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SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR IN ZIMBABWE.

BY
HEATHER NCUBE B224235B

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RELEASE FORM

NAME OF AUTHOR:	Heather Ncube
REGISTRATION NUMBER:	B224235B
DISSERTATION TITLE:	Supply chain management practices and organizational performance in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe.
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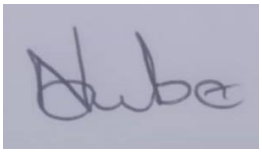

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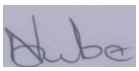
Heather Ncube  June 2023

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Student Signature Date

Dr S Mutsvangwa  June 2023

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Supervisor Signature Date

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Chairperson Signature Date

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to the Almighty God for the guidance and strength He gave me, my entire family and friends for the support they gave me throughout my studies.

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ABSTRACT

Supply chain management practice in Zimbabwe is still in the infancy stages, hence the Zimbabwean food processing industry is faced with problems which impede the firms' determination to grow fast and compete in the global market, such as insufficient working premises and inadequate link with other sectors. This study was intended to answer some questions related to SCM practices in Zimbabwean food processing firms and their impact on organizational performance. Three objectives were formulated and were focused on assessing the impact of strategic supplier partnership on production efficiency in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe, analysing the influence of customer relationship on market performance of manufacturing products in Zimbabwe and evaluating the effect of level of information sharing on product innovation in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe Explanatory and descriptive research designs were used to collect data from a sample of 132 respondents in the food processing industry that is, fish and meat processing, grain milling, fruits and vegetables, freezing, dairy and eggs and poultry located in Harare. Semi structured questionnaires were used as research instruments to collect data from respondents applying stratified sampling method. Data was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively and major findings showed that there is a positive relationship between strategic supplier partnership and production efficiency, strong positive relationship between customer relationship and market performance of manufacturing products and a positive relationship between level of information sharing and product innovation. The study concluded that, involving key suppliers in planning and goal setting activities promotes smooth operations in production and ensures reliable supplies in production and facilitating customer's ability to seek assistance from firms allows good relations and market performance of manufacturers' products and guarantee sales. The study further concluded that, informing supply chain partners in advance of changing needs facilitates product improvement and helps in new product development. Based on the conclusions the study recommended that, to boost product innovations, food processing companies should further improve the quality of information sharing performance by improving the timeliness, correctness, completeness, sufficiency, and reliability of the information communicated, companies that produce food should help their staff develop the skills and abilities necessary to adapt to the ever-changing competitive landscape and managers of food processing companies improve the performance of their organizations by creating and enhancing high-quality information sharing

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CHAPTER ONE

INRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Since supply networks now compete with one another rather than with companies, effective supply chain management (SCM) has emerged as a potentially useful strategy for gaining a competitive edge and enhancing organizational performance. The three facets of supply chain management (SCM) practice strategic supplier partnerships, customer level of information sharing, and their relationship to the organisational performance of Zimbabwean manufacturing firms are conceptualized and developed in this study. The backdrop of the study, the problem statement, the research questions and goals, the importance of the study, the definition of terms, the delimitations of the study, the limits, and the definition of important words are all included in this chapter.

1.1 Background to the study

Since supply networks now compete with one another rather than with companies, effective supply chain management (SCM) has emerged as a potentially useful strategy for gaining a competitive edge and enhancing organizational performance. The three facets of supply chain management (SCM) practice strategic supplier partnerships, customer level of information sharing, and their relationship to the organisational performance of Zimbabwean manufacturing firms are conceptualized and developed in this study. The backdrop of the study, the problem statement, the research questions and goals, the importance of the study, the definition of terms, the delimitations of the study, the limits, and the definition of important words are all included in this chapter.

The capacity to swiftly adapt to market demands and provide the appropriate product to the right consumer at the right time has replaced lowest cost, highest quality, or best-performing products as the competitive environment has changed over the past decade. Speed has become the new normal, forcing businesses to compete throughout their whole supply chain. Thus, in order to compete and enhance supply chain surplus in the global arena, knowledge of and use of supply chain management (SCM) have become essential (Balsmeier & Voisin 2021). Hewlett-Packard, West Co., Becton Dickinson, Baxter, Whirlpool, Wal-Mart, and Georgia-

Pacific Corp. are a few examples of early adopters of SCM approaches that achieved breakthrough performance in their firms (Cachon & Fisher, 2020; Carroll et al., 2021).

In the 1990s, as markets expanded globally and competition increased, so did the difficulties in delivering goods and services at the best possible price to the appropriate location at the right time. Companies started to understand that making their whole supply chain competitive was just as important as increasing internal efficiency. According to Cachon & Fisher (2020; Carroll et al., 2021; Garvin, 2022; Hall, 2020), knowledge and use of supply chain management (SCM) are now necessary for maintaining competitiveness and increasing profitability.

A group of three or more organizations or people who are directly engaged in the upstream and downstream movement of goods, services, money, and/or information from source to customer is known as a supply chain management group (Mentzer et al., 2021). The collection of actions carried out by a company to support efficient supply chain management is known as supply chain management (SCM) practices (Li et al., 2021). Initiatives that impact the supply chain as a whole, individual components, or critical operations are the best supply chain practices (Balsmeier & Voisin 2021). Contextual elements such industry type, firm size, location in the supply chain, and supply chain type and length have an impact on these behaviors (Li et al., 2021).

Manufacturing organizations use supply chain management (SCM) as one of their strategies to get a competitive edge over their rivals. It includes all actions related to conversion, sourcing, and procurement, as well as all logistics management tasks (Xi & Canhua, 2018). Businesses have seen many, before unseen changes in recent decades due to the peculiarities of the modern global business environment. The markets have transitioned into an age of integration and networking, which is the most notable transformation. It follows that companies now compete via supply networks rather than as independent entities. Customer value is now the main focus of SCM researchers' research agendas and the cornerstone of corporate marketing strategies. In enterprises, customers are seen as a major source of competitive advantage. It is now essential for businesses to retain high customer levels while simultaneously cutting costs and raising profit margins due to factors including revenue augmentation, suppliers obtaining new ideas, technologies, information access, or market access from their customers. Customers and the value that is provided to them have therefore taken centre stage in business strategy (Balsmeier & Voisin 2021).

SCM's primary goal is to seamlessly integrate information and material flows across the supply chain to create an effective competitive weapon (Childhouse & Towill, 2003; Feldmann & Muller, 2018). Practitioners, scholars, business managers, and consultants have all paid more attention to the theory of supply chain management (SCM) (Tan, 2022). For the majority of businesses, supply chain management (SCM) is essential to gaining a sustainable competitive advantage for their goods and services in the increasingly competitive marketplace (Jones, 2018). Numerous bodies of literature, including those on buying and supply management, logistics and transportation, operations management, marketing, organizational theory, and management information systems, have examined the SCM paradigm from a variety of angles (Balsmeier & Voisin 2021).

A company's ability to create and maintain a competitive edge in its goods and services depends on its supply chain management. According to Gunasekaran and Ngai (2019) and Sufian (2020), controlling and integrating critical information elements into a supply chain has an impact on its performance. Information technology must be used by the businesses in order to accomplish successful supply chain integration (Handfield and Nichols, 2019); Sufian (2020). According to Brandyberry et al. (2019), businesses may manage the flow and effect of many supply chain dimensions, including quality, cost, flexibility, delivery, and profit, by using information technology. Information technology has an influence on the efficacy of the supply chain, according to Byrd and Davidson (2018). They claimed that improved business performance in terms of market share, return on equity (ROI), and return on investment (ROI) resulted from the development and long-term use of information technology. According to Vickery et al. (2018), the use of integrated information technology facilitates supply chain integration and coordination, which has a direct influence on the financial performance of the businesses. Sufian (2010) asserts that the company strategy and supply chain management plan must work together to provide a competitive edge and improved performance.

According to earlier research, an organization's total financial and marketing success is directly impacted by its SCM procedures (Shin et al. 2020; Prasad and Tata 2020). In fact, it is anticipated that SCM procedures would boost a company's ROI, market share, and overall competitiveness. Tan et al. (2018), for example, claimed that buying habits and customer interactions affect the efficiency of SCM strategy and influence market and financial performance. On the other hand, Froehlich and Westbrook (2021) hypothesized that businesses who had more extensive supply chain integrations with clients and suppliers had the greatest gains in terms of business accomplishments.

SCM procedures affect an organization's competitive edge in addition to its overall performance. They should increase a company's competitive edge in terms of price/cost, quality, dependable delivery, speed to market, and product innovation. Previous research has shown that different elements of supply chain management (SCM) strategies, such strategic supplier partnerships, influence different facets of competitive advantage, like cost and pricing. For instance, a strategic supplier partnership may raise customer satisfaction and response levels, decrease time to market, and enhance supplier performance (Balsmeier & Voisin 2021).

Zimbabwe's manufacturing sector is a significant one, contributing significantly to the nation's economic growth. One of the main economic pillars of Vision 2030, which aims to elevate the country's income to a middle-class level by 2030, is the industry. Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI) (2022) reports that Zimbabwe has more than 700 well-established multi-sector manufacturing companies. The items that each company produces and their sizes, as shown by the number of workers, vary. To diversify the nation's economy and create jobs, the manufacturing sector has the ability to produce rate foreign currency gains via exports. Kenya's manufacturing industry is a significant one that contributes significantly to the economic growth of the nation. It has the ability to diversify the economy of the nation and produce a rate of foreign currency profits via exports.

Over time, this industry has increased in terms of employment and its share of the GDP of the nation. Even if this industry is significant and large in Zimbabwe, it is still relatively minor in comparison to the developed countries (United Industrial Development Organization UNIDO, 2022). Production companies are now compelled to search for more efficient production techniques in order to stay competitive due to supply chain rivalry and globalization. But the industry's output has also decreased as a result of rising inflation, rising energy prices, and the dumping of low-cost imports. Large manufacturing companies may obtain a competitive edge by using supply chain management practices, as opposed to competing on price alone. This will improve organizational performance.

A rising number of academics, consultants, and corporate managers are paying attention to the SCM idea. A growing number of businesses are starting to realize that SCM is essential to creating a long-lasting competitive advantage. The research hasn't been able to provide much direction to support the practice of SCM despite this increasing emphasis (Perona, 2019). The majority of contemporary supply chain management (SCM) theoretical and empirical research focuses on either the upstream or downstream side of the chain, or specific SCM characteristics and viewpoints. Studies conducted internationally, such those by Clark and Lee (2020),

concentrate on the relationships that manufacturers and merchants have downstream. Tan (2019) conducted a research that examined the relationship between supplier management techniques, customer relationship practices, and organization performance. A few recent studies have concurrently taken into account upstream and downstream factors. Among many other things, Frohlich and Westbrook (2001) looked at how supplier-customer integration affected the effectiveness of the business. The efforts made to address the many yet fascinating facets of SCM procedures are reflected in these research. Nevertheless, developing a framework for putting past SCM findings into practice is not greatly aided by the absence of an integrated framework that includes all activities on both the upstream and downstream ends of the supply chain and connects them to both competitive advantage and organizational performance. In order to determine the relationship between SCM practices and organizational performance, this research attempts to provide a validated framework.

In Africa. Kamau (2021) discovered a strong correlation between buyer-supplier relationships and organizational effectiveness after doing research on the subject. A research on the use of e-procurement in big industrial companies was carried out by Mose (2022). He discovered that several industrial companies have used diverse e-procurement strategies. This suggests that little research has been done locally to develop a knowledge of the whole suite of supply chain management (SCM) strategies and how they might help a firm become more competitive and perform better. The present study endeavored to bridge this disparity by investigating the following research questions: What are the supply chain management practices implemented by Kenyan manufacturing firms, and what impact do these practices have on the performance of major manufacturing firms in Nairobi, Kenya?

A research on the impact of supply chain management practices on business performance was carried out by Masresha (2018). The Techno Style Private Limited Company Case Study. According to the research, customer relationship has a low correlation with business performance at a statistically significant level, whereas strategic supplier relationship, level of information sharing, quality of information sharing, and lean techniques all have medium relationships. Even though Masresha (2018) research attempted to address supply chain management practices and areas, it was primarily concerned with financial performance indicators of organizations.

The Effect of Supply Chain Management Practices on Organization Performance in the Case of Ethiopian Agricultural Business Corporation-Agricultural Input Supply by (Balsmeier & Voisin 2021). The study's overall conclusion shows that Ethiopian Agricultural Business

Corporation-Agricultural Input Supply's organizational performance is significantly impacted by efficient supply chain management. Even though Lina's research attempted to address supply chain management practices, it did not involve rate internal lean practices, and this impact is not appropriate or true for all supply chain elements.

Studies that have been conducted locally have focused on certain facets of SCM. Chiripanhura (2020) conducted study on how lead times and customer service in Zimbabwean supermarkets are affected by logistics outsourcing. He discovered that the lead times for product delivery are directly impacted by the outsourcing of logistics services in supermarkets. Moreover, he discovered that the time it takes to deliver the same products to their warehouses has significantly decreased in supermarkets that have outsourced their procurement of products from suppliers.

Based on the literature analysis, it is evident that scholars have differing opinions about the supply chain management practices that are essential to the overall success of organizations. It shows that various organizations rate these practices differently; for example, one company may use a certain supply chain management approach extensively while another organization may use it sparingly or not at all. Nonetheless, it is not possible to consider the relationship between supply chain management and performance to be definitive (Cousins, et al., 2021). The researcher identified very few previous studies that were especially designed to investigate supply chain management practices in practice and their effects on organizational performance in Zimbabwe's industrial sector. Therefore, the goal of this study is to investigate how supply chain management practices affect organizational performance in the context of Zimbabwe's food manufacturing business.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In Zimbabwe, supply chain management is still in its infancy; just a small number of industrial firms have integrated it into their organizational structure. Furthermore, the sector is facing a number of difficulties that have decreased the demand for and quality of locally produced goods (Chiripanhura 2020). The food processing industry in Zimbabwe faces a number of challenges that make it difficult for its companies to compete globally and grow quickly. These challenges include a lack of working space, poor connections with other industries, a lack of capital, a lack of high-quality products to access export markets, a high degree of information asymmetry, high transaction and organizational costs, challenges that are difficult to quantify, a lack of research and development, and a lack of managerial and physical infrastructure (Moyo 2018). It was difficult for the researcher to locate any prior study that had been done expressly

to look at the use of SCM techniques in real-world settings and how they affected organizational performance in the food processing sector in Zimbabwe. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to address some of the issues surrounding SCM methods and their effects on organizational performance in food processing companies in Zimbabwe.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is therefore to assess the impact of supply chain management practices on organisational performance in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe.

1.4 Research objectives

1.4.1 To assess the impact of strategic supplier partnership on production efficiency in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe

1.4.2 To analyze the influence of customer relationship on market performance of manufacturing products in Zimbabwe

1.4.3 To evaluate the effect of level of information sharing on product innovation in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe

1.5 Research questions

1.5.1 What is the impact of strategic supplier partnership on production efficiency in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe?

1.5.2 How does customer relationship influence market performance of manufacturing products in Zimbabwe?

1.5.3 Does level of information sharing have an impact on product innovation in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe?

1.6 Assumptions

The following assumptions were made about the study.

- In order to avoid influencing the study's findings, respondents will answer truthfully. All information requested will be available within the project's timeline.
- It was also believed that respondents would be encouraged to provide honest and truthful answers without worrying about being recognized by guarantees of secrecy for questionnaire replies.

- During the study procedure, it was presumed that respondents provided the highest level of support.
- A strong grasp of the topic matter was presumed among the people chosen.

1.7 Delimitations

SCM covers a wide range of management techniques, making it impossible and unmanageable to examine them all. As a result, the study's scope is restricted to a particular setting on SCM techniques and how they affect operational performance. The topic scope of supply chain practices is further confined to the organization's level of information sharing, customer relationships, and strategic supplier partnerships. The analysis was restricted to operational performance in terms of company performance. The sample population for the research came from Harare's industrial regions, and the investigation was conducted in private food processing companies there. Data from January 2023 to October 2023 were utilized in the research.

1.8 Limitations of the study

Confidentiality of information

A portion of the respondents at the corresponding businesses declined to answer some questions on the questionnaires that were given to them. The researcher did everything in their power to convince the companies to provide the confidentiality information they were afraid would be leaked to their rivals. To this end, the researcher attached an introduction letter from Bindura University of Science Education identifying the researcher as a student, or, in the event that the distribution was self-administered, they showed their student identity card. In other cases, however, the sample size was lowered because several businesses had entirely omitted to respond to the questionnaire that was sent to them.

Time constraints

A time limitation impeded the researcher's ability to gather a portion of the completed surveys. The sample size was lowered because several businesses neglected to turn in their questionnaires on time. The researcher constantly reminded the chosen organizations to provide feedback via phone calls, emails, and massages, which helped to lessen the impact of time restrictions.

1.9 Definition of key terms

Supply chain management (SCM): It is a swarm of organizations with higher and lower relationship levels that are involved in processes and activities, such as the presentation of goods and services to clients in order to generate value (Tan, 2019).

Supply Chain Management Practices: SCM practices are seen as an integrated set of activities inside businesses to improve internal supply chain performance and achieve targeted outcomes (Masresha Assefa 2018).

Organisational performance: According to Lina Zewdu (2017), it describes how successfully a company delivers correct goods and services at a fair price, in a fair amount, and at an acceptable time.

Strategic supplier partnership: The organization's long-term relationship with its suppliers. Tan (2019) states that the program's objective is to assist each participating business in achieving substantial, long-term advantages by using their strategic and operational skills.

Customer relationship: The whole suite of procedures used to handle customer complaints, establish enduring connections with clients, and raise client satisfaction levels (Tan, 2019).

Level of information sharing: How much confidential and essential information is shared with a supply chain partner (Tan, 2019).

Quality of information sharing: speaks to the veracity, sufficiency, timeliness, and correctness of the information shared (Tan, 2019).

1.10 Chapter summary

The research study's context was made clear in this opening chapter. Additionally, it provided a clear explanation of the goals and queries that the study aims to address. There were many presumptions and restrictions on this investigation. This study's value and fit within the body of literature research are justified by its significance. The chapter that follows reviews the literature and includes relevant research on the phenomenon being studied that has been done by various other scholars.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The factors employed in this study's supply chain management practices and their relationship to organisational performance are reviewed in this chapter from previous research. The chapter also includes a synopsis of the research gaps this study addressed and an empirical evaluation of earlier investigations.

2.1 Theoretical review

The study's theories were introduced in this part. A theoretical section addressed adoption theories and concepts put out by eminent writers in connection with the use of SCM methods and the performance of organizations. Theories from accounting, management, economics, sociology, and engineering have all been connected to SCM. In fact, the majority of these theories that are now being studied in SCM literature predate the SCM concept itself since they have been there for a very long period (Pala, 2018). As a result, the research used three widely accepted theories. The resource-dependent theory and the resource-based perspective are these theories.

2.1.1 Resource-based view theory (RBV)

Birger Wernerfelt (1984) first put out the theory, which Jay B. Barney (1991) and other academics subsequently expanded upon. The business literature has provided significant support for the resource-based conception of the corporation. A well-liked theory of competitive advantage in recent years has been the resource-based view of the company (RBV) (Ray et al., 2019; Raduanet al., 2019). Over the last two decades, there has been evidence that the resource-based approach has been used to analyze performance and/or organizational competitiveness (Ibrahim and Hamid, 2019). According to Arifin and Baihaqi (2022) the Resource-Based View (RBV) is a theoretical framework that aims to explain, anticipate, and characterize how enterprises might get a sustainable competitive advantage by acquiring and controlling resources. For a resource to provide a competitive edge, it has to meet four requirements:

i. Valuable: must be important to the organization strategically.
ii. Imperfect immutability (inimitable): the resource cannot be completely duplicated or copied; it must be scarce (uniqueness) among existing and prospective rivals.
iii. Non-substitutability: rivals are unable to replace the resource with an equivalent alternative resource and get the same outcomes (Liouet al., 2019).

Organizational resources are easily categorized into three building blocks: organizational assets (such as culture, business processes, and management resources), human assets (such as deployment, competency, and skill resources), and physical assets (such as technological equipment and plant) (Shamsuddin et al., 2018). Moreover, the resources are divided into physical and immaterial categories (Curado, 2021). The influence of organizational resources and competencies on competitive advantage, which results in total organizational performance, is also investigated using the RBV theory. Resources and capabilities that are not conditioned into sustaining activities and business processes will not have a beneficial influence on an organization's performance, according to Ray et al.'s (2019) research (Yap and Tan, 2022).

The theory is often used to explain why different industries perform differently. According to the firm's RBV, successful organizations generate variations in performance because they have access to valuable resources that others do not, which enables them to collect rent in a quasi-monopolist manner (Curado, 2021). RBV may be utilized to comprehend the relationship between SCM practices and competitive advantage in the setting of SCM practices in the real world. This is how the application becomes an organizational resource and contributes to SCM excellence performance (Shamsuddin et al., 2018).

2.1.2 Resource Dependent Theory (RDT)

The resource dependency theory was put out by Pfeffer and Salancik in 1978 to describe how an organization's behavior is influenced by the external resources it has. The theory focuses on how some businesses depend on others for essential inputs like supplies and products, and how businesses should handle these kinds of interactions (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). For particular organizations, reducing environmental uncertainty is crucial, and this is made possible by the asymmetric dependency present in these inter-firm connections. Members of the supply chain who collaborate closely with one another often become increasingly reliant on one another, forming alliances, partnerships, and cooperative relationships. RDT is thus very valuable in the context of the supply chain. This theory's underlying presumptions include faith in the partnership agreement, dedication to working together for the benefit of both parties, and

favorable circumstances that allow you to rely on your partners and establish a position of strength. According to Mbuthia and Rotich (2019), interdependence in best value supply chains should thus be used to foster mutual trust and forbearance rather than to encourage the aggressive exploitation of one chain member by another.

2.1.3 Systems theory

In the 1940s and 1950s, Ludwig von Bertalanffy developed the initial version of the Systems Theory. Supply chain management was able to get a deeper understanding of its operating environment thanks to systems theory. According to Checkland (2012), systems are flexible wholes that can tolerate changes in their surroundings. An effort was made to build a theoretical framework for supply chain management between 2006 and 2016 (Shaffer, Dalton, & Plucinski, 2011). According to Abhijeet et al. (2013), specialists have to use a system of systems strategy to get a deeper comprehension and improvement of the supply chain. This was discovered by von Bertalanffy (1972), who maintained that the collaboration of a system's many components and the environment in which they function determines whether the system succeeds or fails.

This frame of reference was used to express the idea that a network of supply chains is a system made up of many different parts. The notion that every element of a system is interrelated and requires perfect coordination with one another is among the most significant contributions of systems theory. In order to allow people, goods, and services to move freely through the system, management had to maintain it in good working order. Non-heterogeneous agents in difficult systems adhere to behavioral rules that produce patterns that comply with the system (Stacey, 2011). In order for the system to function correctly and be complete, all of its component parts have to be integrated (Stacey, 2011). Businesses had to develop increasingly sophisticated systems to keep up with the speed at which technology, education, and modern society were developing.

According to theorist von Bertalanffy (1972), similarities may eventually be discovered in a variety of domains, including the sciences, daily life, politics, and economics. To get a better understanding of the objectives of a complex system and how they connect to one another, experts may choose to dissect the system into smaller components for analysis. Gaining a greater understanding of the unit's components as well as outside impacts was the goal. Distortions can happen in the absence of the many parts that comprised and operated the system. Knowing systems theory gave managers a comprehensive understanding of their business and enabled them to collaborate effectively to prevent a systemic collapse (Kauffman,

1990). Systems theory was established by Serge (1990) based on the work of von Bertalanffy. An organization has to be able to admit its shortcomings in order to be successful and effective, according to Serge (1990).

The study of systems theory, which is dynamic and aids in identifying supply chain issues, assisted managers in comprehending how to resolve issues that affected the system's smooth operation. Even if the raw materials are prepared, packaged, and transported as planned, transportation issues might prevent them from reaching the customer in a timely manner, even if they get at the manufacturing site on time. The transportation system was the one area where the whole system had failed, rendering it still useless, even if other components were operating without a hitch. A system that is free from interruptions is necessary for every supply chain operation to be successful.

2.1.4 Institutional Theory

Arkis et al. (2010) use the institutional theory to analyze how outside forces impact a business. The institutional theory states that external pressure has a significant influence on the organizational tactics related to supply chain management. Strategies related to the use of technology and supply chain cooperation, for instance, are chosen by the enterprises (Lavassani and Movahedi, 2010). According to institutional theory, there are three types of isomorphic drivers—coercive, normative, and mimetic—that might persuade a business to adopt certain behaviors. Drivers of coercive isomorphism result from the influence of the powerful. Strong organizations that have the ability to coerce an organization's behavior via trade obstacles and penalties are government authorities. Businesses adapt to normative isomorphic drives in order to be seen as engaging in acceptable organizational activities. Mimetic isomorphic drivers happen when businesses mimic the strategies of their profitable industry rivals in an effort to follow their successful route (Sarkis, et al., 2010).

The institutional context in which the company operates has an impact on the adoption process with regard to SCM techniques. Coercive pressure is seen to be crucial for enforcing authorized standards and regulating business operations via regulatory mechanisms. Mimetic pressure is thought to adhere to the effective implementation strategies used by other organizations. And lastly, in a rapidly changing environment, normative pressure is seen as a solid acceptance of best practices for SCM implementation (Shamsuddinet al., 2013).

2.2 Review of concepts

This section defines the major concepts of the study which are supply chain management practices and organisational performance.

2.2.1 Concept of supply chain management practices

A collection of actions carried out by an organization to support efficient supply chain management is known as supply chain management (SCM) practices. The most recent developments in supply chain management (SCM) include sharing of information technology, outsourcing, continuous process flow, and supplier partnerships (Zhao & Lee, 2019). The notion of supply chain management (SCM) is multifaceted and encompasses several perspectives, including supplier, internal, and customer perspectives. According to Chopra and Meindl (2021), supply chain management (SCM) strategies that integrate collaboration between manufacturers, distributors, suppliers, and consumers may assist improve the long-term performance of supply chains and organizations. Different practices pertaining to the organization's complete supply chain might combine to generate SCM practices.

Tan (2018) utilized quality, buying, and customer relationships to represent SCM practices in his empirical research, whereas Donlon (2021) used supplier partnerships, outsourcing, information sharing, cycle time compression, and continuous process flow as SCM practices in his study. Outsourcing, strategic supplier partnerships, customer relationships, information sharing, and product modularity are the five practices that Lee (2019) identified as critical to improving supply chain responsiveness and, ultimately, organizational performance. Moreover, Zhou and Benton (2022) defined that there are only three categories of supply chain practices, which are supply chain planning, just-in-time production, and delivery practices. Walton (2021) identified planning, sharing benefits and burdens, operational information exchange, and extendedness as SCM practices. Additionally, long-term relationships, cross-functional teams, supplier base reduction, and supplier participation were employed by Chen and Paulraj (2019) as SCM techniques that would impact organizational performance. SCM procedures are critical to enhancing the effectiveness of the whole supply chain system and, therefore, the performance of the firm. As metrics for SCM techniques, Anatan (2019) used "strategic supplier partnership, customer relationship, level of information sharing, quality of information sharing, and postponement." Collaboration, demand and supply planning, inventory production and distribution management, and logistics were used by Spina, Di Serio, Brito, and Duarte (2020) as metrics for SCM approaches.

2.2.2 Concept of Organisational performance

The degree to which a company meets both its financial and market-oriented objectives is referred to as its organizational performance. While increasing market share and earnings for all supply chain participants are the long-term goals of supply chain management (SCM), increasing productivity and decreasing inventory and cycle time are the primary short-term goals of SCM (Lee, 2022). Financial measures have been used to compare companies and assess how they have behaved over time (Peng et al., 2021). The ultimate goal of any organizational endeavour, including supply chain management, should be improved organizational performance. Previous research has assessed the performance of organizations based on a variety of financial and market parameters, such as ROI, market share, profit margin on sales, growth in ROI, sales growth, market share growth, and overall competitive position (Wagnera et al., 2022; Yoshino & Rangan, 2020). The same metrics will be used in this research to assess organizational performance in accordance with the previously mentioned literature.

Organizational outcomes that were assessed in relation to the goals the organization established for itself make up the organization's performance. According to Richard (2019), there are three distinct aspects of company outcomes that make up organizational success: financial performance, product market performance, and shareholder return. Profits, return on investment (ROI), and return on assets (ROA) are used to assess financial success, while market share obtained in comparison to competitors is used to measure product market performance (Wagnera et al., 2022). When an investor makes an investment in the company and the economic value generated that depends on the company's future development, the total shareholder return is used to calculate the shareholder return. Basically, non-financial performance related to strategy and operational performance, such as delivery, productivity, response time, and distribution, is also one of the firm outcomes that will determine on the organizational performance, aside from product market performance and shareholder return. Organizational performance will be assessed for this research using both financial and non-financial performance, and the results will be grouped appropriately in the section that follows. The performance of an organization may be impacted by several things. They are essentially separated into two categories: non-financial performance and financial performance (Yoshino & Rangan, 2020).

2.3 Empirical review

With varying degrees of success, researchers have examined how different SCM techniques affect organizational performance. Apopa (2018) investigated how Kenyan government departments performed in relation to SCM techniques. The research used a cross-sectional survey methodology, the RBV, coordination, and system theories, and it targeted 1372 employees from 20 government ministries who worked in the SCM department. In order to examine the link between the variables, the research also used multivariate regression analysis and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis(r). The results showed that although organizational culture tempered the impacts, SCM practices explained 96.4% of the performance variation.

Mollel (2019) looked at how SCM methods affected organizational performance in Tanzanian food processing companies located in Dar es Salaam. In order to investigate the link between SCM practices and organizational performance, the research collected data from a sample of 53 food processing companies utilizing questionnaires employing a descriptive design. Correlation analysis and the Kruskal Wallis test were used to analyze the data. The degree and quality of information exchange, customer relationships, strategic supplier partnerships, and lean techniques were shown to have a favorable correlation with the performance of the organization. The research did find, however, that there was no connection between organizational success and outsourcing. The performance of an organization may be indirectly impacted by outsourcing techniques via a mediating variable that was not taken into account in his research.

Memia (2018) investigated how modern SC practices affected the performance of major industrial companies in Kenya. The research formulated supply chain management (SCM) techniques as a multifaceted framework including supplier relationship management, customer relationship management, outsourcing, and lean supply chain practices. The research also included five other theories: the transaction cost theory, the theory of lean six sigma, the value chain theory, the theory of resource-based perspective, and the theory of supply chain limitations. Additionally, a descriptive research approach was used in the study to gather information from 312 respondents, who were described by KAM as representing 563 big manufacturing businesses. In addition, the research used regression analysis and correlation to determine the associations between the criteria and predictor factors. The findings showed that every modern SC practice has a major impact on performance. Nevertheless, the indirect association between the variables was not included in this research, which instead focused on

the direct relationship between SC practices and performance. The research came to the conclusion that lean supply chain techniques, outsourcing techniques, and customer relationship management techniques all improved the performance of big manufacturing companies.

The supply chain operations and understanding of the SCM concept were examined in Ruteri and Xin's (2009) research. They conducted a study that included 23 Tanzanian food processing companies. Inventory management, pricing strategy, customer service and customer perceived value, marketing and distribution strategies, order processing, and information technology application are some of the SCM methods that were employed in the research. The study's conclusions demonstrated that respondents from local investment food processors and multinational food processors had quite different understandings of SCM principles.

Anatan (2019) used basic regression models to examine how SCM methods affected the supply chain performance and competitive advantage of Indonesian large-scale manufacturing enterprises. The findings showed that supply chain competitive advantage and performance are significantly impacted by SCM techniques. Additional findings demonstrated that supply chain performance is not much impacted by competitive advantage. Consequently, PLS-SEM, which is better than regression approaches in analyzing the mediation process in a model, has to be used to investigate the mediation function of CA in performance management study (Joseph F. Hair, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019).

The impacts of OP and SCM practices at Haco Industries Ltd. were investigated by Mutuerandu & Iravo (2019). The results showed that every aspect of supply chain management (SCM) techniques had a beneficial impact on an organization's performance in terms of lower operating costs, shorter lead times, better customer service, higher-quality products, quick market reaction, and growing market share and sales. Bezabh (2022) examined the impact of supply chain management techniques on Ethiopian telecom's operational performance using an explanatory and descriptive study approach. The results of the research showed that lean methods, information sharing, customer relationships, strategic supplier partnerships, and information quality all had a substantial impact on OP.

Barasa (2021) looked at how SCM techniques affected Kenyan Steel Manufacturing Companies' performance. Data from Kenyan Steel Manufacturing Companies were gathered via a cross-sectional survey from a sample of fifty companies. The findings showed that the success of Kenyan steel manufacturing enterprises was strongly predicted by practices in

supply chain cooperation, green supply chain management, information sharing, and customer relationship management. Milk, in contrast to steel, is a very perishable product that calls for special SCM procedures. According to the study's findings, organizational success is positively correlated with supply chain cooperation, green supply chain management, information sharing, and customer relationship management techniques.

Cheng (2021) investigated the impact on organizational performance of outsourcing, delay, quality of information sharing, customer relationships, strategic supplier partnerships, information sharing, and lean methods. Using a descriptive framework, 483 workers were randomly chosen to be sample members in China. The findings showed a favorable correlation between lean methods, information exchange, and both financial and non-financial success. The research found a significant correlation between operational and organizational performance and SCM techniques.

In the Malaysian electronics sector, Sundram et al. (2021) looked at the impact of several supply chain management practices (SCMP) aspects on supply chain performance (SCP). A sample of 300 Malaysian electronic companies were surveyed. According to partial least squares analysis, postponement, agreed-upon vision and objectives, risk and reward, information quality, information exchange, and strategic supplier partnerships all significantly improved SCP. Nevertheless, the suggested performance metrics were limited to evaluating the overall performance of the SC and did not account for performance at the organizational level. To assess organizational performance as well as the performance of the whole chain, a consistent set of performance indicators must be validated. According to the study's findings, SC practices boost customer happiness, financial success, and operational performance.

2.4 Research gap

The findings of previous research were inconsistent and erratic, which begs the question of whether SCM practices can improve organizational performance. Furthermore, since most previous research focused on the indirect connection between SCM practices and organizational performance, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions from them. Global operations have an impact on supply chain management practices. The actual difficulty for managers operating in Zimbabwe is to create KPIs and performance measurements that are appropriate for making choices that will lead to better supply chain practices. A subset of empirical research (Sundram et al., 2021) only examined the top tier supply chain, or suppliers, whereas other studies exclusively examined the bottom tier supply chain, or consumers. Some studies, such as those conducted by Memia (2018), Mutuerandu & Iravo (2019), and Barasa

(2021), concentrate on both suppliers and customers; however, the variables utilized to analyze supply chain processes differ based on the firms that were chosen for the research. On the other hand, there is a lack of comprehensive agreements on the supply chain practice variable and its impact on the organization's performance. There was no more research found in Zimbabwe related to the food processing industry. This revealed a study vacuum that needs to be addressed by examining the supply chain's upstream and downstream components and connecting these activities to organizational performance in the food processing industry in Zimbabwe.

2.5 Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses were made bout the study.

H_1: Strategic supplier partnership has a positive relationship with production efficiency in the manufacturing sector.

The organization's long-term engagement with its suppliers is known as a strategic supplier partnership. Its goal is to assist each participating firm achieve substantial, long-term advantages by using their unique strategic and operational strengths (Anatan 2019). A strategic partnership SCM approach promotes cooperative planning and problem-solving activities as well as direct, long-term associations (Peng et al., 2021). These kinds of strategic alliances are formed in order to foster reciprocal advantages and continued involvement in one or more important strategic domains, such markets, goods, and technology (Gunasekaran, Patel, & Tirtiroglu, 2021). Organizations may collaborate more successfully with a select group of significant suppliers who are prepared to share responsibility for the goods' success when they form strategic relationships with them. Early-stage suppliers may assist identify the best components and technologies, provide more cost-effective design options, and aid in design review (Moberg CR et al., 2022). Organizations that are strategically linked may collaborate closely and cut down on time and effort wastage (Peng et al., 2021). A cutting edge supply chain may depend critically on a strong supplier alliance (Gunasekaran, Patel, & Tirtiroglu, 2021).

According to Kotabe et al. (2018), companies that heavily integrate suppliers in supply chain management (SCM) may benefit from accelerated product development cycles, reduced input costs, and improved end-product quality. But creating a supply chain partnership requires a large outlay of funds for partnership-specific assets including plants, warehouse layouts, locations, and specialized facilities, as well as equipment and tools. In order to support the aims and objectives of partnerships, businesses must invest in this infrastructure. The physical

infrastructure serves as the management interface for daily problems in the value generating processes of partnerships. As a result, it has an impact on partnership results and relationship quality. Maheshwari and associates, 2021. According to Futrell et al. (2021), partners should always strive to enhance the strategic, operational, and cultural fit between partners in order to enhance the quality of partnership results. They propose that partnering companies may assess and benchmark their status as attractive partners in comparison to other businesses in their field, which will help with progress.

Companies may get suppliers' knowledge and resources by working closely with them, which can aid in the creation of manufacturing processes that are more productive (Anatan 2019). The exchange of creative ideas and best practices that might further improve production efficiency can also come from this partnership. Furthermore, tighter system and process integration between the business and its suppliers is often a component of strategic supplier alliances (Croorn S, et al 2018). By improving inventory control, logistics, and production schedule coordination, this integration may lower the likelihood of delays and disturbances in the manufacturing process.

Moreover, improved quality assurance and control might be the outcome of strategic supplier collaborations (Croorn S, et al 2018). Working closely with suppliers, businesses may make sure that the components and raw materials they get fulfill their quality requirements, which lowers the possibility of errors or rework throughout the manufacturing process. Furthermore, cost reductions may be achieved via a variety of strategies, including shared process improvement projects, bulk buying discounts, and just-in-time delivery agreements that lower the cost of holding inventory. The establishment of strategic supplier partnerships has a significant effect on the efficiency of production as it allows companies to take advantage of the knowledge and assets of their suppliers, integrate systems and processes for enhanced coordination, enhance quality control, and realize cost savings through cooperative efforts (Tan, et al 2022).

According to Tan et al. (2022), companies may find cost-saving options including economies of scale, bulk buying, and process enhancements by collaborating closely with their suppliers. Profitability may rise and manufacturing expenses can be decreased as a result. Strategic supplier relationships often result in better-quality goods and services. Because any problems might harm both their reputation and the reputation of the purchasing organizations, suppliers are encouraged to maintain constant quality requirements (Peng et al., 2021). Innovation and the exchange of information are fostered via collaborative partnerships. Suppliers might

provide new ideas, technology, or insights that help improve product development and provide businesses a competitive edge.

According to Gunasekaran, Patel, and Tirtiroglu (2021), a more effective supply chain may be achieved by tight cooperation with suppliers. Improved inventory management, shorter lead times, and timely delivery may all save costs and increase customer satisfaction. By offering backup supply sources, disclosing market knowledge, and assisting with risk assessment and mitigation, suppliers may assist companies in managing risks (Peng et al., 2021). This is especially crucial when there are interruptions in the supply chain. More individualized solutions and quicker reactions to shifting market needs are possible via strategic supplier agreements. Suppliers that have a strong business relationship with you are able to adjust to your unique requirements.

Long-term contracts and strategic alliances help reduce price volatility and supply interruptions by ensuring pricing and availability stability for necessary inputs. Developing a solid rapport with suppliers promotes open communication and trust. This may result in improved mutual understanding of demands, quicker problem solving, and a more harmonious working environment. A solid supplier relationship may enhance an organization's standing. Collaborating with trustworthy and accountable suppliers may improve the perception of your business and fortify connections with stakeholders and consumers.

Product quality and innovation often increase significantly when suppliers are transformed into strategic partners (Gunasekaran, Patel, & Tirtiroglu, 2021). These alliances, which often represent a plethora of specialized expertise and cutting-edge technology, assist companies in staying ahead of the curve in their respective fields. Significant cost savings may result from strategic supplier agreements (Sundram et al., 2021). During supply chain breakdowns, strategic suppliers may provide vital support by acting as backup partners or other sources of supplies. Essentially, these collaborations strengthen the organization's resilience against unanticipated obstacles in addition to guaranteeing company continuity. As a result, the benefits of strategic supplier partnerships go much beyond simple purchasing and include aspects of risk management, cost-effectiveness, and innovation.

Cost reduction is one of the main benefits of strategic supplier agreements (Sundram et al., 2021). Businesses may negotiate favourable price arrangements and achieve competitive rates for products and services by maintaining excellent working relationships with their suppliers. Through the use of long-term contracts and their purchasing power, businesses may attain

economies of scale and drastically lower their procurement expenses. These cost reductions are long-term gains that support the organization's overall financial stability; they are not only one-time advantages (Barasa 2021). Additional cost savings may result from improved demand forecasting and procurement activity planning. Strategic supplier alliances are essentially savvy business practices, and one of the main benefits of this winning business strategy is cost savings.

Additionally, by working together, companies may improve overall efficiency and optimize their supply chain procedures (Barasa 2021). Effective production schedule coordination, prompt material or component delivery, and enhanced inventory control are all ensured by close supplier engagement. By cutting lead times and removing bottlenecks, this synchronization helps improve processes while also minimizing delays. One method that strategic suppliers may assist companies with this is by near shoring the necessary items.

The potential for innovation that results from wise supplier alliances is another important advantage. According to Sundram et al. (2021), suppliers often have specialized knowledge and experience in their respective domains. Enterprises might use this plethora of information to propel enhancements in their products or procedures by cultivating a cooperative atmosphere. Collaborative R&D projects may provide novel ideas that improve product quality or add new features, providing companies a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

H_2: Customer relationships has a positive relationship with market performance of manufacturing products.

The word "customer relationship" refers to the whole range of strategies used to handle customer complaints, establish enduring bonds with clients, and raise client satisfaction levels (Anatan 2019). As they said, committed relationships are the greatest lasting advantage due to their inherent obstacles to competition, which is why customer relationship management is regarded as a crucial part of supply chain management methods. Relationship management with clients is becoming more important for company survival as mass customisation and customized service expand (Gunasekaran, Patel, & Tirtiroglu, 2001). Implementing SCM programs successfully requires having positive connections with all supply chain participants, including consumers (Moberg CR et al., 2002). Strong customer relationships enable a business to stand out from the competition, maintain client loyalty, and significantly increase the value it offers to clients.

Strong customer relationships enable a business to stand out from the competition, maintain client loyalty, and significantly increase the value it offers to clients (Li et al., 2019). According to Tan et al. (2022), manufacturers are more likely to foster a feeling of trust and loyalty when they make a significant investment in establishing and maintaining close connections with their consumers. This may result in more purchases from the same client over time and a greater lifetime value. Furthermore, brand advocates are more likely to be loyal consumers, which may boost market share and improve reputation of the brand. Moreover, Li et al. (2019) assert that customer interactions are a critical factor in boosting customer retention. Manufacturing businesses are better positioned to hold onto their current clientele when they put a high priority on customer involvement and satisfaction. This is especially crucial for businesses where it may be expensive and difficult to bring in new clients. Manufacturers may lower attrition rates and raise client lifetime value by emphasizing the development of strong connections.

Positive customer interactions may result in beneficial word-of-mouth referrals in addition to brand loyalty and client retention (Cigolini et al 2019). Customers who are happy with a product or service are more inclined to refer it to others, which promotes natural market expansion. Positive word-of-mouth recommendations have a big influence on market performance in the manufacturing industry, where credibility and reputation are crucial. They draw in new clients and raise the brand's profile. Furthermore, strong customer ties may provide producers insightful knowledge about consumer preferences, market trends, and product feedback (Li et al., 2019). Manufacturers may get information and input that can guide their product development, marketing plans, and general company choices by actively interacting with their consumers. By creating goods that better satisfy the wants and preferences of the target market, this customer-centric strategy may eventually result in greater market performance.

Strong customer interactions enable manufacturers to better grasp the demands and preferences of their clientele, according to Li et al. (2019). This enables businesses to customize their offerings to fulfil those requirements, leading to superior solutions that are more likely to satisfy client demands. Furthermore, excellent customer-manufacturer interactions increase the likelihood of input from consumers, which may be used to enhance the quality of the product (Li et al., 2019).

According to Peng et al. (2021), as producers and consumers have a tight connection, the former may better comprehend the latter's requirements and preferences. This gives them the ability to alter their goods to suit those requirements, which may boost client happiness and

loyalty. Additionally, customization may assist producers in setting themselves apart from rivals and increasing the appeal of their goods to prospective buyers (Peng et al., 2021). Strong customer ties enable manufacturers to promptly collect client input and apply it to their product development procedures. This may result in more inventive items that satisfy the demands of the target market and quicker cycles for the creation of new products.

Good relationships with customers can lower costs for manufacturers in a number of ways. Firstly, satisfied customers are more likely to offer comments and ideas for improvement, which can lessen the need for expensive market research (Cigolini et al 2019). Furthermore, a producer may save money and get volume discounts from devoted clients who are more likely to buy items in quantity. Manufacturers are better equipped to recognize and control risks related to product development and manufacturing when they have solid customer connections. A firm may be able to negotiate better terms and prices with its suppliers, for instance, lowering the possibility of supply chain interruptions.

According to Cigolin et al. (2019), manufacturers may gain significant marketing benefits from having great customer connections since devoted consumers are more likely to provide favourable evaluations and testimonials, which can be utilized to advertise the brand's goods and draw in new clients.

H_3: Level of information sharing has positive relationship with product innovation in the manufacturing sector.

The degree to which one shares confidential and sensitive information with a supply chain partner is known as the level (quantity aspect) of information sharing (Li et al., 2019). Information shared might range from logistics-related details to general market and consumer data, as well as from strategic to tactical in nature (Tan et al 2022). Making undistorted and current marketing data accessible at each supply chain node has been proposed by several academics as the key to a seamless supply chain. Information may be utilized as a source of competitive advantage by using the available data and sharing it with other stakeholders in the supply chain.

Information sharing is seen by Barasa (2021) as one of the five components that make up a strong supply chain connection. Regular information sharing allows supply chain partners to function as a single unit. When they work together, they can better grasp the demands of the final consumer and react to changes in the market more quickly. Furthermore, one might argue that a crucial differentiator and source of competitive advantage for all functional components

of the supply chain is the efficient use of pertinent and timely information. The key to an integrated and efficient supply chain, according to their empirical results, is simplified material movement, which includes streamlined and clearly visible information flow across the chain includes elements including the information exchanged's correctness, timeliness, sufficiency, and credibility.

Information sharing is crucial, but how much of an effect it has on supply chain management (SCM) relies on what information is shared, when it is shared, how it is shared, and with whom (Cigolini R, et al (2019). There are several examples in the literature of the dysfunctional consequences of incomplete or delayed information as it travels through the supply chain. Information quality is impacted by supply chain partners' opportunistic conduct, conflicting interests, and informational asymmetries (Peng et al., 2021). There have been suggestions that companies would knowingly misrepresent information so that it may be seen by their rivals, suppliers, and consumers. Since information sharing is seen as a loss of power, it seems that organizations are inherently reluctant to provide more information than the barest minimum. Because of these inclinations, maintaining the caliber of the information sent becomes essential to efficient supply chain management (SCM) (Peng et al., 2021). Information must be seen by organizations as a strategic asset, and they must make sure that it flows as quickly and accurately as possible.

There are two components to information sharing: quantity and quality. Both elements have been regarded as distinct constructs in previous supply chain management research and are crucial to supply chain management techniques (Tan KC, et al., 2022). The level of information sharing, also known as the quantity aspect, describes how much confidential and essential information is shared with a supply chain partner. According to Tan KC, et al. (2022), shared information may range from being strategic to being tactical in nature, as well as from being information concerning logistical operations to broad market and consumer intelligence. Making undistorted and current marketing data accessible at each supply chain node has been proposed by several studies as the key to a seamless supply chain (Croom, et al., 2018). Information may be utilized as a source of competitive advantage by using the available data and sharing it with other stakeholders in the supply chain. Information exchange is one of the five components that Lalonde (2022) lists as defining a strong supply chain partnership.

Supply chain partners may function as a single entity if they routinely communicate information, claim Stein and Sweat (2021). When they work together, they can better comprehend the demands of the final consumer and react to changes in the market more

quickly. Furthermore, Tompkins & Ang (2022) see a crucial differentiator and competitive advantage for all functional components of the supply chain as the efficient use of pertinent and timely information. The cornerstone to an integrated and efficient supply chain, according to Childhouse & Towill's empirical results from 2023, is streamlined material flow, which includes simplifying and making readily visible all information flow across the chain.

Making undistorted and current marketing data accessible at each supply chain node has been proposed by several studies as the key to a seamless supply chain (Barasa 2021). Information may be utilized as a source of competitive advantage by using the available data and sharing it with other supply chain participants. Information sharing is one of the five elements that make up a strong supply chain relationship. Regular information sharing allows supply chain partners to function as a single unit. When they work together, they can better grasp the demands of the final consumer and react to changes in the market more quickly. Furthermore, someone views one of the main differentiators and competitive advantages of the supply chain as the efficient utilization of pertinent and timely information by all functional components. The empirical results show that the key to an integrated and successful supply chain, encompassing elements like the correctness, timeliness, sufficiency, and credibility of information exchanged, is simplified material flow, which includes streamlining and making highly visible all information flow throughout the chain (Barasa 2021).

Making undistorted and current marketing data accessible at each supply chain node has been proposed by several academics as the key to a seamless supply chain. Information may be leveraged as a source of competitive advantage by using the available data and sharing it with other partners in the supply chain (Balsmeier & Voisin, 2021). Information sharing is regarded by researchers as one of the five fundamental components of a strong supply chain relationship. Regular information sharing allows supply chain partners to function as a single unit. When they work together, they can better grasp the demands of the final consumer and react to changes in the market more quickly. Some see the efficient use of pertinent and prompt information by every functional component in the supply chain as a crucial differentiator and source of competitive advantage. According to Li et al. (2019), the key to an integrated and efficient supply chain is simplified material flow, which includes making all information flow along the chain extremely visible and streamlined.

2.6 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework created for this study is presented in this part. According to the framework, SCM procedures will directly affect how well a company performs. Three-

dimensional concepts are used to conceptualize SCM practice. The degree of information sharing, customer relationships, and strategic supplier partnerships are the three aspects. The predicted correlations between SCM practices and organizational performance are examined, and hypotheses linking these variables are established, supported by the literature. The researcher's conceptual framework is shown in the picture below.

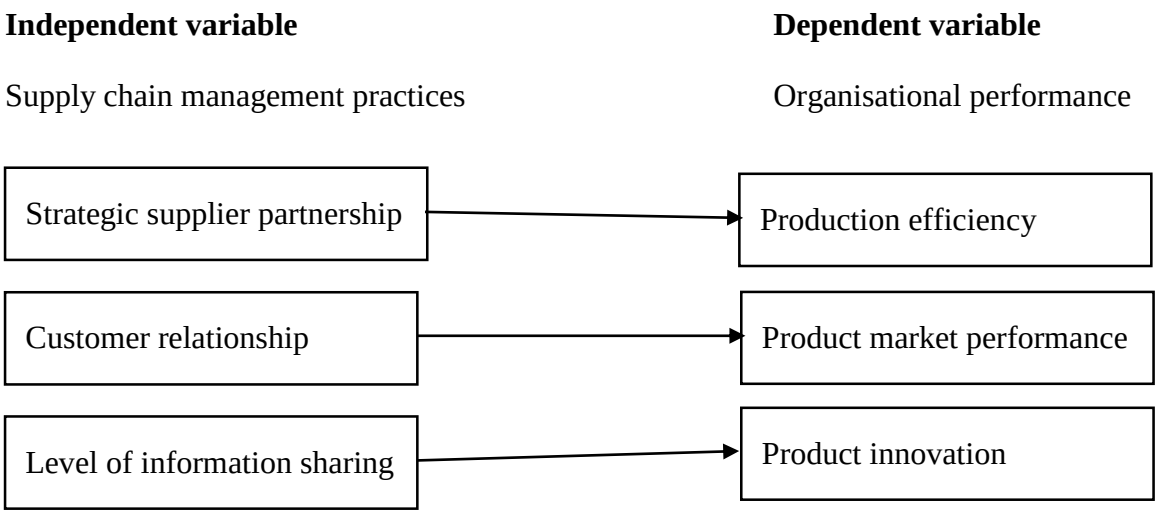

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework. Source: Researcher's own construct

2.7 Chapter summary

This chapter's goal was to highlight the theoretical, conceptual, and empirical research on supply chain management methods and organizational performance that has been done. The chapter examined the theories pertaining to the impact of supplier partnerships, customer relationships, and information sharing levels on organizational performance, as well as a review of the literature in this area. The research approach was the main topic of chapter 3 that followed.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The research design and methodology are presented in this chapter. It includes the population, the research design, the methods for gathering data, and the steps used in the analysis and presentation of the findings.

3.1 Research design

To meet the study aims, this study used a quantitative technique in conjunction with both descriptive and explanatory research designs. In order to maximize reliability and minimize bias, a descriptive research design was used to gather data on individuals, groups, and environments (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). In order to enable data collection, categorization, analysis, comparison, and interpretation in order to provide a summary report, the descriptive design was appropriate for this research (Neuman 2000). The relationship between supply chain management (SCM) techniques and organisational performance in Zimbabwe's industrial enterprises was similarly assessed using an explanatory research design. To analyze and forecast a result, an explanatory design was used to assess the correlations between many factors of interest. The choice of this approach was made with the intention of accurately capturing the traits of a certain scenario and group. Mwangangi (2016) investigated the impact of supply chain management practices on the performance of Kenya's manufacturing enterprises using both descriptive and explanatory approaches.

3.2 Target population

The term "population" refers to the complete group of people or other things to whom research results are intended to be applied. The food processing sector is one of Zimbabwe's major industrial sectors. Despite having extensive supply chain procedures and controls, its operations have been found to be fairly inefficient. Subsequently, the study has acknowledged its significance and used it as a research population in order to comprehend the impact of supply chain management practices on industrial performance. Nonetheless, the management and staff of the supply chain in Harare provided the data. The bulk of food processing companies are

located in this area, which is why it was selected (Musundikwa 2021). Researchers now have the ease of precisely gathering data by drawing a proportional sample from a large population. The six (6) subsectors of the food processing industry—fish and meat processing, grain milling, fruits and vegetables, freezing, dairy and eggs, and poultry—were the units of analysis for this research, which focused on private food processing companies.

3.3 Sampling and sampling procedures

The population of various big manufacturing enterprises does not represent a homogenous group, thus the stratified random sampling approach was used to determine the sample size. This method is often used to generate a representative sample. Creswell (2012) claims that doing thus guarantees the representation of the food processing subsectors. Mugenda & Mugenda, (2012) noted that a minimum aim of 10% is necessary when a research is working with a diverse population. Only managers, executives, or anybody else in the business with the greatest understanding of implementing SCM methods was chosen, according to this research. Since the study's focus was only on food processing companies in Harare, simple random selection was used after the population was stratified. This ensured that every business had an equal chance of being included in the sample.

3.3.1 Sample size and Sample size determination

According to Cooper & Schindler (2013), a sample is a subset of a population that is used to research the population as a whole. One of the four interrelated characteristics of a research design that might affect the identification of significant differences, relationships, or interactions, according to Peers (1996), is sample size (Creswell 2012). The sample size shouldn't be either too big or too little. It ought to be ideal. According to Kothari (2004), an ideal sample is one that satisfies the following criteria: reliability, adaptability, representativeness, and efficiency.

Although they might cost more, larger sample sizes could reduce sampling mistakes (Saunders et al., 2018). Error variance and bias in sampling may grow with small sample numbers. The sample size estimate table was created using the statistically and scientifically verified Krejcie & Morgan (1970) technique. Below are the estimation's table and computation.

$S = X^2NP\ (1-P) + d^2\ (N-1) + X^2P\ (1-P)$

S = required sample size

X^2 = the table value of chi-square for one degree of freedom at the desired confidence level N = the population size

P = the population proportion (assumed to be 200 since this would provide the maximum sample size)

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05) data.

The Krejcie and Morgan formula helps find the right sample size given a desired level of accuracy, a desired level of confidence, and an estimated proportion of the characteristic present in the population. It is believed that the Krejcie and Morgan formula is especially appropriate in situations when the populations are known. The table in figure 3.1 below illustrates the sample size of 132 for the population of 200 respondents.

Table for Determining Sample Size from a Given Population

N	*S*	*N*	*S*	*N*	*S*
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Note.—*N* is population size.
S is sample size.

Figure 3.1: Table for determining sample size from given population:

Source (Krejcie and Morgan 1979)

Using the Krejcie and Morgan (1979) table a sampling frame for this study was made and the representation is shown below.

Table 3.1 sampling frame

Subsector	**Target population**	**Sample size**
Fish And Meat Processing	35	22
Grain Milling	33	22
Fruits And Vegetables	33	22
Freezing	33	22
Dairy	33	22
Eggs And Poultry	33	22
Total	**200**	**132**

The target population for the research was 200, as shown in table 3.1 above, and the sample size based on the Krejcie and Morgan (1979) model becomes 132. A representative sample of 22 was selected from each of the food processing industry's subsectors. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2012), a 60% representation of the target population is necessary for a sample size to provide credible, trustworthy findings.

3.4 Research instruments

Questionnaires were used in the research to gather primary data for quantitative analysis. The closed-ended questions on the surveys were intended to elicit responses. A questionnaire is the best survey tool for collecting quantitative data since it is both practical and economically priced. Thus, the data for this study were gathered using structured questionnaires. Respondent data was collected using Likert scales in closed-ended questions. Table 3.2 illustrates how the questionnaire's format was developed using the Likert scale.

Table 3.2 Questionnaire structure

Question	Scale	Purpose
Demographic data	Tick	
Section A	Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree & Strongly agree	Strategic supplier partnership and production efficiency in the manufacturing sector.
Section B	Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree & Strongly agree	Customer relationships and market performance of manufacturing product
Section C	Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree & Strongly agree	Level of information sharing and product innovation in the manufacturing sector.

3.5 Data collection procedures

The investigation gathered original data. Primary data are information gathered directly from an original source and are first-hand accounts. The use of questionnaires, interviews, or observation may all be used to gather primary data. The questionnaire approach was employed in the research to gather data. The questionnaires were divided into two main sections. Part A included certain crucial instructions meant to ensure that ethical considerations were taken into account in the particular research. It included the study's title, goals, and advantages as well as the qualifications needed for participants, while part B included the research questions. Moreover, there were four portions in part B. A demographic profile of the respondents and their respective firms was generated by the questions in the first section. The second part addressed objective one, the third part addressed objective two, and the final section addressed objective three. Self-administration was the method of administration. The researcher had to meet in person to get the answers using this form of delivery and collecting approach, or they might be dropped off and picked up later; it all relied on what the researcher thought would be most convenient for both sides. In addition, telephone follow-up and explanation were given to make sure the respondents understood the questions properly and to remind them to turn in their completed surveys by the deadline for feedback.

3.6 Validity and reliability

According to Cooper & Schindler (2013), reliability is the degree of consistency shown by a variable or group of variables with respect to the desired outcome being measured. Utilizing reliability analysis, one may assess a questionnaire's consistency. While there are other reliability test techniques, Cronbach's alpha is thought to be appropriate for this particular investigation. The most used reliability metric is Cronbach's alpha. The purpose of a pilot survey is to remove some of the potential complexities that may arise during the final survey (Apopa, 2018). In order to evaluate the validity and reliability of the data collecting tools used in this research, a pilot survey was carried out. A pilot sample should be between 1% and 10% of the sample size, (Cooper & Schindler 2013). Consequently, during the pilot research, five dairy processing companies, or 3% of the total sample size, were included; however, they were excluded from the final sample for the actual data collection.

Three elements make to the validity of a research instrument, according to Mugenda & Mugenda (2012). The first is construct validity, which addresses how well the questions match the answers the researcher expected. By organizing the questionnaire in accordance with the particular aims, this validity was guaranteed. The capacity of an instrument to collect the data necessary for the specified analytical approaches is known as content validity, which is the second kind of validity (Okongwu, Brulhart & Moncef (2020). Closed-ended questions prevented irrelevant responses, ensuring this. The researcher sent the supervisor a draft of the questionnaire to examine in order to establish internal validity, and the supervisor's suggestions were included into the final version.

3.7 Data analysis and presentation

Examining the information gathered from the survey and developing conclusions and deductions are all part of data analysis. The completeness and consistency of the quantitative data were verified prior to analysis. The gathered data was sorted to ensure that it was organized, and it was also modified to remove mistakes in order to identify any issues that could have arisen as a result of using the questionnaire. Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to examine the quantitative data in the present investigation via the application of Descriptive and Inferential statistics. In order to identify patterns and interdependencies across variables, the data was initially evaluated using descriptive statistics, including means, frequencies, standard deviation, and percentages. Furthermore, statistical inference: Prior to the regression analysis, Pearson's correlation test was run. The linkages and

strength of the correlations between the independent and dependent variables were tested using correlation tests. In order to shed light on the connections between the variables, regression analysis was used. The relationship between dependent and independent variables is measured by regression (Sigmund, Babine, Car, & Griffin, 2010). The frequency, mean, percentages, and standard deviation are examples of descriptive statistics. Charts and comparison tables with percentages and frequencies were used to display the data. To evaluate the study hypotheses, inferential statistics were calculated and used to assess the impact of supply chain management practices on manufacturing businesses' performance in Zimbabwe, namely using correlation and regression analysis. To ascertain the relative importance of each of the three predictor factors in relation to the antecedent variables, a multiple regression model was also modified.

3.6 Chapter summary

The research methodologies used in this paper were discussed in detail in this chapter. Explanatory and descriptive research designs were chosen due to their compatibility with the quantitative orientation, employment, time constraints, which forced the researcher to use questionnaires as research instruments, and a lack of funding to administer other instruments that could have been used. A sample of 132 respondents who were chosen using a stratified random sampling approach were given questionnaires to complete in order to obtain primary data. The presentation of data, analysis, and conclusion interpretation were covered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

The research's data analysis and findings interpretation are covered in this chapter. The quantitative data obtained was tabulated and analyzed using descriptive and inferential analysis statistical methods in order to provide the study results on the influence of supply chain management practices on organisational performance.

4.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics is a branch of statistics that deals with summarizing and describing the main features of a dataset (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). It involves calculating various measures of central tendency such as mean, median, and mode and variability such as range, variance, and standard deviation) to provide a snapshot of the data. Descriptive statistics also includes visualization tools like bar charts and scatter plots to help understand the distribution of the data. In this study the researcher used descriptive frequencies to analyse data and major findings were presented in the form of tables.

4.1 Response rate

The percentage that indicates how many participants answered the surveys compared to the total number of respondents who were expected to do so is called the response rate. Response bias is based on response rate; the greater the rate, the less bias there is. It also indicates how reliable the replies are and how much confidence should be placed in the outcomes. Table 4.1 presents the study's response rate.

Table 4.1: Response rate

Description	Questionnaires Distributed	Questionnaires returned	Response rate
Management	12	12	100%
General employees	120	118	98.33%
Total	132	130	98.48%

According to the data in Table 4.1, of the 120 questionnaires given to general workers, 118 were successfully completed and returned to the researcher, and all 12 of the questionnaires given to management of food processing companies were returned and answered. As a consequence, the study's overall response rate was 98.48%, which was satisfactory for findings that accurately represented the sample. Mugenda & Mugenda, (2012) states that a response rate of 50% is deemed appropriate, 60% and higher is excellent, and 70% and above is very good. The response rate for this study was large enough to reflect the intended sample across different levels of authority, taking into account the author's postulations. As a result, the researcher continued to examine the data.

4.3 Demographic analysis

The profile of the respondents' in the food processing sector are summarized in to six parts in this survey. The first one is about the respondents' gender, age groups, employment status educational qualification, years of service and designation in their organisations.

4.3.1 Gender of respondents

The gender profile of respondents who took part of the study is shown in this part. Table 4.2 shows the respondents' distribution by gender.

Table 4.2: Respondents' gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Males	94	72.3	72.3	72.3
	Females	36	27.7	27.7	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

Based on figures in table 4.2 above, 72.3% were male respondents and 27.7% were females. Males dominated the study with a higher frequency than females. Consequently, these figures support Newsday's (2020) claim that men predominate in Zimbabwe's workforce. According to the researcher, the distribution accurately represents the perspectives of respondents of both genders.

4.3.2 Respondents' age groups

The age groupings of respondents who took part of the study is shown in this part. Table 4.3 shows the respondents' distribution by age groups.

Table 4.3: Age groups of respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-30 years	13	10.0	10.0	10.0
	31-40 years	84	64.6	64.6	74.6
	41-50 years	21	16.2	16.2	90.8
	51+ years	12	9.2	9.2	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

As shown in table 4.3 above different age groups responded to the study. 10% of respondents were between 18-30 years, 64.6% were between 31-40 years, 16.2% were between 41-50 years and 9.2% were 51 years of age and above. The age range of 31 to 40 years old is thus shown to be the most dominating group in Zimbabwe's food processing sector. More than three years have passed since these respondents began working for their organizations. However, the research's findings indicate that individuals of all ages were equally included, meaning that age did not bias the findings.

4.3.3 Employment level of respondents

The respondents' work status within their respective organizations is a significant contributing element to the demographic variable of the survey. There are several job levels in the food processing sector, ranging from general staff to chief officer, which is the highest ranked position. Therefore, the research aimed to collect answers from a range of job levels. The employment level of study participants is shown in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: Employment level of respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	General employees	118	90.8	90.8	90.8
	Management	12	9.2	9.2	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

As depicted in table 4.4 above 90.8% of respondents were general employees and 9.2% were management. According to the results, general workers were the most prevalent category in terms of employment status. This suggests that the data collected from them is valid and relevant for the research because of their extensive engagement in the company's logistics and supply chain activities.

4.3.4 Respondents' educational levels

For the responders to be able to understand problems with supply chain processes and resource use, education is crucial. This section showed and discussed the educational backgrounds of the research participants. The education levels of study participants are shown in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5: Educational levels of respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Primary level	15	11.5	11.5	11.5
	Ordinary level	26	20.0	20.0	31.5
	Tertiary level	89	68.5	68.5	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

Based on research findings presented in table 4.5 above 11.5% of the respondents have primary level as their high level of educational achievement, 20% have ordinary level and 68.5% have tertiary level. Findings from the study revealed that respondents with tertiary education dominated the study. This result was consistent with Katz's (1992) observation that people with more education have greater success because they possess more information and contemporary

management abilities, which heighten their awareness of the realities of the corporate world. This suggests that they have the ability to think critically about problems and provide authoritative answers.

4.3.5 Respondents' years of service in food manufacturing sector

For the survey to be implemented successfully, it was also crucial to take notice of the respondents' degree of experience in the study's field. As a result, the years that respondents have worked in the food manufacturing industry are covered in this section.

Table 4.6: Respondents' years of experience in food processing sector

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-5 years	13	10.0	10.0	10.0
	6-10 years	45	34.6	34.6	44.6
	11-15 years	61	46.9	46.9	91.5
	16+ years	11	8.5	8.5	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

As shown in table 4.6 above 10% of the respondents have 0-5 years of experience in the food processing sector, 34.6% have 6-10 years of experience, 46.9% have 11-15 years of experience and 8.5% have more than 15 years of experience in the food processing sector in Zimbabwe. We may thus draw the conclusion that they are aware of supply chain procedures since their answer was regarded as reliable.

4.3.6 Respondents' designation

Working departments of respondents who took part of the study was dealt with in this section.

Table 4.7: Designation of respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Procurement department	65	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Marketing department	43	33.1	33.1	83.1
	Production department	22	16.9	16.9	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

As shown in table 4.7 above 505 of respondents were in the procurement department, 33.1% were in the marketing department and 16.9% were in the production department. The most dominant group in terms of designation were respondents from the procurement department. This suggests that the replies gathered from them get comprehensive and detailed data for the questionnaire. As a result, the conclusions may be applied generally to the sector.

4.4 Reliability test

The Cronbach alpha reliability test was employed by the researcher to assess the data's reliability prior to utilizing it to evaluate the association between variables. It gauges how strongly item answers collected simultaneously correlate with one another. According to Field (2019), the generally recognized cut-off point for social science is that an item set must have an alpha of 0.70 or more in order to be classified as a scale.

Table 4.8: Reliability tests for the questionnaire

Scale	Number of items	Cronbach’s alpha
Strategic supplier partnership	5	0.873
Customer relationship	5	0.801
Level of information sharing	5	0.847

The computed coefficient Cronbach's alpha for this research was determined to be larger than 0.7 for all variables, as can be shown from SPSS-generated data on Table 4.8. This confirms the variables to be internally consistent for each variable related to supply chain management

practices. These results verify that the measures have a high level of internal consistency and stability.

4.5 The impact of strategic supplier partnership on production efficiency in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe

In order to assess impact of strategic supplier partnership on production efficiency in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe respondents were requested to respond for five questions on the questionnaire in line with the research objective. Research findings on this objective were first presented using descriptive statistics, followed by Pearson's correlation tests.

Table 4.9: Respondents responses on the impact of strategic supplier partnership on production efficiency in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe

	Percentages frequency				
	SD	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**
Including key suppliers in planning and goal setting activities promotes smooth operations in production	12.5%	12.5%	15%	57.5%	2.5%
Considering quality of raw materials as supplier selection criteria enhances production efficiency.	2.5%	5%	2.5 %	25%	65%
Actively involving key suppliers in new product development process ensures reliable supplies in production.	7.5%	7.5%	5%	57.5%	22.5%
Continuous improvement programs that include key suppliers helps in mitigating supply challenges of raw materials.	5%	2.5%	15%	10%	67.5%
Regularly solving problems jointly with suppliers promote quality assurance of raw materials.	10%	5%	0	65%	20%

Based on the output data which is shown on the table 4.9 on the impact of strategic supplier partnership on production efficiency in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe. Majority of respondents (57.5%) agreed that, including key suppliers in planning and goal setting activities promotes smooth operations in production. Majority of respondents (65%) further strongly

agreed that, considering quality of raw materials as supplier selection criteria enhances production efficiency. Majority (57.25%) agreed that, actively involving key suppliers in new product development process ensures reliable supplies in production. Also majority 67.5% strongly agreed that, continuous improvement programs that include key suppliers helps in mitigating supply challenges of raw materials. Majority of respondents (65%) agreed that, regularly solving problems jointly with suppliers promote quality assurance of raw materials. From the information presented it is revealed that majority of respondents there is a positive impact of strategic supplier partnership on production efficiency in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe. Findings were further complimented by output data from Pearson's correlation tests shown below.

Table 4.10: Correlation between Strategic supplier partnership and Production efficiency

		Strategic supplier partnership	Production efficiency
Strategic supplier partnership	Pearson Correlation	1	.871**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	130	130
Production efficiency	Pearson Correlation	.871**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	130	130
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The results indicate that Pearson correlation coefficient between strategic supplier partnership and production efficiency is 0.871. The 2-tailed sig value for Pearson's correlation test is 0.000, which means it is significant at 95% confidence level. Hence, this shows that there is a strong and positive correlation between the two variables. Findings are therefore in line with responses from open ended questions which supports a positive relationship between strategic supplier partnership and production efficiency for instance respondent on questionnaire 7 quoted claiming that,

"Including key suppliers in planning and goal setting activities promotes smooth operations in production as well as considering quality of raw materials as supplier selection criteria enhances production efficiency in our company as it reduces issues of poor quality or sub-standard raw materials sourced."

Findings revealed a positive relationship between strategic supplier partnership and production efficiency. This is consistent with the findings of Gunasekaran, Patel, and Tirtiroglu (2021), who point out that strategic alliances allow businesses to collaborate more successfully with a select group of significant suppliers who are prepared to share responsibility for the products' success. According to Moberg et al. (2022), suppliers that get involved early in the product-design process may assist choose the best components and technologies, provide more cost-effective design options, and aid in design evaluation. Organizations that are strategically linked may collaborate closely and cut down on unnecessary time and effort. Peng et al. (2021) observe that a cutting edge supply chain may be significantly impacted by an efficient supplier alliance. A similar point of view is expressed by Li et al. (2019), who assert that a leading edge supply chain may depend critically on an efficient supplier collaboration.

4.6 The influence of customer relationship on market performance of manufacturing products in Zimbabwe

In order to assess the influence of customer relationship on market performance of manufacturing products in Zimbabwe respondents were requested to respond for five questions on the questionnaire in line with the research objective. Research findings on this objective were first presented using descriptive statistics, followed by Pearson's correlation tests. Content analysis was done on open ended questions and results were presented in verbatim quotes.

Table 4.11: Respondents responses on the influence of customer relationship on market performance of manufacturing products in Zimbabwe

	Percentages frequency				
	SD	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**
Frequent interaction with customers to set reliability, responsiveness and other standards promotes sales	18.7%	3.8%	10.4%	59.7%	7.4%
Frequent measuring and evaluating customer satisfaction enhances production quality of products	11.2%	11.0%	8.7%	66.0%	5.8%

Facilitating customer's ability to seek assistance from us allows good relations and market performance.	13.4%	10.0%	4.6%	60.1%	13.9%
Long term contract agreement with reliable customers guarantee sales	23.2%	5.9%	12.9%	45.0%	2.6%
Frequently determining future customer expectations allows us to continue improving our product quality.	10.2%	10.9%	9.9%	58.0%	0.6%

Based on the output data which is shown on the table 4.10 on the influence of customer relationship on market performance of manufacturing products in Zimbabwe majority (59.7%) agreed that, frequent interaction with customers to set reliability, responsiveness and other standards promotes sales, majority (66.0%) also agreed that, frequent measuring and evaluating customer satisfaction enhances production quality of products. Majority of respondents (60.1%) agreed that, facilitating customer's ability to seek assistance from them allows good relations and market performance and (45.0%) agreed that, long term contract agreement with reliable customers guarantee sales. Majority of respondents agreed that, frequently determining future customer expectations allows them to continue improving our product quality. Findings revealed that majority claims that, customer relationship has a positive impact on market performance of manufacturing products in Zimbabwe. Findings were further tested for relationship using Pearson's correlation tests and output is shown below.

Table 4.12: Correlation between customer relationship and market performance of manufacturing products

		Customer relationship	Market performance of manufacturing products
Customer relationship	Pearson Correlation	1	.721**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	130	130
Market performance of manufacturing products	Pearson Correlation	.721**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	130	130
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The results indicate that Pearson correlation coefficient between customer relationship and market performance of manufacturing products is 0.721. The 2-tailed sig value for Pearson's correlation test is 0.001, which means it is significant at 95% confidence level. Hence, this shows that there is a strong and positive correlation between customer relationship and market performance of manufacturing products. Findings are therefore in line with responses from open ended questions which supports a positive relationship between customer relationship and market performance of manufacturing products for instance respondent on questionnaire 121 quoted claims that,

"Facilitating customer's ability to seek assistance from our business allows good relations and market performance of our products. Also long term contract agreement with reliable customers guarantee sales and frequently determining future customer expectations allows us to continue improving our product quality."

Therefore findings revealed that, customer relationship has a positive impact on market performance of manufacturing products. This is consistent with Okongwu, Brulhart & Moncef (2020), who notes that customer relationship management is a crucial part of supply chain management (SCM) procedures due to their intrinsic obstacles to competition, which provide them a durable advantage. An era in which customer relationship management is increasingly essential for company survival is being ushered in by the advent of mass customization and customized service. In addition, Moberg et al. (2002) give evidence to support the claim that a company that has strong customer relationships may stand out from the competition, maintain customer loyalty, and significantly increase the value it offers to clients.

4.7 The effect of level of information sharing on product innovation in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe

In order to assess the effect of level of information sharing on product innovation in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe respondents were requested to respond for five questions on the questionnaire in line with the research objective. Research findings on this objective were first presented using descriptive statistics, followed by Pearson's correlation tests. Content analysis was done on open ended questions and results were presented in verbatim quotes.

Table 4.13: Respondents responses on effect of level of information sharing on product innovation in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe

	Percentages frequency				
	SD	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**
Informing supply chain partners in advance of changing needs facilitates product improvement.	5.4%	20.8%	9.2%	6.9%	57.7%
Exchanging information that help establishment of business planning helps in new product development	5.4%	9.2%	20.8%	13.8%	50.8%
Supply chain partners keeping us fully informed about issues affecting our business helps us in problem solving in production	10.2%	13.8%	18.5%	52.1%	5.4%
We and our trading partners keeping each other informed about events or changes that may affect the other partners makes it possible for us to anticipate for future challenges in production	12.3%	16.2%	4.6%	61.5%	5.4%
Sharing business knowledge of core business processes with trading partners helps in product innovation ideas.	5.4%	11.5%	16.2%	50%	16.9%

Based on the output data which is shown on the table 4.13 on effect of level of information sharing on product innovation in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe majority (57.7%) strongly agreed that, informing supply chain partners in advance of changing needs facilitates product improvement. Majority (50.8%) strongly agreed as well that, exchanging information that help establishment of business planning helps in new product development. Majority of respondents agreed that, supply chain partners keeping them fully informed about issues affecting their business helps them in problem solving in production. On statement stating that, manufacturers and their trading partners keeping each other informed about events or changes that may affect the other partners making it possible for them to anticipate for future challenges in production majority (61.5%) agreed and (50%) agreed as well that, sharing business knowledge of core business processes with trading partners helps in product innovation ideas. These findings clearly shows that majority believes that, level of information sharing has a positive effect on product innovation in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe. To further asses the findings Pearson's correlation tests were done.

Table 4.12: Correlation between level of information sharing and product innovation

		Level of information sharing	Product innovation
Level Of Information Sharing	Pearson Correlation	1	.811**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	130	130
Product Innovation	Pearson Correlation	.811**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	130	130
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The results indicate that Pearson correlation coefficient between level of information sharing and product innovation is 0.811. The 2-tailed sig value for Pearson's correlation test is 0.000, which means it is significant at 95% confidence level. Hence, this shows that there is a strong and positive correlation between level of information sharing and product innovation. Findings are therefore in line with responses from open ended questions which supports a positive relationship between level of information sharing and product innovation for instance respondent on questionnaire 121 quoted claims that,

"Informing supply chain partners in advance of changing needs facilitates product improvement and exchanging information that help establishment of business planning helps in new product development. Sharing our business knowledge of core business processes with trading partners helps in product innovation ideas."

Findings from the study reveals that, there is a positive relationship between level of information sharing and product innovation. This is consistent with Cigolini, et al. (2019), who point out that one of the five components of a strong supply chain partnership is information exchange. Regular information sharing allows supply chain partners to function as a single unit. When they work together, they can better grasp the demands of the final consumer and react to changes in the market more quickly. According to Croom et al. (2018), information may be leveraged as a source of competitive advantage by using the data that is accessible and sharing it with other partners throughout the supply chain. Similar in their viewpoint, Stein and Sweat (2021) contend that a crucial differentiator and competitive advantage for all functional components of the supply chain is the efficient utilization of pertinent and timely information.

4.8 Regression analysis

In order to make predictions about the variables and determine the cause and effect link between supply chain management practices and the food processing sector in Zimbabwe, the researcher also carried out regression analysis. The study used regression analysis to ascertain and project the extent of the independent variables' impact on the organisational performance of food processors, and to quantify the unidirectional association between the two.

Table 4.13: Combined Statistics on multiple regression analysis of study variables

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Regression coefficient	R square	Adjusted R Square	Standardized coefficient (Beta)	Sig. value
Strategic supplier partnership	Production efficiency	.798	.345	.501	0.726	.003
Customer relationship	Market performance of manufacturing products	.721	.471	.531	0.789	.004
Level of information sharing	Product innovation	.776	.241	.302	0.867	.001

Source: SPSS version 26

Production efficiency and strategic supplier partnerships have a strong and positive relationship, as table 4.13 above demonstrates. The results show that a p value of 0.003 and an R2 value of 0.345 explain the relationship. The beta coefficient (= 0.798) indicates that a just one-unit increase in strategic supplier partnerships would result in a 44.5% gain in production efficiency. Consequently, H1 may be agreed upon and the null hypothesis refuted. The regression results for this goal are in line with the findings of Gunasekaran, Patel, & Tirtiroglu (2021), who point out that organizations can collaborate more successfully with a small number of key suppliers who are prepared to share accountability for the products' success when they form strategic partnerships with them. According to Moberg et al. (2022), suppliers that get involved early in the product-design process may assist choose the best components and technologies, provide more cost-effective design options, and aid in design evaluation. Organizations that are strategically linked may collaborate closely and cut down on unnecessary time and effort. Peng et al. (2021) observe that a cutting edge supply chain may be significantly impacted by an efficient supplier alliance. A similar point of view is expressed

by Li et al. (2019), who assert that a leading edge supply chain may depend critically on an efficient supplier collaboration.

The results of the regression analysis for the second goal demonstrate a significant and positive relationship between the market success of manufacturing items and the customer relationship. A p-value of 0.004, an R2 value of 0.471, and a beta coefficient of = 0.721 all contribute to the explanation of the findings. This indicates that a 47.1% increase in the market performance of manufacturing items will come from better customer relationships. Therefore, it is advised that the null hypothesis be refuted and the H2 be adopted. These findings validate the claim stated by Okongwu, Brulhart & Moncef (2020) that customer relationship management is a crucial part of supply chain management (SCM) techniques because of its intrinsic obstacles to competition, which provide it a durable advantage. An era in which customer relationship management is increasingly essential for company survival is being ushered in by the advent of mass customisation and customized service. In addition, Moberg CR et al. (2002) give evidence to support the claim that a company that has strong customer relationships may stand out from the competition, maintain customer loyalty, and significantly increase the value it offers to clients.

Regression findings for the third aim show a positive relationship between product innovation and the level of information sharing. A beta coefficient (= 0.776), a p-value of 0.001, and an R2 value of 0.241 all contribute to the explanation of the data. This implies that a 24.1% gain in product innovation will result from a one-unit increase in knowledge exchange. Therefore, it is recommended to support H3 and reject the null hypothesis. These findings corroborate the claim stated by Cigolini R, et al. (2019), who point out that one of the five fundamental elements of a strong supply chain relationship is information exchange. Regular information sharing allows supply chain partners to function as a single unit. When they work together, they can better grasp the demands of the final consumer and react to changes in the market more quickly. According to Croom et al. (2018), information may be leveraged as a source of competitive advantage by using the data that is accessible and sharing it with other partners throughout the supply chain. Similar in their viewpoint, Stein and Sweat (2021) contend that a crucial differentiator and competitive advantage for all functional components of the supply chain is the efficient utilization of pertinent and timely information.

4.9 Chapter summary

This study's primary goal was to evaluate how supply chain management practices affected the organisational performance of a Zimbabwean food processing company. This chapter reported and analyzed the study's main findings. The findings demonstrated that the supply chain procedures (strategic supplier rate, customer rate, level information sharing) had a substantial influence on the organisational performance of the food processing sector in Zimbabwe. The analysis was summarized in chapter five, which also included findings and suggestions for businesses and policy makers.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

Supply chain management practice in Zimbabwe is still in the infancy stages, hence the Zimbabwean food processing industry is faced with problems which impede the firms' determination to grow fast and compete in the global market, such as insufficient working premises and inadequate link with other sectors. This study was intended to answer some questions related to SCM practices in Zimbabwean food processing firms and their impact on organizational performance. Explanatory and descriptive research designs were used to collect data from a sample of 132 respondents in the food processing industry that is, fish and meat processing, grain milling, fruits and vegetables, freezing, dairy and eggs and poultry located in Harare. Semi structured questionnaires were used as research instruments to collect data from respondents applying stratified sampling method and major findings are summarised below

In line with ***assessing the impact of strategic supplier partnership on production efficiency in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe*** findings from descriptive statistics revealed that majority of respondents believes that, strategic supplier partnership has a positive impact on production efficiency in the manufacturing sector as they were in agreement with five of the questions on the questionnaire. Correlations output between strategic supplier partnership and production efficiency showed a strong positive coefficient (0.871) implying a strong positive relationship between the variables. Regression output further confirmed a positive relationship between strategic supplier partnership and production efficiency with a beta coefficient (= 0.798).

In line with ***analysing the influence of customer relationship on market performance of manufacturing products in Zimbabwe*** findings from descriptive statistics revealed that majority of respondents believes that, customer relationship has a positive impact on market performance of manufacturing products as they were in agreement with five of the questions on the questionnaire. Pearson's correlations output between customer relationship and market performance of manufacturing products showed a strong positive coefficient (0.721) implying a strong positive relationship between the variables. Regression output further confirmed a

strong positive relationship between customer relationship and market performance of manufacturing products with a beta coefficient (= 0.721).

In line with ***evaluating the effect of level of information sharing on product innovation in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe*** findings from descriptive findings from descriptive statistics revealed that majority of respondents believes that, level of information sharing has a positive impact on product innovation in the manufacturing sector as they were in agreement with five of the questions on the questionnaire. Correlations output between strategic supplier partnership and production efficiency showed a strong positive coefficient (0.811) implying a strong positive relationship between the variables. Regression output further confirmed a positive relationship between level of information sharing and product innovation with a beta coefficient (= 0.776).

5.2 Conclusions

After assessing the impact of supply chain management practices on organisational performance in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe findings were discovered and major conclusions are made based on the research findings below.

In line with ***assessing the impact of strategic supplier partnership on production efficiency in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe*** based on the research findings the study concludes that strategic supplier partnership has a positive contribution on production efficiency in the manufacturing sector. The study concludes that, involving key suppliers in planning and goal setting activities promotes smooth operations in production and ensures reliable supplies in production. Continuous improvement programs that include key suppliers helps in mitigating supply challenges of raw materials needed in production.

In line with ***analysing the influence of customer relationship on market performance of manufacturing products in Zimbabwe*** based on research findings the study concludes that, customer relationship has a positive contribution on market performance of manufacturing products in Zimbabwe. The study concludes that, facilitating customer's ability to seek assistance from firms allows good relations and market performance of manufacturers' products and guarantee sales. Frequently determining future customer expectations allows food processing firms to continue improving product quality.

In line with ***evaluating the effect of level of information sharing on product innovation in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe*** based on research findings it was concluded that, level of information sharing has a positive contribution towards product innovation. The study concludes that, informing supply chain partners in advance of changing needs facilitates product improvement and helps in new product development. Sharing business knowledge of core business processes with trading partners helps in product innovation ideas.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the study's results, it was determined that SCM methods must be implemented in Zimbabwean food processing companies if they are to improve the overall performance of their organizations. As a result, the researcher offered the following suggestions, which are readily implementable by all food manufacturing companies in Zimbabwe:

- Senior and intermediate managers must get training beforehand in order to increase the likelihood that they will see the benefits of implementing SCM techniques and show a commitment to doing so. In addition, it is imperative to offer training programs to other staff members to enable them to comprehend the SCM concept in greater detail and subsequently implement it appropriately. This is because a lack of understanding of the concept may impede their ability to fully participate in the implementation of SCM practices in their respective companies.
- To boost product innovations, food processing companies should further improve the quality of information sharing performance by improving the timeliness, correctness, completeness, sufficiency, and reliability of the information communicated.
- It is advised that managers of food processing companies improve the performance of their organizations by creating and enhancing high-quality information sharing. A seamless supply chain depends on the importance of quality.
- Companies that produce food should help their staff develop the skills and abilities necessary to adapt to the ever-changing competitive landscape. Using the shared information from several partners and collaborating with various departments inside an organization as well as their supply chain partners call for new skills that are necessary for the implementation of supply chain management (SCM).

- Food processing companies should cultivate mutual respect and trust in order to fortify their ties with trade partners, especially suppliers and distributors. This will encourage strong customer relationship management.
- It is recommended that food processing companies in Zimbabwe evaluate the practices mentioned in this study both internally and throughout the supply chain, ranging from upstream suppliers to downstream customers. This will allow the companies to gauge the practices' significance and impact on their day-to-day operations and improve organizational performance.

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APPENDIX I

Questionnaire for non-management and management employees

BINDURA UNIVESITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF COMMERCE

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent

I am …….., student number …… a Master's student at Bindura University of Science Education in partial fulfilment of the Master of Science Degree in Purchasing and Supply Logistics, I am conducting a study on **supply chain management practices on organisational performance in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe.** You are being invited to participate in this research study by completing this form as truthful as you can. Put a tick or an X in the appropriate space or box. Any information attained in connection with this study will remain confidential. **DO NOT WRITE** your name or anything that identifies you in any way.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. **Gender**

   Male ☐ Female ☐

2. **Age group** *(years)*

   18-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 50+ ☐

3. **Please indicate your nature of employment**

   Management ☐ General Employee ☐

4. **Length of Service**

   0-5 years ☐ 6-10 years ☐ 11-15 years ☐ 16years and above ☐

5. **Please indicate your highest level of academic qualification**

   Primary ☐

   Secondary ☐

   Tertiary ☐

6. **Please state your department**

Section B

(Please make use the scale provided to give responses for the questions that follows in tables below.)

1 - Strongly disagree **2** - disagree **3** - Neutral **4** - Agree **5** - Strongly agree

	Strategic supplier partnership and production efficiency in the manufacturing sector	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
7	Including key suppliers in planning and goal setting activities promotes smooth operations in production					
8	Considering quality of raw materials as supplier selection criteria enhances production efficiency.					
9	Actively involving key suppliers in new product development process ensures reliable supplies in production.					
10	Continuous improvement programs that include key suppliers helps in mitigating supply challenges of raw materials.					
11	Regularly solving problems jointly with suppliers promote quality assurance of raw materials.					

	Customer relationships and market performance of manufacturing product	1	2	3	4	5
12	Frequent interaction with customers to set reliability, responsiveness and other standards promotes sales					
13	Frequent measuring and evaluating customer satisfaction enhances production quality of products					
14	Facilitating customer's ability to seek assistance from us allows good relations and market performance.					
15	Long term contract agreement with reliable customers guarantee sales					
16	Frequently determining future customer expectations allows us to continue improving our product quality.					

	Level of information sharing and product innovation in the manufacturing sector	1	2	3	4	5
17	Informing supply chain partners in advance of changing needs facilitates product improvement.					
18	Exchanging information that help establishment of business planning helps in new product development					
19	Supply chain partners keeping us fully informed about issues affecting our business helps us in problem solving in production					
20	We and our trading partners keeping each other informed about events or changes that may affect the other partners makes it possible for us to anticipate for future challenges in production					
21	Sharing business knowledge of core business processes with trading partners helps in product innovation ideas.					

SECTION C

22. In your opinion what do you think is the impact of strategic supplier partnership on production efficiency in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe

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23. Tell us in your opinion what customer relationship does on market performance of manufacturing products in Zimbabwe

…….....

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24. In your opinion what impact do you think level of information sharing have on product innovation in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe

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The end, thank you for participating.