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# INFLUENCE OF SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT ON SUPPLY CHAIN PERFORMANCE OF RWANDA MEDICAL SUPPLY LIMITED

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study entitled "Influence of Supplier Relationship Management on Supply Chain Performance of Rwanda Medical Supply limited" was to examine the influence of Supplier Relationship Management on supply chain performance with a case of Rwanda Medical Supply limited and four specific objectives were used: to assess the influence of supply chain collaboration on supply chain performance in Rwanda Medical Supply ltd, to determine the influence of supplier development on supply chain performance in Rwanda Medical Supply ltd and to identify the influence of integrated communication technology on supplier chain performance in Rwanda Medical Supplier and to determine the influence of supply evaluation on supply chain performance in Rwanda Medical Supply ltd. The research used descriptive research survey. Population of the study was 268 employees and the sample size of the study was 268 employees of Rwanda Medical Supply ltd and census sampling technique was used to select employees. Data collection instruments to be used in this study were both questionnaire and interview. Methods of data analysis were descriptive statistics and inferential statistics such correlation and multiple linear regressions. The findings revealed that revealed that supply chain collaboration has significance positive influence on supply chain performance of RMS LTD as indicated by $\beta$= 0.097, p-value=0.000<0.05. The findings revealed that integrated communication technology has significance positive influence on supply chain performance of RMS LTD as indicated by $\beta$= 0.213, p-value=0.000<0.05. The implication is that an increase of one unit in integrated communication technology would lead to an increase in supply chain performance of RMS LTD by 0.213 units. terms. The findings revealed that supply evaluation has significance positive influence on supply chain performance of r as indicated by $\beta$= 0.615, p-value=0.000<0.05. The findings revealed that the level of supply chain performance was excellent with mean score of 4.38 and the standard deviation of 0.99 which implies that there is strong evidence of existing of fact and heterogeneity response. In conclusion, supplier relationship management can positively impact the performance of Rwanda Medical Supply Ltd by improving efficiency, reducing costs, ensuring quality, fostering innovation, managing risks, and enhancing customer satisfaction. It allows RMS LTD to build resilient and sustainable supply chains that are crucial for its mission of supplying vital medical supplies to healthcare providers in Rwanda even though, from the results, it was shown that supplier development was insignificant effect on supply chain performance of RMS LTD. The study therefore, recommends for more improvement on supplier development practices in place among RMS LTD to ensure that they significantly contribute towards supply chain performance.

***Keyword****: supplier, supplier relationship management, supply chain, supply chain collaboration, supplier development, information technology, supply evaluation, supply chain performance*

## 1. Introduction

Supplier relationship management (SRM) is the systematic approach to evaluating vendors that supply goods, materials and services to an organization, determining each supplier's contribution to success and developing strategies to improve their performance. The SRM discipline helps to determine the value each supplier provides and which ones are most critical to business continuity and performance. It also enables managers to cultivate better relationships with suppliers based on each supplier's importance. Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) plays an important role in the reduction of costs and the optimization of performance in industrial enterprises (Dash, 2018).

In South Africa Supplier relationship management (SRM) is a necessary tool on which businesses in the public and private sectors rely. However, South African public sector plays a critical role in providing healthcare organizations with essential medical products and equipment. To ensure an efficient and reliable supply chain, effective supply chain management practices are crucial. One significant aspect of supply chain management is Supplier Relationship Management (SRM), which focuses on building and maintaining strong relationships with suppliers Naude *et al*, (2017). In increasingly competitive markets, customer satisfaction is a vital corporate objective. Key elements to increasing customer satisfaction include producing consistently high-quality products and providing high-quality customer service. Also, supplier relationship management (SRM) contributes to the supplier selection and increases the competitive advantage of manufacturers. SRM can enhance customer satisfaction and increase market share (Choy *et al*, 2003).

In Rwanda Supply chain integration (SCI) is a useful approach to improve various measures of firm performance. The aim of this study is to evaluate the impact of supply chain integration strategies on performance of pork processing industry in Rwanda. The results indicated that there was a positive and significant correlation between internal integration, supplier integration, customer integration and performance of the firm (Effect of Supply Chain Integration Strategies on

Performance of Pork Processing Industry in Rwanda.). The supplier selection process deploys a tremendous amount of an organization's financial resources. In return, organizations expect significant benefits from contracting with suppliers offering high value. Buyers must define and measure what "best value" means for the buying organization and execute procurement decisions accordingly (Sabiti & Mulyungi, 2018).

The effectiveness of SRM in the medical supplier industry can impact various aspects of supply chain management, including supplier collaboration, performance, lead times, costs, risk management, and innovation. However, the specific relationship between SRM practices and supply chain effectiveness in Rwanda's medical supplier industry requires empirical investigation. The study aims to provide evidence-based recommendations for medical suppliers in Rwanda on how to effectively implement SRM practices to enhance supply chain management. The findings will be valuable not only to medical suppliers in Rwanda but also to policymakers and healthcare organizations seeking to improve the efficiency and reliability of their supply chains in the medical sector.

## 2. Problem statement

Rwanda has made significant strides in improving its healthcare system, with a particular emphasis on ensuring the availability and accessibility of medical supplies. The effectiveness of the supply chain management (SCM) in the medical supplier industry remains a critical concern. A study done by Ojiambo *et al* (2021) on the influence of supplier relationship management on supply chain performance in the county assembly of Vihiga stated that supplier relationship management significantly influenced supply chain performance and Ergun (2017) investigated on the effect of supply chain collaboration on supply chain performance. The findings of the study revealed that supply chain collaboration (SCC) significantly and positively affects supply chain performance (SCP). Supplier relationship management (SRM) plays a pivotal role in improving operational efficiency in terms of cost reduction, improved quality of products or services and timely delivery of products. However, a study done by Fatema (2017) revealed that lack of communication between buyers and suppliers, lack of trust and lack of cooperation and poor performance were some of the challenges that were facing buyer-supplier relationship. Wambani (2017) studied the link between supplier relationship management and operational

performance of sugar manufacturing firms in Kakamega County, Kenya and the findings found that SRM was positively linked to operational management. All the above studies were based on different conceptual, contextual and demographic backgrounds with different study variables and findings. None of them specifically looked at the effect of supplier relationship management on supply chain performance in Rwanda Medical Supply ltd, hence the present study fill gap by analyzing how supply chain collaboration, supplier development and integrated communication technology and supply evaluation affect supply chain performance of Rwanda Medical supply ltd.

## 3. Objective of the study

The general objective of this study was to examine the influence of Supplier Relationship Management on supply chain management performance with a case of Rwanda Medical Supply ltd.

## 4. Literature review

There are three theories discussed that underpin this study. These include the Agency Theory (AT), Network Theory and Transaction Cost Theory:



### Agency Theory

It was Jensen and Meckling (1976) who developed this agency theory. The theory is used to present the interaction between the principal and the agent and how they relate with each other. In a typical organization, the organization is owned by the shareholders while the management is responsible for the activities on a daily basis. There is a board of directors that has the responsibility of checking the actions of the managers. The theory places emphasis on the need to engage other professionals on behalf of other individuals. The essence of this agency theory is to bring a description of the interaction between the agent and the principal. In this relationship, the agent acts on behalf of the principal. This theory is relevant to the study as it supports the objective of supply chain collaboration in that it shows how effective interaction and collaboration between the agents and the principal play a key role in coming up with planned decisions that are geared towards improving the supply chain performance.

**Network Theory**

This theory was developed by Leonhard (1736) and its essence to provide a description of the relationships the firm develops with its supply chain partners including the customers and suppliers. From its original focus of the relationship between two parties (strategic alliances) during inception in 1970s, the network had undergone development to cover multiple relationships among various parties in the supply chain. The theory is premised on a number of factors including the fact that the centrality of the firm in the network shapes its competitive positioning and that there is inter-firm sharing of knowledge and information (Håkansson & Ford, 2016). The limitations of this theory include the fact that collaborating with other firms may involve sharing of strategic information that may have an adverse effect on competitive advantage. Despite its limitation, this theory is relevant to the study since it focuses on the relationship that the firm develops with its partners in the supply chain which is the foundation of supplier relationship management in an entity.

**Transaction Cost Theory**

This theory is of the notion that the governance of a relationship is predicted by the asset specificity or the extent of investment involved in a transaction. To put in another way, the bigger the transaction, the stronger or sensitive the relationship (Emmett & Crocker, 2009). Additionally, other predicting factors are the environmental and behavioral uncertainty surrounding the transaction consequently the scope of opportunism. The theory further puts relationship specific investment and the reduction in uncertainty as the key to any relationship success that can be enjoyed by both parties. To illustrate this, if one party makes relationship specific investment, it will only be done when the other party also makes the same investment that is relationship specific or contractual guarantees be given. The factors in the transaction cost theory that are relevant to this study are adaptation and uncertainty (Tarafdar & Qrunfleh, 2017). This theory guides the study as it contends that transaction sizes between the influence of supplier relationship management practices. This is however affected by the uncertainty and adaptation around the relationships.

### 4.2. Conceptual framework

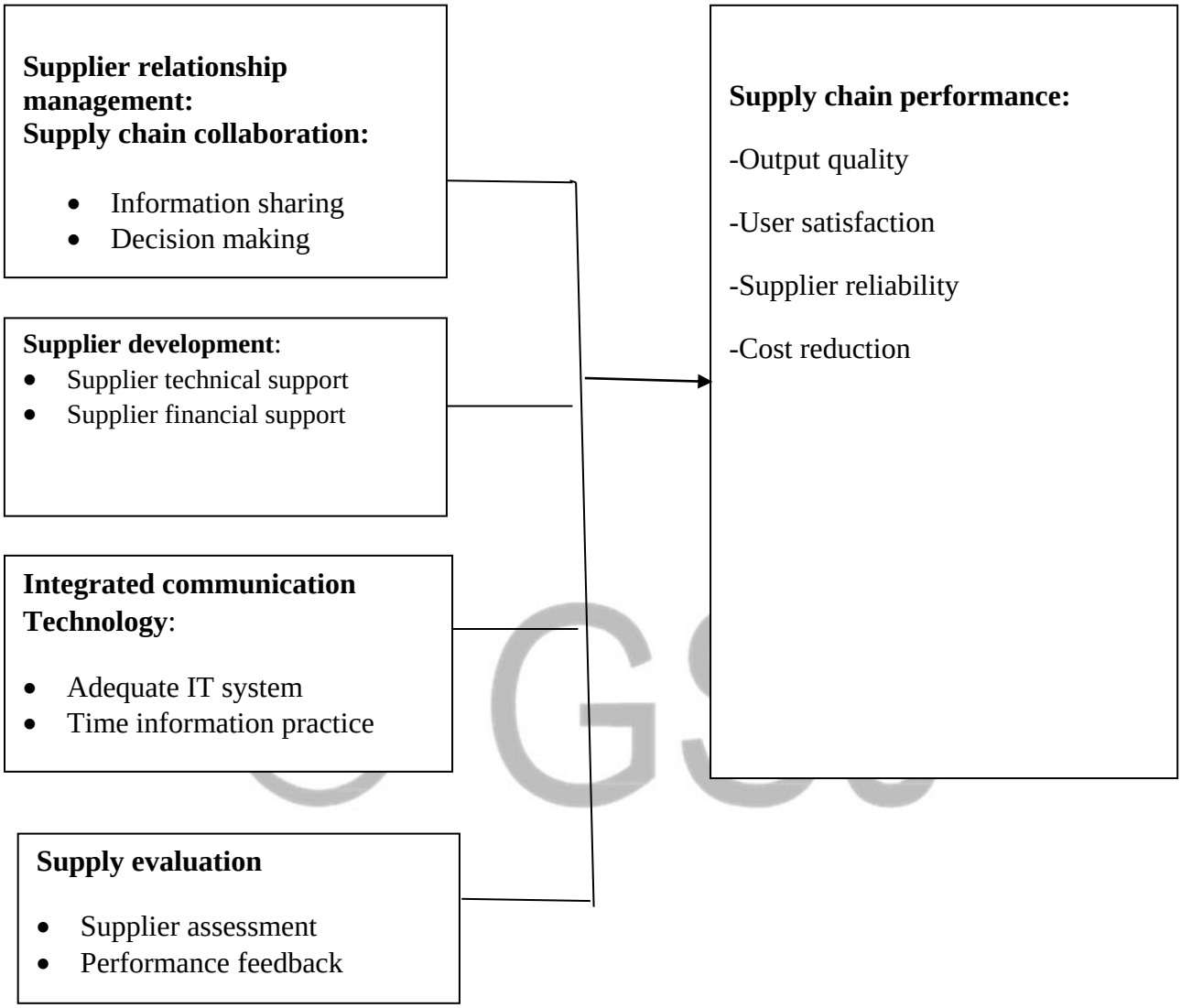


**Figure 1: Conceptual framework**

**Source: Researcher's compilation, 2023**

## 5. Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design and inferential research design. According to Creswell (2013), a descriptive research design is appropriate since it describes the elements of the study variables. This design was appropriate for this research because it is concerned with clearly defined problems with definite objectives. Descriptive research design was used because

it appropriately enabled the researcher to describe how supplier relationship management affects supply chain performance by using both quantitative and qualitative research approaches because they complement one another. Using both helped cover more areas, while using only one approach was defective. Descriptive research design also helped the researcher to collect quantitative data that was analyzed to establish relationship between supplier relationship management as independent variable and supply chain performance as dependent variable.

The study population is a group of elements to which the researcher wants to make inference to make conclusion on characteristic of the whole population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The study population of this study is 268 employees of RMS LTD

A sample is a subset or portion of the total population under study. This part concerns the sample size and sampling procedures used to come up with the sample size. A sample is defined as a subset of the population. It comprises some members selected from the population (Kothari, 2011). Therefore, the sample size used in this study equals to the target population and consists of all 268 employees of Rwanda Medical Supply ltd. The study used Universal sampling technique to select employees.

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes (Sekaran, 2006). Data collection instruments in this study were questionnaire and interview.

The researcher used questionnaire in the process of collecting primary data. Questionnaires were administered to employees of Rwanda Medical Supply ltd. Questionnaires were considered as appropriate based on the fact that they captured respondent's opinions in structured manner and in written form for future reference. It also enables respondents to answer questions freely and frankly even on sensitive issues because their identification were not a requirement. Further, it offers uniformity in answering questions allowing a great degree of comparison because the items were framed in the same format (Kothari, 2011). Questionnaire was self-administered and each respondent received the same set of questions in the exactly same way. A cover letter explaining the purpose of the study was attached to the questionnaires. Questionnaires were distributed to the chosen respondents in the sample frame.

Questionnaire was used in order to fully collect information on the role of agricultural project on livelihoods of its beneficiaries. Kothari (2011) suggests that this method of data collection ensures a high response rate and accurate sampling. He also urges that greatest care is needed in briefing the respondents, or they may, with the best intentions, introduce fatal bias. Questions were directed towards the variables as brought out in the conceptual framework. Variables in this study were measured using closed-ended questions. A Likert scale of five responses was used: Likert scale is an interval scale that specifically uses five anchors of strongly disagrees, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree and the researcher used open-ended questions and this assisted in measuring the extent to which the supplier relationship management affect the supply chain performance of Rwanda Medical Supply ltd.

The researcher carried out a direct conversation with manager of Rwanda Medical Supply ltd which the interview contains questions needed to fill the gaps that could not be filled by the questionnaires. Appointments for interview with respective officers were not made in advance, but rather depend on the availability of ample time interviewees could get within their tight schedules at work.



**Validity of research instruments**

Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what is supposed to measure. Data need not only to be reliable but also true and accurate. According to Creswell (2013), validity is a measure of relevance and correctness. It is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results. Data collection techniques must yield information that is not only relevant to the research questions but also correct. Three basic approaches that are adopted as suggested by Sekaran (2006) of testing the validity of the instruments and they include: content, construct, and criterion-related validity.

Data validity was tested by using the Content Valid Index (CVI). To achieve this, a copy of the questionnaire was distributed to the supervisor and field experts to rate the relevant items/questions in relation to the research objectives, the relevant questions was divided by the total number of items. According to Sekaran (2006), indicates that for a research instrument to be valid, the CVI should be more than or equal to 0.7. Then a content validity index (CVI) was

computed using the formula. According to Sekaran (2006) content validity index should not be less than 0.7. The following formula was used to test content validity index (CVI).

$$\textbf{CVI} = \frac{\text{No. of items regarded relevant by judges}}{\text{Total No. of items}}$$

If the calculated C.V.I is greater than 0.60, the questionnaire is valid (Saunders, et al, 2007).
For this study the calculated C.V.I was 22/28=0.785.

From the above calculation, the CVI was 0.84 which was greater than 0.60, hence questionnaire was valid.

**Reliability of research instruments**

Reliability is the degree at which results obtained from a study are consistent after interpreted number of times. Similarly, reliability in every research gives the same results on frequent assessment from an experiment or test by using similar methodology (Mugenda, 2003). Reliability in research is influenced by the degree of error. As random error increases, reliability decreases (Mugenda, 2003). The test re-test method was used to assess the reliability of the instruments. This involves administering the same questionnaires to 30 employees of Rwanda Medical Supply ltd. After administering the questionnaires, the scale reliability was used, which is the extent to which any measuring procedure yields the same results on repeated trials. It was done by comparing the value of the Coefficient Cronbach's Alpha with the value 0.7. If the Coefficient Cronbach's Alpha> 0.7, it means that the measurement result is reliable. Reliability of the questionnaires was evaluated by determining the Cronbach's alpha of the results from the pilot study.

**Table 1: Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|---|---|
| .798 | 28 |

**Source:** Primary data, 2023

The findings indicated that al variables had a coefficient of 0.798. All constructs depicted that the value of Cronbach's Alpha is above the suggested value of 0.7 thus the study was reliable.

**Method of data analysis**

Data analysis were based on the questions designed at the beginning of the research where the researchers sorted to identify the main determinants of the success of the agriculture projects. The study will employ a descriptive statistical method for representing and summarizing of the bio data and also the study used inferential statistics specifically multiple linear regression analysis

Descriptive statistics involve the use of measures of central tendency which included frequency, percentage, the mean, standard deviations, maximum and minimum values and variances. The results were presented using tables, pie charts, column charts and bar charts. The purpose of descriptive statistics was to provide simple summaries about the measures in the study (Sathianandan, Safeena, & Rahman, 2017). Measurement of variables were carried out with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0.

**Correlation analysis**: Correlations were done to determine the degree of the relationship between these variables using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and therefore ranking was done to determine which independent variable has a strong influence on organization performance (Cohen, Cohen, West & Aiken, 2002). The correlation coefficient ranges from -1.0 to +1.0 and the closer the coefficient is to +1 or -1, the more closely the two variables are related (Cohen, Cohen, West & Aiken, 2002). The strength of the correlation is measured based on the Pearson correlation scale where, if the correlation coefficient is positive and close to one, the variables are said to be strongly and positively correlated and vice versa. Correlations were done using a 1-tailed test, setting the significance value at 0.05. Values smaller than the significance value (0.05) was to be deemed as significant while those values greater than 0.05 were said to be insignificant.

Multiple linear regressions: The regression was conducted using a multistage analysis which involving first running the R2 and F-test without the moderator while the second stage involved running the tests with the moderator included. The purpose was to compare the changes in R 2 value and F-value to determine the effect of the moderator in the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable. Presence of a significant difference would indicate significant effect of the moderator. Hypotheses in the study were tested using beta, t and p values. The test was done at 95% confidence level, 1 tailed test. This implies that the

significance value was set at 0.05. The values less than 0.05 wer deemed as significant while those greater than the significance value will be deemed to be insignificant (Yin, 2017). The beta value was used to indicate the direction and strength of the relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable. A positive beta coefficient indicated a positive relationship between the variables and vice versa (Yin, 2017).

Regression analysis was used to test whether there is significant effect of the independent variable (Supplier relationship management including supply chain collaboration, supplier development and integrated communication technology and supply evaluation) and the dependent variable (supply chain performance) The multiple regression model was as follows:

$Y= \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1+\beta_2X2+\beta_3X3 ++\beta_4X4 +\varepsilon$ Where

Y= Performance $\boldsymbol{\beta_0}$ = Constant, β1, β2 and β3 are Coefficients of the determinants of the relationship between information sharing in supply chain performance of Rwanda Medical Supplier, **ε** = error term



**$X_1$=** Supply chain collaboration

**$X_2$=** Supplier development

**$X_3$ =** Integrated communication technology

**X4**= Supply evaluation

The regression model runs to test whether the model is significant or not. The statistical significance was verified by the Coefficient (β), t-statistic and Prob. In additional, statistically significant relationship between the dependent variable which is supply chain performance of Rwanda Medical Supplier and independent variables which are supply chain collaboration, supplier development and integrated communication technology from the model was accepted at 5% significance level.

variable and dependent variables.

## 6. Findings

The study used inferential statistics such as correlation analysis and multiple regression to determine the influence of Supplier Relationship Management on supply chain management performance with a case of Rwanda Medical Supply ltd.

### 4.3.1. Correlation analysis

Analysis of the correlation is generally performed to determine the relation between the variables. The primary objective of conducting correlation analysis in this research work is to establish the relationship between project risk management strategies and road construction performance. The Peason's coefficient of correlation ranges between +1 to -1. A zero (0) coefficient indicates that there is no association between the two variables. A coefficient value of greater than 0 indicates a positive relationship between the variables and hence an increase in the value of one variable leads to an increase in the other values of the other variable and the converse is true. The study sought to determine the correlation between the independent variables (supply chain collaboration, supplier development, integrated communication technology and supply evaluation) and the dependent variable (supply chain performance). To calculate the correlation (strength) between the study variables and their findings the survey data used the Pearson's coefficient of correlation (r). The findings were presented in table 2.

**Table 2: Correlations coefficients**

| | | X1 | X2 | X3 | X4 | Y |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| X1= Supply chain collaboration | Pearson Correlation | 1 | | | | |
| X2= Supplier development | Pearson Correlation | .285** | 1 | | | |
| X3 = Integrated communication technology | Pearson Correlation | .256** | -.092 | 1 | | |
| X4= Supply evaluation | Pearson Correlation | .555** | .065 | .581** | 1 | |
| Supply chain performance in Rwanda Medical Supply ltd. | Pearson Correlation | .552** | -.007 | .673** | .904** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .915 | .000 | .000 | |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results from the Table 2, indicates that there is moderate positive significant relationship between supply chain collaboration and supply chain performance of RMS LTD at r = 0.552**; p-value =0.000 < 0.01. This means that in supply chain collaboration had a positive influence on supply chain performance of RMS LTD.

The results revealed that there is negative relationship between supplier development and supply chain performance of RMS LTD at r = -0.007**; p-value =0.915 >0.01. This means that supplier development in supply chain had a negative influence on supply chain performance of RMS LTD.

The results indicated that there is moderate positive significant relationship between integrated information technology and supply chain performance of RMS LTD at r = 0.653**; p-value =0.000 < 0.01. This means that integrated information technology had a positive influence on supply chain performance of RMS LTD.

The results indicated that there is strong positive significant relationship between supply evaluation and supply chain performance of RMS LTD at r = 0.904**; p-value =0.000 < 0.01. This means that supply evaluation had a positive influence on supply chain performance of RMS LTD.



**Multiple linear regression analysis**

With this test, it was assumed that the kind of relationship that exists between independent and dependent variables is linear. To ascertain this, and to know the extent to which the predictors affect supply chain performance of RMS LTD, regression test was carried out; the predictors in this case include: supply chain collaboration, supplier development, integrated communication technology and supply evaluation, while dependent variable is supply chain performance of RMS LTD.

**Table 3: Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .927[a] | .860 | .858 | .18014 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), X4= Supply evaluation, X2= Supplier development, X3 = Integrated communication technology, X1= Supply chain collaboration

Findings established an R-squared value of .860. This means that when all the independent variables were taken together, they gave an R-squared value of 0.549(54.9%). Thus, the independent variables (supply chain collaboration, supplier development, integrated communication technology and supply evaluation) taken together could account for up to 54.9% of the total variation supply chain performance of RMS LTD at 95% of confidence interval. The remaining 14% in the variation in supply chain performance of RMS LTD could be explained by other factors not in the model. This meant that in an ideal situation without interference from extraneous variables, the independent variables accounted for up to 86% of the total variance in supply chain performance of RMS LTD.

**Table 4: ANOVA**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 52.317 | 4 | 13.079 | 403.031 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 8.535 | 263 | .032 | | |
| | Total | 60.852 | 267 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Y=Supplier chain performance in Rwanda Medical Supplier.
b. Predictors: (Constant), X4= Supply evaluation, X2= Supplier development, X3 = Integrated communication technology, X1= Supply chain collaboration

In order to examine on whether the data was good fit for regression model, the ANOVA was undertaken and the data being good fit for data was tested at 5% level of significance. Since from the Table 4 indicated an F-value of 403.031 is larger than the critical $F(v_1=3, v_2=263)= 2.40$ and also because p-value calculated =0.000 is less than Critical p-value =0.05 level of significant. Therefore, this implies that supplier relation management such as: supply chain collaboration, supplier development, integrated communication technology and supply evaluation, as independent variable is good predictors of supply chain performance of RMS LTD.

**Table 5: Regression Coefficients**

| | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. |
| 1 | (Constant) | .595 | .153 | | 3.887 | .000 |
| | X1= Supply chain collaboration | .097 | .024 | .117 | 4.030 | .000 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| X2= Supplier development | -.065 | .024 | -.066 | -2.686 | .008 |
| X3 = Integrated communication technology | .213 | .028 | .222 | 7.704 | .000 |
| X4= Supply evaluation | .615 | .029 | .714 | 21.547 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Y=Supplier chain performance in Rwanda Medical Supplier.

Performance of King Faisal Hospital= $0.595+0.097X_1+ (-065) X_2+0.213X+0.615X_4$

The regression equation above has established that taking all factors into account (supply chain collaboration, supplier development, integrated communication technology and supply evaluation) constant at zero. Supply chain performance of RMS LTD will be 0.595.

The regression results revealed that supply chain collaboration has significance positive influence on supply chain performance of RMS LTD as indicated by $\beta_1$= 0.097, p-value=0.000<0.05. The implication is that an increase of one unit in supply chain collaboration would lead to an increase in supply chain performance of RMS LTD by 0.097 units.

The regression results revealed that supplier development has negative influence on supply chain performance of RMS LTD as indicated by $\beta_2$= -0.065, p-value=0.08>0.05. The implication is that an increase of one unit in supplier development would lead to supply chain performance of RMS LTD by -0.065 units.

The regression results revealed that integrated communication technology has significance positive influence on supply chain performance of RMS LTD as indicated by $\beta_3$= 0.213, p-value=0.000<0.05. The implication is that an increase one unit in integrated communication technology would lead to an increase in supply chain performance of RMS LTD by 0.213 units.

The regression results revealed that supply evaluation has significance positive influence on performance of King Faisal Hospital as indicated by $\beta_3$= 0.615, p-value=0.615<0.05. The implication is that an increase one unit in supply evaluation would lead to an increase in supply chain performance of RMS LTD by 0.615 units.

## 7. Conclusion

Correlation results indicated that supply chain collaboration was highly practiced within RMS LTD. In other words, this implies that majority of the studied firms collaborated with their suppliers. Respondents agreed that their organization effectively controlled the inventory turnover besides ensuring that there was sustainability when it came to handling the supplier collaborations. In conclusion, supplier chain collaboration can positively impact the performance of Rwanda Medical Supply Ltd by improving efficiency, reducing costs, ensuring quality, fostering innovation, managing risks, and enhancing customer satisfaction. It allows RMS LTD to build resilient and sustainable supply chains that are crucial for its mission of supplying vital medical supplies to healthcare providers in Rwanda. The study established that supplier development was highly practiced within as an aspect of their supplier relationship management even though in this study, the results indicate that supplier development play a big role in supply chain performance Based on correlation analysis, it was noted that integrated communication technology had moderate relationship with supply chain performance. It enhances efficiency, accuracy, visibility, and collaboration within the supply chain. Moreover, IT empowers data-driven decision-making, which is essential for optimizing operations, reducing costs, and meeting the evolving needs of healthcare providers in Rwanda. Supplier evaluation had strong relationship with supply chain performance. It was noted that RMS LTD did practice supplier evaluation as a way of supplier relationship management. Respondents agreed that the organization ensured that there was efficiency when it came to supplier evaluation besides maintaining production level by ensuring continuous evaluation of its suppliers.

## 8. Recommendations

The findings revealed that supply chain collaboration had the third largest and significant influence on supply chain performance of RMS LTD. In view of this finding, the study recommends that when making supplier relationship management decisions aimed at optimizing supply chain performance, the supply chain managers should place more emphasis on supply chain collaborations.

In view of the regression results, it was shown that supplier development had the least and insignificant effect on supply chain performance of RMS LTD. The study therefore recommends

for more improvement on supplier development practices in place among RMS LTD to ensure that they significantly contribute towards supply chain performance.

The results analyzed indicated that integration communication technology had the second largest and significant influence on supply chain performance of RMS LTD. Based on this finding, the study recommends that RMS LTD should adopt of innovative technology in management of supply chains to ensure that the systems are optimized.

The results of regression analysis indicated that supply evaluation had the first largest and significant influence on supply chain performance of RMS LTD. Based on this finding, the study recommends that the supply chain managers and the procurement managers of RMS LTD should optimize and improve on their supplier evaluation criteria so as to maximize their supply chain performance.

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