SUPPLY CHAIN ORIENTATION AND PERFORMANCE OF CLASSIFIED TOURISM ENTERPRISES IN KENYA

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International Academic Journal of Procurement and Supply Chain Management (IAJPSCM) | ISSN 2518-2404

Received: 9th November 2024

Published: 15th November 2024

Full Length Research

Available Online at: https://iajournals.org/articles/iajpscm_v3_i2_368_393.pdf

Citation: Osir, E. O., Muli, S., Namusonge, E. (2024). Supply chain orientation and performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya. *International Academic Journal of Procurement and Supply Chain Management, 3(2)*, 368-393.

ABSTRACT

Tourism industry in Kenya have suffered difficult times over the years as a result of dull performance of enterprises in the 1990s, post-election violence that rocked the country in the year 2007/2008, global economic crisis in the year 2008, floods, poor climatic conditions, terrorism threats from Al-shabaab leading to loss of lives to both citizens and tourists; and travel bans that brought the country to its lowest point ever. As a result, proactive enterprises have embraced supply chain orientation (SCO) as one of supply chain ambidexterity (SCX) practices well known for delivering enhanced performance to enterprises operating in a complex, hyperdynamic and hypercompetitive business environment manifested in the tourism industry in Kenya. SCO amplifies performance by making a simultaneous pursuit of exploitation and explorations supply chain paradigms which enables enterprises to exploit existing knowledge and resources; and explores new innovations, opportunism and ideas; all with a view of heightening competitiveness and adaptive capability of enterprises. SCO facilitates performance by focusing on measures that include: supply chain design, personnel competency and performance measurement. This thesis was anchored on resource-based theory; and employed a mixed research design in conducting stratified sampling targeting a population of 594 respondents made up of supply chain managers, finance managers and food and beverage managers; in each and every classified tourism enterprise in Kenya. Both primary and secondary data were collected. Structured research instrument was used to collect primary data. Construct validity method was applied in testing the adequacy of the research instrument. Further, pilot testing was conducted on data collection instruments upon which it was established that the instruments were reliable and valid. Data collected was analyzed with the help of statistical packages for social sciences version 24. Thus, by employing supply chain supply chain design, personnel competency and performance measurement as predictors; with supply chain maturity level as a moderating variable; this thesis established the influence of SCO on performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya. From these results, it was found that SCO have a significant influence on performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya. Besides, supply chain maturity level was found to have a moderating effect on the relationship between predictor variables and response variables. The study accentuated the need for classified tourism enterprises to enhance the uptake of SCO and other SCX practices to enhance their performance.

Keywords: Supply Chain Ambidexterity, Supply Chain Orientation, Supply Chain Design; Supply Chain Personnel, Supply Chain Maturity, Performance of Classified Tourism Enterprises.

INTRODUCTION

In unreliable and unstable environments, enterprises are exposed to supply chain disruptions. These disruptions go beyond short-term losses due to their propensity to decrease revenue, increase delays in service delivery and machine downtime (Dolgui & Ivanov, 2021). According to Aslam, Blome, Roscoe and Azhar (2020), disruptions in supply chain could potentially damage enterprises in the long-term and immensely contribute to unmet expectations leading to changes in customers' belief in the enterprise's ability, benevolence and integrity; thereby damaging trust and reputation of an enterprise.

Tourism industry in Kenya have suffered difficult times over the years as a result of dull performance of enterprises in the 1990s, post-election violence that rocked the country in the year 2007/2008 (Kariuki, 2018); global economic crisis in the year 2008, floods, poor climatic conditions; terrorism threats from Al-shabaab that led to loss of lives to both citizens and tourists; and travel bans that brought the country to its lowest point ever. As a result, proactive enterprises in kenya embraced supply chain orientation as one of supply chain ambidexterity (SCX) practices that is popularly known in the global arena for delivering enhanced performance to enterprises operating in a complex, hyperdynamic and hypercompetitive business environment evident in the Kenyan tourism industry (Kariuki, 2018, Aslam, Khan, Rashid & Rehman, 2020; Wang, Yan, Jia & Chen, 2023).

SCO is an ambidextrous practice that demonstrates top management's recognition of the strategic role of supply chain management in delivering sustained high performance to an enterprise (Choi, Narayanan, Novak, Olhager, Sheu & Wiengarten, 2021; Gligor, Feizabadi, Pohlen, Maloni & Ogden, 2022). As such, an enterprise is in supply chain orientated if its top leadership/management recognizes and appreciates the strategic role played by supply chain management in the delivery of an enhanced and sustained high performance. Davis-Sramek, Omar and Germain (2019) allude that SCO is demonstrated by commitment of entire top management to the pursuit and attainment of supply chain excellence through embracing considerations like: ensuring proper supply chain structure/design is in place, focusing on competence of supply chain personnel and measurement of supply chain performance for optimal output (Feizabadi, Maloni & Gligor, 2019).

Global Perspective of Supply Chain Orientation

As indicated by Gligor, Gligor and Maloni (2019), SCO is a critical enabler of supply chain management which aims at enhancing performance by aiding an enterprise to strategically manage its supply chain operations, norms of behavior within an enterprise, facilitates top leadership to view supply chain in a holistic way in order to seek convergence, integration and synchronization of strategic capacity and operational activities. Davis-Sramek, Omar and Germain (2019) added that before engaging in supply chain management, enterprises must develop a foundation in supply chain orientation. SCO anchors the success of any supply chain on the input of the management and top leadership of an enterprise (Harland, 2021). This is demonstrated when the top management and leadership of an enterprise appreciates and understands the value and implications of effectively managing the

finances, people, activities, products, information and flow of processes systematically across the chain.

According to Jadhav, Orr and Malik (2019), for an enterprise to be supply chain oriented, top leadership has a responsibility of ensuring a firm has formal systems and structures that facilitates control and coordination of activities with the aim of attaining supply chain and organization goals; employment and hiring of supply chain personnel with supply chain-related abilities, skills and knowledge; and finally, put in place a mechanism to monitor and measure supply chain performance with the aim of enhancing continuous learning, innovation alignment with corporate goals of the firm (Davis-Sramek *et al.,* 2019). Thus, SCO is a precursor to successful implementation of any supply chain strategy.

Supply chain orientation has a significant and positive effects on operational performance. Additionally, Jadhav *et al.,* (2018) concluded that SCO has a great potential to enhance performance of firms if adopted alongside other supply chain strategies. Mubarak, Shaikh and Sohu (2019) in a triad of supply chain orientation, strategies and competencies in construction industry divulged that there are two paradigms of viewing SCO, namely: a) strategic perspective of SCO is based on the philosophy seeks to exploit exchanges by making strategic decisions and choices that are grounded on supply chain capabilities; b) structural SCO paradigm is grounded on firm's internal structural elements, which include: i) supply chain design which is part of organizational design; ii) supply chain personnel as a component of human resources; iii) supply chain measurement as part of organizational measurement ; and iv) supply chain technology as an element of information technology.Thus, with an aim of establishing the influence of SCO practices on performance of enterprises, the study was anchored on resource-based theory; and employed SCO measures like: supply chain design;supply chain personnel competency and supply chain performance measurement.

Local Perspective of Supply Chain Orientation

Hotel industry is one of the biggest industries in Kenya's economy (Andrew, 2020); however, with the turbulent nature of the tourism industry, hotels face various challenges thus calling the need to improve efficiencies within the hotels and their whole supply chains. Most five-star hotels are supply-chain oriented having implemented supply chain management; however, these hotels have continued to achieve varied results in their performance; similarly, the reaserch also established that the major challenges of being supply chain orientation in the hotel industry were the lack of understanding the supply chain management concepts and the turbulent nature of the hotel industry.

Ondoro (2018) scrutinized supply chain management practices and competitive advantage in the hotel industry in Nairobi Region with the objective of establishing the relationship between supply chain management practices and competitive advantage among classified hotels in Nairobi region. Findings reaveled that the extent to which each of the practices had been adopted within the hotel industry varied; While the results showed that lean supply chain practices had been adapted to a small extent, strategic supplier partnership and supplier development had been adopted to a moderate extent with inventory management being adapted

to a greater extent; however, results divulged that none of supply chain practices practices were a significant predictor of competitive advantage.

Classified Tourism Enterprises

Classified Tourism enterprises in Kenya operate in a business environment that is hyper competitive, regulated and highly dynamic (Bii, Akuku, Geoffrey & Onyango, 2023; Osir, 2016). Business environment encompasses a set of conditions and forces both inside and outside the boundaries of an enterprise that have the probability of influencing the way firms run; thus, an understanding of the environment within which an enterprise operate in is critical for its success at any place. Vohra (2015) explains that business enterprises are confronted with four main categories of environments classified by Emery and Trist (1965), as cited by Eraslan and Altindag, (2021) in their research on effects of organizational ambidexterity and justice on organizational learning. These categories of environments include: placid-randomized, placid-clustered, disturbed-reactive and turbulent-field environments (Lawlor & Sher, 2023).

Classified tourism enterprises entails establishments that have been categorized into classes and licensed to operate and run tourism and hospitality related business in the Kenyan tourism sector with an aim of making profit (Section 122 of the Tourism Act 2011 laws of Kenya). The government regulates the tourism industry through a corporate body known as Tourism Regulatory Authority (TRA) which was established in pursuant to section 4 of the Tourism Act No.28 of 2011; and mandated to regulate the tourism sector in Kenya by developing regulations, standards and guidelines that are essential for ensuring an all-round quality service delivery in the tourism sector. Periodically, TRA carries out National classification of all regulated tourism activities and services with a view of ensuring high standards and quality of services in the sector. The classification exercise is overseen by a standardization and classification committee made up of members from both the private sector and public sector. This exercise is guided by an approved criterion for each category of establishment (9th Schedule of Tourism Act 2011 laws of Kenya).

In order to gain competitive advantage and enhance their performance, tourism enterprises in Kenya are depending on the success and excellence of their supply chain. Thus, making supply chain management a driver of attaining competitive advantage to the enterprises (Sun, Sarfraz, Khawaja & Abdullah, 2022). Since tourism enterprises in Kenya operates in hypercompetitive, complex and hyperdynamic environment characterized by heightened regulatory requirements, ever-changing customer demand in addition to supply chain disruptions; most tourism enterprises have embraced SCRES with a goal of achieving an enhanced performance and remaining competitive (Cheruiyot, 2022; Kinyua, Kangai & Njoroge, 2022; Kichanja, 2023).

Statement of the Problem

Besides being popular for its pristine beaches, inordinate national parks and wildebeest migration; Kenya continues to receive global recognition for its rich leisure, hospitality and tourism destination (Kwoba, 2018; Kenya, 2020). Kenya has distinguished herself as a key tourism hub in the East Africa region. According to Kenya Association of Travel Agents, in 2017 tourism industry significantly contributed a total of 294.6 billion shillings to Kenya's

economy which accounted for approximately 3.7% of the total GDP (Ndambuki, Kariuki & Bitok,2022; KATA,2018). World Travel and Tourism Council, (2018) explaines that Travel and Tourism in Kenya grew faster than the regional average and significantly above other economies in Sub-Saharan Africa (Sindiga, 2018; Nyasha, Odhiambo & Asongu 2021). This industry grew by 5.6 per cent to contribute Kenya Shillings 790 billion and 1.1 million jobs to the Kenyan economy (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2019; Nyasuguta, 2019).

In order to gain competitive advantage and enhance their performance, tourism enterprises are depending on excellence of their supply chain (Fontoura & Coelho, 2022). Thus, making supply chain both a pillar and driver of attaining competitive advantage to the enterprises. In view of this studies exposed that total direct expenditure of tourism enterprises amounted to $ 77,588,812 (which is approximately Kenya Shillings. 7,992,453,894.00) in the year 2019; thus, alluding that every tourism enterprise surveyed spent $ 2.7 million through supply chain management activities. Major expenditure was incurred on procurement of food and beverage items amounting to $ 22 million; and least amount spent on procurement of uniform at $ 0.18 million, equipment at $ 0.6 million, insurance services at $ 0.74 million and marketing services at $ 0.12 million (Ministry of Tourism & Wildlife, 2020; Kenya, O. T. I. 2020). Despite of a foregoing colossal amount of investment in tourism enterprises in Kenya, major problems contributing to dismal performance of these enterprises have not been addressed adequately (Murimi, Wadongo & Olielo, 2021; Osir, 2016). These performance hindrances include: lack of resilience to handle supply chain disruptions as a result of the effect of pandemic, political turmoil and poor climatic conditions (Odeny, Kurauka & Kurauka, 2020).

Since tourism enterprises in Kenya operates in hypercompetitive, complex and dynamic environment characterized by regulatory requirements, ever-changing customer demand and supply chain disruptions (Ondoro, 2018); most enterprises have embraced ambidexterious supply chain practices SCO with measures such as: SC design; SC personnel and SC performance measurement. These practices are well known for increasing performance and competitiveness of enterprises by making a simultaneous pursuit of exploitation and exploration supply chain paradigms,which are known to make enterprises both adaptive and creative while at the same time relying on traditionally proven methods of business (Caiado *et al,* 2021). However, despite embracing SCO and experience of enterprises in the global arena, performance of tourism enterprises in Kenya have remained varied (mixed) with some enterprises only register moderate to dull results (Ondoro, 2018; Nyakwaka, 2021). Thus, by employing supply chain maturity level as moderator and supply chain design; supply chain personnel and supply chain performance measurement as predictors; this thesis establishes the influence of SCO on performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya.

Study Objectives

The main objective of this study was to establish the influence of supply chain orientation on performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya.

The specific objectives of the study were:

a) To determine the influence of supply chain orientation on performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya.
b) To establish the moderating effect of supply chain maturity in the relationship between

supply chain orientation and performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya.

Research Hypotheses

The research null hypotheses were as follows:

a) H_{01}: Supply chain orientation has no significant influence on performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya
b) H_{05}: Supply chain maturity has no significant moderating effect on the relationship between supply chain orientation and performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya.

Significance of the Study

The study holds significant value in various dimensions, including optimizing the supply chain performance of classified tourism enterprises, shaping policy options for the tourism supply chain, and contributing to the research body of knowledge. For classified tourism enterprises, the findings can be utilized to improve supply chain performance by enhancing service delivery, reducing costs while maintaining quality, ensuring compliance with standards and regulations, mitigating supply chain disruptions, and increasing responsiveness to dynamic tourism market conditions. Policy makers can leverage the study results to formulate regulations that enhance the competitiveness and resilience of enterprises in the tourism sector. Researchers can be inspired to conduct similar studies for validation and to generate new recommendations for improving the performance of tourism enterprises in Kenya. Academicians in the tourism industry will benefit from the study's contributions to both theoretical and practical knowledge, aiding in handling supply chain disruptions and ensuring resilience in the tourism sector.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the study mainly entails theories underpinning the existence of the research problem and provides a structure to support the research study's theory. Defined by Swanson and Chermack (2013) as a coherent group of tested propositions commonly regarded as correct, a theory offers principles for explanation and prediction of phenomena. This thesis relied on the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm as the study's theoretical foundation.

A basic tenet of the RBV is that top-performing firms are those that are able to develop, obtain, and/ or exploit strategic resources - firm assets that are rare, valuable, difficult to imitate or substitute and organizationally activatable (Hult, Ketchen Jr, Adams & Mena, 2008). Achored on this argument; the origin of resource-based theory is associated with Barney, (1991) who found that resource-based theory creates and opportunity for managers and strategists to assess potential aspects, resources and factors in an organization that can be put together in order to attain competitive edge. In order to understand this theory; Fahy and Smithee, (1999) noted that a fundamentally, not all resources are of a firm have the potential of becoming a source of sustainable competitive advantage.

Prahalad and Hamel, (2006) explored the core competence of the corporation and revealed that the foundation of sustainable advantage of a company spring from following three aspects: doing things in a superior manner, developing superior resources and capabilities. As explained by Lowson, (2003); comprehending the causal relationship between the sources of advantage and successful strategies of a firm can be a daunting and difficult task for strategists or managers. Thus, companies must endeavor to invest and spend their energy more on organizational learning to develop, nurture and maintain key resources and competencies.

Similarly, firms should spend their efforts in identifying, understanding and classifying core competencies in their organizations. Scholars like Hooley, Greenley, Fahy and Cadogan, (2001) investigated RBV in comparison to other theories and concurs that resource-based theory is more flexible than Porter's prescriptive approach to strategy formulation. In line with this, Day and Wensley, (1988) points out that managers and strategists should endeavor to select the competitive position that best exploits the internal resources and capabilities of their firm relative to external opportunities. Thus, resource-based theory remains the most preferred model in anchoring all studies related to supply chain orientation.

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework represents the researcher's understanding of how variables in his study connect; thus, representing his/her synthesis of the literature on how to explain a phenomenon under investigation (Varpio, Paradis, Uijtdehaage & Young, 2020). This study will examine the influence of supply chain Orientation on performance of classified tourism enterprises as indicated in figure 1.1. In this regard, therefore; supply chain Orientation as the independent variables; while performance of classified tourism enterprises, the dependent variable. Additionally, this study also assessed the moderating effect of supply chain maturity level in the relationship between SCO and performance of classified tourism enterprises.

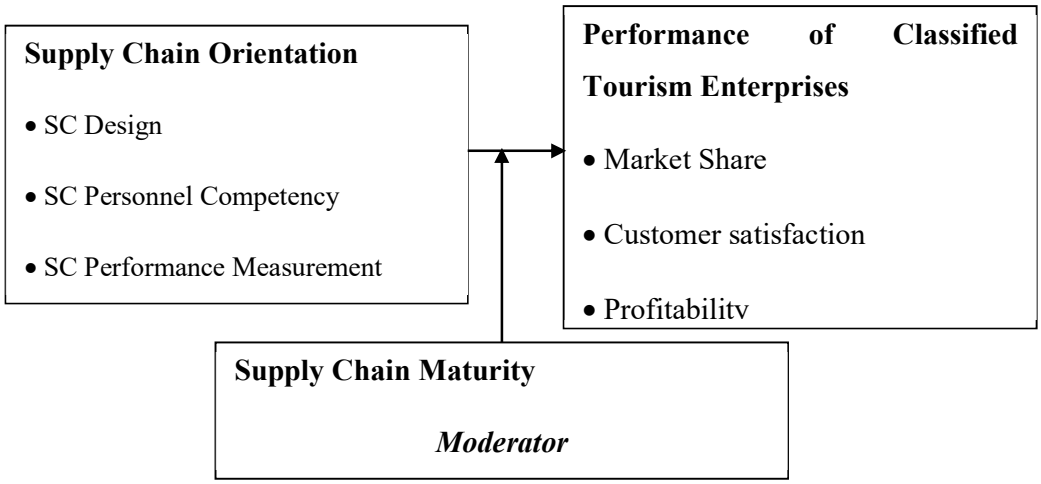


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

LITERATURE REVIEW

Supply Chain Orientation

Supply chain orientation is an ambidextrous practice that demonstrates top management's recognition of the strategic role played by supply chain in delivering sustained high performance to an enterprise (Jadhav, Orr & Malik, 2019). Thus, an enterprise possesses a supply chain orientation if its top leadership/management recognizes and appreciates the strategic role played by supply chain management in the delivery of enhanced and sustained high performance. SCO is demonstrated by commitment of entire top management to the pursuit and attainment of supply chain excellence through embracing considerations like: ensuring proper supply chain structure/design is in place, focusing on competence of supply chain personnel and measurement of supply chain performance for optimal output (Jadhav *et al.,* 2019).

SCO aims at enhancing performance aiding an enterprise to strategically manage its supply chain operations, norms of behavior within the enterprise, facilitates top leadership to view supply chain in a holistic way in order to seek convergence, integration and synchronization of strategic capacity and operational activities (Davis-Sramek, Omar & Germain, 2019). SCO anchors the success of any supply chain on the input of the management and top leadership of an enterprise. This is demonstrated when the top management and leadership of an enterprise appreciates and understands the value and implications of effectively managing the finances, people, activities, products, information and flow of processes systematically across the chain.

To enable simultaneous pursuit of exploitation and exploration, top leadership of an enterprise must successfully implement SCO in pursuit of supply chain excellence. Successfully implemented SCO thus demonstrated when an enterprise's supply chain design factors in higher-level considerations or influencers such as: business and political environment, SC life cycle and firm's desired outcomes (Thornton, Esper & Autry,2016); SC structure factors in middle-level specific design decisions such as: physical network design, social, behavioral and structural design elements that define a supply chain; and considerations for including SC building blocks such as: inventory, capacity and technology decisions (Velez & Prada-Ospina, 2018).

Similarly, supply chain-oriented enterprises are expected to ensure that SC performance is measured, by use of metrics. These SC metrics include: cash-to-cash cycle (cash conversion) metric, which measures the time lag between sending cash to suppliers and receiving cash from customers (Sholeh, Nurdiana & Dharmo, 2021); supply chain cycle time, which measures the period of time it would take to complete a customer's order if all inventory levels were zero (Sharma, Kamble, Mani, Sehrawat, Belhadi & Sharma, 2021); fill rate, which is the amount of customer demand that is met through stock availability, without backorders or lost sales; inventory turnover which measures efficiency of the entire supply chain process by gauging the number of times the entire inventory is sold in a specified time period; and finally, perfect

order index which measures error-free rate of the entire supply chain process with the aim of avoiding damaged goods, inaccurate orders or late shipments.

Since SCO is anchored on exploitation and exploration initiatives; it is instrumental in cultivating corporate performance of an enterprise by delivering a supply chain with higher levels of maturity through mapping of proper design of a supply chain, boosting competence of supply chain personnel and measuring supply chain performance for optimal output. Jadhav *et al.,* (2019) concluded that SCO has a great potential to enhance performance of firms if adopted alongside other supply chain strategies. Thus, with an aim of establishing the influence of SCO practices on performance of enterprises, the study was anchored on resource-based theory; and employed SCO measures like: SC design; SC personnel compentence and SC performance measurement.

Supply Chain Maturity Level

Any maturity level infers that in the continuous representation a group of process areas have reached certain capability levels (Hansali, Elrhanimi & Elabbadi, 2022). Achieving a maturity level sets a solid basis for the entire enterprise improvement towards the next maturity level (McCormack, Bronzo Ladeira & Paulo Valadares de Oliveira, 2008). In the context of the uncertain and hypercompetitive business environment witnessed in the tourism sector, it is imperative for tourism enterprises to enhance their performance through the pursuit of higher levels of supply chain maturity as alluded by scholars like Cheshmberah and Beheshtikia (2020).

Supply chain maturity, characterized by stages of development, plays a crucial role in improving an enterprise's performance by facilitating effective responses to environmental changes, ensuring better control, accuracy in forecasting, and increased responsiveness (Benrqya, Chetioui & Jerboui, 2024). Higher maturity levels of supply chain enable enterprises to build a resilient and agile supply chain, respond to customer needs, and reduce the bullwhip effect through real-time data sharing and enhanced communication across the supply chain. To measure supply chain maturity, the capability maturity model integration is employed, which categorizes maturity stages into five levels (Hansali, Elrhanimi & Elabbadi, 2022).

Xxxx Constantinescu and Iacob,(2007) divulges that in stage one (also known as initial), sporadic improvement activities may be underway in a few areas;in stage two (also known as managed), informal approach deployed in a few areas with varying degrees of effectiveness and sustainment;stage three (also known as defined) is characterized by a systematic approach/methodology deployed in varying stages across most areas, facilitated with metrics,good sustainment;in stage four (also known as quantitatively managed), on-going refinement and continuous improvement across the enterprise is witnessed and improvement gains are sustained ;and finally, stage five (also known as optimizing) is characterised by exceptional, well-defined, innovative approach is fully deployed across the extended enterprise (across internal and external value streams); recognized as best practice.

Similarly, in an attempt to demonstrate the progression of activities toward effective supply

chain integration witnessed in supply chain maturity model, xxx McCormack, (2001) investigated the supply chain maturity and explained that stage one (ad hoc) of supply chain maturity is characterized by supply chain management practices which are unstructured and ill defined,process measures are not in place and the jobs and structures in the organization are based upon the traditional functions, not horizontal supply chain processes; in stage two (defined); basic supply chain processes are defined and documented, order commitment,procurement and other processes, for instance, are available in flow charts, and changes to these processes must now go through a formal procedure, jobs and organizational structures include supply chain managemnet, but remain basically traditional.
In stage three (linked or the breakthrough level) however; managers employ supply chain management with strategic intent and results, broad supply chain management jobs and structures are put in place outside of traditional functions, cooperation between intracompany functions, vendors and customers takes the form of teams that share common supply chain management measures and goals that reach horizontally across the supply chain. In Stage four (integrated) of supply chain maturity advanced supply chain management practices take shape; the company, its vendors and suppliers, take cooperation to the process level,organizational structures and jobs are based on supply chain management procedures, and traditional functions, as they relate to the supply chain, begin to disappear altogether, supply chain management measures and management systems are deeply imbedded in the organization; and finally, in stage five (extended), a horizontal, customer-focused, collaborative culture is firmly in place.

In this stage, competition is based upon multi-firm supply chains, collaboration between legal entities is routine to the point where advanced supply chain management practices that allow transfer of responsibility without legal ownership are in place, trust and mutual dependency are the glue holding the extended supply chain together. In light of the foregoing, this study employs supply chain maturity level as a moderator to explore the influence of SCO on performance of classified tourism enterprises in kenya. The staged representation of a supply chain maturity provides a roadmap to efficiently focus on improving process and process areas, with milestones for bringing the entire enterprise in a coherent and uniform way from the initial level to the optimizing level, ensuring a robust incremental improvement. Further,the staged demonstration is also seen as a good choice when starting a process improvement initiative lacking precise directions towards the areas that need improvement.

Performance of Classified Tourism Enterprises

Hotel industry environment in kenya has become more complex and hypercompetive and dynamic due to increased competition, innovations and rapid advances in technology (Fredrick & Authority, 2019). As a result, tourism enterprises have faced several challenges, which include: stiff competition, unfavourable government regulation, shortage of qualified staff, poor infrastructure, insecurity, lack of strategic planning and poor organizational processes among others. These factors have affected the performance of classified tourism enterprises and the hotel industry at large;thus making these enterprises resort to developing various competitive capabilities with a view of enhancing their strategic performance (xxxx Kibe & Okello, 2015; Osir,2016).

Classified tourism enterprises in Kenya, licensed by the government under the Tourism Act of 2011, operate in a highly competitive and dynamic business environment (xxxxx Kibe & Okello,2015; GOK, 2011). To navigate this environment, enterprises in the global arena have embraced supply chain ambidexterity practices like SCO with the aim of enhancing performance in terms of profitability, market share, growth, customer satisfaction, and revenue (Kariuki, 2018; Aslam, Blome, Roscoe & Azhar, 2018). Leveraging supply chain maturity as a moderating variable, the research aims to investigate the influence of SCI on the performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya. Alluded by scholars like: Otto, Szymanski and Varadarajan (2020); and Eklof, Podkorytova and Malova, (2020); performance metrics of this study included: profitability, market share, growth, customer satisfaction, and revenue, measured over the past five years, with 2017 as the base year.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology encompassed a range of activities, including research design, target population, sampling frame, sample and sampling technique, data collection instrument, data collection procedure, pilot testing, data analysis, and presentation (Devi,2017; Bhattacharyya, 2006). In terms of research design, this study opted for a mixed methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research methods. This decision was grounded in the belief that combining these two types of data would yield a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem, as emphasized by Hesse-Biber, (2010) and Brannen, (2017). The features of a mixed methods research design, involving the collection and analysis of both quantitative (closed-ended) and qualitative (open-ended) data, were outlined, underscoring the advantages such as addressing contradictions between results and capturing participant perspectives.

In this study, the discussion on the target population defined the specific group of interest, comprising 198 tourism enterprises in Kenya classified by the Tourism Regulatory Authority.SimilarlySimilarly, the unit of observation encompassed supply chain managers, finance managers, and food and beverage managers in each enterprise, totaling 594 respondents. The determination of the sample size, guided by Slovin's formula, led to the selection of 239 respondents as the appropriate sample size for the study. Additionally, subsequent sections delved into the sampling frame, sample size determination, research instrument, data collection procedure, and pilot testing. The sampling frame was derived from the national classification register generated by the Tourism Regulatory Authority, with all 198 enterprises in the register being targeted. The research instrument, a structured questionnaire, was chosen for its ease of administration and standardization. Data collection procedures involved self-administration and drop-off/pick-up techniques to enhance response rates and reduce costs. Pilot testing, conducted on a small subset of respondents representing approximately 8% of the target population, aimed to identify potential issues with the methodology.

The sections on validity and reliability in this study addressed the validity of the research instrument and the reliability of the research instrument. Construct validity was scrutinized

through factor analysis, while reliability underwent testing using Cronbach's Alpha. The data processing and analysis section underscored the utilization of both qualitative and quantitative methods, including descriptive and inferential statistics, for analyzing the data. The study employed SPSS software for data entry and analysis, presenting the results through tables, graphs, and charts. This study concluded with a discussion of data presentation, drawing on various statistical measures, and introduced the utilization of multiple regression analysis to investigate the relationship between supply chain ambidexterity variables and the performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya. In summary, the research methodology chapter established a robust framework for conducting the study, aligning with established research principles and methodologies cited in the literature.

Research Findings and Discussion

In this research findings and discussion chapter, the study employed both descriptive and inferential methods of data analysis using SPSS. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, means, standard deviation, and percentages, were initially utilized to summarize the data. The inferential analysis involved Pearson correlation and linear regression analyses to explore relationships between independent variable (SCO and supply chain maturity level) and the dependent variable (performance of classified tourism enterprises). The section begins by outlining the techniques and procedures, followed by an exploration of pilot study results, response rate and statistical inference.

Pilot Study Results

The pilot study, conducted on a small subset of respondents, aimed to identify potential issues with the data collection instruments, ensuring their validity and reliability. The subsequent sections delve into the reliability and validity of the research instrument. Reliability, assessed through Cronbach’s alpha, demonstrated good internal consistency across variables, with all standardized alpha coefficients exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.7. The reliability tests encompassed various dimensions, including supply chain integration, supply chain maturity level, as well as the performance of classified tourism enterprises. The overall reliability coefficient was found to be 0.800, affirming the instrument's reliability. Validity was assessed through construct validity, involving expert opinions and factor analysis. The latter aimed to confirm that observed variables measured the intended constructs, with satisfactory factor loadings obtained. Table 1.1 represent the findings.

Table 1: Reliability and Validity

Variables	Chronbar bar alpha	Standardized cronch bar alpha	Factor Loads	No of items
Supply Chain Orientation	.942	.941	0.652	11
Supply Chain Maturity	.831	.830	0.648	20
Performance Of Enterprises	.763	.771	0.661	11
Overall	0.774	0.800	0.654	42

Response Rate Results

The response rate analysis in Table 2 indicates that 78.66% of the total surveys and questionnaires distributed received responses, totaling 188 returned responses. Conversely, 22.34% of the attempts remained unreturned, accounting for 51 responses. The overall response rate, combining both returned and unreturned categories, reached 100%, aligning with the considered 50%, 60%, 70% response rate range deemed appropriate in research. Scholars like Hardigan, Popovici, and Carajal (2016) and Creswell and Creswell (2017) have suggested varying response rate benchmarks, with the study's 78.66% rate deemed adequate. Factors contributing to the high response rate included respondent awareness, sufficient time for data collection, efficient research assistants, and the simplicity of the research instruments. This response rate supports the researcher's ability to draw meaningful conclusions from the data, as indicated by the established benchmarks.

Table 2: Response Rate

Response Rate	Frequency	Percent
Returned	188	78.66%
Unreturned	51	22.34%
Overall	**239**	**100.00%**

Descriptive Statistics

Supply chain design, supply chain personnel competency and supply chain performance measurement within the SCO framework received mean scores of 3.534, 3.511 and 3.498, respectively; indicating a generally positive outlook and agreement among respondents regarding the SCO as shown in table 2. The overall mean for SCO aspects, at 3.514, reflected a balanced and favorable perception, aligning with existing literature that underscores the significant contribution of SCO to performance improvement. These results agree with finding of Gligor, Feizabadi, Pohlen, Maloni and Ogden, (2022) who concluded that besides SCO being a critical enabler of SCM; an enterprise with supply chain orientation matching its primary downstream or upstream customers/partners performs meaningfully better than an enterprise with a higher or lower supply chain orientation.

Concerning Supply Chain Maturity, respondents rated Total Level 3 (Defined) the highest, with a mean score of 3.868, indicating a well-defined and structured supply chain. The Overall Aspects of Supply Chain Maturity received a mean score of 3.651, reinforcing a positive evaluation of maturity levels. These findings were consistent with recommendations from Correia, Garrido-Azevedo, and Carvalho (2023) who emphasized the importance of maturity models in helping enterprises benchmark their operations against industry best practices. Cislaghi, Wegner, and Vieira (2022) also supported the idea of maturity models as tools for identifying areas of improvement and evolving governance and relational rents during the maturity stages of supply chains.

Finally, the Performance of Enterprises, assessed through Market Share, Customer Satisfaction, and Profitability, yielded mean scores of 3.512, 3.476, and 3.489, respectively, indicating a moderately positive assessment of enterprise performance. Low standard deviations across all aspects reflected a consistent and stable response pattern among respondents, enhancing the reliability of the data. Overall, these findings indicated a generally positive past perception of supply chain elements and the performance of enterprises among the surveyed individuals. These observations resonated with previous studies by Jermsittiparsert and Pithuk (2019), highlighting factors like higher capital intensity, competitive rivalry, leverage, and risks impacting the hospitality and tourism industries. Verreynne, Williams, Ritchie, Gronum, and Betts (2019) also supported the positive impact of supply chain ambidexterity practice on enterprise performance by improving order fulfillment, reducing delays, and increasing profitability through effective demand forecasting efforts.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Supply Chain Orientation, Supply Chain Maturity Aspects of Performance of Enterprises.

Aspects of Supply Chain Orientation		**Mean**	**Std. Dev**	**N**
1	SC Design	3.534	0.798	188
2	SC Personnel Competency	3.511	0.769	188
3	SC Performance Measurement	3.498	0.728	188
Overall Aspects of Supply Chain Orientation		**3.514**	**0.765**	**188**
Aspects of Supply Chain Maturity		Mean	Std. Dev.	N
1	Total Level 1 Initial	3.558	0.736	18
2	Total Level 2: Managed	3.431	0.897	43
3	Total level 3 Defined	3.868	0.833	60
4	Total level 4 Managed	3.712	0.832	52
5	Total Level 5: Optimizing	3.583	1.015	15

Overall Aspects of Supply Chain Maturity		**3.651**	**0.881**	**188**
Aspects of Performance of Enterprises		Mean	Std. Dev	N
1	Market Share	3.512	0.844	188
2	Customer Satisfaction	3.476	0.798	188
3	Profitability	3.489	0.739	188
Overall Aspects of Performance of Enterprises		**3.492**	**0.794**	**188**

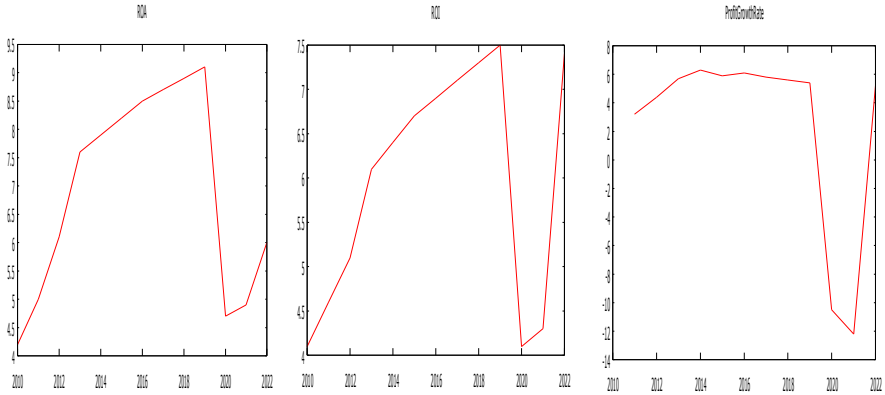
Using secondary data in assessing the performance of classified tourism enterprises in terms of profitability, various financial metrics were employed, including Return on Assets (ROA), Return on Investment (ROI), and Profit Growth Rate. For ROA, the mean over the years was 6.9%, with a standard deviation of 1.8, indicating moderate variability. The lowest and highest ROA values were observed in 2010 (4.2%) and 2019 (9.1%), respectively, in Table 4. Despite a consistent upward trend from 2010 to 2019, there was a decline in ROA in 2020 and 2021, attributed to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. These findings align with Muragu, Nyadera, and Mbugua (2023), emphasizing the effect of the COVID-19 crisis on tourism enterprises in Kenya.

Regarding ROI, the mean was 6.0%, with a standard deviation of 1.3, suggesting substantial variability. The lowest and highest ROI values were recorded in 2021 (4.1%) and 2019 (7.5%), respectively. The stable trend from 2010 to 2019 saw a significant decrease in ROI in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic, consistent with insights from Kimunio and Maingi (2022) highlighting the need for recovery strategies post-COVID-19. For Profit Growth Rate, the mean was 2.6%, with a standard deviation of 6.6, indicating moderate variability. The lowest and highest values were -10.5% and 6.3%, respectively, with a consistent upward trend from 2010 to 2019 and a sharp decline in 2020 and 2021, reflecting the pandemic's impact. These findings resonated with Ondicho (2021), emphasizing the repercussions of COVID-19 on tourism in Kenya and suggesting recovery strategies. The data in Figure 2 further details these insights, providing a comprehensive overview of the performance metrics over the years.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics on Measures of Performance in Terms of Profitability of Classified Tourism Enterprise in Kenya.

Year	ROA (%)	ROI (%)	Profit Growth Rate (%)
2010	4.2	4.1	-
2011	5	4.6	3.2
2012	6.1	5.1	4.4
2013	7.6	6.1	5.7

2014	7.9	6.4	6.3
2015	8.2	6.7	5.9
2016	8.5	6.9	6.1
2017	8.7	7.1	5.8
2018	8.9	7.3	5.6
2019	9.1	7.5	5.4
2020	4.7	4.1	-10.5
2021	4.9	4.3	-12.2
2022	6	7.4	5.2
Mean	6.9	6	2.6
STD	1.8	1.3	6.6
Min	4.2	4.1	-12.2
Max	9.1	7.5	6.3



ROA (%) **ROI (%)** **Profit Growth Rate (%)**

Fig. 2: Line Graphs for Performance Measures of Classified Tourism Enterprises in Kenya.

Regression Analysis for the Relationship Between Supply Chain Orientation and the Performance of Classified Tourism Enterprises in Kenya.

In order to demonstrate a positive impact of Supply Chain Orientation on the performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya, a simple regression analysis was undertaken, mirroring previous methodologies. Furthermore, the null hypothesis was tested, positing no effect of Supply Chain Orientation on the performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya, in contrast to the alternative hypothesis suggesting a significant effect. The findings revealed an R-square value of 0.131 in the absence of a moderator, indicating that 13.1% of the performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya was explained by Supply Chain Orientation. Moreover, with the inclusion of a moderator, an R-square value of 0.174 was recorded, signifying that 17.4% of the performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya was explained by Supply Chain Orientation in the presence of a moderator, as depicted in the summary model Table 5.

The details of further results showed that the F-statistic values were 28.030 and 19.440 for model 1 and 2 respectively as presented in Table 5. In this case, there was an indication that the two models were significant with p-values of 0.00 which were less than 0.05 showing that the two models were sufficient as the null hypotheses were rejected. The finding further suggests that there was effect of Supply Chain Orientation on the Performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya. Besides that, the coefficient of regression between Supply Chain Orientation and performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya was given as;

Y= 2.557+ 0 .103X3 ……with no moderator;
and **Y= 2.354+ 0.099X3 + 0.057X3*z** ……with moderator as illustrated on the coefficient Table 5.

The p values for two models were 0.000 which were also less than 0.05. This further implies that there was a positive significant effect of Supply Chain Orientation on performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya. From the analysis the null hypotheses were rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted for the two models that is when the moderator is not available and when the moderator is available. However, model 2 (model with moderator) was the most preferred model. These results resonate with the findings of Yu, Jacobs, Chavez and Feng (2019) in their study of Data-driven SCO and financial performance, with the innovation-focused complementary assets as a moderator.

Table 5: Model summery for regression Analysis for Supply Chain Orientation (X3) and Performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.362[a]	.131	.126	.21301	1.671
2	.417[a]	.174	.165	.20828	1.766

a. Predictors: (Constant), Supply Chain Orientation and Supply Chain Orientation *z(moderator) model 1 and 2

b. Dependent Variable: Performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya.

Table 6: ANOVA for Supply Chain Orientation (X3)

Model		Sum of Squares	Degree of freedom	Mean Square	F	P-value
1	Regression	1.272	1	1.272	28.030	.000[b]
	Residual	8.440	186	.045		
	Total	9.712	187			
2	Regression	1.687	2	.843	19.440	.000[b]
	Residual	8.025	185	.043		
	Total	9.712	187			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya.

b. Predictors: (Constant), Supply Chain Orientation and Supply Chain Orientation *z(moderator) model 1 and 2

Table 7: Coefficients for Supply Chain Orientation (X3)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P-value
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.557	.075		33.898	.000
	Supply Chain Orientation	.103	.019	.362	5.294	.000
2	(Constant)	2.354	.099		23.874	.000
	Supply Chain Orientation	.099	.019	.347	5.179	.000

Supply Chain Orientation *z	.057	.018	.207	3.092	.002	

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of classified tourism enterprises in Kenya.

Conclusions

The study further deduces that the tourism enterprises in Kenya have adopted supply chain orientation in their operations to great levels. There is clear evidence that the supply chain performance is measured by supply chain cycle time, which is a metric that measures how long it would take to complete a customer's order if all inventory levels were zero; the supply chain performance is gauged by the cash-to-cash cycle (cash conversion) metric, which measures the time lag between sending cash to suppliers and receiving cash from customers. Supply chain orientation has an outstanding influence on the performance of the tourism enterprises in Kenya. The tourism enterprises have supply chain orientation tools designed to identify vulnerable areas, develop alternative plans, and practice reactions to the crisis; supply chain orientation keep the tourism enterprises ready for a time of crisis; The tourism enterprises employ various supply chain orientation to survive in the mounting pressure in the industry; and supply chain orientation systems are frequently used in organizations to impact their overall performance.

The study deduces that the five levels of supply chain maturity are characterized by definite features that become more refined as the enterprises advance in maturity levels. According to the study findings, firms in the initial stage of SC maturity have processes that have proven to yield positive results in terms of work completion at higher rates. These processes are however prone to reactivity unpredictability and uncontrollable to effectively respond and enhance employees' contributions. From the research, the enterprises within the second stage of SC maturity have developed basic supply chain processes which are often reactive to specific aspects of performance. These processes are usually focused on similar projects within a given period of time after which they are reviewed and refocused.

The study concludes that most of the tourism enterprises operate below their levels of operations as compared to the period prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to COVID-19 pandemic, the tourism enterprises had growing market shares, had increasing profits, customer rating improved consistently, products offered to customers surpassed customer expectation, had growing occupancy rate, sales improved consistently, and realized growing overall performance. This is an indication of the retrogressive effects of the pandemic on this industry which is heavily dependent on travel and accommodation.

Recommendations

The study found that tourism enterprises in Kenya have adopted SCO in their operations. Supply chain orientation in the tourism enterprises is the manifestation of the supply chain mindset within the firm. In this regard, it is essential for the tourism enterprises to put in place well equipped staff to seek and develop appropriate response mechanisms to cushion the

tourism enterprises from economic shocks that affect their performance. The study recommends that the tourism enterprises need to invest in improving the supply chain orientation practices. Further, tourism enterprises need to encourage contracting suppliers with complementary goals and objectives so as to facilitate and promote growth of tourism enterprises.

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