

**STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES AND SUSTAINABLE
COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AT THE EAST AFRICA BREWERIES LIMITED
IN THE ERA OF COVID-19 IN KENYA**

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
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2022

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project proposal is my original work and has not been submitted for an award at any university or institution of higher learning.

Signature.....  Date...11-November-2022.....

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This research project has been tendered for examination and I fully approve it as the project supervisor.

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My friends, colleagues and classmates, I sincerely thank you for walking this journey with me.

Thank you for all your guidance and support.

DEDICATION

I wholeheartedly dedicate this project to my family, more so to my late sister, Esther Kemunto Getengah. You were and always will be my source of inspiration in life.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EABL: East African Breweries Limited

KBV: Knowledge-Based View

MNC: Multinational Corporation

CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

LTD: Limited

ABSTRACT

Organizations face significant concerns about remaining competitive in highly turbulent markets, which pose new opportunities and threats. Covid-19 brought about economic disruptions, which saw substantial shifts in business operations. This created a dilemma on how companies will work to maximize profits in the new normal. This calls for organizations to implement strategic management practices to achieve their goals and sustain competitive advantage in ever-changing business environments. The main objective of the study was to establish the association of strategic management practices and sustainable competitive advantage at EABL in the era of Covid-19. Case study research design was used and limited to EABL. An interview guide was used to collect data from 9 top managers at EABL. The data to be collected was primary data collected using an interview guide. The interview was collected from 9 senior managers at EABL and analyzed through content analysis. The study established that EABL adopted strategic management practices through environmental scanning, strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation and control to achieve its core objectives. To a great extent, EABL employed a combination of strategies to remain competitive in the industry. These strategies include product and technological innovation, product differentiation, diversification, CSR and human resource management because they influence organizational performance and play a key role in decision-making. The study concluded that strategic management practices had enabled organizations to sustain a competitive edge in the industry. It also concluded that the business arena is very dynamic, and organizations must adopt more than one strategy to remain competitive. They also need to invest in human capital, as these resources are unique to a firm and play a key role in organizational success.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Currently, many organizations across the globe face significant hardships regarding the daily challenges leading to lackluster performance, growth, or productivity. Stiff competition in the international, regional, and global markets has forced companies to work on their competitive advantage. In the current turbulent corporate arena, dynamism, speed, agility, adaptability, and flexibility have become crucial factors of competitive advantage (Sushil & Barney, 2001). Studies in the strategic management industry suggest that organizations acquire a competitive edge by harnessing strategies that leverage their internal capacities while avoiding interior shortcomings and neutralizing exterior threats (Rosenberg, 2006).

This study is guided by the dynamic capability theory, Porter's 5 model and knowledge-based theory. According to the dynamic capability theory, there is no single most appropriate method of running organizations, and managers must adopt innovative approaches to facilitate their organizations' growth. The proponents of the theory recognize that the business environment is dynamic and requires flexible plans (Arndt & Bach, 2015). On the other hand, the knowledge-based approach (KBV) is a crucial strategy towards organizational knowledge management that is part of the foundation for setting up human capital involvement in the firm's routine and structural activities.

KBV advocates for creating different knowledge frameworks across a firm's management hierarchies as a precondition for accomplishing a sustainable knowledge-focused competitive edge since knowledge-focused resources usually are marked by social complexities and difficulties in imitation and transmission.

Several studies indicate that implementing strategic management practices leads to a competitive firm. This is because strategic management practices allow companies to outmuscle competitors and grab a significant market share. With strategic management practices, companies can plan various ways to achieve their desired future as well as provide guidance and organizational scope in the long run, thus achieving an edge in a dynamic environment via its structure of competences and resources to satisfy shareholder ambitions (Johnson & Whittington, 2008). This is an indication that the basis of sustainable competitive advantage is the implementation of strategic management practices.

In Kenya, companies such as EABL are increasingly adopting strategic management practices because it has been established that sustainable practices such as producing high-quality goods, providing excellent customer care, and lowering costs relative to competitors are associated with sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 2009). The beverage industry, both globally and locally, is highly competitive. Grabbing the exterior and interior environment allows companies to endure difficulties and optimize opportunities, thus fostering sustainability and growth, especially within this challenging era of the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.1.1 Strategic Management Best Practices

The development of strategic ideologies and strategic management practices has led to the heterogeneous nature of strategic thinking. Even the most talented manager would no doubt agree that strategic management with no action plans typically renders strategic management in any organization ineffective.

According to Adler et al. (1992), strategic management practices involve making decisions on which customers to serve, with which services and products, and satisfying the legitimate needs of those customers by assigning resources in the best way possible. It's a corporate procedure meant to direct, invigorate, and sustain the firm's personnel and other resources to benefit all stakeholders. The firm's cultures guide the process and values manifested in both the mission and values statements and the behavior of the management.

However, Ketchen Jr & Giunipero (2004) argue that strategic management practice is a method, technique, activity, process, reward or incentive that traditional wisdom considers more effective in delivering an intended outcome than all other techniques when applied in certain situations. The notion is that desirable results can be achieved with few complications with appropriate procedures, testing, and evaluations.

Strategic Management practices are a significant activity in strategic management, dealing with decision-making concerning the purpose of the organization's mission, vision, values and policies. Also, it covers establishing long-term plans for efficient control of environmental threats and opportunities in line with the firm's corporate strengths and weaknesses.

Pearce and Robinson (1991) say that strategic management involves actions and deliberations that steer organizations towards forming and executing plans to accomplish organizational activities. This implies planning, organizing, controlling, and directing an organization's strategies that reflect actions and decisions that improve competitiveness.

1.1.2 Sustainable Competitive Advantage

These are the firm's unique, essential resources or competencies that are difficult to duplicate that ensure the organization's long-term superior position in its industry (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990). Competitive strategies consist of all the approaches and move a company employs to attract customers, withstand competitive pressure, and improve its position in the market (Thompson & Strickland, 1993). Porter's (2004) idea of competitive edge concentrates on sufficiency founded on economic activities that create value by offering services and products above production costs. In his definition of competitiveness, productivity is a crucial factor.

According to D'Cruz and Rugman (1992), competitive edge is a company's ability to structure, manufacture, and sell products and services superior to what competitors offer in terms of quality. Saji (2002) modified D'Cruz and Rugman's definition by saying that global competitive edge is the ability of countries, sectors, and organizations to constantly create revenue while staying vulnerable to international competition, technological capacities, factor employment levels, and high factor income on a sustainable basis.

A company is said to have achieved a sustainable competitive edge when it's executing a value creation strategy not simultaneously being applied by any potential or current competitor. Porter (1985) states that a company's relative position in its operating industry determines whether its profitability is below or above the industrial average. The primary basis of above-average profits in the long-term is sustainable competitiveness. Porter developed the generic competitive approaches of focus, product differentiation, and cost leadership. This is partly the basis of the competitive advantage of firms.

1.1.3 Era of Covid-19 Pandemic in Kenya

Covid-19 was first diagnosed in the Chinese city of Wuhan in late 2019 (Abouk & Heydari, 2020). However, the spread has spread globally, affecting various aspects of businesses. The rationale of this paper is to discuss the effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic on global business operations. According to Guan et al. (2020), covid-19 negatively impacts international business worldwide. This is because the pandemic has led to lockdowns, curfews, and travel restrictions in almost all countries worldwide. Several companies have reported changes in their supply chain due to covid-19. Countries are experiencing disruptions in terms of air travel (Abouk & Heydari, 2020). With covid-19, companies cannot maintain their employees, leading to high unemployment as many companies try to reduce their workforce. In some regions, such as Africa, companies cannot pay their employees' salaries due to losses and a lack of resources (United Nations Human Rights, 2020).

In Kenya, companies have to adopt preventive measures such as one-meter social or physical distancing, quarantine, ample ventilation in indoor environments, covering sneezes and coughs, washing hands, and avoiding touching the face. In public settings, face coverings or masks are advised to reduce the risk of transmission. All these measures have led to challenging business operations, and many organizations are now adopting flexible business models to meet the stakeholder's needs. Moreover, it should be noted that most of the supply chain globally originates from China, and with the disruption of the supply chain, many companies cannot get their goods (Venter et al., 2020). The pandemic has also adversely affected various sectors due to lockdowns and travel restrictions. There are high levels of business interruptions even among fortune 100 companies across the globe. Typically, investors and small companies are not investing due to the pandemic's fear and anxiety (Caggiano, et al., 2020).

1.1.4 East African Breweries Limited

The East African Breweries Limited (EABL) is a Kenyan holding firm that produces branded alcoholic (most famous of which is Tusker beer) and non-alcoholic drinks. In 1922, two British settlers, Charles and George Hurst, founded the company Kenya Breweries Limited (KBL). It went public in 1934 and bought Tanzania-based Tanganyika Breweries Limited (TBL) in 1935, leading to the EABL name change in 1936. In 1959, it consolidated the East African market by acquiring shares in Ugandan Breweries (EABL, 2018).

EABL is the region's number-one branded alcohol and beverage company, with an excellent brand portfolio covering beers, wines, spirits, and non-alcoholic drinks. While still considered the market leader in Kenya, EABL has not been exempted from stiff competition from local brewers such as Keroche Industries and imports from international companies such as SABMiller and Heineken. Despite the competition, EABL still boasts 80% of the Kenyan market and is looking to expand into the large Eastern Africa region. With distilleries, breweries, support and distribution networks across the region, EABL's diversity remains a significant factor in providing quality products to East African customers and investors.

1.2 Research Problem

Organizations face hardships due to a dynamic business environment resulting in declining growth, productivity, and performance. According to Kabaza et al. (2010), stiff competition in local and international markets requires companies to improve their competitive edge regularly. This can be done via the implementation of strategic management practices. In the current dynamic business environment, only firms that have adopted strategic management practices such as consideration of dynamic capabilities, speed, agility, adaptability and flexibility are enjoying a high competitive advantage (Li & Liu, 2014). The basis of sustainable competitive advantage is to allow organizations to design, manufacture and sell products superior to those produced by rivals in terms of quality. With strategic management practices, firms can adopt strategies to ensure that resource allocation is done efficiently to maintain competitive advantage (Awino, 2011).

In Kenya, Companies such as EABL are increasingly adopting strategic management practices in their operations. The company's top management has realized that adopting strategic management practices such as differentiation, diversification, cost leadership, and practical resource mobilization can help improve its performance and competitive advantage (Njuguna, 2016). However, some top management team is still worried about the sustainability of adopting strategic management practices. It has been argued that strategic management practices are expensive and provide strict ways of managing organizations. This problem should be addressed to promote and improve the management of organizations using strategic models.

Several inquiries have been done to ascertain the correlation between Strategic Management Practices and Sustainable Competitive Advantage among companies worldwide. Anwar (2018) studied the corporate model innovation and SME performance in the United States. The authors concluded that small and medium enterprises should adopt business model innovation as strategic management practices to promote performance. However, the study was done in the United States, and its implications may not apply to the current research-based in Kenya. In India, Mishra and Suar (2010) conducted a study investigating if corporate social responsibility (CSR) impacted the firm performance of Indian firms and confirmed that CSR is essential to promoting companies in India. The authors established that organizational social responsibility is critical towards promoting the brand image of organizations and ensuring stakeholders' needs are met and should be used in promoting the performance of organizations. However, this study was done in late 2010, before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Li and Liu (2014) determined the competitive advantage, environmental dynamism, and dynamic capabilities in China. They noted that firms that have adopted dynamic capabilities enjoyed a high competitive advantage since they could adopt flexible problem-solving methods. However, the study was done in China, and its implications may not apply to Kenyan firms.

Olanipekun et al. (2015) evaluated the effects of strategic management on a company's competitive edge and organizational productivity using a Nigerian bottling company in the African region. They noted that the turbulent and discontinuous nature of the corporate arena makes it vital for firms to implement strategic management practices and to be wary of changes in the corporate environment, while in Zimbabwe, Tapera and Gororo (2013) studied the effectiveness of marketing approaches used by Zimbabwean Insurance firms for creating competitiveness and noted that the sector has continued to experience a rise in the number of competitors penetrating the market and the study concluded that insurance firms broadly use low-cost and differentiation strategies to increase their competitive advantage.

In Kenya, Awino (2011) investigated strategic management using quantitative data of selected strategy factors on organizational performance and a case study of supply chain management in big privately-owned production companies in Kenya and concluded that the independent impact of core capabilities, core competencies, strategy implementation, and strategy on organizational performance is weaker relative to the collective effect of the same variables.

The study was conducted on 52 large private manufacturing companies. The study concluded that firms should adopt core capabilities, innovations, and effective strategy implementation to promote performance. However, this study was done in late 2011, before the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Mutunga and Minja (2014) also studied the generic approaches used by Kenyan food and beverage firms and noted that the application of dual methods is an organizational survival and diversification tactic. However, Ogutu & Samuel (2012) studied the approaches by multinationals to wade off competition in the Kenyan market. Their most popular local and foreign strategies were excellent customer service, better quality, and licensing and franchising. Another study finding was that approaches like strategic alliances, diversification, differentiation, and innovation were implemented less to the same extent by both types of multinationals. However, all these studies were done before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

From the analysis of the various studies done on the determination of the correlation between Strategic Management Practices and the Sustainable Competitive Edge of companies across the globe, it can be argued that limited studies have been done to determine the association between Strategic Management Practices and Sustainable Competitive Advantage at EABL in the era of Covid-19. It is also evident that most studies on the topic do not provide conclusive results and are done primarily outside Kenya. Their findings cannot apply in Kenya, especially within the current Covid-19 Era. Therefore, this research seeks to respond to the research question, what is the correlation between Strategic Management Practices and a Sustainable Competitive Edge at EABL in the era of Covid-19?

1.3 Research Objective

The primary research objective in this investigation is to establish if there is a significant association between Strategic Management Practices and a Sustainable Competitive Edge at EABL in the era of Covid-19.

1.4 Value of the Study

This research has provided several benefits in promoting an understanding of the relationship between Strategic Management Practices and a Sustainable Competitive Edge at EABL in the era of Covid-19. This means that the study is a significant benefit the top management of EABL since they can use the study findings to adopt the best Strategic Management Practices and increase their Sustainable Competitive Advantage during this era of Covid-19. This will increase and improve their competitive advantage over their rivals.

Moreover, the study findings can be used to help government agencies and policymakers formulate programs and policies associated with Strategic Management Practices and collaborate with companies in Kenya to increase their Sustainable Competitive Advantage during this era of Covid-19. This is important in promoting the Sustainable Competitive Advantage of Kenyan companies and encouraging them to adopt strategic management practices in their significant operations.

Finally, this research shall benefit future scholars, researchers and academics since they can use the study findings as a reference point in their future studies related to Strategic Management Practices and Sustainable Competitive Advantage of companies during this era of the Covid-19 pandemic. The prospective researcher shall also use the research results for training and future research, as it shall lay a platform on which a study on the topic can be conducted. It shall highlight theories guiding the adoption of Strategic Management Practices and how to use them to increase companies' Sustainable Competitive Advantages during this era of Covid-19.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section's primary aim and objective are to provide effective evaluation of theoretical and empirical literature related to the topic of study, determining the Strategic Management Activities and Sustainable Competitive Edge at EABL in the era of Covid-19. The section includes an analysis of the past and current literature related to the study topic. The chapter has literature review related to the subject and cover the analysis of the theories guiding the study. This segment also includes an analysis of the knowledge gaps and an empirical review of the past studies associated with the topic of the study.

2.2 Theoretical Foundations

Several theories have been advanced over time to explain the concept of sustainable competitive advantage and further illuminate the importance of strategic management practices adopted by different organizations to maintain a competitive edge in their industries. This study will be directed by the dynamic capability theory, knowledge-based theory (KBV) and porter's five forces models.

2.2.1 Knowledge-Based Theory

Barney first introduced the knowledge-based theory in the late 1990s. The theory expands resource-based theory and indicates that firms should consider knowledge as one of the essential resources for their business (Grant, 1996).

The theory proponents reasoned that knowledge-based resources are not easy to emulate since they are socially complex and heterogeneous. Different firms have different capabilities due to their knowledge systems (Qiu & Wang, 2018). The employees' knowledge, experiences and abilities allow the firm to have superior corporate performance and sustained competitive advantage in the market (Curado, 2006).

The primary assumptions of the theory are that firm knowledge is entrenched and carried through numerous entities and models (Grant, 1996). For example, organizational culture, technology, corporate policies, routines, and the firm identities and systems or employees (Curado, 2006). The theory recognized workers' different capabilities and unique societal characteristics (Grant, 1996). The theory supports organizational learning, which eventually establishes the human capital required to conduct the routine practices of the firm (Qiu & Wang, 2018).

The theory includes several strengths, including the view that knowledge-based resources are essentially dynamic and intangible, allowing for distinctive development through path dependency and causal ambiguity, which is a fundamental mechanism for economic value creation (Kirsirja & Aino, 1990). The theory also supports the view that knowledge-based resources embrace the most strategic significance in companies' processes and production operations and that knowledge application is done by individuals working in the firm (Caner et al., 2017).

In this study, the theory will help to guide how companies can use their knowledge-based resources to increase their competitive edge. This is because the firm's KBV is a managerial ideology of organizational learning that provides them with ideas for gaining a competitive advantage. This is accomplished through high employee involvement in the institution and administration of the company's operational goals and long-term transformational aims. The constant transfer and acquisition of knowledge within corporate firms are necessitated by factors such as dynamic competitive market conditions initiated by frequent deregulations, globalization, technological advancements, and complications such as the coronavirus pandemic.

2.2.2 Dynamic Capability Theory

According to Augier and Teece (2009), the dynamic capability theory indicates that there is no single most appropriate way to manage organizations. Managers must adopt innovative approaches to facilitate their organizations' growth. The proponents of the theory recognize that the business environment is dynamic and requires flexible plans (Arndt & Bach, 2015). The theory is related to the publications by Teece, Pisano, and Shuen (2009) on 'Dynamic Capabilities and Strategic Management' published in 1997, and this marks a significant phase in the development of the dynamic capability theory and its application in organizations.

The dynamic capabilities theory assumes that a sustainable competitive edge is best accomplished when a company develops the capability to reconfigure and integrate its resources to adjust to a dynamic environment (Baden-Fuller & Teece, 2020). In this sense, the theory addresses the resource-based theory's failure to incorporate a dynamic environment's influence in strategic management (Teece, 2009).

The theory also assumes that companies that can adapt faster will enjoy the high performance (Ahmad Zaidi & Othman, 2014). Although the dynamic capabilities theory addresses some of the shortcomings of the resource-based theory, it exhibits various weaknesses (Grant & Chen, 2005). For instance, dynamic capabilities can be substituted. In other words, an organization does not have a monopoly on the capacity to integrate and reconfigure resources to realize a sustainable competitive edge in a dynamic environment (Teece, 2009). Therefore, the argument that competitive advantage arises from dynamic capabilities is yet to pass the test (Chowdhury & Quaddus, 2017). Dynamic capabilities are also limited because they involve a tradeoff between various abilities, and some powers are imitable (Arndt & Bach, 2015).

The dynamic capabilities theory relates to the present study because it forms the basis for promoting sustainable competitive advantage among companies. This means that it can help to guide companies such as EABL in promoting their sustainable competitive edge in the long run. Dynamic capabilities are associated with strategic management practices and coach companies in managing their business environment and various challenges (Li & Liu, 2014).

2.2.3 Porter's Five Forces Model

Grundy (2006) states that Porter's Five Forces is a model for evaluating a firm's competitiveness. The theory indicates that industry competition, new entrants, the bargaining power of suppliers, the power of customers, and the threat of substitutes are the critical determinants of competition in the environment. This means that the central element of a company's background is the industry it operates.

Industrial structure strongly impacts the game's rules and the strategies readily available to companies (Dobbs, 2014). The theory assumes that in Porter's model, the bargaining power of suppliers, rivalry among industry pioneers, barriers to entry, bargaining power of buyers, and the threat of substitutes determine an industry's profit-making potential. The framework can help the company find an industrial position from which it can safeguard itself best against competitive forces or impact them in its favor (Porter, 2008). This model provides a systemic thought about how competitive pressure works at the industry level and how the forces influence the profit-making ability of various industries and their segments (Dobbs, 2014).

In this study, the theory will help managers adopt competitive plans and strategies and improve their sustainable competitive advantage (Dobbs, 2014). The model also includes several basic assumptions about sources of competition (Porter, 2008). Competitive approaches typically alter the company's position relative to its rivals and suppliers. This theory relates to the research because it offers a sophisticated technique for evaluating competitive edge with all its implications. In conclusion, it is essential to consider the contexts in which companies are established, managed and organized as well as the type of rivalry.

2.3 Strategic Management Best Practices and Sustainable Competitive Advantage

Strategic management is a business operating game plan aimed at enhancing a firm's competitive edge, creating consumer satisfaction, and achieving the targeted goals, Irwing (1995). Strategic management practices are the set of actions and decisions that an organization's managers make that shape the performance of an organization in the long run. According to Pearce and Robinson (1991), strategic management practices involves a combination of actions and decisions that direct an organization toward the generation and implementation of plans for an organization to achieve its objective and goals. A well-thought-out strategy will lead to an increase in an organization's competitive edge as well as see an increase in its performance. Strategic management practices enable managers at all business levels of an organization to interact when formulating strategies and at the implementation stage, which has tremendous behavioral consequences, Pearce and Robinson (2003).

The business arena is quite competitive, and starting a business is not as expensive and complicated as it used to be. Most of our company can be conducted online, and organizations can win customers from different global markets. Online business methods have challenged organizations to stand out from their competitors in the market. For an organization to maintain market leadership, it needs to sustain its competitive edge. A sustainable competitive advantage enables organizations to increase sales, improve profit margins, expand customer reach, have greater focus and maintain the staff compared to the competitors.

Generic competitive strategies are implemented to increase the competitive edge of organizations. These strategies include product differentiation, low cost of production and focus strategies. An organization must be the most inferior cost produce, differentiating its products from its competitors by offering unique products and using focus strategies. The use of differentiation and low cost as competitive advantages is a value chain function of an organization (Porter, 2001). To enable firms to achieve this, Porter (1998) posited that the firm should be involved in a cycle of continuous change that allows them to be and remain innovative. Changes for strategic advantage include products, technology, people and culture, structure and strategy (Liao, 2015).

2.4 Empirical Studies and Knowledge Gaps

These are the studies that have formed the background of the study. They guided the researcher in conducting the research by pointing out the key areas in determining strategic management practices and sustainable competitive advantages from different organizations. These studies have been conducted globally, at a local level and a local story.

2.4.1 Global Studies

In the United States, Anwar (2018) conducted a study on business model innovation and SMEs performance, using competitive advantage as mediating variables and noted that business innovation promotes the implementation of SMEs in the United States of America. The study used a cross-sectional research design, and data was gathered from different SMEs in the US.

The authors concluded that SMEs should adopt business model innovation as strategic management practices to promote performance. However, the study was done in the United

States, and its implications may not apply to the current research-based in Kenya. In 2010, Mishra and Suar (2010) conducted a study investigating whether CSR influenced organizational performance in Indian firms and confirmed that corporate social responsibility is essential to promoting the performance of companies in India. The authors adopted a cross-sectional research design, collecting data from various Indian firms. The authors established that corporate social responsibility is essential towards promoting the brand image of organizations and ensuring stakeholders' needs are met and should be used in promoting the performance of organizations. However, this study was done in late 2010, before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Li and Liu (2014) determined the environmental dynamism, dynamic capabilities, and competitive edge in China. They noted that firms that have adopted dynamic capabilities enjoyed a high competitive advantage since they could adopt flexible problem-solving methods. The authors hold that emotional capacity is a significant factor in pursuing a competitive edge. They argue that dynamic capacity is the organization's power to systemically find solutions to problems, created by its tendency to predict threats and leverage opportunities, to make informed decisions, and to execute strategic deliberations and changes effectively to make sure the organization is moving towards the right direction, and also examines the association between dynamic capacities and competitive edge and, the role played by environmental dynamism.

The authors used empirical data from 217 Chinese enterprises and realized that dynamic capacities positively affect competitive edge, and environmental dynamism is a facilitator rather than a mediator. However, the study was done in China, and its implications may not apply to Kenyan firms.

2.4.2 Regional Studies

In Nigeria, Olanipekun et al. (2015) examined the effects of strategic management on the competitive edge and organizational productivity of the Nigerian bottling company. They noted that the turbulent and discontinuous nature of the corporate environment ensures that organizations implement strategic management activities to be wary of environmental changes. Olanipekun and his team used the resource-based theory (RBT) as their theoretical foundation since RBT illustrates how competitive edge and superior performance are defined by the distinctiveness of its capabilities and resources that comprise central considerations in strategy formulation. Structured questionnaires were used to collect information and Chi-square and ANOVA analysis. They found that implementing strategic management activities should be proactive and initiate positive changes that eventually lead to sustainable performance and competitive advantage. They advise organizations to constantly sustain, maintain, and improve strategic management activities to ensure performance. However, the study was done in Nigeria.

In Zimbabwe, Tapera and Gororo (2013) investigated the efficiency of marketing strategies adopted in the Zimbabwean insurance sector for creating competitiveness and found that the industry has seen a rise in rival companies grabbing market share on the one hand and a shrinking market caused by the underperforming economy. The influx of new insurance firms worsened this problem after the new currency took effect. Tapera and Gororo used questionnaires and interviews to collect the data. They found that insurance organizations majorly implement low-cost and differentiation strategies and sell their products through multiple brokers and agents. Personal advertising and selling are also used as the main promotional tactics. The researchers propose that insurance organizations regularly conduct comprehensive market studies to identify customers' ever-changing needs in a dynamic environment. Also, they recommend that insurance organizations their levels of creating value for customers via improved product benefits and features.

Moreover, they can use aggressive ICT tactics to market and promote their services to the target market. However, this study only focused on the insurance industry. Kabaza et al. (2010) examined Knowledge Management and Competitive edge in Ugandan consultancy engineering firms in Uganda. They found that these firms don't deliver value for clients' money due to tough competition and the inability of individual employees to leverage and manage their knowledge effectively to gain a competitive edge. The quantitative cross-sectional survey research design found that IT usage significantly impacts the correlation between sharing, configuration, filtering, acquisition and competitive advantage; however, it didn't affect the correlation between applying knowledge and competitiveness.

The study implies that consultancy engineering companies are not systematically and consciously practicing knowledge management for competitive advantage. Kabaza et al.

(2010) strongly recommend that consultancy engineering companies implement knowledge management strategies to apply and filter knowledge to gain a competitive edge. However, the study was done in Uganda and only focused on engineering firms.

2.4.3 Local Studies

In Kenya, Awino (2011) investigated strategic management using quantitative data of selected strategy factors on organizational performance and a case study of supply chain management in big privately-owned manufacturing companies in Kenya and concluded that the independent impact of core capabilities, core competencies, strategy implementation, and strategy on organizational performance is weaker relative to the collective effect of the same variables. The study was conducted on 52 large private manufacturing companies. The study concluded that firms should adopt core capabilities, innovations, and effective strategy implementation to promote their performance. However, this study was done in late 2011, before the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Mutunga and Minja (2014) also studied the generic approaches used by Kenyan food and beverage companies and their impacts on the sustainable competitive edge. The research used a descriptive design – a group of scientific techniques to gather raw data and formulate data structures to describe a target population's current features. They discovered that implementing dual strategies is a firm's survival tool in risk diversification, especially in highly competitive environments. The study concluded that firms should adopt diversification strategies to foster their competitive edge. However, the study was done in 2014 and only focused on the Kenyan food and beverage industry.

Ogutu and Samuel (2012) determined the strategies adopted by 213 Kenyan multinationals to wade off competition in the Kenyan market. The duo discovered that MNCs thrive in global environments unfamiliar with economic, political, socio-cultural, legal and technological elements. Increased competition among MNCs and the entry of other competitors in the market lead to the developing of competitive approaches that promise productivity. Formulating strategies for navigating competition is at the centre of strategic management, which is crucial for long-term organizational survival. They found that most MNCs use lower prices, excellent customer service, better quality, licensing, and franchising to navigate the competitive market. The study also noticed that the MNCs rarely used strategic alliances, diversification, differentiation, and innovation. The study concluded that firms must adopt different strategies to increase their competitive advantage.

Njuguna (2016) also studied the impact of strategic management on the competitive edge in Kenyan youth enterprises and realized that Youth Enterprises survive in the challenging economic environment by defining areas where they can obtain the best results and base their operations on them. Such regions include establishing collaborative networks, product diversification, innovation through value addition, and implementing sustainable business development services to gain a competitive edge. Njuguna (2016) collected both qualitative and quantitative data. He found that Kenyan youth enterprises essentially employ strategy formulation to gain a competitive edge. The study found that business development services, product diversification, innovation, and collaborative networks are positively related to competitive advantage in Kenyan youth enterprises. However, this study was done in late 2016, before the era of the Covid-19 pandemic.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section includes the research design that was used in this research. In addition, this section consists of the data collection method that was used in this study. It is also worth noting that this section also includes the data analysis method that the researcher used to analyze the research findings. The analysis and procedures helped attain the study's objective of establishing a relationship between Strategic Management Practices and a Sustainable Competitive Edge at EABL in the era of Covid-19.

3.2 Research Design

In this inquiry, the researcher adopted a case study method, and the case study was EABL. This means that the focus area of the study where data was collected was EABL. The researcher adopted a case study method since it enabled the researcher to maintain the meaningful and holistic features of the real-life experiences of the study topic, and it was easier to establish if there's a relationship between Strategic Management Practices and Sustainable Competitive Advantage at EABL in the era of Covid-19. Accordingly, the use of case study design has allowed the researcher to get a detailed analysis of a situation related to the topic of the study, which was to establish if there's a relationship between Strategic Management Practices and Sustainable Competitive Advantage at EABL in the era of Covid-19. This has provided the researcher with an in-depth comprehension of the phenomena under study and has allowed the researcher to have a deeper understanding of strategic management practices that helped promote sustainable competitive advantage at EABL in the era of Covid-19.

3.3 Data Collection

The researcher collected primary data from the field, especially from the managers at EABL, to determine how they use strategic management practices to promote their sustainable competitive advantage. These managers included the Human Resource Manager, Corporate Relations Manager, Marketing and Innovation manager, Business development manager, Production, Distribution, Operations manager, Supply chain manager and Customer Service Manager.

Using the interview guide method allowed the study participants to express their views with regards to the topic of the study. The interview method also helped achieve a high response rate during the data collection process. This is because face to face interview method allowed the researcher to closely interact with the participants during the process of data collection. This was important in identifying the respondents and ensuring that they provided honest and reliable data associated with the topic of the study. The researcher interviewed 9 top managers at EABL to establish if there's a relationship between Strategic Management Practices and Sustainable Competitive Advantage at EABL in the era of Covid-19.

3.4 Data Analysis

A qualitative data analysis method was adopted, and this was done after data was collected using telephonic interviews and face-to-face interview methods. The data collected was analyzed using the method of Content analysis. However, the content analyzed was based on various themes underlying the topic of study. Responses with common themes or patterns were grouped into coherent categories, which helped to establish a relationship between Strategic Management Practices and Sustainable Competitive Advantage at EABL in the era of Covid-19.

According to Saunders et al. (2015), qualitative research methods involve examining a concept to provide more insight into a topic. Using the qualitative data analysis method is essential in creating awareness of an existing study idea. Since the study adopted and used content analysis, it was easier to analyze the data based on different thematic categories, which helped to determine the study's objective.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter entails the analysis of the data collected, findings and discussion based on the objective of the research and methodology. The key aim of the study was to ascertain strategic management practices and sustainable competitive advantage at EABL in the era of COVID-19 in Kenya. The case study research design was used in this study, and data collection was done through an interview guide where the researcher interviewed senior managers at EABL. The data collected was qualitative, and the content analysis method was used to analyze the data.

4.2 Respondents profile

The researcher managed to collect data using interviews and reached 9 managers at EABL. The researcher got a response rate of 100% since all 9 senior managers were present for discussions. The respondents are senior managers who had been under the employ of EABL between 3 and 7 years. This made them the best to respond to the strategic management practices EABL has adopted and implemented to maintain a sustainable competitive edge during the era of COVID-19 in Kenya. The respondents were the significant persons responsible for formulation of strategy formulation, the implementation and the execution of strategies in the organization.

4.3 Strategic Management Practices

From the respondents, East African Breweries Limited has increasingly adopted strategic management practices that have enabled the organization to enjoy and maintain a competitive edge in the industry. These practices included environmental scanning, strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation.

4.3.1 Environmental Scanning

The respondents were in consensus that EABL uses environmental scanning to assist management plan the direction of the future of EABL. The organization maximized the strengths and opportunities while minimizing the threats and weaknesses. Resources are allocated to the research department, which gathers information regarding events, patterns, trends and relationships internally and externally that will impact current and future strategies.

When COVID-19 hit the country in 2020, there was a shift in the business arena. Consumers developed new trends in consumption trends and patterns, which saw changes in the preferences among consumers. There were unregulated new entrants in the industry and competition from illicit brew sales due to the decline in the purchasing power of the consumers. The interviewees pointed out the crucial role of the research department to ensure that the organization could sustain their market share. They researched opportunities in the external environment such as partnering with other online platforms to maximize sales and diversify their product selection to cater to the changing purchasing trends.

4.3.2 Strategy formulation

An inquiry was made on the extent of involvement of the respondents in the formulation of strategies for the organization. It was determined that the departments highly in touch with customers, consumer needs, and market trends were responsible for formulating strategies. The respondents explained that their business's core is their mission and vision, which guide strategies the organization uses to gain and maintain a competitive advantage in the long term. The plans greatly dictate the organization's success that an organization formulates. The strategy formulation process greatly influences prioritization, validation of an organization's business goals, alignment, and resource allocation.

Successful strategies allow EABL to share one clear vision and set key performance indicators that are measurable to track performance. When COVID-19 hit, one of the strategies that EABL used was partnering with different stakeholders, such as collaborating with the government of KENYA to supply and distribute more than 135,000 litres of alcohol-based sanitizers across other groups of people. This strategy aided EABL in positioning itself as a brand that supports the community.

4.3.3 Strategy Implementation

Strategy implementation involves getting things done for an organization to attain the desired outcomes. From the findings, EABL has a culture that ensures the employees are prepared through training and effective communications to implement the strategies for the organization to reach its goals. In strategic management, communication plays a fundamental role in implementing systems.

The respondents felt that there is effective communication across the organization in that they are aligned with the critical mission and vision of the organization. To a great extent, the managers agreed that proper allocation and utilization of resources, capacity building, rewards initiative and stakeholder involvement played a role in how the strategy was implemented in the organization. However, they pointed out that communication is vital in ensuring that the system is implemented to achieve the mission and vision objectives.

4.3.4 Evaluation and control

Strategy evaluation and control are essential to any organization as a tool to assess if a business has efficiently and effectively achieved the set-out goals. Strategies are subject to modifications due to the turbulent nature of the business arena.

EABL has designed KPIs to allow the organization to measure and track progress, especially after launching the 10-year action plan, the 2030 strategy. These KPIs are reviewed to report on the progress of the implementation of the strategy. Control is exercised through the crisis management team. There are also contingency strategies put in place. The respondents explained that regular evaluations and control were vital in creating inputs for formulating new strategies and forming a basis for rewards and appraisals.

4.4 Sustainable Competitive Advantage

Sustainable competitive advantage is the key to the success of any business in its industry. These are the sets of characteristics, capabilities and assets that an organization has that meet the needs of the consumers better than their competitors. EABL has had and is still enjoying a huge market share compared to its competitors.

4.4.1 Innovation strategy

From the respondents, it was clear that EABL significantly invested in product and technological innovation, which leads to process improvement of production, manufacturing and distribution, leading to increased efficiency in adapting to the changes in the market. In the dynamic environment of the beverage business today, coupled with the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic brought, organizations need to be innovative to sustain their competitive advantage. Innovation is the introduction of something new. Product innovation is the development and market introduction of a new, redesigned or greatly improved good or service. It is not necessarily something new and original; it may be taking something already there and making it much better.

Consumers expect changes in the market and products regularly due to technological breakthroughs in many industries. Therefore, organizations must continuously allocate resources for innovation to match consumer expectations to remain ahead in their industries. This leads to customer loyalty and retention. According to the respondents, technological innovations have boosted the growth and expansion of the organization's customer reach and increased sales. It has led to improved market data analysis, customer satisfaction, and enhanced product quality management.

4.4.2 Product differentiation

EABL invests heavily in product differentiation and the creation of unique products as a strategy to sustain competitiveness in the brewery industry over a long period. The use of product differentiation as a strategy has seen the organization create brand loyalty for its consumers. Porter (1980) suggests differentiation, a generic process that firms should adopt to gain a competitive edge amongst their rivals in the market.

The respondents pointed out that EABL allocates resources to the research department responsible for gathering information about market trends. This department is responsible for suggesting which direction the organization should go to create and produce products and services that will differentiate them from its competitors and remain a market leader.

4.4.3 Product Diversification

Diversification is one of the strategies organizations use for business growth through the development of new products and by tapping into new markets. Expansion of appeal and risk enables organizations to increase profits by exploring new avenues of sale. The managers at EABL indicated that they had employed a diversification strategy to be able to venture into new markets that were previously untapped.

There was a massive shift in consumer behavior, seeing consumers shift to in-home consumption and trade purchases instead of on premise consumption. This created new markets that EABL ventured into. EABL launched a new platform, 'party central', to secure and maximize sales during the lockdown period. EABL also saw portfolio extensions by introducing can and one-way glass formats to support home consumption occasions. This saw EABL attract and retain new markets which strengthened its competitive advantage.

4.4.4 Human resource management

In recent years, human resource management has been rising as a strategy for organizations to sustain their competitive edge. The global economy is becoming knowledge-based, and the development and acquisition of human capital have proven to be essential in the growth and success of EABL.

According to the respondents, EABL has a track record of acquiring qualified employees and cultivating its human capital to ensure that the goals and objectives set by the organization are achieved. The organization has continuous development and training programs that provide the employees at EABL are in tune with the industry's dynamic changes, such as changes in consumer tastes and preferences.

The managers also noted that EABL is one of the few companies that retained its employees during the pandemic. It created new routines to accommodate the changes and allowed most employees to work from home, providing them with protective gear such as face masks and sanitizers. This flexible working environment, coupled with the retention of the workers, motivated the employees to remain loyal to the brand and work towards achieving the goals and objectives of the organization.

4.4.5 Corporate Social Responsibility

EABL has adopted CSR as a strategy to retain its market share. According to the respondents, part of EABL's vision for 2030, part of the mission is to ensure that the organization is accountable and transparent. Following this objective, EABL has launched sustainability projects focused on empowerment and community engagement. The organization boasts as one of the most water-efficient breweries in the world through the investment it has made in water recovery and wastewater management. The organization has also invested in empowering farmers through training programs and providing free seeds, among other things. For a long time, EABL has invested in CSR, increasing its reach while significantly improving its image by giving back to society. They offer scholarships to bright students as well as mentorship programs.

4.5 Era of COVID-19 Pandemic in Kenya

The respondents confirmed that at the onset of the pandemic, the crisis had adverse impacts across the entire region. The restrictive measures that the country took to protect its citizens against the pandemic greatly affected all sectors of the economy and activities. The respondents agreed that there was a significant economic slowdown across East Africa due to the cumulative impacts of lockdowns, travel restrictions, social distancing and the shutdown of many open venues. The nationwide curfews and the need for social distancing significantly impacted sales in restaurants and bars since operations in these areas were restricted to the set opening hours in Kenya. This led to a shifting behavior of consumers across the board.

Many people lost their jobs, while others saw a decrease in their salaries. This meant that they could not afford most of their usual brands, leading others to shift to illicit brew since they are easy to buy. In return, this saw a decline in sales during the first year of the pandemic. The respondents said that East Africa Breweries Limited had a great understanding of the shift in consumer patterns which drove EABL to diversify into new channels and focus on already created media to boost their profits. This forced EABL to have robust growth in off-trade sales and e-commerce.

The respondents confirmed that there was an increase in the cost of production materials at the onset of Covid-19. There were unregulated new entrants with an increase in the sales of illicit brews as they were perceived to be a cheaper alternative due to the high cost of living with the majority of the people having seen a reduction in salaries or loss of jobs. These posed a major challenge to the organization which had to invest in research and innovation to reduce the cost of products and retain and grow its market share.

4.6 Discussion of the findings

The study's objective was to determine the strategic management practices and sustainable competitive advantage at EABL during Covid-19 in Kenya. The study revealed that EABL had adopted strategies that have helped the organization sustain its competitive advantage in the breweries industry's dynamic business environment, especially during this era of COVID-19.

Since the onset of Covid-19 in Kenya in March 2020, different industries and organizations have seen a dramatic shift in business operations. The lockdowns, travel restrictions, curfew and social distancing adversely affected many companies, especially those that rely on open venues such as bars and restaurants. The study findings indicate that EABL has had to review and adopt strategic management practices and strategies that will continue to cushion the organization from further economic disruptions. These have impacted EABL, maintaining its market share, maintaining the brand, and sustaining the competitive edge it has enjoyed over the years.

The management at EABL worked together to form, implement and evaluate strategies that ensure they achieve their goals and objectives. This is effectively communicated to all the departments in the organization, as communication plays a crucial role in ensuring that everyone is aligned with the mission and vision of the organization. They also regularly monitor and evaluate the strategies' progress using the set KPIs. This assists the organization in realigning the systems if need be better-allocating resources and informing on future strategy formulation.

EABL has also incorporated Corporate Social Responsibility as a strategy to improve its brand image, which showcases it as a market leader in community engagement and empowerment, enhancing organizational performance. The Free Sanitizer Handover Campaign won the Social Investment Campaign of the Year category in the Public Relations Society of Kenya Awards (PRSK Awards). These findings align with Mishra and Suar's (2010) study that investigated if corporate social responsibility (CSR) impacts the firm performance of Indian firms. The authors established that corporate social responsibility is essential towards promoting the brand image of organizations and ensuring stakeholders' needs are met and should be used in promoting the performance of organizations.

Management has also allocated resources to attract, train and maintain human capital, which is key to organizational success. They have increased their employees' knowledge base to ensure they are aligned with the organization's mission and vision. EABL has formulated policies that provide human resource management as one of the key strategies in the organization. They also cultivate their human capital through internship and graduate programs. This is in line with the knowledge-based view theory that has argued that knowledge is increasingly becoming one of a company's most valuable resources. The employees' knowledge, experiences and capabilities allow the firm to have superior corporate performance and sustained competitive advantage in the market (Curado, 2006).

The core capabilities of EABL include differentiated products, value-added products and the provision of quality products. These capabilities are supported by effective communication throughout the organization and the human resources strategies that have been put in place that attract and retain effective and competent staff and the efficiency in the delivery of products and services demonstrated by the effective implementation of strategies.

EABL has adopted a combination of strategies such as differentiation, innovation and diversification to attain a competitive advantage, especially during this era of COVID-19. The findings agree with Ogutu and Samuel's (2012) findings which concluded that firms must adopt different strategies to increase their competitive advantage after conducting a study on the approach adopted by 213 Kenyan multinationals to wade off competition in the Kenyan market.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the summary of the findings, the conclusion and the recommendations of the researcher after the data analysis. The chapter also contains the limitations of the study and future research suggestions. The study's objective was to establish if there was a significant association between Strategic Management Practices and a Sustainable Competitive Edge at EABL in the era of Covid-19 in Kenya.

5.2 Summary of the study findings

The study's main objective was to examine strategic management practices and sustainable competitive advantage at EABL in the era of COVID-19. The findings established that EABL operates in a competitive and highly dynamic environment. The organization adopts strategic management practices of strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation to ensure that it achieves its goals and objectives. To remain a major competitor in the industry, the organization has invested in research and innovation strategies which enable the organization to keep up with the changing trends and preferences and tap into new markets. Innovation has proven to be a helpful strategy, especially during this era of COVID-19, since there were significant disruptions in how businesses operated.

The study also established that EABL used product differentiation and diversification to provide unique products and tap into new markets. There was satisfaction and loyalty among the employees at EABL. This is attributed to the organizational culture that considers its employees' well-being, especially during the pandemic period.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concludes that EABL's strategic management practices have enabled the organization to sustain its competitive edge in the industry. There is also a great understanding of strategic management amongst the managers; hence great thought is put into the formulation, implementation and evaluation of strategies that EABL have put into place to achieve its objectives.

The research findings also concluded that in the dynamic business arena that EABL operates in, organizations need to adopt strategies such as differentiation, innovation and diversification to attain competitive advantage, especially during this era of COVID-19.

From the findings, it is evident that human capital plays a significant role in organizational success. Knowledge-based resources of a firm are often hard to imitate and socially complex. The heterogeneous knowledge capabilities of a firm play an essential role in sustainable competitive advantage leading to superior corporate performance.

5.4 Recommendations and Implications of the study

The study recognizes that COVID-19 brought about disruptions in the economy and how businesses operate; therefore, organizations should formulate and adopt multiple strategies that will cushion them and the industry at large from future economic disruptions.

The study recommends that knowledge management and human capital play a significant role in organizational success; therefore, resources must be allocated to attaining and maintaining human capital to advance organizational success. This can be increased through constant education and employee training to cultivate their full potential.

The study recognizes the importance of environmental scanning since it illuminates the environment in which an organization operates. It, therefore, recommends continuous scanning of the environment since the beverage industry is highly competitive with the threat of new entrants, substitute products and consumers' shifting tastes and preferences.

From the study findings, other industries, policy makers and the government, in general, can benefit from strategic management best practices to cushion them from future economic disruptions whether from a pandemic or political instability which are the major causes of disruptions in business. This is important in policy making and formulation of programs. The study can also be used in the planning and allocation of resources coupled with clear visions and missions which will in turn benefit many organizations and industries as well. It is evident that the use of sustainable competitive strategies such as product diversification and continuous technological innovation strategies can boost the country's economic standing.

5.5 Limitations of the study

The major limitation that the researcher faced was the unavailability of some of the senior management. This would have aided in getting a deeper understanding from managers who were senior however the managers who were interviewed were responsible for strategy formulation and strategy implementation as well as responsible for market and consumer research.

The case study was limited to EABL and may not apply to other industry organizations in the beverage industry. Other alcohol and beverage organizations in Kenya could have been consulted on the strategies they adopt to enhance sustainable competitiveness to get broader findings.

The research findings from the interviewees may not be an exact representation of the views of the entire organization. However, there were minimal inconsistencies in their responses.

5.6 Suggestion for further studies

Further studies can be conducted across multiple beverage industry organizations to fully understand the impacts that COVID-19 has had on the industry. The data gathered could assist other economic sectors in formulating and adopting strategies that would cushion the economy from unforeseen disruptions.

Further studies could also be conducted on the government of Kenya to ensure that the country is prepared for any future economic disruptions as well as improve on the economic standing of the country in the region.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Interview Guide

INTERVIEW GUIDE ON STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND SUSTAINABLE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AT EABL IN THE ERA OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

1. State your name (Optional)
2. What is your current position at EABL?
3. Which department do you head at EABL?
4. How many years have you worked at EABL?
5. How does EABL formulate its strategies?
6. Explain some of the strategic management practices that EABL has adopted?
7. Which department(s) is responsible for formulating strategies that EABL use? Why these department(s)?
8. To what extent has East African Breweries Limited implemented the below strategic management practices in its operations to remain competitive in the industry?
 - i. Setting vision and mission statement
 - ii. Having long-term goals and Core business plans
 - iii. Setting objectives, clarifying strategic issues and setting key results
 - iv. Adopting strategic environmental analysis tools such as SWOT, PESTLE and value chain model
 - v. Strategy formulation, implementation and control/monitoring of plans
 - vi. Allocation of resources and budgeting

- vii. aligning its operations or programs with the organizational structure and other organizational systems (culture, values, processes)
9. What sustainable competitive strategies have EABL implemented to achieve its set goals?
 10. To what extent has EABL implemented the generic strategies below to remain competitive in the industry?
 - i. Cost leadership
 - ii. Differentiation
 - iii. Focus
 11. What changes has the COVID-19 pandemic brought about to the industry and EABL since it hit Kenya in 2020?
 12. How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the formulation of sustainable competitive strategies?
 13. What new strategies has EABL formulated to ensure the organization remains competitive in the long run since the COVID-19 pandemic began?
 14. What are the market changes that EABL has faced from its competitors during the era of COVID-19?
 15. What additional measures has EABL put in place to ensure the organization is cushioned from future economic disruptions and pandemics?
 16. Where do you project EABL's position in the industry in the next 5 years?

THANK YOU

Appendix 2: List of Alcohol Beverage companies in Kenya

1. London Distillers (K) Ltd
2. Keroche Industries Ltd
3. Africa Spirits Ltd
4. Mpaka Wines
5. West Liquors
6. Jovet (K) Ltd
7. The Big Five Breweries
8. Spectre International Ltd
9. Samuja Quality Wines and Spirits Ltd
10. Heineken East Africa
11. Moonwalk Investments Ltd
12. Vintage Liquor and General Supplies
13. Kenya Wine Agencies Ltd
14. Dion Wines and Spirits East Africa Ltd
15. Kenya Breweries Limited

Source: Kenya Yellow Pages Ltd, 2022