

**THE EFFECTS OF STRATEGIC AGILITY ON THE
PERFORMANCE OF SIMBA CEMENT COMPANY
LIMITED**

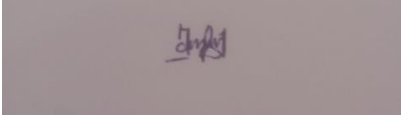
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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF
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DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented for the award of degree in any other university or institution of higher learning.

SIGN: 

DATE 24th November 2023

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D61/39562/2021

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

SIGN.....  .. DATE...24th, November 2023.

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my loving mother and father for their relentless and unwavering support and prayers towards my academic exploration. To my lovely wife Mevaline and son Harvey Daliso, family and friends, whose unwavering support and patience have been a source of strength, this work stands as a testament to the shared victories of this intellectual pursuit. To my mentors, whose guidance has been a beacon illuminating the path of discovery, thank you for your wisdom, encouragement, and shared passion for learning.

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To the participants and individuals especially from Simba Cement Company who generously shared their insights and experiences, your invaluable contributions form the heart and soul of this research. Your willingness to engage in this scholarly dialogue has enriched the depth and breadth of our collective understanding. May this research project serve as a small tribute to the spirit of inquiry, collaboration, and the enduring quest for knowledge. It is dedicated to the belief that each contribution, no matter how modest, contributes to the tapestry of human understanding. In the same vein, I acknowledge the help and encouragement from my friends and family for giving me humble time during my research.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ARM	Athi River Mining limited
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DCT	Dynamic Capability Theory
EAPCC	East Africa Portland Cement Company
R & D	Research and Development
SA	Strategic Agility
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises

ABSTRACT

This research study delved into the effects of strategic agility on the performance of cement manufacturing firms operating in Kenya, using Simba Cement as a case study. Strategic agility, defined as an organization's ability to adeptly respond to dynamic and uncertain business environments, has gained prominence as a crucial factor in achieving competitive advantage. The Kenyan cement industry, characterized by its unique challenges and opportunities, serves as an apt context for investigating the relationship between strategic agility and firm performance. Drawing upon theoretical frameworks such as the Dynamic Capabilities Theory and the Contingency Theory, the research explored the dimensions of strategic agility and its potential impact on various aspects of firm performance. The literature review provided insights into the existing body of knowledge on strategic agility and its implications across diverse industries. The empirical investigation focuses on Simba Cement, one of Kenya's leading cement manufacturing firms, to assess the extent to which strategic agility influences operational efficiency, innovation and product development, and financial performance within the context of the cement industry. By analyzing relevant data and conducting interviews with key stakeholders, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how Simba Cement's strategic agility initiatives have contributed to its overall performance. The findings of this research contribute to both academic and practical perspectives. Academically, the study enhances the understanding of the relationship between strategic agility and firm performance, particularly in the context of emerging economies and dynamic industries. Practically, the research offered insights to cement manufacturing firms in Kenya and beyond, aiding them in formulating and implementing strategies that leverage strategic agility to navigate challenges and capitalize on opportunities. In conclusion, this research shed light on the pivotal role of strategic agility in influencing the performance of cement manufacturing firms in Kenya, exemplified by the case study of Simba Cement. As organizations strive to remain competitive in rapidly changing business environments, understanding and harnessing the power of strategic agility emerges as a critical imperative for sustained success.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In today's rapidly changing business environment, organizations face numerous challenges that require them to adapt quickly to new opportunities and threats. The business landscape is marked by its volatility, unpredictability, intricate nature, and ambiguity. Consequently, companies and their operations are in a perpetual state of change, as those that choose to remain passive in such a highly volatile business environment risk being displaced from the market. Strategic agility refers to an organization's ability to sense, seize, and transform opportunities in a rapidly changing environment, while also effectively managing risks (Teece, 2007). It encompasses the capacity to be proactive, innovative, and responsive, thereby enhancing a firm's competitive advantage. All organizations are always keen on their performance since it determines their stability and perpetuity. Although, most organizations and SMEs alike find it challenging to maintain positive performance always. It is more tricky for them especially in phases of economic meltdown and shutdown of commercial activities. Therefore, for a firm to thrive it should be flexible, responsive and dynamic hence strategically agile.

This research was premised on two theories: Dynamic Capabilities Theory advanced by Teece Pisano and Shuen, (1997) and Contingency theory by Woodward and Fiedler, (1964). Dynamic capabilities refer to the organization's ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external resources to sense and seize new opportunities (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997). Strategic agility can be viewed as a dynamic capability that enables firms to rapidly sense changes in the external environment and make necessary adjustments to their strategies and operations. This ability to adapt and respond to market shifts enhances a firm's performance by

allowing it to seize emerging opportunities and mitigate potential threats. Contingency theory recognizes the ever-changing operating conditions under which business organizations operate. It means that there is no single management approach that suits all situations. This implies that there is a need to match a management strategy to the prevailing opportunities or challenges, rather than relying on a universal management style or approach. Contingency theory suggests that the role of strategic agility in enhancing organizational performance is directly affected by the degree of alignment between the firm's strategy, plan, leadership, together with the external environment (Mao, Liu & Zhang, 2015). The anchor theory to this research shall be the dynamic capability theory.

This study took a keen interest in the cement manufacturing industry with a focus on Simba Cement Company Limited. The production of cement, which serves as the main component of infrastructure, residential, and commercial structures, is vital to the global construction industry. Intense rivalry, shifting market dynamics, and changing consumer needs define the sector. Strategic agility, or the capacity to recognize and act quickly on environmental changes and opportunities, is a necessary quality for cement manufacturing enterprises to succeed in this intensely competitive climate (Eisenhardt, 2000; Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2001). Organizations may efficiently modify their strategies, business models, and operations through strategic agility, which improves performance and competitiveness. The study seeks to establish a nexus between strategic agility and performance of cement manufacturing companies with Simba Cement as a case study.

1.1.1 Strategic Agility

Various scholars have defined strategic agility in various ways. Hitt, et al., (2015) observed strategic agility as "the capability of an organization to spot and capitalize on opportunities and

adjust strategies in light of changing market conditions." While Teece (2007) describes strategic agility as "the ability to sense and seize new opportunities, generate new resources, and effectively reconfigure the organization's structure and processes.". Doz and Kosonen, (2008) define strategic agility as "the capacity to change the business model in response to changes in the environment." While these definitions highlight the importance of flexibility, adaptability, and responsiveness to alterations in external environment for an organization to achieve strategic agility, this study defines strategic agility as ability to respond swiftly to changing situations with innovative responses as demonstrated by business organizations. Various researches have been done to establish ways in which firms achieve strategic agility. If a firm has a systematic process to continuously monitor and analyze the external environment, including market trends, the firm has an upper hand of agility.

This enables the organization to identify possible opportunities and any likely threats. It should also be noted that firms should establish mechanisms and decision-making frameworks that facilitate quick and efficient decision-making. This involves delegating decision-making authority, empowering employees, and fostering a culture that encourages experimentation and risk-taking. In addition, there should be a learning culture that promotes continuous learning, knowledge sharing, and the ability to adapt based on feedback and new information. Encourage employees to embrace a growth mindset and provide training and development opportunities to enhance their skills and capabilities. (Doz & Kosen, 2008). The organizational structure and processes should be designed in a way that enables quick decision-making, cross-functional collaboration, and effective communication.

Strategic agility can be exhibited through such ways as ability of environmental scanning and sensing, adaptive strategy formulation, organizational learning and innovation, resource allocation, flexibility, strategic partnerships and alliances (Doz & Kosonen, 2010).

1.1.2 Performance

Organizations are constantly mindful of their performance, as it ultimately dictates their survival in the highly competitive business arena. Consequently, those organizations capable of thriving in such circumstances are the ones that exhibit agility. While the term firm performance has to do with the level of success or failure in achievement of firm goals set aside by a firm, different scholars have opined the essence in different ways. Barney and Hesterly (2019) observed that "Firm performance refers to the overall results and outcomes achieved by a firm in relation to its strategic and operational objectives, reflecting its ability to create value, generate profits, and acquire a viable competitive advantage. Further Alegre and Chiva (2008) defined it as "the overall effectiveness, efficiency, and competitiveness of a firm in achieving its desired outcomes, including financial results, market position, customer value, and organizational reputation.

However, Chen and Mahmood (2019) observed that firm performance is the relative success or failure of a firm in achieving its goals and objectives, determined by various financial and non-financial indicators, such as return on investment, market share, innovation, and customer satisfaction. This study defines performance of firms as the degree of the ability of firms to achieve their goals and objectives in a competent, efficient and effective way possible. Performance of firms can be noticed through the following indicators: Revenue, profitability, market performance indicators like market share, consumer satisfaction, innovation and growth indicators, research and development, new product development, social-environmental

performance indicators, corporate social responsibility (CSR), environmental footprint/management.

1.1.3 Cement Manufacturing Firms in Kenya

The cement manufacturing industry in Kenya plays a pivotal role in the country's economic growth and infrastructure development this is according to the Kenya cement market analysis report (2023). Cement is a vital building material used in various construction projects, including residential buildings, roads, bridges, and commercial structures. The industry's performance is closely linked to the overall economic health of the nation and serves as a barometer for measuring economic activities and investments in the construction sector.

According to Kenya manufacturers association report (2023), the prominent cement production firms in Kenya currently include: East African Portland Cement Company (EAPCC), Bamburi Cement Limited, ARM Cement (now known as National Cement Company), Savannah Cement Limited, Mombasa Cement Limited, National Cement Company Limited (Separate from ARM Cement) and Simba Cement (Devki Group). The cement sector in Kenya is marked by the existence of numerous prominent cement manufacturing companies, encompassing both local and international players. These firms operate state-of-the-art cement plants across different regions of the country, catering to the domestic market and exporting to neighboring countries in East Africa (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2020). The industry is highly competitive, driven by factors such as product quality, pricing strategies, distribution networks, and innovations in cement technology.

Cement manufacturing firms in Kenya contribute significantly to job creation, income generation, and government revenue through taxes and levies (Ng'ang'a & Kibera, 2018). The industry's growth and performance have a direct impact on employment opportunities and social

development in the regions where cement plants are situated. Moreover, the availability of affordable and high-quality cement is essential for promoting sustainable urbanization and meeting the country's infrastructure needs. Despite the cement industry's importance, there is a knowledge gap in understanding the effects of strategic agility on the performance of cement manufacturing firms in Kenya. Strategic agility, the ability to adapt and respond swiftly to market changes and uncertainties, is a critical factor in a dynamic and competitive environment (Namada et al., 2017). Exploring the linkage between strategic agility and organization performance will provide valuable insights into the industry's resilience, growth prospects, and strategies for maintaining a competitive edge.

1.1.4 Simba Cement

Simba Cement is a subsidiary of Devki Group of Companies, which is a conglomerate with diverse business interests, including manufacturing, construction, and real estate. Devki Group, founded by Mr. Narendra Raval, commonly known as "Guru" in the business community, is a prominent business conglomerate in Kenya. The incorporated company established its presence in the cement industry in Kenya in 2008 with the aim of contributing to the country's infrastructure development and construction needs. The company operates cement manufacturing plants in both Kenya and Tanzania. These plants produce various types of cement products used in the construction industry.

Simba Cement Company Ltd produces and supplies cement and related construction materials. The company is known for producing high-quality cement products that are used in various construction projects across Kenya and East Africa. Forbes (2019) indicates that Simba Cement has been involved in significant expansion efforts to increase its production capacity and meet

the growing demand for cement in East Africa. These expansion initiatives have included the construction of new cement plants and investments in infrastructure.

Simba Cement competes in the highly competitive East African cement market, serving both domestic and regional markets. It faces competition from other cement manufacturers in the region. The company offers a range of cement products suitable for various construction applications, including building construction, infrastructure development, and other industrial uses. According to Business Daily newspaper (2019), like many cement companies, Simba Cement is likely to be focused on sustainability and environmental responsibility, including efforts to reduce the carbon footprint associated with cement production and alliances with other organizations can provide access to complementary resources and markets . Simba Cement products are well-known in the Kenyan and East African construction markets. Simba cement report (2020) indicates that the company has a presence in various regions and serves a wide range of customers, including contractors, builders, and infrastructure developers.

1.2 Research problem

Despite the growing recognition of strategic agility as a strategic imperative, there is still a significant gap in the knowledge regarding its effects on the performance of firms. While some studies have examined the relationship between agility and performance in specific industries or contexts, a comprehensive understanding of how strategic agility impacts on the performance of cement manufacturing firms is lacking (Sanchez & Heene, 2004). A lot of research on strategic agility and firm performance have been done in a broader context, encompassing various manufacturing industries, without specific attention to the cement manufacturing sector. For instance, (Smith et al., 2018) explored strategic agility in manufacturing firms without delving

into the unique challenges faced by cement manufacturers. Some studies have primarily concentrated on traditional financial performance metrics, such as revenue and profitability, overlooking other relevant dimensions of performance for cement manufacturing firms. Some studies have focused on specific regions or countries, neglecting the diversity of the global cement manufacturing industry. For example, (Johnson et al., 2019) focused on the performance of cement manufacturing firms in a single region, limiting the generalizability of their findings to other contexts.

Many researches have relied on cross-sectional designs, which provide a snapshot of the link between strategic agility and performance at a specific point in time. For example, (Lee et al., 2018) used a cross-sectional survey to assess the nexus between strategic agility and performance in cement manufacturing firms. This study shall use a case study to establish the relationship between strategic agility and a firm's performance. From the above, there are conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps in establishing the effects of strategic agility on the performance of firms. Therefore, to bridge these gaps, this study sought to investigate the following research question: What are the effects of strategic agility on the performance of Simba Cement Company?

1.3 Research Objective

The aim of this research was to investigate the effects of strategic agility on the performance of Simba Cement Company limited.

1.4 The Value of the Study

This research holds considerable significance for multiple stakeholders. For cement manufacturing firms, the findings will offer insights into effective strategic management

practices that can foster sustainable growth and profitability especially to the practitioners like the top managers. Policymakers can benefit from understanding the industry's dynamics and identifying policy interventions that can support the growth and competitiveness of the cement sector. It will help the government to harmonize new policies governing the cement industry with current strategic agility approaches. Investors and financial institutions can use the study's findings to make informed investment decisions within the cement industry. They can assess which companies are better positioned for growth and profitability based on their strategic agility.

Additionally, the study will enrich the academic discourse on strategic management and firm performance, particularly in upcoming markets and the context of the cement industry. It will help in the advancement of knowledge on SA. By exploring the context of cement manufacturing firms in Kenya and outlining the research's aim, objectives, and significance, this research proposal sets the foundation for investigating the effects of strategic agility on the performance of the cement industry in the country.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the literature related to the research objective, which is to establish the effect of strategic agility on the performance of Simba Cement Company limited. The section discusses the theories underpinning the study. Further, it encompasses empirical studies that pertain to the research area.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

Theories that are relevant to and support the topic of study are discussed in this section.. The discussions relating to the effect of strategic agility on the performance of firms is anchored on two theories, namely; Dynamic capability theory and the Contingency theory. Two theories are covered in this section with their relevance clearly brought out. The anchor theory to this study shall be the dynamic capability theory.

2.2.1 Dynamic Capability Theory

The dynamic capability theory (DCT) was developed by Teece, Pisano and Shuen (1997). This theory has emerged as a result of recognizing that the resource-based view was inwardly oriented and failed to acknowledge the rapid changes in the operating environment. Hence, it underscores the imperative for organizations to constantly adapt and align with the ever-evolving surroundings. The DCT thus recognize that a firm's capabilities are both internal and external, meaning that in order to register performance a firm should integrate, learn and reconfigure its assets and process in rapidly changing environments. A firm dynamic capability is measured through three dimensions, namely; sensing, seizing and transforming capacity (Gerald, Obianuju & Chukwunonso, 2020). An organization should sense changes in its operating environment,

including technological, market trends, competitive dynamics and customer preference. After changes have been identified, an organization has to seize the opportunities that arise or come up with mechanism through which the challenges can be managed. This step will imply that the organization leadership have to allocate adequate resources to the strategy and in a timely manner. Lastly, the other important step for an organization is to be able to transform the internal available resources and capabilities towards actualization of the strategic direction that is to be pursued.

Dubey, Gunasekaran and Childe (2018) explain how dynamic capability theory recognizes that internal resources can be aligned to cope with the highly changing environment and by so doing seize new opportunities in new and potentially effective ways. In this regard, business units and non-business units must respond rapidly to the market and competitors, which is dynamic in their operations, in order to deal with the fast changing business environments

Dynamic capability theory has received both acclaim and criticism in the field of strategic management and organizational studies. While it has provided valuable insights into how firms can adapt and innovate in rapidly changing environments, there are also several criticisms and challenges associated with the theory. Here are some of the key criticisms of dynamic capability theory. Difficulty in measurement, Conceptual Overlap where there is often conceptual overlap between dynamic capabilities, organizational learning, and routines. These concepts are closely related and sometimes used interchangeably, which can lead to confusion and theoretical imprecision (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000) and even empirical challenges. Despite these criticisms, dynamic capability theory remains a valuable framework for understanding how firms can adapt and innovate in dynamic environments. The criticisms serve as a basis for ongoing scholarly debate and further refinement of the theory.

2.2.2 Contingency Theory

Several scholars developed the contingency theory; its roots can be traced back to the early 1964. One of the earliest contributors to the development of contingency theory was Lawrence. Another influential scholar in the development of contingency theory was Fiedler. It acknowledges the ever-changing operating conditions under which firms operate means that there is no single management approach that suits all situations. This implies that there is need to match a management strategy to the prevailing opportunities or challenges, rather than relying on a universal management style or approach. The contingency theory suggests that for an organization to compete efficiently in such a market, it is essential to ensure the alignment of organizational and contextual factors and to maintain a sufficient level of agility to address both challenges and opportunities that may arise. (Aghina, Smet, & Weerda, 2016). The possible contingencies highlighted by the theory that will need tailoring of a management approach include the problem or the task at hand, organizational structure and culture, characteristics of individuals involved and other situations and emerge from time to time.

Contingency theory suggests that the role of strategic agility in enhancing organizational performance is directly affected by the degree of alignment among the organization's strategy, structure, leadership, and the external environment (Mao, Liu & Zhang, 2015). An organizational structure can either facilitate or hinder strategic agility and this means that a business structure should support agility through decentralization of decision-making, and the removal of barriers to communication and faster decision making. Similarly, the structure should enable quick decision-making, rapid information flow, and effective coordination to capitalize on emerging opportunities or respond to threats. Guo, Yin, and Liu (2023) explain that contingency theory expounds that leaders should adopt a leadership style that aligns with the organization's agility requirements. This includes having agile processes, leveraging technology, fostering a learning

culture, and attracting and retaining talented individuals who can adapt to new challenges. Therefore, the gist of the contingency theory is the need for business organizations to be agile and adapt its processes to be able to cope with emerging changes in the business environment.

2.3 Strategic Agility and performance

Strategic agility measures the ability and prowess of a firm to react to changing market conditions; a step that will mean that they invest in different resources and coming up with a wide array of strategic options. Kalay and Lynn (2016) research in Turkey on how organizational structure affect management innovation support the same position on the role of agility because it showed that agility in business operations enables firms to act aptly to market opportunities and emerging technologies. It makes businesses to modify strategies, processes and structures to meet new challenges and seize opportunities. Strategic agility enhances a firm capability to respond to customer preferences, market conditions, technological advancements and regulatory requirements (Yousaf & Majid, 2018). They attributed the same to the fact that organizations that are more flexible can quickly identify and adapt to these changes, gaining a competitive advantage over less agile competitors by capitalizing on new opportunities and mitigating risks. Strategic agility enhances innovation and creativity within an organization because it allows for experimentation, the exploration of new ideas, and the ability to adapt processes and products to emerging trends.

Strategic agility encourages innovative thinking and provide the necessary resources and support; it helps in developing a culture of creativity and continuous improvement (Ni et al, 2020). This leads to the development of new products, services, and processes that increases performance and meet evolving customer needs. In addition, strategic agility facilitates effective

resource allocation and utilization because it can enable re-allocation of resources quickly to areas with higher potential or changing priorities. In a turbulent environment characterized by the emergence, collision, division, evolution, and decline of markets, a key factor influencing a firm's success is strategic agility. This refers to the capacity to adapt to new developments, consistently adjust the company's strategic course, and devise innovative methods to generate value (Weber & Tarba, 2014).

Shin and Konrad, (2017) study, which explored the link between high-performing work systems and organizational performance, underscores that, within the framework of the resource-based view, a company's strategic agility can be limited by its resources and how they are utilized. This limitation arises due to the vital role that resources themselves play, in addition to the value they bring to the company's operational activities. Consequently, effective resource allocation is contingent on the inherent characteristics of these resources, while the company's capacity to employ its available resources is reflected in its coordination efforts. (Grewal & Tansuhaj, 2001).

Speed as a measure of organizational agility is concerned with how an organization makes quick and timely decisions, implement changes rapidly, and bring new products or services to the market before competitors. The speed at which an organization operates can have a great effect on its performance because it shortens the period that it takes the business to introduce new products or services to the market. Wu, Straub and Liang. (2015) observed that organizations that provide prompt and efficient customer service have higher chances of retaining customers and building long-term relationships. Speed in addressing customer needs can lead to improved performance through increased customer loyalty, positive word-of-mouth, and enhanced reputation. In their research on the antecedents and impact of strategic agility on the performance of private higher education institutions in Malaysia, Chan and Muthuveloo (2021), confirmed the

relationships outlined in their framework. They conducted an online survey involving 155 private higher education institutions (HEIs) in Malaysia, achieving a response rate of 41.33 percent. The data analysis revealed that strategic agility plays a central role in the proposed relationships. Furthermore, it was demonstrated that technologies, organizational capabilities, and human resources are robust drivers of strategic agility. This study underscores the essential importance of strategic agility for private HEIs in achieving enhanced organizational performance and ensuring long-term business sustainability. This agility allows organizations to navigate uncertain and dynamic environments, seize opportunities, and mitigate risks, leading to improved performance outcomes. In the same line, (Jain & Moreno, 2015) acknowledged that a learning orientation encourages knowledge sharing and collaboration within the organization. This collective knowledge and collaboration can lead to innovation, problem-solving, and improved performance. Fayezi, Zutshi, and O'Loughlin, (2017) sought to understand the development of supply chain agility and its influence on performance among fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) in Iran and established that collaboration increase a firm adaptability because it fosters a culture of agility within an organization.

2.4 Summary of empirical studies and Research Gaps

Koçyiğit and Akkaya (2020) investigated the impact strategic agility in organizational performance among 54 firms in the west of Turkey. The strategic agility variables were measured using competency, flexibility, speed and responsiveness. The findings suggest that there is a positive and significant nexus between strategic agility and performance because agility introduces resource pools and different portfolios of strategic options that enable them to handle effectively any surprises that come to the market.

Mehdibeigi, et al., (2016) investigated the causal effect between customer knowledge management and organization's effectiveness by determining the moderating role of organizational agility. The study used descriptive research survey was undertaken among private banks in Sirjan, in Spain. The population of the study was 130 employees from which all of them were given a questionnaire each and 97 were successfully filled and collected. The research finding reveal that the ability of an organization to develop and launch their offerings quickly is a source of competitive advantage. This was attributed to the fact that being first to market a product allows organizations to capture market share, establish brand recognition, and generate revenue earlier.

Arokodare et al., conducted a study to investigate the role of knowledge management as a mediator in the relationship between strategic agility and organizational performance within the upstream oil and gas industry in Nigeria. The study's findings indicated that knowledge management has a substantial impact on organizational performance. However, it was revealed that knowledge management does not significantly mediate the relationship between strategic agility and organizational performance. Nonetheless, both knowledge management and strategic agility independently demonstrated a significant impact on organizational performance.

Doz and Kosonen, (2021). empirical research delves into the examination of the strategic agility of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and its correlation with factors such as the age of the business, its size, and its performance. The study involved 30 businesses spanning various industries situated in the vicinity of Florida's Space Coast, where they implemented and evaluated the three-factor model of strategic agility proposed by Doz and Kosonen. The research findings indicate a decline in strategic agility as businesses age, although this decline is not associated with the company's size. Furthermore, the research reveals that strategic agility boosts

firm performance in highly turbulent environments but diminishes in low-turbulence settings. This outcome reinforces the notion that in stable conditions, dynamic capabilities like strategic agility may be less essential due to their associated costs.

While existing research provides insights into the nexus between strategic agility and firm performance, there is a scarcity of studies examining this relationship within the context of Kenyan cement manufacturing firms. This research aims to bridge this gap by investigating the specific impacts of strategic agility on Simba Cement's performance. The literature review establishes the theoretical foundation for the research, highlighting the importance of strategic agility in enhancing firm performance. The review also highlights the gaps in the current literature and sets the stage for the empirical investigation into the effects of strategic agility on Simba Cement's performance in the subsequent chapters. While there is a substantial body of literature on the importance of strategic agility and dynamic capabilities, there is a need for more empirical research to understand the specific effects of strategic agility on firm performance.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methodology used to examine the effects of strategic agility on the performance of the cement manufacturing industry in Kenya, with a focus on Simba Cement as a case study. It presents the research design that shall be used to collect data, sample selection, and how data found shall be analyzed.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative case study research design to explore the effects of strategic agility on the performance of cement manufacturing firms in Kenya, using Simba Cement as a case study. This approach allowed for a deeper investigation of a specific firm, Simba Cement, within the broader context of the Kenyan cement manufacturing industry. A case study design facilitates the exploration of the complexities, nuances, and specific strategies employed by Simba Cement and provides valuable insights into the effects of strategic agility on its performance. Simba Cement was selected as the case firm due to its significance within the Kenyan cement manufacturing industry (Yin, 2014).

3.3 Data Collection

The data which was collected was be primary data. This was achieved by use of an interview guide aiming key stakeholders at Simba Cement. These stakeholders shall be the finance officer, chief executive officer, planning officer, human resource officer, production manager and the quality assurance officer. These interviews explored the firm's strategic agility initiatives, challenges faced, and the perceived effects on various aspects of performance. A pre-designed interview guide was used to ensure consistency while allowing for flexibility to probe deeper

into relevant areas. (Smith, 2010). Additionally, archival data, such as financial performance reports, strategic plans, annual reports, and other relevant documents were collected and analyzed to gain insights into Simba Cement's strategic agility initiatives and their impact on performance metrics. (Johnson, 2015).

3.4 Data Analysis

Data from interviews were transcribed and subjected to qualitative content analysis. Themes related to strategic agility initiatives, challenges faced, outcomes, and their impact on performance was identified and interpreted. This analysis provided a rich comprehension of the qualitative aspects of the nexus between strategic agility and performance. Data found through interview guide was compared with the archival data at the disposal, Simba cement reports relevant to the study and strategic plans. This helped the study to compare the performance matrices before and even after strategic agility interventions. General conclusions shall thereafter be drawn to help the study align its objectives with the concepts of the topic under research.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The objective of the study was to determine the effect of strategic agility on performance of Simba Cement. The chapter provides the outcome of the findings from data analysis. This is in relation to the study objectives and the variables incorporated in the study. Primary data was collected through use of an interview guide and the analysis done based on the content that was captured in the collection instrument.

4.2 Demographic Information

This part of the interview guide sought information of the interviewee particularly in respect to role and responsibilities within the organization and tenure in the organization. Further, the firm's information including its size, market presence, and strategic objectives in the cement industry was also sought. In total, the researcher was able to interview five resource persons, namely; Finance Manager, Planning officer, human resource Manager, Production Manager and Quality Assurance Manager.

In response to the first question regarding the demographic information of the respondents, the interviewees identified themselves with various key roles within Simba cement Kenya Ltd. The Finance manager expressed,

“ I serve as the financial steward and strategist within the organization, responsible for overseeing and optimizing its financial resources. I am in charge of managing the complexities of financial planning, reporting, and analysis, the finance manager plays a pivotal role in guiding the organization towards sustainable growth and success. To the

cement company, I am at the forefront of ensuring the fiscal integrity of the company by developing and implementing financial policies, procedures, and controls."

This underlines the multifaceted responsibilities inherent in roles central to the organization's financial health. Similarly, the planning officer highlighted, *"My role in the organizations strategic agility goal is developing a proactive approach to environmental scanning, effective strategic planning facilitation, and the integration of agile methodologies, they contribute significantly to the organization's ability to navigate a dynamic business environment and capitalize on emerging opportunities."*

This insight provides a glimpse into the vital role of planning department in Simba Cement goal of maintaining a growth in its performance.

Furthermore, the Quality Assurance Manager described his responsibilities in relation to the organizations strategic agility goal, stating, *"I work closely with leadership to align quality standards and assurance processes with the organization's strategic goals aimed at ensure that the quality objectives support the overall strategic direction."* This sheds light on the broad scope of activities undertaken by the quality assurance department and their pivotal role in shaping the Simba Cement position in the dynamic cement market in Kenya and regionally.

Additionally, according to the Human resource manager, her role in the organization strategic agility goal include, *"my foregoing objective in the cement maker is to identify and acquire talent with the skills and competencies needed to support the organization's strategic goals. This involves develop strategies for attracting, recruiting, and retaining top talent that ensures that the organizations workforce is capable of driving strategic*

initiatives" This acknowledgment emphasizes the integral role of the HRM department plays in the organization talent management, organizational culture, workforce flexibility, and continuous learning. All these functions define how Simba Cement responds to the dynamic nature of its business environment.

4.3 Strategic Agility at Simba Cement

This section of the interview guide sought to assess Simba cement capacity to act on the changes in the industry quickly in order to remain operational and ability to response to market changes or industry challenges. The interviewees highlighted that Simba Cement has been able to introduce new products quickly in response to market changes and that the shorter time-to-market indicates agility in adapting to industry shifts. In order to respond to the need of shorter lead time to get to the market, it was noted that the firm had decentralized its production to various regions in country and not be dependent on its Nairobi main production line. One example that was given is the setting of Ksh 6.8 Billion factory at Salgaa along the Nakuru – Eldoret road which helped reduce the price of cement in Nakuru and its environs from Ksh 780 per bag to Ksh 520. This response to the customer demand in the market has led to increased performance of the firm in the region to a position where it commands over 43% of the market share from 21% five years ago. Due to the successful performance of the Salgaa production plant, the interviewees explained that the company has plans to open 750, 000 tons production plant at Mariakani Kilifi County.

In relation to the ability of Simba cement ability to respond to customer changing demands and preferences, the interviewees explained that, the firm

“ensures that customer service is prompt and accessible with customer inquiries, concerns, and issues being resolved in a timely manner through various channels such as phone, email, chat,

and different social media platforms. Similarly, the firm offers a 24/7 customer service support, especially for our global customer base. This demonstrates a commitment to being available whenever customers need assistance.”

In order to meet the ever changing customer demands, the results indicate that Simba Cemnet had adopted a flexible manufacturing and supply chain system that can adjust production volumes and distribution channels based on fluctuations in demand. This agility capacity ensured that its customers access the products without whenever they need them and thus avoid stockouts and delay in delivery. On the part of the firm, a flexible manufacturing system enabled them to reduce costs of storage and insurance cost while being able to maintain a good standing in the market. A flexible manufacturing system that Simba Cement had adopted facilitated customization of products to different types of clients, including the different construction projects and this has enhanced relevance of offerings and cater for diverse customer demands. Coupled with establishment of open communication with customers about changes, improvements to products and services, the firm has been able to build trust and loyalty among its customers. One interviewee expounded that;

“The firm has stay abreast of industry trends and customer preferences and this has enabled us to be agile in responding to emerging trends and incorporates them into product or service offerings.”

The firm shifting strategies to become more customer-centric in response to changing customer preferences was exhibited through continuously being focused on customer satisfaction and quick adaptation to e-commerce trends.

Adjusting organizational policies swiftly with a view to align with changing market conditions has helped the cement firm adapt to remote work policies in response to shifts in employee expectations and lifestyle changes. Similarly, proactively investing in and adopting emerging technologies to stay ahead of the curve drove the firm to use of alternative fuels, such as biomass, waste-derived fuels, and even municipal solid waste, as a replacement for traditional fossil fuels.

“the organization has adopted a carbon capture and storage (CCS) system that capture carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions produced during cement production and store or repurpose them. This technology has helped in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, a step that has helped its cement plants to comply with environmental regulations and contribute to sustainability goals”

In the near term, the interviewees noted that the cement firm is planning to incorporating alternative raw materials like pozzolans, fly ash, and slag into cement production, a move that will reduce its dependence on traditional raw materials, conserves natural resources, and enhances the performance characteristics of cement. Similarly, to meet the customer demands of improving the durability and strength of its cement products, the interviewees explained that it's reconfiguring its production system to incorporate nano-materials, such as nano silica. This is expected to improve the mechanical properties of its products, reduces permeability, and enhances resistance to environmental factors. The other technological advancement that Simba Cement had adopted in its production process is the development of alternative clinker technologies, such as belite-rich clinkers or calcium sulfoaluminate cements which has been known to reduce the carbon footprint associated with traditional Portland cement production. All these technologies are as a result of the cement firm desire to adjust to the customer and regulatory demands.

4.4 Effect of the firm Responses on performance

In this section, the researcher sought to establish the effect of the customer and technological responses by the firm on its performance. The results highlight that in relation to appropriately adjusting to changing customer demands, the cement firm had achieved an improved customer satisfaction and that a satisfied customers tend to become repeat buyers, recommend the company to others, and contribute positively to the firm's reputation. This has led to increased customer loyalty and revenue to the organization. The capacity to meet customer needs, has been able to increase their market share.

The interviewees noted that as a result of the organization meeting customer needs, they have been able to increase their market share because new customers have continuously been added to their portfolio. It was noted that by effectively addressing customer demands, Simba Cement has been able to gain a competitive edge, attract new customers and be able to result in increased business performance. It was stated that

“The cement manufacturer recognizes that retaining existing customers is often more cost-effective than acquiring new ones and therefore adopting a responsive approach to customer demands builds trust and fosters long-term relationships and thus reducing customer churn. Further, offering products or services that align with customers preferences attracts more buyers and contributes to the financial success of the firm”

Brand reputation came out in the study as a key benefit that emanate from the organization being responsive to customer demands. The customers' positive word-of-mouth, online reviews, and customer testimonials contribute to a positive brand image, attracting new customers and

business partners. The organization has endeavored to actively seek and incorporate customer feedback into product development so that it can offer solutions that resonate with the market and in the process fostering ongoing success. Further, it was highlighted that by being able to meet customer demands better than competitors, the firm has been able to gain a distinct advantage because they are better positioned to outperform competitors due to their capacity to respond to the market quickly.

The other benefit that came out as a result of Simba Cement staying attuned to the prevailing customer demands is improved risk mitigation capability because the firm has been able to anticipate and mitigate risks associated with market changes. Proactive responses help the company adapt to evolving market conditions. The firm was found to have better adapted to changing customer needs and market dynamics emanating from improved resilience, enabling sustained performance in dynamic environments. Compliance with industry regulations was found to be better because through meeting of the customer demands, the firm has been able to avoid legal issues and maintain a positive reputation.

4.5 Challenges to Implementation of Strategic Agility

This section sought to determine the challenges that the organization face in implementing the strategic agility. It was noted that the dominant challenge was pressure to deliver short-term results that end up undermining long-term strategic thinking and yet the need to balance short-term goals with long-term vision is crucial for sustained success. They noted that the pre-occupation by the senior management to register high performance in the short-term horizon has ended up compromising the cement manufacturer competitive position in the long-term. A case in point was highlighted as the inability of the company to expand its production capacity to different regions in the country like the coastal and western Kenya regions because of the believe

that the market was small but in turned out that competing firms entered the regions and it forced the company to play catch up in the last decade. In the process, it has become expensive for the firm to penetrate the market since it required increased advertisement expenditure and coming up with strategies to increase customer loyalty and retention.

Strategic alignment in the organization was noted to have been affected by a lack of a clear strategic goals and objectives such that in some cases has led to confusion and misalignment. The interviewees explained that in some cases, the organization has been reactive in coming up with appropriate strategies that match the prevailing market condition. A case in point is the introduction hardeners in the road construction cement that was found not to be effective by consumers and this led to bad publicity to the firm. This was occasioned by the competing firms introducing a similar product but because Simba cement lagged behind, it introduced a substitute product to the market with due testing and evaluation in the market. They explained that there is need for the establishment of clear communication in the firm of its vision and mission is essential. In reacting to the market changes, the interviewees highlighted the need for the firm to consider the long-term vision and mission too so that the strategies they come up with do not become short-term.

Strategic agility requires strong commitment and support from top leadership and therefore, when initiating an intervention response to market dynamics, there is need for leaders to fully come on board so that minimal hindrance is faced by the organizations. The strategic agility interventions require financial support and this can easily be accessed through the top management leadership support. Limited resources, including time and budget, can impact the ability to invest in agile practices and therefore the ability of the top management to allocate adequate resources strategically is important for successful implementation. The need to address

cultural behaviour in an organization was also highlighted as a potential challenge that faces the Simba cement in implementing its strategic agility programs. It came out that an organizations pre-occupation with implementation of agile processes without addressing cultural and employee mindset aspects can lead to sub-optimal changes and thus necessitating a cultural shift if the intended outcome is to be realized.

4.6 Role of Strategic Agility in Maintaining Competitive Position

Strategic agility is not just about responding to change; it's about proactively shaping the future and positioning the firm to thrive in a dynamic and competitive landscape. Firms that embrace strategic agility are better equipped to navigate uncertainty, capitalize on opportunities, and maintain a competitive edge in their industries. The researcher sought to establish how the strategic agility practices adopted by Simba Cement had influenced its competitive position. The interviewees explained that

“Strategic agility has enabled them to quickly adapt to changes in the market, customer preferences, and industry trends, and that through the said capacity, they have been able to stay ahead of competitors by responding rapidly to emerging opportunities or challenges”

The organizations innovation capability came out strongly as an outcome of being agile since the management was ready to experiment and learn from failures and rapidly implement new ideas, which in turn gives a competitive edge in terms of product and service offerings. The interviewees explained that being agile involves staying close to customer needs and preferences. Through this closeness, the firm is able to be responsive to customer feedback and changing demands, which in turn enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, a key drive that has resulted in the firm competitiveness as manifested by increased market share from 16.3 % in 2018 to the current 32.5% in 2022. The opening up of new production plants nearer to the customers is also

part of the organizations agile practice to reduce time-to-market for new products or services. In the last 8 years, it was noted that Simba Cement had constructed two plants in Kenya and one in Uganda to gain a speed advantage which allows the firm to capitalize on emerging opportunities before competitors can react, creating a competitive advantage.

The competitive position of the Simba Cement was noted to have been enhanced through its capacity to allocate resources quickly whenever a need is required. This was attributed to the agility of the organization which ensures that resources are directed towards the most strategic initiatives based on the priorities and the decision making be made quickly by the top management. It was also noted that organizations agility was a continuous learning process and improvement and through the same capability the cement manufacturer was able to adapt to changing market dynamics, ensuring that they remain competitive over the long term.

“The organizations’ strategic agility has enabled us to be more flexible in adjusting to the strategic plans as needed and that the increased flexibility capacity has enabled us to seize unexpected opportunities in response to competitive threats.”

As a result of the firm strategic agility, it was noted that it had been able to create more resilience in the face of the ever evolving market dynamics. This resilience helped in maintaining brand reputation and customer trust, crucial elements in sustaining a competitive position. The firm strategic agility capability has been associated to its ability to attract top talent employees who have in turn increased the firm competitiveness.

In relation to the question of competitive strategies or innovations that Simba Cement has implemented to respond to changes in the industry, the interviewees highlighted several notable initiatives but key among them were product diversification, technological upgrades,

sustainability initiatives and adoption of energy efficient technologies and processes. They highlighted that the firm had come up with new types of cement and related products to meet specific market demands, such as eco-friendly cement, specialty concrete mixes, or precast products. The interviewees also explained that Simba Cement had invested in advanced technologies for production efficiency and that is environmentally sustainable. Similarly, to reach to the customers faster, they highlighted that Simba cement had entered into strategic alliances with suppliers, distributors and construction companies to strengthen the overall value chain and be able to meet customer needs as it arises.

The researcher sought to establish the different decision makers involved in the organizations strategic agility process. The results suggest that different departments and team are involved in shaping and implementing strategic plans but key among them is the executive leadership team, strategic planning team, human resources team, operations and the risk management team. These teams play different roles with the top executives, including the CEO and COO, playing a crucial role in setting the overall strategic direction of the organization in the face of the changing business environment. They are responsible for aligning strategic goals with the organization's mission and vision. Through liaising with the strategic planning team, they are able to gather and analyze data, facilitate planning sessions, and develop the strategic plan in collaboration with other departments. Similarly, the results shows that the he finance team is crucial for providing financial analysis, budgeting, and ensuring that the strategic plan aligns with financial capabilities. Further, they evaluate the financial feasibility of strategic initiatives and monitor the allocation of resources. In relation to the technology and IT teams, the results suggest that they play a critical role in ensuring that the organization's technology infrastructure supports the strategic plan by contributing insights on technological trends, data management, and digital

transformation. They observed that effective communication and collaboration among these decision-makers and teams are essential for successful strategic agility planning and implementation and that each group contributes unique perspectives, skills, and expertise to ensure that the strategic plan is well-rounded and achievable.

4.7 Discussion

The objective of the study was to determine the effect of strategic agility on performance. The study found that the strategic agility of the organization took different dimensions ranging from responding appropriately to market changes, customer dynamics, competitor actions, communication with supply chain partners, flexible manufacturing system, technology adoption and innovativeness. Strategic agility refers to an organization's ability to adapt and respond effectively to changes in its external environment through being flexible, innovative, and able to quickly adjust strategies and operations in the face of uncertainty.

The findings suggest that the organization agility takes both the operational and structural adaptability whereby it is able to make quick adjustments to day-to-day operations in response to changes in the business environment. Chen and Mahmood (2019) assert that the capacity of an organization to quickly re-organize its organization structure to better align with new strategic objectives or market conditions is found to enhance its competitiveness level and be able to adjust to market dynamics. Mao, Liu and Zhang, (2015) further highlight that an organization that is able to adapt its operational and structure combine to synergistically contribute to an organization's overall performance and that the ability to adapt operationally ensures that the organization remains responsive to immediate challenges and market fluctuations. Simultaneously, structural adaptability facilitates a more strategic, long-term approach, enabling the organization to proactively position itself for future success.

The findings also suggest that the organization has continuously engaged in product and service innovation to meet changing customer needs and make their internal processes more efficient and effective. This finding supports the results arrived by Kalay and Lynn (2016) who stated that in a rapidly evolving business environment, the strategic pursuit of product and service innovation stands as a cornerstone for organizational agility and, consequently, firm performance. The capacity to continuously, develop, and introduce novel offerings to the market positions a company at the forefront of market dynamics, fostering a competitive edge and enhancing its overall performance. The importance of product and service innovation was found to be an important determinant to the performance of an organization. In line with the Dynamic Capability Theory (Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997) product and service innovation serve as catalysts for growth by addressing evolving customer needs and preferences. By staying attuned to market trends and proactively responding to changing consumer demands, innovative firms not only attract new customers but also retain existing ones, cultivating a loyal customer base (Yousaf & Majid, 2018). The findings therefore aligns with the position advanced by the contingency theory which postulate that for a firm to maintain its competitiveness, then it needs to continuously align its processes with the demands of the market.

The study findings reveal that one of the important agility processes in the organization is the building a formidable internal and external collaboration with partners. Building partnerships and alliances with external entities to access resources, share knowledge, and respond jointly to market changes was found to help the organization achieve its competitiveness and enable it to quick make decision and deliver new strategies. Xxxx holds a similar position where it was noted that the capacity to develop and modify strategic plans quickly in response to changes in the business ensures that they align with the organization's goals. Collaboration fosters the exchange

of ideas and expertise among diverse teams within and between organizations, a move that often leads to innovative solutions and creative problem-solving, giving organizations a competitive edge. Shin and Konrad, (2017) opines that through collaboration, organizations can harness the collective intelligence of their workforce and tap into a broader range of perspectives, ultimately driving continuous improvement and adaptation. This position is reinforced by the study findings which show that the organizations performance is supported by increased collaboration within and outside its boundaries.

The results to the study shows that the agility of the organization is anchored on it being customer centric whereby it has placed a strong emphasis on understanding and meeting customer needs, and being responsive to changes in customer preferences. The results indicate that by being customer-centric, the firm has been able to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty. Wu, Straub and Liang. (2015) opine that by a business organization anticipating their needs, and delivering exceptional experiences, a firm can build strong and lasting relationships and the outcome of this decision is to get satisfied and loyal customers that are more likely offer repeat business, refer others, and contribute positively to a firm's reputation. This, in turn, establishes a competitive advantage as customer loyalty becomes a barrier for competitor. Chan and Muthuveloo (2021) further highlight that by being responsive to customer needs, it allows a company to stay ahead of the curve, adapting swiftly to market changes and maintaining a competitive edge in terms of offering relevant and cutting-edge solutions.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter encapsulates the key results made during the course of this study, emphasizing the fundamental conclusions that have been derived from these findings. Moreover, it expounds upon the policy recommendations that have been formulated based on the insights garnered from the research objectives. Within this section, a concise overview of the key findings is provided, which subsequently leads to the formulation of robust conclusions and sound recommendations.

5.2 Summary

The results suggest that as one way of increasing the organizations agility is through introduction of new products quickly in response to market changes and that the shorter time-to-market indicates agility in adapting to industry shifts. In order to respond to the need of shorter lead time to get to the market, it was highlighted that decentralization of production plants across the market improved the organization agility to meet changing business environment. Coupled with the adoption of a flexible manufacturing and supply chain system that can adjust production volumes and distribution channels based on fluctuations in demand, the firm has been able to deliver its products to its customers when needed with limited stockouts or delay in delivery.

The findings further reinforce the need for an organization to align its internal policies in a manner that is able to swiftly align with changing market conditions with its employees being able to respond to changing market dynamics. Similarly, proactively investing in and adopting emerging technologies to stay ahead of the curve has enabled the firm to use alternative fuels, such as biomass, waste-derived fuels, and even municipal solid waste, as a replacement for traditional fossil fuels.

The brand of a firm is an important attribute that determines its flexibility because a positive recommendation from customers through word-of-mouth, online reviews, and customer testimonials contribute to attracting new customers and business partners. The organization has endeavored to actively seek and incorporate customer feedback into product development so that it can offer solutions that resonate positively with the market and in the process fostering ongoing success. Compliance with industry regulations was found to emanate from meeting customer demands, through which the firm has been able to avoid legal challenges and maintain a positive reputation.

The study established that the common challenges faced by the firm in seeking to enhance its strategic agility capability include the pressure to deliver short-term results that end up undermining the firm long-term strategic position. Alack of a clear strategic goals and objectives has in some cases led to confusion and misalignment of the response strategies to the changing business environment. A lack of the top management support in certain response strategies emanating from the firm agility was found to have been hampered and this requires that the top management support should be consistent. Despite the limited challenges identified, the study found that the organizations; strategic capability had a positive effect on its competitive position.

5.3 Conclusion

The study established the important role of an organization being customer-centric in the present day dynamic business environment. It is concluded that by consistently prioritizing the needs and preferences of our customers, a firm is not only able to foster loyalty but also drive innovation, enhance brand reputation, and ultimately secure a distinct advantage in the dynamic marketplace. A firm should not only strive and exceed customer expectations positions through provision of products or services, but as a trusted partner in their success.

The position of an organization leadership as an enabler of agility and competitiveness was reinforced in the study. It is therefore concluded that that as driving force behind strategic vision, organizational culture, and adaptability, effective leadership is the linchpin that propels the company forward in a competitive landscape. The commitment of leaders to strategic foresight and proactive decision-making not only positions a firm as a contender in the marketplace but also ensures its ability to thrive and lead in the face of change.

The findings also show that the adoption of appropriate technology stood out as formidable enabler in propelling the firm towards heightened competitiveness. This is because it not only enhanced operational efficiency but also empowers the to swiftly adapt to dynamic market demands. The adoption of a cutting-edge technology in the cement manufacturing has led to increased productivity, agility, and customer-centricity. Consequently, it is imperative that a business organization places technology adoption in its processes at a central point in the quest to achieve desired level of performance.

5.4 Recommendation for Policy

Due to the importance of customer-centric policies on the firm agility, it is recommend that the formulation and implementation of a comprehensive policy that explicitly underscores the centrality of customers in the firm's pursuit of competitiveness is developed and continuously implemented. This policy should encapsulate a holistic approach, emphasizing customer-centric principles across all facets of the operations, from product development and service delivery to marketing and post-sales support. By institutionalizing a customer-first mindset, we not only enhance customer satisfaction but also cultivate long-term loyalty, contributing significantly to our competitive advantage.

By understanding and harnessing strategic agility, a firm is able to navigate uncertainties, capitalize on emerging opportunities, and optimize performance outcomes. This policy decision will underscore the commitment to evidence-based decision-making, fostering a culture of innovation, and ensuring long-term sustainability in the face of evolving business landscapes.

5.5 Limitation of the Study

The scope of the study was limited to Simba Cement and this implies that the findings should not be generalized to other industries or sector players. The operations of a manufacturing firm is not the same as that of other business entities and thus the finding should be applied in the context of this limitation. Similarly, the research was only limited to strategic agility in relation to customers, technology, leadership, product innovation and risk management. However, there are possibly more facets of strategic agility.

The research methodology adopted was a case study and hence was not able to establish the causal effect to such organizational outcomes as performance, competitive advantage and success. The researcher targeted five interviewees which limits the answers provided since only a single cadre of staff was targeted without considering stakeholder views. However, despite the limitations to the study, the findings of the study are useful for management practice and policy decision in both the hospitality sector and other sectors where changes in operations are being witnessed.

5.6 Recommendation for Further Research

As a result of the research limitations, it is recommended that longitudinal study be undertaken to provide insights into the sustainability of performance improvements and how strategic agility contribute to long-term competitive advantage. In addition, it is recommended that a industry specific studies be undertaken to explore how the impact of strategic agility varies across

different sectors. Different industries may have unique dynamics that influence the outcomes of performance. In addition, a study exploring the moderating factors that influence the relationship between strategic agility and performance can be pursued. Factors such as firm size, organizational culture, and technological innovation may impact the strategic agility-performance nexus.

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A SAMPLE INTERVIEW GUIDE

- 1) Can you provide some background information on Simba Cement, including its size, market presence, and strategic objectives in the cement industry?
- 2) How do you rate Simba Cement or the cement manufacturing industry in terms of ability to act on the changes in the industry quickly in order to remain operational?
- 3) Can you provide examples of instances where Simba Cement has demonstrated strategic quickness in response to market changes or industry challenges?
- 4) In your opinion, what have been the key effects of the above on Simba Cement's performance (financial, market share, customer satisfaction, etc.) in recent years?
- 5) What are some of the challenges and obstacles that Simba Cement has encountered when attempting to implement strategic agility practices?
- 6) Can you share any specific instances where a strategic agility initiative did not yield the expected results, and what were the contributing factors?
- 7) How does Simba Cement view its competitive position in the cement manufacturing industry, and how does strategic agility play a role in maintaining or enhancing that position?
- 8) Can you provide examples of competitive strategies or innovations that Simba Cement has implemented to respond to changes in the industry?
- 9) How does Simba Cement make decisions regarding changes in the environment? What is the process for identifying and prioritizing opportunities and challenges that require apt action?
- 10) Who are the key decision-makers or teams involved in shaping and implementing strategic plans?
- 11) How does Simba Cement promote a culture of learning and adaptation within the organization?
- 12) What are Simba Cement's future plans and aspirations with respect to sensing, seizing and controlling its processes?
- 13) Are there any new initiatives or approaches on the horizon?
- 14) How do you see the cement manufacturing industry evolving in the coming years, and how will Simba Cement adapt to these changes?

15) Is there anything else you would like to add or any additional insights you believe are important for understanding the effects of ever being ready for anything that may affect the operation of Simba cement?