

# Innovations

## Practices of Marketing strategy and Supply chain management practices of the textile Manufacturing industry in the case of selected Industrial Parks, Ethiopia

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### Abstract

*This article presents the findings of a qualitative study on the existing practices of the marketing strategy and supply chain management practices of the textile manufacturing industry in the case of selected industrial parks, in Ethiopia. the study employed depth interviews with industrial parks directors, company managers, and customs clearing officers. the study specifically, focused on the marketing strategy and supply chain management practices of textile Manufacturing companies, in selected industrial parks, in Ethiopia. The finding of the study disclosed that the emphasis given to Marketing strategy is very less. Consequently, the market segmentation of the companies was ignoring the domestic Market. according to the study, Among the 4Ps, the companies are using the promotional strategy to a less extent. Furthermore, the study disclosed that the absence of raw materials from the local market and High transport costs are found to be critical challenges in the practices of Supply Chain Management. especially, among the products that are produced in textile manufacturing industries, nylon is the most popular product. But, the finding of the study revealed that, in Ethiopia, there are raw materials that are agreed to produce nylon. According to the interviewees, nylon is produced from the raw material called flaxen and Ethiopia has a very conducive environment for the production of flaxen. On the contrary flaxen is imported from another country at Hight prices. Finally, the study recommends that the company should give more emphasis to marketing strategy. Especially, it is better if the market segmentation strategy of the textile manufacturing companies can consider the domestic market. lastly, the study recommends that Ethiopia should focus on the production of flaxen raw materials to reduce the import cost of raw materials.*

**Key words:** 1.Marketing strategy, 2.Supply chain management, 3.flaxen

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## Introduction

There are numerous Arguments about marketing strategy in the literature and such arguments reflect different perspectives (Nashwan Mohammed, 2015). According to Muhammad (2019) Marketing strategy is a plan set by a company to differentiate itself from its competitors by using its' strength to improve customer satisfaction withits product or services. Moreover, according to Budi & Aditya (2013) Marketing strategy consist of the analysis, strategy development, and implementation of activities in developing a vision about the markets of interest to the organization, selecting market target strategies, setting objectives, developing, implementing, and managing the marketing program positioning strategies to meet the value requirements of the customers in each market target.

Furthermore, the research conducted by Malshe and Sohi (2014) disclosed that the Successful implementation of a marketing strategy depends upon addressing 4ps. These include: what a company is going to produce, how much it will charge, how it is going to deliver its products or services to the customer; and how it is going to tell its customers about its products and services. This is traditionally known as the 4ps. This strategy, therefore, combines product development, promotion, distribution, pricing, relationship management, and other elements; it identifies the firm's marketing goals; it explains how they will be achieved; it determines the choice of target market segments, positioning, marketing mix, and allocation of resources. (Vaillant, 2015)

On the other hand, Supply Chain Management practices is aareet of activities undertaken in an organization to promote effective management of its supply chain and this effective management of its supply chain is achieved by using the important components of Supply chain managements practices includes: inventory management, supply, material management issues, operations, information technology (IT) and customer service (Ragu Nathan et al., 2006; Ebrahim& Mahmoud, 2014). Additionally, the studies conducted by Charles et al. (2014) Suggest that effective Supply chain Management practices have a direct impact on the overall financial and marketing performance of the firms. It is expected to increase firms market share, and return on investment and improve overall competitive positions.

For instance, Froehlich & Charles (2014) asserted that the aim of every supply chain management is to minimize system-wide costs, while satisfying customer service level requirements and companies with broader supply chain integrations with suppliers and customers showed the largest performance improvement in business achievements. Therefore, Successful supply chain management practices requires effective communication, supply chain visibility, event management capability and performance metrics. It also requires coordination of activities and information sharing among supply chain partners at three decision levels, namely strategic, planning, operating levels (Habib, 2017).

Beside to the aforementioned concepts, Scozzen.G, (2013) stated that both Supply chain management practices and Marketing Strategy are viewed as the two major Functioning areas in providing superior customer service in the value chain. Accordingly, better coordination between Supply chain Management practices and marketing strategy could obtain the competitive

advantage in new ways and a good Firm Performance can be achieved from an integrated approach between Supply chain management practices and Marketing Strategy (Deshmukh. A. 2016).

On the other hand, the boundary between marketing and supply chain management (SCM) has received increased attention from scholars. Accordingly, both Marketing Strategy and Supply chain management practices are positively related with each other and has a positive impact on the firm performances (Tippmann et al., 2014; Tate W. et al., 2015). Moreover, according to Gligor et al., (2016) integrating the Marketing Strategy with supply chain management practices leads to the alignment of organizational visions and goals; alignment of organizational plan, objectives and goals; leads for effective implementation of organizational activities, cross-functional awareness, adopting a holistic approach to value creation and delivery between marketing strategy and Supply chain management Practices.

However, to the extent of researcher knowledge, no study was conducted to Assess the existing practices of Marketing Strategy and Supply chain management practices in textile manufacturing companies, therefore, this study assessed the existing Practices of Marketing Strategy and Supply chain management practices.

### **Objective the study**

This study focused on assessing the existing practices of Marketing Strategy and Supply chain management practices in the textile manufacturing industry. The study sought answers to the following additional objectives: 1)to Investigate the Existing Practices of Marketing Strategy in the Textile Manufacturing industry.2) to Investigate the Existing Practices of Supply chain management practices in Textile Manufacturing industry.

## **Literature review**

### **Theories of Marketing Strategy**

Today where the world is being recognized as global village, marketing has become vital ingredient for every business success (Singh A., 2011). Thus, it is almost become difficult to every competitor to survive in market for a prolonged period because competition is cut to throat, that Change or dies the core faith of marketing (Taormina, R. J & Gao, J. H., 2013). That is why development of right marketing strategy over time is required. Respectively according to Reykjavík (2015) Right marketing Strategy is something that helps companies achieves marketing objectives. Effective marketing strategies or marketing campaigns often consist of a combination of several marketing tactics that work together in a synergistic way to establish your brand, reduce sales resistance, and create interest and desire for your product or service (Neil A. Morgan et al., 2019). Therefore, Marketing strategy is a vital prerequisite of Industry's ability to strengthen its market share and minimize the impact of the competition (Delves. J., 2020) Thus

different firms' needs Marketing Strategy for at least basic five reasons. Such as it will give the firms' business direction, it will make firm's tactics successful, it will help the firms to gather the right data, it will build trust with firm's audience, and it will improve the firm's performance (Abercrombie & Fitch, 2020)

Ebitu (2015) indicated that marketing strategy outlines the strategic direction and tactical plans that marketing teams must implement to support the company's overall objectives. As a result, marketing strategy draws its strength from the overall corporate strategy and it may be defined as those marketing programmes and tactics designed to achieve the objectives of an organization and it articulates the best uses of a business resources and tactics to achieve its marketing objectives.

### **Market Segmentation strategy**

According to Camilleri, M. A. (2018) Market segmentation is the actual process of identifying segments of the market and the process of dividing a broad customer base into sub-groups of consumers consisting of existing and prospective customers and it is a consumer-oriented process and can be applied to almost any type of market Moreover, Market segmentation" refers to subdividing a market along some commonality, similarity, or kinship. That is, the members of a market segment share something in common. The purpose of segmentation is the concentration of marketing energy and force on the subdivision (or the market segment) to gain a competitive advantage within the segment (Jerry W. Thomas, 2019). further, Blank and Dor (2020) found that after analyzing the different segments using tools like cluster analysis (trying to find similar groups based on characteristic and scoring them) or segmentation trees (dividing an overall market into user types based on behavior).

Generally, from the above mentioned argument it is possible to concluded that the purpose of market segmentation includes: To break down a large market into smaller groups, To arrange smaller markets according to homogenous needs and characteristics, To distinguish groups based on meaningful differences, while smaller groups must share in-group homogenous needs and characteristics and To enable the organization to make sense of the smaller groups and use it to their advantage( Hendrik Visser, 2019; Blank and Dor , 2020)

### **Marketing Mix Strategy**

Marketing mix is defined as set of controllable marketing tools (Product, Price, Promotion and Place) that a company uses to create a desired response in the targeted market and it is a means of translating marketing planning into practice (Goi, 2009; seriekiene, 2013). Further Marketing mix is an interrelated actions and solutions to meet consumer needs and to achieve the company's marketing goals as a whole. It is a set of relevant factors and solutions that enable customers to meet the (national) needs and achieve the goals set by the company (Pruskus, 2015; Singh, 2016).

Therefore, marketing mix is the combination of different marketing decision variables being used by the firm to market its goods and services. After identifying the market and gathering the

basic information about it, the next step is the direction of market programming, is to decide upon the instruments and the strategy to meet the needs of the customers and the challenge of the competitors. It offers an optimum combination of all marketing ingredients so that companies can realize goals for example profit, sales volume, market share, and return on investment. The marketing mix is grouped under four elements i.e., Product, Price, Place, Promotion (Margarita, 2016).

Effective marketing mix management enables marketers to create a combination of elements that will enable wisely manage the company's budget in order to achieve the desired objectives. Companies that strive to operate effectively and achieve their goals have to pay well to control all elements of the marketing mix. In order to achieve the best result, it is not enough to use only one or a few elements. The formation of the marketing mix elements requires taking into account the characteristics of each element so that they could be aligned. The non-alignment of the above-mentioned elements of interaction might be the company's shortcomings (Pruskus, 2015; Rad, 2014; sereikiene, 2013).

### **Theories of Supply Chain Management**

Supply chain Management is defined as a systemic, strategic coordination of the business functions, processes and transactions within the supply chain, for the purposes of improving the long-term performance of the individual companies and the supply chain as a whole. It is seen as a business philosophy that strives to integrate the dependent activities, people, and resources from the points of origin and ultimate destination in supply channels. (Arawati, 2015)

Supply chain Management involves an integrated and process-oriented approach to the management, design and control of the supply chain, with the aim of producing value for the end consumer, by both customer service and reduces cost, Thus, the supply chain management has dual purpose, in one side is to improve the performance of an individual organization as well as that of the entire supply chain. In other side the supply chain management reduces organization total cost (Li et al., 2006). According to Ashish (2007) Supply Chain Management as all activities involved in delivering products from raw material to customer, including sources of raw material and parts, manufacturing and assembly, warehousing and inventory tracking, order entry and order management, distribution across all channels, delivery to customers and information systems required to monitor all activity.

A supply chain is a network of suppliers, factories, warehouses, distribution centers and retailers, through which raw materials are acquired, transformed, produced and delivered to the customer. The supply chain consists all the activities associated with the flow and transformation of goods from the raw material stage, through to the end user, as well as the associated information flows (Neha et al., 2013). The supply chain includes suppliers, distributors, retailers and customers. The customers are the main focus of the chain since the primary purpose of the existence of any supply chain is to satisfy customer needs (Mohammad & Mamun, 2012).

Moreover, Supply Chain Management (SCM) was initially related to the inventory management within a supply chain. In the course of time, the most considerable benefits to business with advance supply chain management capabilities will be radically improved customer responsiveness, developed customer service and satisfaction, increased flexibility for changing market conditions, improved customer retention and more effective marketing. A supply chain is the chain of the process which is included their facilities, functions and activities that are involved in producing and delivering a product from supplier(s) to customers (Habibet al., 2010).

Supply Chain Management seeks to enhance performance by closely integrating and coordinating the internal functions within a company and effectively linking them with the external operations of suppliers and customers. A firm must achieve a relatively high degree of integration to implement SCM successful, which involves integration, coordination and collaboration across organizations and throughout the supply chain (Agus, 2011). Furthermore, the research conducted by Kevin et al. (2018) revealed that, there are different activities that can be categorized as Supply chain management practices. Among the activities, supply relationship management, supply chain responsiveness and supply chain integration have vital impact on the firm performance of textile firms.

### **Transaction Cost Economics (TCE) Theory**

According to Williamson (1973) Transaction Cost Economic theory argues that a firm's make-or-buy decision is determined not only by the price of the purchased item but also its transaction costs. Similarly, Williamson (2008) expressed that these transaction costs can occur ex ante or ex post the transaction (Ex ante costs are typically related to information-seeking processes and the negotiation of contractual terms, whereas ex post costs primarily stem from monitoring tasks and other processes that target the enforcement of contractual agreements. Consequently, the adequate governance mode for a transaction (i.e., market, hybrid and hierarchy) is the one which results in the lowest total costs.

In different countries, especially in industrialized countries, industry experts have been advising manufacturers that judicious use of supply chain management applications would give them a competitive edge. Such business applications, which can include demand planning through warehouse management, have helped many companies improve their bottom lines by lowering the cost of doing business or improving customer service (Christopher-Jüttner 2000; Dubois et al. 2004).

According to the arguments of Tuija Liisa (2004) the term 'Supply Chain Management' (SCM) was introduced by consultants in the early 1980s and the scope of SCM has widened over time from intra-organizational focus to more inter-organizational issues. According to Tan (2001) there does not seem to be much consistency in the use of it or its exact meaning. In addition,

Dubois et al. (2004) also argues that although there are some shared ideas about what SCM is about, there is no universally accepted definition. The concept of SCM builds on the theories of the firm, especially transaction cost economics, Porter's value chain and the network approach, and has become established as a useful business paradigm.

thus, A variety of changes in the business environment, including global competition, international cooperation, and vertical disintegration, along with a focus on core competencies, have fueled interest in networked supply chains and also This new perspective has created the challenge of developing insights into how and why different supply chain arrangements emerge and understanding the consequences of these arrangements for industry efficiency and competitiveness. (Mohammady Garfamy, 2009)

## **Resource Based View (RBV) Theory**

### **2.4.3 .1. Origin of RBV theory**

The Resource Based View takes an 'inside-out' view or firm-specific perspective on why organizations succeed or fail in the market place (Zhang, C. and J. Dhaliwal 2009). Thus, giving consideration for Resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable make it possible for businesses to develop and maintain competitive advantages, to utilize these resources and competitive advantages for superior performance (Pankaj Madhani, 2010)

The RBV is a theory about the nature of firms, as opposed to theories such as transaction cost economics which seeks to explain why firms exist. As such, the RBV requires minimal limiting assumptions about the nature of strategic behavior. In effect, the RBV is a statement about how firms actually operate the minimalistic nature of the RBV's assumptions (i.e., its two central tenets) makes formalization difficult (Andy Lockett et al., 2010). Ultimately, the RBV's message that firms' performance differs because of different resource endowments is probably incapable of falsification. However, theoretical insights have been developed from these central tenets (Irina V. Kozlenkova et al., 2013).

According to Barney, J. B (2003) Resource Based Theory aims at showing the importance of firm-specific resources in achieving sustainable competitive advantage and, hence, superior performance. Moreover, According to Barney (1991) and Amit and Shoemaker (1993) Resource Based view theory recognized that an organization can be considered as a collection of physical resources, human resources and organizational resources. Hence Resources of organizations that are valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable and imperfectly substitutable are main source of sustainable competitive advantage for sustained superior performance. Further, different scholars have confirmed that a resource must fulfill 'VRIN' criteria in order to provide competitive advantage and sustainable performance. A 'VRIN' criterion is explained below (Barney, 1991; Chan, Y. E. 2000 and Montealegre, R., 2002)

## **Methodology of the study**

The primary methodology was the use of in-depth interviews with the selected target group for an interview. The questions were tested and refined through a pilot study before conducting the interviews. The pilot test was conducted with four managers of the textile Manufacturing industry which is located in Adama and Bole Lemi Industrial parks. This was consistent with the goal of qualitative research to allow participants to describe their experiences from their perspective and in their own words (Morrow, 2005). These pilot interviews were not included in the final study but were used to modify the interview.

The interview covered the following areas: Work experiences, educational status, and the perceptions of General Directors, Company Managers, and Customs Clearing officers towards Marketing strategy, Supply chain management practice, and Competitive advantage of the textile Manufacturing industry. In the study, the researcher interviewed eleven company Managers, two Industrial Park Directors (one from Bole Lemi and one from Adama industrial park), and two custom clearing officers who are working in industrial parks. The researcher has also gathered relevant written documents and all of these sources helped the researcher to address and identify the perceptions of the participants towards Marketing Strategy, Supply chain management Practices, and competitive advantages in textile Manufacturing industries, in selected industrial Parks.

The researcher began data collection by securing support letters from the Postgraduate dean's office, Wollega university, addressed to Bole Lemi and Adama Industrial parks. Respectively, Bole lemi Industrial parks issued support letters to seven Textile manufacturing industries that are operating in the industrial park. Such company is: Ever top Sportswear and textile PLC, Top new Ethiopian Garment and textile PLC, Ashton Textile Manufacturing PLC, Vests Garment and Textile Manufacturing PLC, Jay Jay garment and textile Manufacturing PLC, Shangtex garment and textile PLC, and Saints Ethiopian textile production PLC. Similarly, Adama industrial park gave a support letter to the researcher to reach four textile Manufacturing Industries that are operating in the park. Such as King dome Garment and textile PLC, sunshine garment and textile PLC, Antex Textile PLC, and Jotun Garment and textile Manufacturing PLC.

After getting permission from all companies, the researcher asked the interviewees for recording their voices. Respectively, all fifteen interviewees did not give consent to record the interview. Therefore, Written notes were made of that interview. The interviews addressed the implementation of Marketing strategy, Supply chain management practices, Competitive advantage, and Firm performances of the firm.

## **Result and Discussion**

### **Views of interviewees on the practices of Marketing Strategy**

This section summarizes the information gathered from interviews with two (2) General Directors, eleven (11) company managers, and two (2) customs clearing officers who are working in the textile Manufacturing industry which are available in the selected industrial parks. A key objective of the interviews was to gain a deeper understanding of General Directors, company managers, and customs clearing officers regarding the existing Practices of Marketing strategy, Supply chain management practices, Competitive advantages, and firm performances in the textile Manufacturing industry.

As is mentioned in the literature review part of this study, Marketing strategy is the set of marketing tools that firms use to pursue their marketing objectives in the target market and it provides the avenue for utilizing the resources of an organization to achieve its set goals and objectives (Gbolagade, 2013; Goi, 2005). Moreover, Marketing strategy is an organization's integrated pattern of decisions that specify its crucial choices concerning: markets to serve; market segments to target, and marketing activities to perform (Rajan Varadarajan,2010; Ebitu and Ezekiel Tom, 2016). The empirical finding of different scholars showed that Marketing strategy is a vital prerequisite for the industry's ability to strengthen its market share and minimize the impact of the competition (Delves. J., 2020).

However, as far as the knowledge of the researcher is concerned, the emphasis given to Marketing Strategy in the Ethiopian textile Manufacturing industry is not mentioned. Therefore, to identify the emphasis given to marketing strategy, The researcher has raised different interview Questions for general directors, Company Managers, and customs Clearing officers who are working in Textile Manufacturing Industry available in Adama and Bole Lemi Industrial parks. Accordingly, the first Question was “how important do you think is a marketing strategy to your company?”

#### **For this question, the General Directors of the parks replied that:**

*“I believe that marketing strategy is very important to the company. Particularly, the company cannot compete in the world market without having a sound marketing strategy. Marketing strategy is all about how to produce, how to set prices, how to distribute, and how to sell to the customer. those Questions should be answered by having a clear marketing strategy. Therefore, I believe that Marketing strategy has a big importance for our company.”*

#### **On the other hand, the managers of the companies replied that:**

*“Marketing strategy is very important to our company. It is all about how to produce, how to handle the customers, and how to make a profit. Therefore, marketing strategy is very Critical for the success of our company.”*

Therefore, from this interview, it is possible to conclude that marketing strategy is very important to textile Manufacturing companies. It shows clear directions to the achievements of the company's objectives. This result is allied with the research finding of Abercrombie & Fitch (2020), which stated that different firms need Marketing Strategy for at least basic five reasons. Such as it will give the firm business direction, it will make the firm's tactics successful, will help the firm to gather the right data, will build trust with the firm's audience, and will improve the firm's performance.

After confirming the importance of marketing Strategy to the company, the interviewer (author) asked the interviewee about the level of emphasis given to marketing strategy. Respectively, the interviewees replied that the level of emphasis given to Marketing strategy is very low. Accordingly, the General Director of Bole Lemi and Adama Industrial Park said that:

*“The level of emphasis given to Marketing strategy is very low. I think the reason why less emphasis is given to marketing strategy is due to the poor level of emphasis given to market segmentation in the textile Manufacturing company. due to the policy direction of the country, the market segmentation of the companies is ignoring the domestic Market.”*

On the other hand, the company Managers replied that all companies are emphasizing the Marketing strategy to produce and sell their products to international Customers. additionally, the company managers have explained that the company doesn't have a clear Marketing strategy for domestic customers.

Thus, the interviewer (the Author) has raised another Question, to Clarify the reason why the market segmentation of the textile manufacturing industry is ignoring the domestic Market. Respectively the interviewees replied that focusing on the foreign Market is the policy direction of the government which is used as means of alleviating foreign exchange shortages. The interviewees said that This is a policy direction from the government.

Therefore, the Author reviewed the report on Industrial Park development in Ethiopia (2018). Respectively, the report revealed that foreign exchange earnings can be facilitated through industrial parks to meet Ethiopia's import needs and provide the government with necessary resources for development through the attraction of foreign investors and the export of goods to other countries. Moreover, according to the report, the textile manufacturing sectors have been designated as top priority manufacturing industries in the latest five-year development plan (2015 to 2020). The main reason is that they have major export potential and low entry barriers.

Therefore, from the result of both interviews and Secondary sources of data, it is possible to conclude that the emphasis given to marketing strategy is not balanced in textile Manufacturing industries in selected industrial parks. According to the perceptions of the interviewees, the current Marketing Strategy of the companies is ignoring the domestic Market.

Besides the policy direction of the textile Manufacturing companies, the interviewees said that it is better to balance and revise the emphasis given to the domestic market and international Market. According to the interviewee the company should give at least 40% Emphasis on the Domestic market and 60 % Emphasis on the international market. during this interview, specifically, the general director of the industrial parks mentioned that, due to the ignorance of the domestic market, the textile Manufacturing companies have suffered a lot of challenges during an outbreak of Covid-19 and the restriction of AGOA. Their Marketing Strategy has hindered them to sell their product in the Domestic Market. consequently, most companies have incurred losses and even some of the companies were terminating their operations due to the impact of Covid -19 and AGOA restrictions.

Another question raised for the interviewee was ‘does your company uses 4Ps? Accordingly, the general directors replied that yes. According to the general directors’ explanations, the companies are using the 4Ps (Production strategy, Price strategy, Place, and Promotion Strategy). But, the levels of using those 4Ps are different. Consequently, Another Question was raised for the interviewee to identify the extent to which the companies are using Production Strategy, Price strategy, place strategy, and Promotion strategy respectively.

*“The company Managers explained that 4Ps are highly functional in textile manufacturing Industries. All companies are using Production Strategy, Price Strategy, place Strategy, and Promotional Strategy. But, the degree of using those 4Ps is different. According to the Explanation of the company Managers, the base for using the 4Ps is the foreign customer’s needs. The Production strategy, Pricing strategy, place strategy, and Promotion strategy of the companies are prepared based on the Need of the Foreign Customers.”*

Additionally, the general directors have further explained that the bases for new product making is a custom order and it varies among its products. Foreign companies are the major customers and those foreign customers request their orders directly from the company. In connection to this, the interviewees were confident that the company’s products are rated as good and users know this in the Foreign Market.

Thus, the interview result from the General Directors and the Company Managers of the textile Manufacturing companies have confirmed that the implementations of the 4Ps in the Textile Manufacturing Companies are based on the need of foreign Customers. this means, designing the product strategy, setting the price strategy, the place strategy, and the promotional strategy of the company depending on the interest of foreign Customers. This result is Associated with the views of Adewale et al., (2013) and Singh (2016). It revealed that a Product is defined as a physical product or service to the consumer for which he/she is willing to pay. Additionally, a product is anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or need. Similar to this argument, the interviewee explained that the company took an order from its customer and produce it as per the customer’s need.

Regarding the Pricing strategy, the interviewee replied that since the product strategy of the company is designed based on the need of foreign customers, the company’s pricing strategy is

determined by its customers. According to the interviewee, the company applies different pricing strategies for products in international markets. About this, the pricing strategy for the international market is usually competitive based; ‘price is based on the prices of international competitors (going price). But according to the interviewee, the pricing strategy of the company doesn’t consider the need of the domestic market. This is because the companies are expected to focus on exporting the produced products to get foreign currency. Moreover, the interview results revealed that the company’s international market destination is mainly the USA market. this was to get the AGOA advantage. In this regard, the textile manufacturing companies that are available in Adama and Bole Lemi Industrial Parks are setting the pricing strategy based on the foreign market Situation. Additionally, the interviewee explained that the government also encourages textile manufacturing companies to set their prices as per the standard of exported products to take the AGOA advantage.

Regarding the place Strategy, all companies distributed their products to foreign countries. Usually, the company distributes its products to foreign markets which are already known. Asper the feedback of the interviewee, most distributions of the company go to the USA and European countries. Therefore, the Place strategy of the company is focused on the international Market.

Moreover, all companies have no special program for promotion; neither does it allocate a budget for promotion Activities. ‘Usually, the company sells its products to the foreign market and the distributors are already known. The customers give an order as per their need and respectively, the company has produced the required material for the Customers. therefore, the interviewee replied that there is no special program for promotional strategy. Additionally, the interviewee, have explained that most sale of the textile manufacturing companies goes to the international Market. they already know their customers. Therefore, all companies do not give attention to the Promotion of their product. Similarly, the interviewee Explained that the company still has no promotional strategy for the domestic Market.

### **Views of Interviewee on the Practices of Supply Chain Management Practices**

Supply chain management (SCM) is a multidisciplinary concept in contemporary trade and research to bring organizational performance to manage the business through delivering goods and services to the end customers. In the face of a competitive global market, organizations have downsized, focused on core competencies, and attempted to achieve competitive advantage by more effectively managing all internal and external value-adding activities (Hajar et al., 2022). In Nowadays, the competitive, fast-moving business environment has permanently transformed the supply chain and the management of its functions. Convinced of new opportunities offered by the global economy, Ethiopia has opted for a new industrial strategy based on Supply chain management practices aimed at improving its performance and making the country an attractive space for global value chains (Hajar et al., 2022)

In line with this concept, the researcher has raised different Interview Questions to identify the perception of interviewees towards the trends of Supply Chain Management Practices of Textile Manufacturing Industries, in Selected Industrial Parks.

The first Question raised for the Interviewee was “how important do you think is supply chain management for your Company? Respectively the General directors of the Industrial parks explained that:

*“It is well known that supply chain management is an integral part of most businesses and is essential to our company’s success and customer satisfaction. Moreover, our supply chains are a vital foundation of our success. Because, Customers expect: the correct product quantity to be delivered, and products to be available at the right location and time. This helps our company to fulfill the customer’s requirements. Consequently, the success of our company depends on the satisfaction of our customers. Therefore, Supply chain management has a big importance for our company.”*

According to the Explanation of General directors, supply chain Management has a big importance for the textile manufacturing industry. especially they have explained that supply chain management is used as an instrument to deliver the right quantity of product, at the right price and quality to the right Customer. this makes SCM the best tool for the success of their firm. Moreover, a Similar Question was forwarded to the Company Managers of the Company. Thus, the Explanation of Company Managers towards the importance of Supply chain management is mentioned as follows.

*“Supply chain management deals with how businesses turn raw materials into finished products, and then transport and distribute those products to consumers. Therefore, our company used Supply chains as a system that links the company to its suppliers, allowing the company to produce and distribute goods and products. Additionally, the supply chain also serves as a network that connects our company with Transportation companies and distribution centers. Thus, Supply chain management has immense importance for our company.”*

Additionally, the Company managers have mentioned that supply chain management has an important role in connecting the Producers (Company), Transportation Company, distributors, and Users. This has contributed to the success of the firms.

On the other hand, the interviewer(author) delivers this similar Question to the customs Clearing officers who are working in industrial Parks. Respectively, they explained that:

*“In today's world, products are most likely not made in only one part of the world. Due to globalization, many products are produced in one part of the world and then shipped to another part where they are sold. therefore, the situation of our company also looks like this. Our company has produced the branded material in our industrial parks and exports the produced Products to the end users. This is often referred to as "Made in the World". When the product*

*passes through borders, it has to cross different countries and sometimes even the same borders multiple times. Therefore, Supply chain management is an important discipline to deliver the produced goods to the final users”.*

Therefore, according to the result of the interview, supply chain management practices have large importance for textile Manufacturing Companies.

Another Interview Question raised for the interviewee was “According to your perception to what extent does your company Practices supply chain management? For this Question, the interviewee explained that:

*Our company has good experience in Practicing supply chain management. There is a good relationship with suppliers of raw materials. Procurement of goods for the company and importing raw materials for the company have been practiced in the company. Respectively, the interviewee Explained that all companies are practicing the supply chain in Hight extent.*

Based on the response of the interviewee, the researcher has asked about the critical challenges while practicing supply chain management. accordingly, the interviewee explained that there is a critical challenge in Supply chain management Practices:

*“Even though these textile manufacturing companies have practiced the Supply Chain Management activities in their day-to-day operations, High shortage of raw materials to produce the goods, High transport cost, absence of the raw materials from the local market, which leads to extra cost are found to be the critical challenges in the practices of Supply Chain Management in the textile industry.”*

Especially, among the products that are produced in textile manufacturing industries, nylon is the most popular. According to the response of the Company Manager, nylon is the most Worthwhile and demanded product next to woolen. But, In Ethiopia, there are no raw materials that are used to produce nylon. Consequently, the researcher has raised another important Question to the interviewee. Is there any potential for producing raw materials of nylon in Ethiopia? The response of the interviewee was “completely yes.” they said that Nylon is produced from the material which is so-called flaxen or “Talba” in the local language. Thus, Ethiopia has a very conducive environment for the production of flaxen. On the contrary, flaxen is imported from another country at Hight prices. Importing the flaxen product from other countries exposed the textile manufacturing companies to additional costs.

From the interview result, the researcher has identified two contradicting ideas. With the so-called foreign Exchange paradox. From one viewpoint, it is impossible to sell or distribute the company’s product to the domestic Market. this happened for the sake of collecting foreign currency from Export. On the other hand, the companies are paying much more dollars to import flaxen from other world countries. Therefore, the researcher has found this concept as it is currency Paradox. Because the companies are Exporting their products to bring the dollar. On the contrary, the companies are importing flaxen raw materials to produce materials.

General directors of the companies and company managers have described that Ethiopia has a huge potential and a conducive climate for the production of flaxen. But the country has failed to produce flaxen for the industrial parks, due to the lack of integration between Industrial parks and the ministry of agriculture. This leads the textile manufacturing companies to import these raw materials from other countries at a very expensive price.

Another interview Question raised for the interviewee was “the issue of Suppliers relationship management. Specifically, the interviewee explained that:

*“The company engages in a process of supplier segmentation, seeking to identify those suppliers with whom the company can work to achieve greater levels of value creation for its customers. For the company, the Segmentation of suppliers is one way to ensure the proper alignment of resources within the company. Thus, the segmentation was made into domestic suppliers and International Suppliers. The company has good communication with both domestic and international suppliers. According to the explanation of interviewee, domestic suppliers are the suppliers of different inputs like chemicals, detergents, and other necessary materials for the company. On the other hand, international Suppliers are those who are supplying raw materials like flaxen.”*

Therefore, the Interviewee Explained that there is a good relationship with their Suppliers. moreover, the interviewee has explained that the information and communication systems of all stakeholders can seamlessly exchange information through all planning, execution, and completion of transport and logistics operations throughout a product’s lifetime. The company Instantaneously communicates with the supply chain partners on the issues of raw material availability, raw material Acquisition, the payment system, its transportation system, and the distribution of finished goods to the customers. They confirmed that the company has good integration with supply chain partners.

Another Question raised for the interviewee towards supply chain management was the topic of Responsiveness. Concerning responsiveness, the interviewer (author) asked the question about the responsiveness issue.

The interviewee explained responsiveness from two perspectives. The first perspective was from the company’s point of view and the second perspective was from the suppliers’ point of view. From the company’s point of view, two contradicting ideas were raised by the interviewee. The company managers explained that:

*“Our company is responsive to its customers because of several reasons. Among that: the company accepts an order from its customers. After taking an order, the company produced the*

*required material as per the need of the customers. and finally, submit it to the customers within a short period.*

On the other hand, the interview conducted with the Customs clearing officers shows that the company is not as much as responsive to its customers. they explained that there is a delay in production due to several factors like shortage of raw material, shortage of human power (due to High turnover), and shortage of utilities (high shortage of electricity and water). This factor contributes to the delay in the delivery of products to the customers. therefore, the customers clearing expert explained that Textile manufacturing industries are not responsive to their customers to the expected level. Another point addressed by the custom clearing Experts was, the company has overlooked its domestic customers. the focus of the company is completely on the foreign market. Therefore, the issue of being responsive to domestic customers is an overlooked concept.

Thus, to reconcile the differences between the explanation of Company Managers and Customs Clearing officers, the researcher has used Secondary sources of data for a triangulation purpose. according to the Industrial Parks report for 2020 and 2021, the textile Manufacturing Companies are receiving an order from their foreign Customers. then they are Producing their products as per the requests of their customers. this is directly associated with the explanation of the company's Managers. From this point of view, we can say that the companies are responsive to their customer. On the other hand, this report confirmed that all textile Manufacturing companies which are available in those Selected Industrial parks are focusing on the Foreign Market. The companies are ignoring the Domestic Market.

Additionally, the Customs clearing officers have explained that there is a Chronic shortage of raw materials from the domestic Market. due to this fact, about 80% of raw materials are imported from china. Consequently, the company has faced different challenges like transportation problems, transit problems, and a shortage of containers.

the customs Clearing officers have Explained that the suppliers are not responsive to the textile Manufacturing companies due to several factors like Contract failures, Market fluctuation, transportation problems, and lack of raw materials from the domestic market. those factors have contributed to the delay from the suppliers' side. This leads to an increase in the waiting time for material delivery to the company.

Therefore, based on the above-mentioned arguments, the researcher has concluded that, since the focus of those textile manufacturing companies is on foreign customers, they can respond to their customers as per the Need of their customers. However, there are long-lasting problems like market fluctuation, transportation problems, and lack of raw materials from the domestic market, which contribute to the delay of produced delivery to the customer's premises. On the other hand, ignoring the domestic market bears criticism from textile manufacturing companies.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

To gain a deeper understanding of the emphasis given on Marketing strategy and Supply chain management Practices, in the textile manufacturing industry, depth interviews were conducted. The interview results disclosed that the emphasis given to Marketing strategy is very less. according to the interviewees, the reason why less emphasis is given to marketing strategy is because of the poor emphasis given to market segmentation in the textile Manufacturing company. This is because the trade policy of Ethiopian Industrial parks and development is favoring the international market more than the domestic market. According to the interviewee, the market segmentation of the companies is ignoring the domestic Market.” On the other hand, the interviewee has justified that focusing on the foreign Market is the policy direction of the government which is used as means of alleviating foreign exchange shortages.

Another Question was raised for the interviewee to identify the extent to which the companies are using Production Strategy, Price strategy, place strategy, and Promotion strategy. Respectively, the interviewees have explained that 4Ps are highly functional in textile manufacturing Industries. All companies are using Production Strategy, Price Strategy, place Strategy, and Promotional Strategy. But, the degree of using those 4Ps is different. According to the Explanation of the interviewees, the base for using the 4Ps is the foreign customer’s needs. The Production strategy, Pricing strategy, place strategy, and Promotion strategy of the companies are prepared based on the Need of the Foreign Customers.”

According to the interview result, Among the 4Ps, the companies are using the promotional strategy to less Extent, than Product strategy, price strategy, and place strategy. Because, according to the respondents, all companies have no special program for promotion; neither does it allocate a budget for promotion Activities. “Usually, the company sells its products to the foreign market and the distributors are already known. They give an order as per their need and procure the products from the companies stores. Additionally, according to the interviewee, most sale of the company goes to the international Market. Therefore, all companies do not give attention to the Promotion of their product. Similarly, the interviewee Explained that the company still has no promotional strategy for the domestic Market.

Concerning supply chain management Practices, the interviewees have explained that the textile manufacturing companies in Ethiopian industrial parks give a high emphasis to supply chain management practices. Respectively, the interviewees have explained that there is a good experience in Practicing supply chain management. Especially, there is a good relationship with suppliers of raw materials. Procurement of goods for the company and importing raw materials for the company is has been practiced in the company.

However, the High shortage of raw materials to produce the goods, High transport cost, and absence of the raw materials from the local market, which leads to extra costs are found to be the critical challenges in the practices of Supply Chain Management in the textile industry.

especially, among the products that are produced in textile manufacturing industries, nylon is the most popular product. According to the response of the Company Manager, it is the most worthwhile and demanded product next to woolen. But, In Ethiopia, there are no raw materials used to produce nylon. According to the interviewees, nylon is produced from the raw material called flaxen and respectively, and Ethiopia has a very conducive environment for the production of flaxen. On the contrary, the flaxen is imported from another country in Hight price. Importing the flaxen product from other countries exposed the textile manufacturing companies to additional costs.

Additionally, according to the interviewees, due to the lack of integration between Industrial parks and the ministry of agriculture, the companies are importing these raw materials from other countries at a very expensive price. Moreover, the interviewee explained that there is an immense shortage of flaxen in the textile manufacturing industry.

Based on the abovementioned Findings, the study proposed the following recommendations:

The interview result found that most sales of the company go to the international Market. Therefore, the study recommends that it is better if the market segmentation strategy of the textile manufacturing companies can consider the domestic market.

Moreover, In Ethiopia, there are no raw materials used to produce nylon. The study recommends that it is better if Ethiopia focuses on the production of flaxen raw materials to minimize the shortage of raw material flaxen, minimize the transport cost, and minimize the cost of importing flaxen raw materials.

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