion of the study.

Table 4. 1 Response Rate

Category	Frequency	Response Rate (%)
Questionnaire received	116	94.3%
Questionnaire not received and not valid	8	
Total	124	100

Source: researcher's survey data, (2022)

4.2 Demographic information of respondents

The demographic profile section, which is crucial since it shows who the data were collected from, provided an overview of the overall characteristics of the respondents who took part in the study. The breakdown of gender, age range, level of education, department and work experience attainment is shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4. 2 Summary of demographic characteristics of respondents

Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	102	87.9
	Female	14	12.1
Age of respondents	Less than 30 years	45	38.8
	31-40 years	52	44.8
	41-50 years	12	10.3

	Above 50 years	7	6.0
Department	LSCM	58	50.0
	Production system	53	4.3
	Sale and Marketing	5	45.7
Experience	Less than 2 years	32	27.6
	2-5 years	46	39.7
	5-10 years	29	25.0
	Above 10 years		7.8
		9	
Education	Bachelor degree	85	73.3
	Masters	25	21.6
	PhD	6	5.2

Source: researcher's survey data, (2022)

The majority of Heineken beverage share company employees are male, accounting for 87.9% of all respondents, while female employees account for only 12.1%. This implies that the majority of the respondents are male, reflecting the gender distributions in Heineken's beverage company.

The age of participants was divided into four groups: the largest number of employees is between the ages of 31 and 40, which adds up to 52 respondents, representing 44.8% of the total respondents, followed by less than 30 age categories, which account for 38.8% of the respondents, and 10.3% of the respondents were at the age of 41 to 50. The rest of the age category above 50 will cover 6% of the population. From this result, we can observe that the majority of employees of Heineken Beverage Share Company are in the young and productive age group.

The respondents' departments were divided into three groups; the LSCM department has the most employees, accounting for 50% of total respondents, followed by the sales and marketing department, which has 45.7%.at the last production department, which covers 4.3% of the respondents.

In terms of education, 73% of respondents had a bachelor's degree, 21.6% had a master's degree, and 5.2% had a PhD. This indicated that most of the respondents were

first-degree holders. Here, all of the respondents are educated, which means that the more they understand the researcher's question, the more reliable the response obtained.

When it comes to respondents' years of experience at Heineken, the majority of 39.7% of respondents worked at Heineken beverage for 2–5 years, followed by 27.6% of the respondents who worked there for less than two years. On the other hand, 25.0% worked at Heineken Beverage for 5–10 years, and 7.8% worked for more than 10 years. Employees with 2 to 5 years of experience make up the majority of respondents.

4.3. Descriptive Analysis Result

This section presents the descriptive analysis of all supply chain management practices determinants (strategic supplier partnerships, customer relations, level of information sharing, quality of information sharing, and internal lean practices), which are the independent variables and the dependent variable competitive advantage. Respondents were asked different questions regarding the determinants of supply chain management practices and their feelings towards Heineken Beverage Company.

To interpret the mean level of agreement among the responders, the Likert scale was transformed into a scale. The scale has five ranges: strongly disagree (1.00 to 1.49), disagree (1.50 to 2.49), neutral (2.50 to 3.49), agree (3.50 to 4.49), and highly agree (4.50 to 5.00).

4.3.1 Strategic Supplier Partnership

Table 4. 3Descriptive Analysis of Strategic Supplier Partnership

Statement	N	Mean	Std.
Quality is our first criterion in selecting suppliers	116	3.65	.867
Problems are jointly solved with suppliers	116	2.91	1.131
Key suppliers are included continuous improvementprograms	116	2.96	.908
Key suppliers are included in planning andgoalsetting activities	116	3.18	1.116
Key suppliers involve in new product developmentprocesses	116	2.79	1.092
The company supports suppliers to improve theirproduct quality	116	3.36	.945
Grand Mean	116	3.1422	.65654
Valid N (listwise)	116		

Source: researcher's survey data, (2022)

As we can see in the above table, the mean and standard deviation are used to indicate the level of practice. The responses with a value of ($m = 3.65$, $s.d = 0.867$) agreed that the company selected suppliers based on supply quality.,andThe respondents were neutral on supporting suppliers to improve their product quality ($m = 3.36$, $s.d. = 0.945$), on including key suppliers in planning and goal-setting activities ($m = 3.18$, $s.d. = 1.116$), on including key suppliers in continuing improvement programs ($m = 2.96$, $s.d. = 0.908$),on solving problems jointly with suppliers ($m = 2.91$, $s.d. = 1.131$), and on involving key suppliers in the new product development process ($m = 2.79$, $s.d. = 1.092$).

Generally, table 4.3 indicates that the majority of the respondents show a neutral level with a grand mean of 3.14 on strategic supplier partnership; therefore, the conclusion that can be drawn from this is that the company needs to put in more effort to enhance its relationship with key suppliers by including key suppliers in planning and goal-setting activities, in new product development processes, in continuous improvement processes, and by supporting them to improve their product quality.

4.3.2 Customer Relationship Practices

Table 4. 4 Descriptive Statistics on Customer Relationship Practices

Statement	N	Mean	Std.
There is frequent interaction with customers to set reliability, responsiveness, and other standards	116	3.00	.855
The company frequently measure and evaluate customer satisfaction	116	3.55	.936
The Company frequently determines future customer expectations	116	3.53	1.123
The company facilitates customers' ability to seek assistance from us.	116	2.85	.816

Periodically, the company evaluate the importance of relationship with customers	116	3.01	1.226
Grand mean	116	3.1086	.67831

The respondents agreed that the organization regularly evaluates and measures customer satisfaction, as indicated by the value of ($m = 3.55$; $s.d. = 0.936$) for the statement, which also suggests that respondents concur with this conclusion and also agree on determining future customer expectations ($m = 3.53$; $s.d. = 1.123$).

Some respondents were neutral on evaluating the importance of relationships with customers ($m = 3$, $s.d. = 1.230$), on interaction with customers to set reliability, responsiveness, and other standards ($m = 3$, $s.d. = 0.855$), and on facilitating customers to seek assistance ($m = 2.85$, $s.d. = 0.816$).

Generally, table 4.4 indicates that the majority of the respondents show a neutral level with overall mean of 3.1; therefore, we can conclude that Heineken prioritizes demand-based selling and also evaluates the market based on the needs of the consumers. However, it needs to put in more effort to enhance the relationship with customers and set standards for reliability, responsiveness, and other standards. It also has to work to provide assistance to customers when they need it.

4.3.3 Level of Information Sharing

Table 4. 5: Descriptive Statistics on Level of Information Sharing

Statement	N	Mean	Std
The company informs trading partners in advance of changing needs.	116	3.78	1.104
Trading partners share proprietary information with the company	116	3.53	.828
Our trading partners keep us fully informed about issues that affect our business	116	3.55	1.114
Our trading partners share business knowledge of core business processes with us	116	2.44	.650
We and our trading partners exchange information that helps establishment of business planning	116	3.08	1.195
Grand mean	116	3.2759	.69114
Valid N (listwise)	116		

Source: researcher's survey data, (2022)

As it is presented in the above table 4.5, the respondents agreed on informing trading partners in advance of change needs ($m = 3.70$, $s.d. = 1.128$), on trading partners keeping us fully informed about issues that affect the business ($m = 3.55$, $s.d. = 1.114$), and on trading partners sharing proprietary information with the company ($m = 3.53$, $s.d. = 0.828$).

neutral on trading partners' exchanging information that helps the establishment of business planning ($m = 3.15$, $s.d. = 0.857$), however the respondents disagree on trading partners share business knowledge of core business processes with the company ($m = 2.44$, $s.d. = 0.650$).

The grand mean of the level of information sharing is 3.3. Therefore, from this, we can conclude that the company has a good practice of updating its trading partners on changing needs, company-core business knowledge is shared with supply chain partners, and also, partners in the supply chain communicate core business information with the firm but need some improvement on exchanging information with trading partners that helps the establishment of business planning.

4.3.4 Level of Information Quality (IQ)

Table 4. 6: Descriptive Statistics on Level of information Quality

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Information exchange between our trading partners and us is timely	116	3.13	.983
Information exchange between our trading partners and us is accurate	116	2.96	.762
Information exchange between our trading partners and us is complete	116	2.77	.926
Information exchange between our trading partners and us is adequate	116	3.12	.906

Information exchange between our trading partners and us is reliable	116	3.12	1.023
Grand mean	116	3.0190	.68218
Valid N (listwise)	116		

Source: researcher's survey data, (2022)

As shown in table 4.6, the mean of each element is neutral, with the highest value of ($m = 3.13$, $s.d. = 3.13$, and the lowest value of $m = 2.777$, $s.d.d. = 0.926$). This indicates that the company's information quality remained consistent with grand mean of 3.0. As a result, the company must focus more on all the factors that affect information sharing with suppliers in order to increase the quality of the information.

4.3.5 Internal Lean Practices

Table 4. 7 Descriptive analysis for internal lean practice

Statement	N	Mean	Std.
The company reduces process set-up time (time required to prepare or refit equipment/workstation for production)	116	3.03	.728
The company has continuous quality improvement programs	116	3.52	.679
The company produces only what is demanded by customers when needed	116	3.49	.899
Grand mean	116	3.3448	.61374
Valid N (listwise)	116		

Source: researcher's survey data, (2022)

According to the above table 4.7, respondents agree on continuous quality improvement programs ($m = 3.62$, $s.d. = 0.668$) and also on demand-based production ($m = 3.51$, $s.d. = 0.890$). However, respondents are neutral on reducing process set-up time required to prepare or refit equipment or workstations for production ($m = 3.03$, $s.d. = 0.709$).

Generally, the overall mean of lean practice is 3.44, which suggests that Heineken views quality improvement as a value-adding activity and that the company also moderately concentrates on customer demand. The company, however, needs to improve to reduce setup time.

4.3.6. Competitive advantage

Table 4. 8 Descriptive analysis for Competitive advantage

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Your company is able to offer prices as low or lower than our competitors.	116	2.49	.786
Your company run operation with less Production cost compared with your competitor	116	3.22	.822
Your company offer competitive prices compared with your competitor	116	3.54	.955
Your company inventory turnover is high compared with your competitor	116	2.93	.669
Your company is able compete based on quality.	116	3.80	1.006
We offer products that are highly reliable	116	3.31	.665
Your company offer high quality products to our customer	116	3.52	.839
Your company deliver the kind of products needed	116	3.46	1.025
Your company deliver customer order on time	116	3.64	.859
Your company provide dependable delivery	116	3.35	.857
Time to solve customer complaints is short compared with your competitor	116	2.97	.918
Your company deliver product to market quickly compared with your competitor.	116	2.59	1.072
Your company has time-to-market lower than industry average compared with your competitor	116	2.67	.949
Your company is first in the market in introducing new products compared with your competitor	116	2.95	1.012
Your company have fast product development compared with your competitor	116	3.03	.859
Grand mean	116	3.1644	.42678
Valid N (listwise)	116		

Source: researcher's survey data, (2022)

According to table 4.8 and the survey results, on average, respondents agree that the company offers competitive prices when compared to competitors, that the company can compete on quality, and that they deliver customer orders on time. On others, company-run operations with lower production costs compared to their competitors, high inventory turnover compared to their competitors, offering highly reliable products, providing dependable delivery, and quickly resolving customer complaints compared to their competitors are on neutral. However, some of the respondents disagree on whether the company is able to offer prices as low as or lower than those of their competitors. Generally, this implies that the company should work on its competitive advantage.

4.4 Correlation analysis

According to Marczak, Demote, and Festnger (2005), correlation is perhaps the most basic and most useful measure of association between two or more variables, expressed as a small number called the correlation coefficient (r). A correlation provides information about the relationship's decision (positive or negative). The most common correlation coefficient is Pearson r . The most important and useful way to determine the link between two or more measurements is through correlations. From -1.0 to +1.0 is the range of correlation coefficients. The relationship is stronger the closer it is to 1.0, whether it is a positive/direct relationship or a negative/inverse relationship. While correlations between .01 and .30 are regarded as weak, those between .30 and .70 as moderate, those between .70 and .90 as significant, and those between .90 and 1.00 as extremely large (Marczyk, Dematteo and Festinger, 2005).

In this research, a correlation analysis was conducted in light of each research objective and the research questions developed. The relationship between supply chain management practices and competitive advantage was investigated using correlation analysis. This provided correlation coefficients that indicated the strength and direction of the relationship. The p value also indicated the probability of this relationship being significant.

Table 4. 9: Correlations between grouping Variables and Competitive advantage

Correlations

Correlations							
		SSP	CR	LIS	LIQ	LP	CA
SSP	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N	116					
CR	Pearson Correlation	.461**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000					
	N	116	116				
LIS	Pearson Correlation	.438**	.447**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000				
	N	116	116	116			
LIQ	Pearson Correlation	.392**	.531**	.384**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000			
	N	116	116	116	116		
LP	Pearson Correlation	.335**	.289**	.273**	.511**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.002	.003	.000		
	N	116	116	116	116	116	
CA	Pearson Correlation	.500**	.535**	.527**	.521**	.610**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	116	116	116	116	116	116

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

Source: researcher's survey data, (2022)

At a significance level of $R = 0.610^{**}$ and a p-value less than 0.05, the Pearson correlation test revealed a moderately positive relationship between the independent variable lean practice and the dependent variable competitive advantage, indicating that the correlation between the two variables is statistically significant.

There is a moderately positive and significant relationship between strategic supplier partnerships and competitive advantage at the significant level of $R = 0.500^{**}$ and a p-value less than 0.05. This implies that the company's strategic supplier partnership with Heineken Beverage Share Company is important and beneficial to improving the company's competitive advantage.

Customer relations and competitive advantage have a moderately positive relationship at the level of ($R = 0.535^{**}$), with a P value less than 0.05 suggesting that the correlation between the two variables is statistically significant.

The company's competitive advantage and its level of information sharing have a moderately positive relationship at the significant level of ($R = 0.527^{**}$, $P < 0.05$), implying a positive and significant correlation between the company's competitive advantage and its level of information sharing.

There is a moderately positive relationship between the level of information quality and competitive advantage at the significant level of $R = 0.521^{**}$, $P < 0.05$. This suggests that there is a positive and significant relationship between the company's competitive advantage and the quality of its information.

4.5 Regression analysis

Quantitative approaches were used to conduct this study's data analysis. Statistical techniques for both descriptive and inferential analysis are used to analyze the data obtained from the Heineken beverage share company questionnaire. On the other hand, data collected through a questionnaire from distributors is analyzed using descriptive analysis. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used for these analyses. The study's goals and the statistical tools were in alignment. Using frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviation, descriptive analyses were given. To show the relationship and significance between the dependent and independent variables, inferential studies were carried out using correlation and multivariate regression. The Pearson correlation method was used to compute the correlation analysis, and the multiple linear regression method was used to estimate the regression analysis. Thus, after we determined its statistical significance, the relationship between SCM and competitive advantage was analyzed.

Here is the model used to show this influence:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + \varepsilon$$

Where: Y = Competitive advantage of Heineken beverage.

β_0 = Constant (value of Y when X1, X2, X3, X4 and X5= 0)

β_1 = Regression coefficient for SSP

X1= Strategic supplier partnership

B2=Regression coefficient for CR

X2= Customer relationship

B3=Regression coefficient for LIS

X3= Level of information sharing

B4=Coefficient of regression for LIQ

X4= Level of information quality

B5=Coefficient of regression for LP

X5= Internal lean practices

ε = the error

4.5.1. Regression Assumption Test

To ensure data validity and the robustness of the research's regressed results, assumption tests for normality, linearity, multi-collinearity, homoscedasticity and autocorrelation should be conducted before performing linear regression.

4.5.1.1 Test of Normality and Linearity

Test Of Normality

To determine the normal distribution of residuals, a histogram is utilized. The results show that the histogram is bell-shaped and that many residuals are pretty near to the curve. The largest bars on the histogram are all centred on the central value, indicating that the majority of scores are located towards the centre of the distribution.

Therefore, this indicates that the residuals are normally distributed.

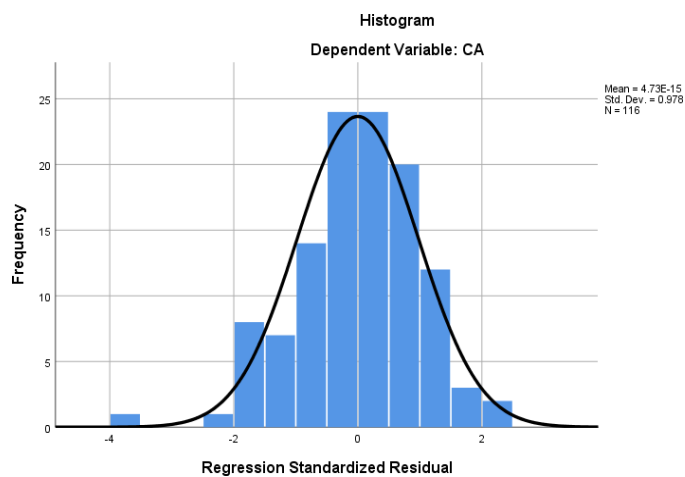
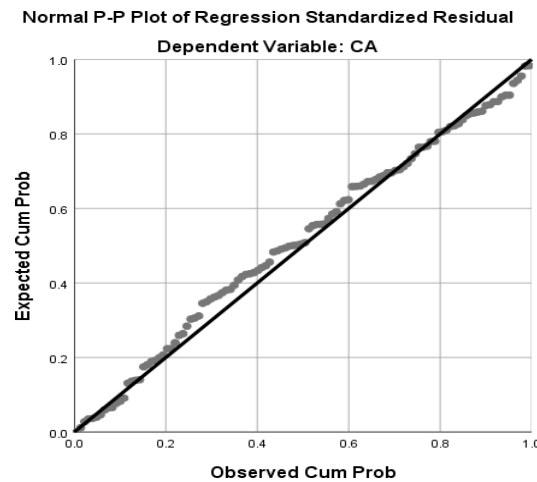


Fig 4.1 Normality test

Test of linearity

It will be desired that points will be located in a substantially straight diagonal line from bottom left to top right in the Normal Probability Plot. This would imply that there aren't any major deviations from normality. To assess for linearity, the study used the Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual (See Figure 4.2). A linearity pattern was seen since the points were equally spaced apart along a diagonal.



4.5.1.2 Multi-co linearity test

In a multiple regression model, multi-co linearity occurs when two or more independent variables are highly correlated, indicating that one may be linearly predicted from the others with a high degree of accuracy (Hair et al., 2010). Tolerance and the variation inflation factor (VIF) can be examined to evaluate this assumption. If the results of the VIF are below 10 and the tolerance value is greater than 0.2, then there is no possibility of multicollinearity among these variables (Hair et al., 2006). The study's findings therefore suggest that the regression models are free from collinearity because the maximum VIF and tolerance values shown in table 4.12 are below the threshold value.

Table 4. 10: Multi-Co linearity Test

Variable	Collinearity statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
SSP	.640	1.562
CRM	.604	1.656
LIS	.630	1.588
LIQ	.535	1.871
LP	.678	1.474

Findings from Table 4.11 provides the multi-co linearity for the study's variables. The value of VIF is between 1 and 10 and the tolerance value is greater than 0.2 showing that there was no multi-co linearity problem in the study.

4.5.1.3. Autocorrelation Test

A test for serial correlation among the residuals is performed using the Durbin-Watson statistic. If the value is between 1.50 and 2.50, there is no relationship between the residual variable and the independent variables. The table below shows that there is no autocorrelation issue with this model because the Durbin Watson statistic value is 1.844, which is between 1.50 and 2.50.

Table 4. 11. Autocorrelation Test

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.766 ^a	.587	.568	.27802	1.844

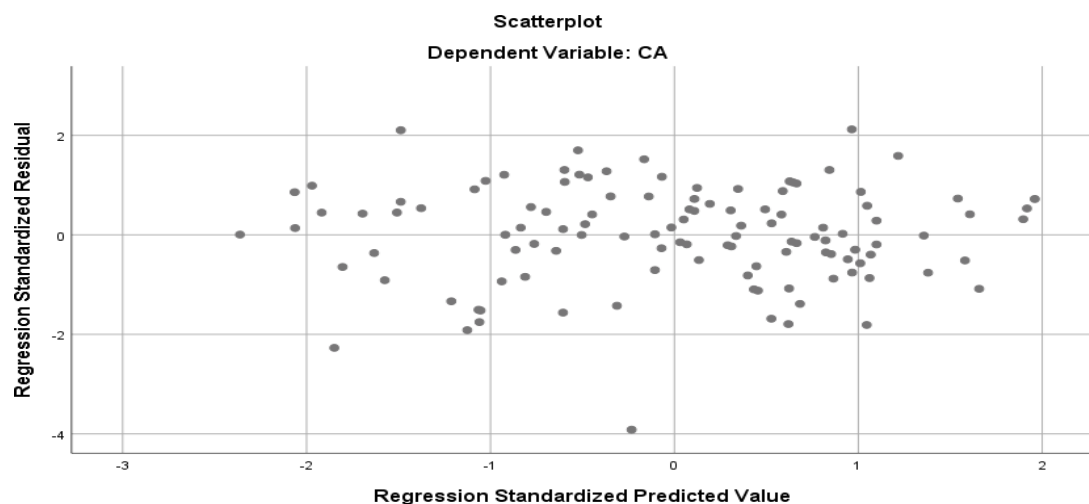
a. Predictors: (Constant), LP, LIS, CR, SSP, LIQ

b. Dependent Variable: CA

4.5.1.4. Homoscedasticity

Homoscedasticity in regression analysis is the presumption that the residuals (differences between the values of the observed and predicted dependent variables) have the same or different variances at each level of the predictors. Differences must always be present and follow a normal distribution. Assumption can be checked by a scatter plot diagram; it can be determined by looking at the scatterplot from the regression standardized residuals and regression standardized predicted value. If the values fan out over the scatterplot the model is homoscedastic, as we can see on figures 4.2 The graph appears to be a random array of dots. As a result, the model is homoscedastic.

Fig 4.3: Scatterplot based on Residual



4.5.2. Regression Analysis

Regression analysis focuses on analyzing and evaluating the relationship between a specific dependent variable and one or more independent variables. In order to determine the extent to which an independent variable explains or predicts a dependent variable, it is used to understand the relationship between the variables. In the model summary below, this is also stated. The statistical correlation between competitive advantage and supply chain management practices was utilized to assess how important supply chain management practices are for competitive advantage.

Table 4. 12: Model Summary table

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.766 ^a	.587	.568	.27802

a. Predictors: (Constant), LP, LIS, CR, SSP, LIQ

b. Dependent Variable: CA

According to table 4.13 above, the independent variables of supply chain management practices statistically predicted the competitive advantage of Heineken's beverage company in Harar. The value of the R square indicates the extent of the impact of supply chain management practices on firms' competitive advantage. This means that the five independent variables such as strategic supplier partnerships, customer relations, level of information sharing, level of information quality, and lean practices on firms' competitive advantage can explain 5.87% of the variation.

Table 4. 13. ANOVA Table

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	12.088	5	2.418	31.279	.000 ^b
	Residual	8.502	110	.077		
	Total	20.590	115			

- a. Dependent Variable: CA
- b. Predictors: (Constant), LP, LIS, CR, SSP, LIQ

To ascertain the overall significance of the regression model's fitness, the researcher employed an analysis of variance (ANOVA), which indicates that the model is significant ($F = 31.279$, $p = .000$) at the 5% level of significance. In other words, the model was well-suited to predicting the influence of supply chain management practices on a company's competitive advantage

4.5.3. Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 4.154 describes how much each predictor influences the result if the effect of all other predictors is maintained constant. This study's equation for multiple regression is based on two set of variables. A dependent variable (competitive advantage) and independent variable (strategic supplier partnership, customer relation, level of information quality, level of information sharing and lean practice) were specifically studied. the primary goal of employing regression analysis in this study is to improve researcher's abilities to describe, understand, predict and control the stated variables (Falizal and Palil, 2015)

Table 4. 14. Multiple Regression of effect of supply chain management practices on competitive advantage

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.946	.180		5.258	.000
	SSP	.089	.048	.138	1.866	.065
	CR	.137	.049	.220	2.799	.005
	LIS	.145	.044	.237	3.266	.001
	LIQ	.031	.050	.051	.622	.535
	LP	.282	.050	.409	5.649	.000

a. Dependent Variable: CA

The Beta coefficient in the above table represents the extent or strength of each independent variables influence on the dependent variable. The model sought to demonstrate that a one percent increase in strategic supplier partnership leads to 13.8 % improvements in competitive advantage of the company on average when all other factors are held constant ; customer relationship management leads to 22.0 % improvements in competitive advantage for every unit; level of information sharing leads to 23.7 % improvements in competitive advantage for every unit; level of information quality leads to 5.1 % improvements in competitive advantage for every unit; and lean practice leads to 40.9 % improvements in competitive advantage for every unit.

4.6. Hypothesis Testing

Table 4. 15 Hypothesis Testing

S/No	Hypothesis	Beta value	sig	Direction of relationship	Result
1.	there is significant and positive effect of strategic supplier relationship on competitive advantage.	0.138	0.065	+	no
2.	there is significant and positive effect of customer relation on competitive advantage	0.220	0.006	+	accepted
3.	there is significant and positive effect of level of Information sharing on competitive	0.237	0.001	+	accepted
4.	there is significant and positive effect of the information quality on competitive	0.051	0.535	+	no

5.	there is significant and positive effect of lean practice on competitive advantage	0.409	0.000	+	accepted
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4.7. Discussion of the Results

➤ **strategic supplier partnership**

For manufacturing companies, strategic supplier partnership is crucial since it helps guarantee the delivery of consistent and regular deliveries in the competitive and dynamic environment of today. The results of the findings revealed that there is a positive but insignificant effect with p value greeter than 0.05. This implies that there is no evidence that shows that effect of strategic supplier partnership on competitive advantage in this study.

The findings of this study is inconsistent with the findings of Sentayehu Tesfaye (2018) the study revealed that the four supply chain management practice; strategic supplier partnership, level of information sharing, internal integration, and postponement positively and significantly affect competitive advantage of the organization. As well as with Lemma Tadesse (2021) and Mohammad Ali Enayati Shiraz, Elham Ramezani (2014). who found out in their research that strategic supplier partnership has positively affect competitive advantage of the company.

➤ **Customer relation**

This refers to all activities undertaken in order to establish long-term relationships with customers, including the handling of customer complaints and the enhancement and maintenance of customer satisfaction. Chang et al. (2017). The finding shows that there is a positive and significant effect, $p < 0.05$. This implies that a one-unit increase in customer relations leads to 22% improvements in competitive advantage for every unit, other variables being constant.

The finding of this study is in line with the findings of Nagwan Alqershi, Abdussalaam I. Ismail, Hussein Abualrejal, and Shahrul N. Salahudin (2020), the finding shows that customer relation have a positive and significant effect on competitive advantage. It is also in agreement with research made by Lemma Tadesse (2021) and Mohammad Ali Enayati Shiraz and Elham Ramezani(2014).

➤ **Level of information sharing**

The degree to which important and proprietary information is shared with supply chain partners is referred to as the "level of information sharing." (Mockza et al., 1998). The finding shows that there is a positive and significant effect, $p < 0.05$. This implies that a one-unit increase in the level of information sharing leads to 23.7%, other variables being constant. As Pandey, Garg, & Shankar, (2010) suggest, information sharing has a significant effect on the competitive strengths of the manufacturer in terms of parameters like cost effectiveness and service level.

➤ **Level of information quality**

Aspects of information sharing's quality include its accuracy, timeliness, adequacy, and credibility. (Moberg, 2002; Monckza, 2002). although information quality is instrumental in prediction of competitive advantage. The finding shows that there is a positive but statistically insignificant finding with a p value > 0.05 , which is 0.535. This implies that there is no enough evidence to support the effect of level of information quality on competitive advantage. The main reason Would be there is excessive amount of work load on employees which resalts delay of information sharing and un accurate information that will affect the company so that the company should consider. The findings of this study is inconsistent with the findings of Sentayehu Tesfaye(2018) and Lemma Tadesse (2021) .

➤ **Internal Lean practice**

It is related to the continuous pursuit of improving processes and the practice of reducing and avoiding (if possible) waste (cost, time, small lot sizes, set-up times, etc.) in the production process. Chang et al. (2017) The finding revealed that there is a positive and significant effect, $p < 0.05$, which is 0.00. This implies that a one-unit increase in lean practice leads to a 40.9% increase in competitive advantage, other variables being constant. Moslem et al. (2013) outlined how internal lean practice can cut down on waste and lower transactional cost.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDING, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Summary of Findings

The study's main purpose was to evaluate the effect of supply chain management practices on the competitive advantage of Heineken Beverage Company. A conceptual framework was developed based on the existing literature in order to examine the effect of supply chain management practices on the competitive advantage of the company. Accordingly, the study was conducted to answer the following research question: "What is the effect of SSP, CR, LIQ, LIS, LIS and LP on the CA of Heineken Beverage Company?".

The study was conducted using a descriptive survey approach. To verify the stability, consistency, sampling adequacy, and strength of the degree of link among the questionnaire items, reliability and validity tests were used. After conducting a reliability and validity test, the study used the analysis approaches of descriptive, correlation, and regression using SPSS version 25 (Statistical Package for Social Science). A total of 124 adapted questionnaires were distributed, and with a response percentage of 94.3%, 116 of them were successfully collected. Five-point Likert scales were used for independent and dependent variable items. the researcher uses a model of multiple linear regression due to the existence of five independent variables (strategic supplier-partnership, customer relations, information quality, level of information sharing, and lean practices) and one dependent variable competitive advantage. whether to use the parametric test assumption or non-parametric test technique the researcher has checked basic assumption of multiple regression and then the researcher chose to employ a parametric test approach in which person correlation was used.

According to the research questions, the details of the outcome are as follows:

- The overall mean value of strategic supplier partnership on the competitive advantage of the company is 3.14, with a standard deviation of .656 This finding shows that company needs to put in more effort to enhance its relationship with key supplier.
- With a standard deviation of .678, the overall mean value of respondents' opinions on the extent of customer relation on the competitive advantage is

3.1.the finding suggests that the company needs to put in more effort to enhance the relationship with customers and set standards for reliability, responsiveness, and other standards. It also has to work to provide assistance to customers when they need it.

- The overall mean value of respondents' opinions on the effect level of information sharing on the competitive advantage of the company is 3.275. with a standard deviation of 0.691.the finding indicates that the company need some improvement on exchanging information with trading partners that helps the establishment of business planning.
- With a standard deviation of .682, the overall mean value of respondents' opinions on the extent of level of information quality on the competitive advantage is 3.01.the finding suggests that the company must focus more on all the factors that affect information sharing with suppliers in order to increase the quality of the information.
- The overall mean value of Lean practiceon the competitive advantage of the company is 3.34, with a standard deviation of 0. 613.
- There is moderate and significant positive relationship between SSP and CA with a value of Pearson's correlation ($r_{SSP}=0.500^{**}$, $p=0.00$).in addition, the findings revealed a moderate and significant relationship between CR and CA practices ($r_{CR}=0.535^{**}$, $p=0.00$). The study also discovered a moderate positive relationship between LIS and CA ($r_{LIS}=0.527^{**}$ $p=0.00$). LIQ have a moderate and significant relationship with CA ($r_{LIQ}=0.521^{**}$, $p=0.00$). LP and CA have a moderate and significant relationship ($r_{LP}=.0.610^{**}$, $P=0.00$).
- Multiple regression analyses also show that when all other factors in the model are held constant, A 1% increase in CR results in a 22% increase in CA. With all other variables constant in the model, a 1% increase in LIS leads to an 23.7% increase in company's CA. Keeping all other factors constant in the model, a 1% increase in LP leads to a 40.9% increase in company's CA. but the value of strategic supplier partnership and level of information quality are insignificant with a P value greeter than 0.05.

5.2. Conclusions

The following conclusions were made in relation to the five research objectives:

- The research finding shows that there is a positive relationship between strategic supplier partnerships and the competitive advantage of Heineken Beverage Company. But it needs to put in more effort to enhance its relationship with key suppliers by including key suppliers in planning and goal-setting activities, in new product development processes, in continuous improvement processes, and by supporting them to improve their product quality.
- According to the research findings, there is a positive relationship between customer relations and competitive advantage. However, it needs to put in more effort to enhance the relationship with customers and set standards for reliability, responsiveness, and other standards. It also has to work to provide assistance to customers when they need it.
- The level of information sharing is related to competitive advantage. We can conclude that the company has a good practice of updating its trading partners on changing needs; company-core business knowledge is shared with supply chain partners; and also, partners in the supply chain communicate core business information with the firm.
- The research also shows that there is a positive relationship between the level of information quality and the competitive advantage of the company, but to raise the quality of the information, improvements must be made to all the aspects that influence information sharing with suppliers.
- There is positive relationship between lean practice and competitive advantage. The finding shows that Heineken sees quality improvement as an activity that adds value, and the company also places a moderate focus on customer demand. However, the company must make improvements to reduce setup time.

Generally, based on the findings, competitive advantage is a critical factor for every organization to be successful. This research could justify that competitive advantage has a positive relationship with all the independent factors, i.e., strategic supplier partnerships, customer relations, level of information sharing, level of information quality, and lean practice.

5.3. Recommendation

According to the conclusion and analysis, the researcher forwarded the recommendations below with regard to the research objectives.

The company should enhance its strategic supplier relationships; they will improve if the company includes key suppliers in planning, goal-setting activities, and continuing improvement programs, and should solve problems jointly with suppliers. These could help the company obtain input from its suppliers at the appropriate time and quantity, which reduces supply-chain uncertainty.

The company have to prioritize and invest in their connections with customers due to intense competition in today's global marketplaces therefore the company should improve its relationship with customers by setting standards for reliability, responsiveness, and other standards and facilitating customers' ability to seek assistance from them; this will help the company create a strong customer relationship.

The company should improve its information sharing practice as information sharing is the tool to meet the required resources at the right time, and at the right place, seamless and instantaneous information flow should exist across the value chain.

Quality information has a lot to do with success or failure in today's competitive world. In order to ensure the quality of its products, the organization should place a greater emphasis on strategic planning; therefore, the company must focus more on all the factors that affect information sharing with suppliers in order to increase the quality of the information.

The company must put more effort into resolving the issue of equipment setup time for providing service to the customers in order to cut down on waste and improve service.

Generally, Heineken Beverage Share Company should have to improve its supply chain management practices to meet both current and potential buyer expectations to the utmost. in order to get a competitive advantage.

Recommendation for future research

As the concept of SCM practices is complex and involves a network of companies in the effort of producing and delivering a final product, its domain cannot be covered in just one study. 43% of the variance is explained by other factors not covered in the study, so future research can expand on the domain of SCM practices by considering additional dimensions.

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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRES

DIRE DAWA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT MBA PROGRAM

I am Saron kefyalew and I am a post graduate student at Dire Dawa University School of graduates studies Department of management, masters of business administrations. Currently I am conducting research which shall be submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Master's Degree in Business administrations. The purpose of this study is to assess "the effect of supply chain management practices on competitive advantage of the company" Therefore, this is to kindly request you to take some of your precious time to fill this questionnaire. Your honest and accurate response will make this study more valuable. Your responses are only meant for academic purpose and will be kept confidential. So, please read it carefully and give your response.

N.B: Writing your name is not necessary. If you have any question, please contact me and I am available as per your convenience

Kefyalewsaron54@gmail.com

(Mobile: 0991450341)

Part I: Demographic characteristics Please tick [√] inside the appropriate box below

1. Gender: - Male ☐ Female ☐
2. Age in years: Less than 30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41 – 50 ☐ above 50 ☐
3. Your Department
Logistics & Supply chain management ☐ production ☐
Salesand Marketing ☐
4. For how long have you held the position (in years)?
Less than 2 ☐ 2-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ Above 10 ☐
5. Level of Education
Bachelor Degree ☐ Masters ☐ PhD ☐

Part two: Supply chain management practices in the Organization

To what extent do you agree about practices of supply chain management which stated in the following statements? (Please mark [√] in appropriate box to your opinion)
Where; SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, N = neutral A=agree and SA = strongly agree

Strategic supplier partnership:	SD	D	N	A	SA
Quality is our first criterion in selecting suppliers					
Problems are jointly solved with suppliers					
The company supports suppliers to improve their product quality					
Key suppliers are included continuous improvement programs					
Key suppliers are included in planning and goalsetting activities					
Key suppliers involve in new product development processes					

Customer relationship:	SD	D	N	A	SA
There is frequent interaction with customers to set reliability, responsiveness, and other standards					
The company frequently measure and evaluate customer satisfaction					
The Company frequently determines future customer expectations					
The company facilitates customers' ability to seek assistance from us.					
Periodically, the company evaluate the importance of relationship with customers					

Level of information sharing:	SD	D	N	A	SA
The company informs trading partners in advance of changing needs.					
Trading partners share proprietary information with the company					
Our trading partners keep us fully informed about issues that affect our business					
Our trading partners share business knowledge of core business processes with us					
We and our trading partners exchange information that helps establishment of business planning.					

Level of information quality	SD	D	N	A	SA
Information exchange between our trading partners and us is timely					
Information exchange between our trading partners and us is accurate					
Information exchange between our trading partners and us is complete					
Information exchange between our trading partners and us is adequate					
Information exchange between our trading partners and us is reliable					

Internal lean practices:	SD	D	N	A	SA
The company reduces process set-up time (time required to prepare or refit equipment/workstation for production)					
The company has continuous quality improvement programs					
The company produces only what is demanded by customers when needed					

Part III: Instruments of Competitive Advantage

Competitive Advantage	SD	D	N	A	SA
Your company is able to offer prices as low or lower than our competitors.					
Your company run operation with less Production cost compared with your competitor.					
Your company offer competitive prices compared with your competitor					
Your company inventory turnover is high compared with your competitor					
Your company is able compete based on quality.					
We offer products that are highly reliable					
Your company offer high quality products to our customer					
Your company deliver the kind of products needed.					
Your company deliver customer order on time					
Your company provide dependable delivery.					
Time to solve customer complaints is short compared with your competitor					

Your company deliver product to market quickly compared with your competitor.					
Your company has time-to-market lower than industry average compared with your competitor.					
Your company is first in the market in introducing new products compared with your competitor					
Your company have fast product development compared with your competitor					

ዴሞክራሲያዊ የኢሸርሲቲ የቢዝነስ እና ኢኮኖሚክስ ኮላጅ

ማኔጅመንት ዱፓርትመንት የቢዝነስ ማኔጅመንት ማስተረስ ፕሮግራም

മ.ല. ഗ്രന്ഥ റിമു

እኔ ሳፍን ከፍያለው የተባልኩ ድሬደዋ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ትምህርት ቤት የድህረ ምረቃት ትምህርት ቤት የንግድ አስተዳደር ትምህርት ክፍል ተመራቂ ተማሪ ስሆን በንግድ አስተዳደር የሁለተኛ ዲግሪ መመረቂያ ጽሁፍ በመስራት ላይ እገኛለው። ይህ የምርምር ጥናት በንግድ አስተዳደር የሁለተኛ ዲግሪ እንዳገኝ የሚረዳኝን የማሟያ ጽሁፍ ለማዘጋጀት ይዉላል። ከውድ ግዜዎ ላይ ቀን ሰው ይህንን መጠይቅ እንዲሞሉልኝ ስል በትህትና እጠይቃለው። የእርስዎ ትክክለኛ ምላሽ ይህንን ጥናት ፍሬአማ እና ተቀባይነት ያለው ያደርጉታል። ምላሽዎም ለትምህርት ጉዳይ ብቻ እንደሚውል ላሳውቅዎት እወዳለሁ ። እባክዎን ጥያቄዎቹን በሚገባ አንብበው መልስዎን ያስፍሩ ስለትብብርዎ በቅድሚያ አመሠግናለሁ። ማስታወሻ፤ በዚህ መጥይቅ ላይ ስሞትን መጻፍ አይጠበቅብዎትም፤ በተጨማሪም ምንም ዓይነት አስተያየት ቢኖርዎ በኢሜል አድራሻዬ Kefyalewsaron54@gmail.com ወይም በስልክ ቁጥር (+25190991450341) ሊገልፁልኝ ይችላሉ።

ክፍል አንድ፡ - ህዝብ ነክ ና ሌሎች መረጃዎች

ለእያንዳንዱ ጥያቄ በተሰጠው ባዶ ሳጥን ውስጥ ተስማሚ ምላሹን ይሆን ምልክት በማድረግ (✓)ግለጽ።

- ጾታ፡ - ወንድ ሴት
- እድሜ፡ - 18-25 አመት 26-35 አመት 36-45 አመት 46 አመት
በላይ
- የትምህርት ደረጃ፡ ሁለተኛ ደረጃ ያጠናቀቀ ዲፕሎማ ዲግሪ
ማስተርስ ዶክትሬት ና ከዛ በላይ ሌላ
- ሀረር ቢራ ድርጅት ሰራተኛ ከሆኑ ምን ያህል ጊዜ ሆኖት?
< 2 አመት [2-5) አመት [6-10) አመት 10 አመት ና ከዛ በላይ

ክፍል 2 የአቅርቦት ሰንሰለት አመራር ተሞክሮን በተመለከተ

ከታች በተቀመጡት መጠይቆች ላይ 1 - 5 በተጠቀሱ መለኪያዎችን በመምረጥ ያሉትን ስምምነት (✓)

ምልክት በማድረግ ይግለጹ። 1 = በጣም አልስማማም 2 = አልስማማም 3 = ገለልተኛ 4 = እስማማለሁ

5 = በጣም እስማማለሁ

መግልጫ	መፍቻ ቁልፍ					ምርመራ
	SD	D	N	SA	A	
1. ስትራቴጂካዊ የአቅራቢዎች የወል ባለቤትነትን በተመለከተ						
➤ አቅራቢዎችን በመምረጥ ረገድ ጥራት የመጀመሪያው መስፈርታችን ነው።						
➤ ችግሮች በሚከሰቱበት ወቅት ከአቅራቢዎች ጋር በመሆን ይፈታሉ።						
➤ ድርጅቱ /ካምፓኒው/ የምርት ጥራታቸውን አንዲያሻሽሉ ለአቅራቢዎች ድጋፍ ያደርጋል።						
➤ ቁልፍ አቅራቢዎች ተከታታይነት ባለው የማሻሻያ ፕሮግራም ውስጥ የተካተቱ ናቸው።						
➤ ቁልፍ አቅራቢዎች አዳዲስ ምርቶችን በመፍጠር ሂደት ውስጥ ተሳታፊ ናቸው።						
2. የደንበኞች ግንኙነትን በተመለከተ						
➤ አስተማማኝነት ፣አሳታፊነት ፣እና ሌሎችንም ስታንዳርዶች ለመቀመር ከተጠቃሚዎች ጋር የማያቋርጥ ግንኙነት ይደረጋል።						
➤ ድርጅቱ /ካምፓኒው/ በየጊዜው የደንበኞችን እርካታ ይለካል ይገመግማል።						
➤ ድርጅቱ /ካምፓኒው/ ተከታታይነት ባለው ሁኔታ የደንበኞችን የወደፊት የፍላጎት አቅጣጫ በማጥናት ይወስናል።						
➤ ድርጅቱ /ካምፓኒው/ ተጠቃሚዎች ድጋፍ የሚያገኙበትን ሁኔታ ያመቻቻል።						
➤ ድርጅቱ /ካምፓኒው/ በየጊዜው ከደንበኞች ጋር ያለውን ግንኙነት አስፈላጊነት ይገመግማል።						

3. መረጃ የመለዋወጥ ደረጃን በተመለከተ	SD	D	N	SA	A	ምርመራ
➤ ድርጅቱ /ካምፓኒው/ የፍላጎት ለውጦች በሚከሰቱበት ወቅት ለንግድ አጋሮቹ ሽሪኮቹ አስቀድሞ ያሳውቃል።						
➤ የንግድ አጋሮቹ ሽሪኮቹ የጋራ የባለቤትነት መረጃዎችን ከድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው ጋር ይለዋወጣሉ።						
➤ የንግድ አጋሮች ወይም ሽሪኮች የንግድ ድርጅቱን በአሉታዊነት የሚጎዱ ኩነቶች ሲፈጠሩ በቂ መረጃ በመስጠት ይሳተፋሉ።						
➤ የንግድ አጋሮች ወይም ሽሪኮች ለድርጅቱ ንግድ ስራ ቁልፍ የሆኑ እውቀቶችን በማካፈል ይሳተፋሉ።						
➤ የንግድ አጋሮች ወይም ሽሪኮች ድርጅቱ የንግድ እቅድ ለማዘጋጀት የሚረዱ መረጃዎችን ይለዋወጣሉ።						
4. የመረጃ ጥራት ደረጃን በተመለከተ	SD	D	N	SA	A	ምርመራ
➤ በንግድ ሽሪኮች ወይም አጋሮችና በድርጅቱ መካከል ያለው የመረጃ ፍላጎት ወቅታዊ ነው።						
➤ በንግድ ሽሪኮች ወይም አጋሮችና በድርጅቱ መካከል ያለው የመረጃ ፍላጎት ትክክለኛ ነው።						
➤ በንግድ ሽሪኮች ወይም አጋሮችና በድርጅቱ መካከል ያለው የመረጃ ፍላጎት የተሟላ ነው።						
➤ በንግድ ሽሪኮች ወይም አጋሮችና በድርጅቱ መካከል ያለው የመረጃ ፍላጎት በቂ ነው።						
➤ በንግድ ሽሪኮች ወይም አጋሮችና በድርጅቱ መካከል ያለው የመረጃ ፍላጎት አስተማማኝ ነው።						
5. የውስጥ አሰራርን በተመለከተ	SD	D	N	SA	A	ምርመራ
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው የማምረቻ ቦታዎችን ወይም ሂደቶችን የማዘጋጀት ጊዜን ይቆጥባል።						
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው ተከታታይነት ያለው የጥራት ማሻሻያ ፕሮግራም አለው።						
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው የሚያመርተው የደንበኞችን ፍላጎት መሰረት በማድረግ አስፈላጊ በሆኑበት ጊዜ ብቻ ነው።						

ክፍል 3. ተወዳዳሪ ተጠቃሚነት |

ተወዳዳሪ ተጠቃሚነት	SD	D	N	SA	A	ምርመራ
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው የሚያቀርበው የዋጋ ተመን ዝቅተኛና ከተፎካካሪ ድርጅቶች ያነሰ ነው ብለው ያምናሉ						
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው ከተፎካካሪ ድርጅቶች አንጻር ሲታይ ምርቶችን የሚያመርተው በቀነሰ የማምረቻ ዋጋ ነው ብለው ያምናል						
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው የሚያቀርበው የዋጋ ተመን ከተፎካካሪ ድርጅቶች አንጻር ሲታይ ተወዳዳሪ ዋጋ ነው ብለው ያምናሉ						
➤ የድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው የቆጠራ ድግግሞሽ ከተወዳዳሪ ድርጅቶች አንጻር ሲታይ ብልጫ አልው ብለው ያምናሉ						
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው ተወዳዳሪነት ጥራትን መሰረት ያደረገ ነው ብለው ያምናሉ						
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው የሚያቀርበው ምርቶች አስተማማኝ ነው ብለው ያምናሉ						
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው ለተጠቃሚዎች የሚያቀርበው ምርቶች ከፍተኛ ጥራት ያላቸው ብለው ያምናሉ						
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው ለተጠቃሚዎች የሚያቀርበው ምርቶች በተጠቃሚዎች ዘንድ ተፈላጊ ናቸው ብለው ያምናሉ						
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው ደንበኞች በሚያዙት መሰረት በወቅቱ ያቀርባል						
➤ ከደንበኞች የሚቀርቡ ቅሬታዎችን በተመለከተ የቀረቡትን ቅሬታዎችን ለማስተካከል የሚወሰደው እርምጃ ከተፎካካሪዎች አንጻር ሲታይ የሚወስደው አጭር ጊዜ ነው						
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው ከተጠቃሚዎች አንጻር ሲታይ ምርትን ወደ ገበያ የሚያቀርበው በተሻለ ፍጥነት ነው						
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው የገበያ የሽያጭ ጊዜ ከኢንዱስትሪ አማካይ አንጻር ሲታይ ያነሰ ነው						
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው አዲስ ምርትን ለገበያ በማስተዋወቅ ረገድ ከተፎካካሪዎች አንጻር ሲታይ በገበያ ውስጥ ቀዳሚነትን ይይዛል						
➤ ድርጅቱ ካምፓኒው የምርት እድገት ፍጥነትን በሚመለከት ከተፎካካሪዎች አንጻር ሲታይ ፈጣን ነው						