

**THE IMPACT OF MANAGING SUPPLY RELATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL
PROCUREMENT STRATEGIES :A CASE OF RILEY PACKAGING LIMITED**

JOVIA BIRABWA

S21B12/127

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF
PROCUREMENT AND LOGISTICS OF UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

October, 2024

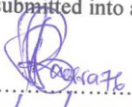


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DECLARATION

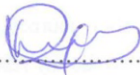
I **BIRABWA JOVIA** do declare that this research report is full of my original work and the best of my knowledge, compiled by my personal effort and written by my own hand and it has never been submitted into any university

Signature..........
Date.....18/09/2024.....

APPROVAL

I certify that this report has been compiled under my supervision and now ready for further examination.

Supervisor.....

Signature.....  18/09/2024

M^s KABUGHO MACKLINE
Academic supervisor

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to all who supported me during my education journey especially my parents, friends and my supervisor, whose guidance, expertise have shaped my research and help me grow.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Chiefly, I thank God for giving me the gift of life and wisdom during this dissertation.

I would like to thank and appreciate the crucial role of the academic supervisor for offering guidance and support during this research journey

My special thanks also goes to Riley packaging limited for great support and guidance during my data collection period at the organization, I also appreciate my Parents and friends for their encouragement during this period .

Behind, my sincere gratitude and value goes to my beloved family, colleague for their moral and financial support during my dissertation. May God bless you

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ABSTRACT

This study looks at how managing supplier relationships affect international purchasing strategies at Riley Packaging Limited. We used a mix of methods, including surveys, interviews, and case studies, to collect information from suppliers, purchasing teams, and top management.

The results show that trust, good communication, and teamwork are very important for strong supplier relationships. This leads to better quality, shorter wait times, and more flexibility in international purchasing. The study also points out some challenges and ways to improve, like using technology, helping suppliers grow, and managing risks.

The findings are useful for Riley Packaging Limited and other companies, showing how important it is to manage supplier relationships well to stay competitive in global markets. In an increasing globalized market this research goes deep to explore the impacts of supply relations management on international procurement results at Riley packaging limited. This research portrays actionable recommendations for riley packing limited and its impact to the industry's knowledge of effective supply relations management on international procurement strategies.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

This chapter covers the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives for the study, the research questions, scope of the study, limitations and delimitation and significance of the study, and conceptual framework.

Background of the study.

Historical Background

The development of modern trade practices and, in the end, the necessity of efficient supply chain management in a more globalized society could be traced in Ross's 2007 book. Organizations could develop ways to enhance functioning with suppliers and identify the key to global market success after learning from the past. Today, data analytics and collaboration platforms are utilized in the field of supply relationship management to secure supply chain transparency and communication (Lee, 2004; cited in WisTech). Over the last five years, businesses were forced to acknowledge not only other trade-related issues but also geopolitical ones

Theoretical Background

The research incorporates insights from other fields and ideas, including international business, supply chain management, and strategic management. Drawing from the works of R. Gulati (1998), C. W. Hill, and G. R. Jones (2001)

1.01 Contextual Background.

According to Rajesh Rajagopal, the following context is investigated in the context of supply relations management in international procurement strategies: "Investigation here concerns how businesses are managing suppliers from around the globes in a manner that ensures their supply chain is smooth for goods and services they supply".

Conceptual background

According to Hughes (2010), supplier relationship management is the discipline of strategically organizing and overseeing all of an organization's relationships with outside companies that provide goods and/or services in order to optimize the value of such interactions.

Statement of the Problem.

. According to Singh, Riley's packaging supply chain succeeded in maintaining the involved environmental issues, local high-quality standards, the cost-effectiveness and deliverance of packaging supplies from the global suppliers. By taking center stage on all these packaging-related issues, I could soon develop strategies to enhance Riley's procurement processes and, more broadly, business packaging procedures. Hence, the study question is: "How does supply relationship management impacts Riley's international procurement strategies?" And how various other such as material quality, cost-effectiveness, sustainability, delivery lead times, supplier reliability and regulatory compliances affect how well the supply chain is smoothly functioning.. The study has been carried out by Chang et al.

Objectives of the study.

1. To examine the effect of supplier quality improvement on cost saving and reduction in Riley packaging limited.
2. To assess the relationship between trust-based supplier relationship and quality assurance in Riley packaging limited.
3. To determine the effect of supplier lead time reduction on timely and assured delivery in Riley packaging limited.

Research questions.

1. What is the impact of supplier quality improvement on cost saving and reduction.
2. What is the relation between trust based supplier relationship and quality assurance
3. What is the impact of supplier lead time reduction on timely and assured delivery.

Scope of the study.

Geographical Scope

The study will focus specifically on Riley packaging limited on timely delivery operating in certain geographical regions. The findings and conclusions drawn will be of merit to the international supply chain operations within Riley packaging limited operations.

1.02 Time scope.

The study will be conducted from May 2024 to July 2024 during which managing supply relations have been implemented within Riley packaging limited.

Content scope

The study conducted by Gupta et al. (2019) on the management of supply relations in international procurement strategies at Riley Packaging Limited elucidates the role of adhesive analysis in manufacturing companies. This involves focusing on two official and informal indicators? Value for money, internal client satisfaction, performance management, goal-setting, international supplier auctions, and supplier performance-related communication, variable for management takes into account three indicators: timely and assured delivery, quality assurance, and cost savings and reduction. The two indicators for management are setting performance targets and international procurement performance.

Significance of study.

Through this course, I will get information about supply chain relationship management and international procurement, including how to implement and evaluate supply chain management in manufacturing entities of a developing country Uganda.

Justification of the study.

According to (Kaushal Rameshbhai) Patel, this study offers viable solutions to improve the supply chain's efficiency, lower costs, raise the caliber of packaging materials, guarantee on-time delivery, address sustainability issues, and ultimately bolster , This study, which is based on (APICS, 2020), fills a critical gap in the manufacturing industry, where effective supply chain relationships management is essential. Riley competes in the packaging industry, thus knowing how managing supply relations affects the company and knowledge gaps and produce policy recommendations for improved supplier relationship management and global procurement tactics

The study offers valuable insights and recommendations to drive positive changes in the Riley's procurement practices.

Limitations and delimitations of the study.

The potential language barriers in Riley supply relations management may create a limitation. The study delimits on solely focusing on specific regions or countries for supplier analysis, excluding certain types of packaging materials.

Conceptual Framework

Independent variables
(Supply Relations Management)
strategy

- supplier quality improvement
- trust based supplier relationship
- Supplier lead time reduction

Dependent variables
(International procurement)

- Cost saving and reduction
- Quality Assurance
- Timely and assured delivery



Moderating variables
(External factors)

- Regulatory framework
- market dynamics
- Technology advancement

This conceptual framework outlines how supply relations management (independent variable) influences international procurement strategies (dependent variable) under the influence of external factors (moderating variables). The ultimate outcomes are enhanced by international procurement strategies indicators that contribute to Riley packaging Limited's efficiency and competitive advantage. This framework provides a systematic way to analyze and interpret the impact of managing supply relations on international procurement strategies within Riley Packaging Ltd, taking into account various factors and potential way of influence.

Key definitions

1. **Effective Supply Chain Management:** The ability to manage and coordinate activities across the supply chain to achieve efficiency, effectiveness, and excellence in delivery, quality, and cost. (A. M. Ross, 2007)
2. **International Procurement:** The process of sourcing goods and services or works from suppliers located in different countries especially abroad. (Lee, 2004)
3. **Supply Relationship Management:** The process of managing and maintaining and implementing relationships with suppliers to achieve mutual benefits and success.
4. **Digital Tools:** Technology solutions used to streamline communication enhance transparency, performance and improve supply chain efficiency. (WisTech)
5. **Data Analytics:** The process of analyzing data to gain insights and make informed decisions in the organization about supply chain management. (WisTech)
6. **Collaboration Platforms:** Digital platforms used to facilitate communication, coordination, management and collaboration among supply chain partners. (WisTech)
7. **Resilient and Sustainable Supply Networks:** Supply chains that are able to withstand geopolitical challenges, trade regulations, and market dynamics while maintaining their ability to deliver quality products and services in this evolving world. (WisTech)

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

A literature review aims to explore existing research in supply relations and its impact on international procurement strategies, focusing on the international company's and Riley packaging limited. The review will cover the objectives of the study which includes the effect of supplier quality improvement on cost saving and reduction, the relationship between trust-based supplier relationship and quality assurance and The effect of supplier lead time reduction on timely and assured delivery

2.2 The effect of supplier quality improvement on cost saving and reduction

One of the most important functions within supply relationships management is supplier quality improvement and its effectiveness in cost saving and reduction is widely recognized. As noted in the case of Riley packaging limited a-leading manufacturing company in East Africa, supplier quality improvement can enhance the cost determination for a business positively only. The quality of materials and components purchased from suppliers by companies can be enhanced, thereby reducing the defects, rework, and location of waste in the organizations processes. This may result into lower production costs, higher efficiency, and overall improvement of the quality of products. will consider best practices of saving and reduction of costs in relation to the issues of supplier quality improvement. According to Krause 2000, does supplier improvement strategy reduce costs in such a way that there are low defective products, inspection costs are low, and inventory is low? Well for example. Similarly, Handfield 2000 according to this study found out through supplier quality improvement levels as the inventory would decrease and logistics costs would decrease supplier cost accumulation by as much as 25%.

Better supplier quality can lead to improved delivery performance, which, as noted by Handfield and Nichols 2002, can also reduce costs associated with production delays and stock out situations. A well-managed and controlled supplier quality can result in cost reduction amounting to 12% in relation to inspection, rework, and repair costs." (Sarkar 2019).

Riley Packaging Company views the enhancement of supplier quality straight to supply chain efficiency as a turning point in their growth. By concentrating on improving the quality of their suppliers, Riley has likewise enhanced their internal processes with a positive impact on the

lengths of lead times and efficiencies (Terpend 2008). This means that there are no longer delays for Riley packaging limited in sourcing good quality packaging materials to the production lines, and this has improved productivity. Better supply chain management enables Riley to react to changing customer requirements, accelerate order fill rates, and grow and profit as a business. This has led to developing a competitive advantage in the packaging industry built on the improvement of supplier quality which is likely to be sustained into the future for Riley. Concerning Riley packaging limited open communication and information sharing that is establish between suppliers and buyers it creates trust and respect, promotes collaboration and teamwork, inspires innovation and creativity, solves problems and issues quickly, increases problem-solving and decision-making effectiveness, facilitates personal and professional development, and creates a healthy and diversified environment. In this way, there will also tend to be more appropriate and matching quality expectations so that quality control improves (Zhao et al., 2008).

. The efforts made to improve supplier quality have been shown to help in cost reduction in a number of ways. Defect rates and subsequent rework and associated costs can be lowered considerably by enhancing supplier quality which can be beneficial to the bottom line. Similar studies have shown that the introduction of policies directed towards the improvement of supplier quality has fewer defects, lower rework, and lower costs for the company as a whole (Krause et al, 2000; Handfield et al, 2000). This in turn can lead into enhanced efficiency, better productivity, enhanced competitiveness and eventually business profitability. There are great benefits to organizations that include sustainable cost reduction if they provide support to supplier quality improvement initiatives. Due to this, it has been possible for Riley Packaging Company to embrace JIT production and minimize production cost by rejecting the use of in house timber inventory. Because reliable suppliers can provide all the materials needed on time without compromising on quality, Riley is now able to manufacture packaging materials at the exact demand, hence no extra stock. This has not only cut the cost of holding inventories but has also cut down on wastage, obsolescence and the cost of handling the inventories. It is further pointed out by Krause et al (2007) that this JIT approach facilitated by suppliers' quality improvement has potential for dramatic savings in inventory costs.

Although supplier quality can enhance the timely delivery of products which can in turn help in decreasing costs, it also poses some challenges rays of negativity particularly with companies

such as Riley packaging. Transacting or partnering with superior quality suppliers may fetch a lot of advantages however; there are limitations of over reliance or lack of flexibility (Choi & Hartley, 1996). Such a business strategy may expose Riley Packaging Company to supply chain based challenges that arise when reliable suppliers of critical materials do not deliver owing to some unforeseen events such as financial difficulties, natural catastrophes or inability to adequately satisfy demand. This dependence may be harmful for Riley for if such belief held on a sole supplier is deeply placed, some desperate alterations will be required if customers' demand levels, preferences or the operational environment are altered which will affect the company's and profitability agility and rocket competitiveness. Therefore, in order to reduce that risk, Riley has to operate in a manner that will provide a good supply relationship and a flexible and varied supply chain so that it will not remain dependent on any particular supplier as things evolve.

These systems may thank Craig Holt (1998) management literature, this building, better exploitation of the strategies of value creation involves the construction of a variety of inter-organizational relationship networks. Investments in these supplier quality improvement initiatives are tactical choices that require high initial costs in the long run, such as time, resources, and money (Kannan & Tan, 2005). Other companies such as Riley Packaging Company have to bear the cost and undertake supplier development initiatives, implement controls of quality systems and invest time and effort in building relationships to ensure their suppliers attain the desired grade of quality.

These initial investments may deal with some costs linked to selection of providers, training and certification, and implementation of quality assurance material and systems as well. These amounts can be termed expensive nke, the long term essence of improvement of suppliers quality that results in llower defect rates, lower capital irrelevant costs, better supply chain responsiveness, and many other benefits Justificaion and the long lifespan intead cannot lead to the use of long term strategies enabling positive return on investment and high profits. Nonetheless, the resolute orientation towards quality that buyers exhibit has its downside especially on how such buyers relate with their suppliers and trust. Two problems arise here, one, suppliers tend to comply as the buyers set higher targets; two, over compliance can trigger buyer supplier dysfunction Mudambi & Helper, 1998). Suppliers too, could expect enhanced quality across the board with increased quality measures. But the measures that are soared could be

viewed as unfair and as a result develop ill will and confidence. This could worsen the joint efforts, for example, improved dialogue or even loss of suppliers. In order to control the level of disruption in supplier relationships, buyers should possess robust quality expectations but at the same time, demonstrate understanding of suppliers and their worries, developing a partnership with them to achieve desirable quality and functioning quantity whilst keeping room for addressing issues concerning relationships to avoid burning bridges.

Cultural and language barriers experienced by local buyers & overseas suppliers. Multinational organizations which develop their supply chain need to deal with a number of the Rich Hofstede areas such as different cultural values and types behaviour, and communication (Samson & Terziovski 2016). Language barriers, often leading to amusing and/or chilling anecdotes of products being ordered in the wrong quantity or quality because there was a mistake made (Morschett et al 2015). As an example, success in establishing good relationship with global suppliers depends on effective communication, cultural intelligence and adaptability to be able to bridge cultures (Gao et al., 2017).

A major issue when sharing information with suppliers is how to handle Intellectual Property (IP) and confidentiality. Riley Packaging needs to carefully manage this balance: they want to collaborate with suppliers to encourage innovation and efficiency, but they also need to protect their trade secrets, special materials, and private designs. If not managed properly, sharing information with suppliers could lead to IP theft, counterfeiting, and unauthorized use, which could harm their competitive advantage and cause revenue loss. To reduce this risk, companies must set up strong confidentiality agreements, access controls, and monitoring systems, and also educate their suppliers about IP protection. In summary, better supplier quality can significantly reduce costs and waste for companies like Riley Packaging Limited, helping them to minimize errors, cut down on rework, and improve their supply chain operations.

However, this advantage comes with difficulties and possible downsides, such as higher initial costs for developing suppliers, potential disruptions to current supply chains, and the risk of depending too much on top-performing suppliers. As Riley Packaging Limited continues to focus on improving supplier quality, it must carefully weigh the benefits of cost savings and reduction against the need to manage these risks. This ensures that its efforts to boost supplier quality do not hinder its ability to adapt to changing market conditions, customer needs, or supplier situations. By recognizing and dealing with these challenges, Riley Packaging Limited

can fully utilize the benefits of improving supplier quality to achieve business success, customer satisfaction, and long-term sustainability.

2.3 The relationship between trust-based supplier relationship and quality assurance

Quality assurance in supply chain management is strongly connected to the relationships between buyers and suppliers. One important part of these relationships that is often discussed is the need for trust between the two parties. Just like trust is crucial in successful personal relationships, it seems to be the main factor in creating and keeping a good and smooth relationship between buyers and suppliers (Mohr & Spekman, 1994; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). The good news is that there are clear ideas in the literature about how to build trust and what types of trust can exist in a supplier relationship. At first, trust can reduce the need for strict rules and constant checking, allowing suppliers to focus on making their products better. Trust can also help manage risks from problems in the supply chain, like natural disasters, political issues, or economic changes. Research shows that trusting relationships between buyers and suppliers don't always guarantee high quality. Other things—like the supplier's skills, how well they talk to the buyer, and clear, reasonable demands—are also very important. A company that trusts its supplier is much more likely to get good, affordable products. But if the company doesn't trust its supplier, it's not as likely to get those good results.

For Riley packaging limited, trust reduces the perceived risks associated with supplier interactions especially in the European union allowing firms to engage in more collaborative behaviors, by working together more closely, suppliers and buyers can identify and address potential issues earlier, share knowledge and expertise, and develop more effective solutions to complex problems, this can lead to improved overall performance, increased competitiveness, and a more sustainable and resilient supply chain. (Kumar et al., 2011).

Trust-based environment, suppliers are more likely to share critical information, invest in joint problem-solving, and engage in continuous improvement initiatives, all of which are essential for quality assurance (Gulati, 1995). According to Jap and Ganesan (2000), trust reduces the need for extensive monitoring and control mechanisms, allowing firms to allocate resources more effectively towards quality improvement initiatives rather than compliance checks. When suppliers feel valued and trusted, they are more likely to prioritize the buyer's quality requirements (Fynes et al., 2005). Dyer and Singh (1998) highlights that collaborative relationships allow for the pooling of resources and knowledge, which can enhance quality

management practices.

While trust-based supplier relationships have been widely recognized as a key factor in achieving quality assurance in supply chain management, it can also have some negative impacts that can be challenging to establish and maintain, particularly in the context of an international company like Riley Packaging limited.

Particularly in the presence of cultural and language barriers for a company like Riley Packaging who outsource some of the machines language becomes a problem hence incurring costs in getting a linguist. Trust is tested during times of crisis, such as natural disasters or supply chain disruptions (Sweeney et al., 2018). When one party holds more power or influence, it can lead to exploitation, coercion, or manipulation, eroding trust and creating a power imbalance (Liu et al., 2019). This can occur when a large buyer dictates terms to a smaller supplier or when a supplier has a monopoly on a critical component. To build trust, it's essential to recognize and address these power imbalances through open communication, fair negotiations, and collaborative problem-solving, ensuring a more equitable and mutually beneficial relationship.

Additionally, trust can be difficult to repair once it has been broken, highlighting the importance of proactive trust-building efforts (Mudambi and Helper, 1998). Building, maintaining and implementing trust in supplier relationships can be challenging, in situations where there are cultural, linguistic, or geographical barriers (Handfield, 2015). Therefore, buyers must invest time and effort in developing trust with their suppliers, through regular communication, joint problem-solving and mutual support.

Competitor influence can be a significant threat to trust-based supplier relationships. In highly competitive environments, rival companies may attempt to undermine the trust and loyalty between a supplier and their customer by offering incentives, spreading misinformation, or poaching key employees. This can lead to erosion of trust, decreased collaboration, and ultimately, a breakdown in the relationship. Suppliers may become wary of sharing sensitive information or making relationship-specific investments, fearing that their competitor may gain. Creating, keeping, and using trust in relationships with suppliers can be difficult, especially when there are differences in culture, language, or location (Handfield, 2015). So, buyers need to spend time and energy building trust with their suppliers by talking often, working together to solve problems, and helping each other. Competitors can be a big problem for trust-based supplier relationships. In very competitive situations, other companies might try to break the trust and

loyalty between a supplier and their customer by giving special offers, spreading false information, or taking away important workers. This can cause trust to weaken, less teamwork, and eventually, the relationship might fall apart. Suppliers might be afraid to share important information or make special investments for the relationship, worried that their competitor could get ahead. To reduce this risk, companies need to carefully watch what their competitors are doing and keep clear, honest communication with their suppliers to build trust and improve their relationship (Kumar et al., 2018). Measuring and quantifying trust in supplier relationships can be a daunting task, as it is an intangible and complex construct (Wagner et al., 2019). Furthermore, building trust requires a long-term commitment to consistent positive interactions, which can be challenging in today's fast-paced business environment (Liu et al., 2019). For Riley packaging limited trust cannot be established overnight since they deal with international reputed companies, but rather it develops gradually over time through repeated experiences and interactions. As such, Riley packaging company must prioritize ongoing communication, collaboration, and mutual support to foster a culture of trust, which can ultimately lead to stronger, more resilient supplier relationships and improved business outcomes. By acknowledging the importance of time and consistency in building trust, organizations can make informed decisions and investments that promote lasting and productive relationships with their suppliers.

In summary, the literature clearly shows that trusting relationships with suppliers have a strong and positive effect on quality control in Supply Chain Management (SCM), as seen in the case of Riley Packaging Limited. By building strong, cooperative relationships based on trust, transparency, and clear communication, Riley Packaging has managed to consistently receive high-quality materials, lower the chances of mistakes, and encourage continuous improvement among its suppliers. This approach has not only improved the quality of its products but also made the supply chain more resilient, adaptable, and efficient. As Riley Packaging continues to deal with the challenges of SCM, its focus on trust-based supplier relationships will continue to be a key part of its quality assurance strategy, helping to achieve business success and customer satisfaction.

2.4. The effect of supplier lead time reduction on timely and assured delivery

According to Huang 2010 Supplier lead time reduction is a critical aspect of supply chain management, as it directly impacts the overall efficiency and responsiveness of the supply chain.

By reducing supplier lead times can lead to improved delivery performance, including reduced delays and increased on-time delivery rates, increased flexibility, reduced inventory levels, and enhanced customer satisfaction (Chopra & Meindl, 2010). supplier lead time reduction improves timely delivery is by reducing the variability in lead times, allowing for more accurate planning and scheduling (Handfield et al., 2000). reduced lead times can lead to improved communication and collaboration between buyers and suppliers, reducing the likelihood of errors and miscommunication (Krause 2000). reduced lead times enable buyers to respond more quickly to changes in demand, reducing the likelihood of stock outs and overstocking (Cavinato, 2005).

Research has shown that reducing the time it takes for suppliers to deliver goods can improve the reliability and speed of deliveries. For instance, a study by Chopra and Meindl (2013) discovered that in the automotive industry, shorter supplier lead times were linked to better on-time delivery. Shorter lead times make customers happier because they get their products faster. According to Daugherty et al. (1999), when lead times are shorter, they match what customers expect for quick delivery, which increases their satisfaction and loyalty. As customers want faster deliveries, companies that can meet these demands have an advantage over their competitors.

Reducing the time it takes to get products from suppliers to customers can save a lot of money. By making processes smoother and working better with suppliers, companies can lower costs related to having too much stock, paying for fast shipping, and dealing with production delays (Kumar & Sethi, 2018). Studies by Kannan and Tan (2006) show that businesses that cut lead times often have lower overall supply chain costs. Shorter lead times improve how well companies can predict demand, helping them plan production better. With quicker lead times, companies can quickly adapt to changes in demand, spot trends more easily, and update their predictions more often. This better accuracy helps in planning production more effectively, adjusting schedules, managing stock levels, cutting waste and unused capacity, and making the whole supply chain work better. As a result, companies like Riley Packaging Limited can make smarter decisions.

Shorter lead times have greatly improved inventory management. By simplifying their supply chain and working closely with suppliers, Riley Packaging Limited has significantly reduced lead times, allowing them to use just-in-time (JIT) inventory systems. This change lets Riley Packaging Limited keep smaller safety stocks, lowering inventory costs and reducing the risk of items becoming outdated or wasted. With JIT, Riley Packaging Limited can now make and get

packaging materials based on customer needs, keeping inventory levels just right and waste to a minimum. This boosts efficiency and increases customer satisfaction by speeding up deliveries and reducing stock shortages. Shorter lead times help companies be more adaptable and better respond to changes in the market and customer needs. This flexibility allows businesses to manage their production plans and inventory more efficiently, which reduces the chances of running out of stock or having too much stock (Christopher, 2000). For example, a study by Lee et al. (1997) showed that companies with shorter lead times can quickly adapt to shifts in customer preferences, making them more responsive to the market. At Riley Packaging Limited, cutting down on supplier lead times has greatly improved risk management. With shorter lead times, the company is less affected by supply chain issues like natural disasters, supplier bankruptcies, or shipping delays. This lower risk helps Riley better handle potential problems, leading to a more stable and strong supply chain. By reducing the risk of delays, Riley can keep production on track, meet customer needs, and protect its reputation.

Reducing supplier lead times comes with challenges and limitations, especially in complex global supply chains. However, there are ways to improve this, such as using lean production and just-in-time (JIT) systems, which help by making production and logistics processes more efficient. Advanced technology, like electronic data interchange (EDI) and vendor-managed inventory (VMI) systems, can also help by improving communication and coordination between buyers and suppliers. Other strategies for reducing lead times include supplier development, collaboration, and process improvement. Supplier development programs can help by improving supplier capabilities through training, technical assistance, and performance feedback. Effective collaboration and communication between buyers and suppliers are also key.

However, cutting down on the time it takes for suppliers to deliver goods can be difficult, especially when suppliers don't have the right resources or skills (Handfield 2000). It's important to think about these challenges and come up with plans to handle them when trying to shorten supplier lead times. So, buyers need to choose and support suppliers carefully to make sure their efforts to reduce lead times work well. Shortening lead times can also cause problems for suppliers, like not having enough space or resources and possibly lowering the quality of what they produce. When buyers want faster deliveries, suppliers might have trouble keeping up, leading to too much work and less quality control (Chopra & Meindl, 2007). To meet the quicker deadlines, suppliers might skip quality checks or rush production, which can result in faulty

products or delays. Also, suppliers might need to buy new equipment or hire more people to handle the increased demand, which can strain their resources.

At Riley Packaging Limited, cutting down on the time it takes for suppliers to deliver goods has come with a price. To get faster deliveries, the company has had to spend a lot on improving its processes and working with suppliers, including using new technology, training staff, and making sure the quality of products is good (Kannan & Tan, 2005). These changes have cost a lot of money, making it harder for the company to manage its finances and affecting its profits. Even though having shorter lead times helps with customer happiness and makes the company more competitive, Riley Packaging Limited needs to think carefully about whether the benefits are worth the extra costs. By doing this, the company can make sure that its efforts to reduce lead times are both successful and can be kept up in the long run.

As companies like Riley Packaging Limited work to shorten the time it takes for suppliers to deliver goods, they might start relying too much on those suppliers. This can make it harder for the company to be flexible and quick in responding to changes (Choi & Hartley, 1996). By depending on just a few suppliers to deliver goods quickly, companies could struggle to adjust to shifts in customer demand, market conditions, or supplier issues. This heavy reliance can also make the supply chain less stable, making it difficult to handle disruptions or supplier problems. To avoid these risks, companies need to find a balance between speeding up delivery times and working with a variety of suppliers.

To sum up, cutting down on how long it takes suppliers to deliver goods has a big positive effect. It helps companies like Riley Packaging Limited deliver products on time and reliably. This lets them serve their customers better, make their supply chain work more smoothly, and stay ahead of their competitors. But, this advantage comes with some difficulties and possible downsides. These include higher costs, relying more on suppliers, putting pressure on their capacity, and maybe having to lower the quality of goods. As Riley Packaging Limited works on reducing lead times, they need to carefully weigh the benefits of quicker deliveries against the need to avoid these risks. They must make sure that their efforts to make their supply chain more flexible don't hurt the quality, reliability, or long-term sustainability of their operations. By recognizing and dealing with these challenges, Riley Packaging Limited can fully use the benefits of shorter lead times to boost their business success and keep their customers happy.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the research methods used in the study. It covers the research plan, the group of people studied, how people were chosen, how data was collected, and how the data was analyzed. The chapter ends with a discussion about the ethical issues related to the study.

3.2 Research Design

The study uses a descriptive research plan, which is often used to describe the traits of a group of people or a situation being studied (Creswell, 2014). This plan is suitable because it helps in a thorough analysis of how managing supply relationships affect international procurement strategies, especially in the case of Riley Packaging Limited (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). This plan will allow for the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data to fully meet the research goals.

3.3 Population of the study

The target population for this study is 70 respondents which includes employees involved in procurement and supply chain management at Riley Packaging Limited. This includes 20 procurement managers, 25 supply chain analysts, 10 quality assurance personnel, and 15 suppliers (Creswell, 2014).

3.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample size

A purposive sampling technique will be used to select participants who have direct involvement in supplier management and procurement processes (Patton, 2015). The respondents will be selected based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling guidelines. The sample size will consist of 59 participants, including 17 procurement managers, 22 supply chain analysts, 8 quality assurance personnel, and 12 key suppliers. This sample size is deemed adequate to provide a representative understanding of the issues under study (Bryman, 2016).

Respondents	Target Population	Sample size
Procurement Managers	20	15
Supply Chain Analysts	25	20
Quality Assurance personnel	10	8
Key Suppliers	15	12

Total	70	55
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3.5 Data collection methods.

3.5.1 Primary Data Collection.

Primary data will be collected through structured questionnaires distributed to the sampled employees. The questionnaire will include closed-ended questions designed to gather quantitative data.

3.5.2 Secondary Data Collection.

Secondary data will be collected from company reports, performance records, and relevant academic journals. This data will provide additional context and support for the primary data collected (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

Primary data will be collected using structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Questionnaires are effective for collecting quantitative data, while interviews are useful for obtaining qualitative data (Gill et al., 2008).

3.6.1 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire will consist of closed-ended questions using a Likert scale to measure the impact of supplier management practices on cost savings, quality assurance, and timely delivery (Likert, 1932). The questions will be categorized according to the research objectives to ensure relevance and clarity.

3.6.2 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with key procurement managers and suppliers to gain deeper insights into the relationship between supplier management and international procurement strategies (Kvale, 2007). These interviews will allow for open-ended responses, providing qualitative data that complement the quantitative findings.

3.7 Data Analysis Procedure

Data collected will be analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The combination of these methods enables a comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

3.7.1 Quantitative Data Analysis.

The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires will be analyzed using descriptive

statistics, including mean, median, and standard deviation (Pallant, 2020). Inferential statistics, such as correlation and regression analysis, will be employed to examine the relationships between supplier management practices and procurement outcomes (Field, 2018).

3.7.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

The information from the interviews will be examined using thematic analysis. This means we will organize the data to find common topics about improving supplier quality, building trust-based relationships, and reducing lead times (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The results will be explained in a story-like format and will help support the numerical results.

3.7.3 Data Presentation.

The outcomes will be shown using tables, graphs, and charts to make the findings easy to understand. This visual way of presenting the data will help in understanding and talking about the results (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

3.8 Validity and Reliability.

3.8.1 Ensuring Validity.

To make sure the research tools are accurate, the questionnaire will be tested with a small group of people from the target group. Feedback from the pilot test will be used to refine the questions. Additionally, the questionnaire will be reviewed by experts in the field to ensure content validity (Creswell, 2014). Validity will be evaluated by experts based on the assessment of items in the instrument as relevant and not relevant using the following formula.

$$CVI = \frac{\text{Total number of questions rated relevant}}{\text{Total number of questions in the instrument}}$$

An instrument is valid when it has a CVI of above 0.7 (Amin, 2005).

3.8.2 Ensuring Reliability

Joppe (2000) defines reliability as the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under the study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered too reliable. Therefore, the questionnaire will be administered to the same sample of two different points in time, and the results will be compared to check for consistency (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016). An internal consistency method of the Cronbach's coefficient alpha will be employed.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The study will adhere to ethical standards in research. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants before data collection (Bell & Bryman, 2007). Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained to protect the identity of the respondents. The data collected will be used solely for academic purposes and will not be shared with unauthorized parties (Flick, 2018).

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the results of analysis that has been done to look at the specific objectives of the study on the impact of managing supply relations on international procurement strategies in Riley Packaging G Limited and in relation to the reviewed literature with the help of tables. The study was carried out using questionnaire with selected respondents.

4.1 Response rate

Table 2: Response rate for questionnaires

Response Rate	Sample Size	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Response	50	90.9%
Non Response	5	9.1%
Expected Response	55	100.0%

Source: *Primary data*

According to table 2 above a total of 56(100%) respondents were expected to respond to the questionnaires, however, 55(90.9%) responded to the questionnaires leaving out 5 (9.1%). According to Ahuja (2009), a response rate of 70% is excellent, 60% is good and 50% is adequate for analysis. Thus the response rate of 90.9% was considered reliable and appropriate for the study. The reason as to why the researcher was unable to collect from the one of the respondents was because there was limited time to collect data since the researcher had to beat the deadline of dissertation submission yet some of these respondents were delaying to give response.

4.2 Findings on demographic characteristics of respondents

This section presents the general background information about the respondents in relation to their gender, age and level of education as shown in the table below;

4.2.1 Gender of the respondents

Table 3: Gender

Gender of respondents	frequency	percent	Cumulative percent
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male	21	42.0	42.0
female	29	58.0	100.0
total	50	100.0	

Source: *Primary data*

Findings in table 3 indicates that the majority of the respondents who are the selected teenagers are female represented by 58.0%, whereas the males make up 42.0% of the respondents. This gender distribution shows that there were more female adolescents than male adolescents involved in the study. This implies that any intervention programs or policies aimed at addressing impact of managing supply relations on international procurement strategies in Riley packaging g limited will be effective.

4.2.2 Age of the respondents

Table 4: Age

	frequency	percent
18-24 years	13	26.0
25-34 years	11	22.0
35-44 years	10	20.0
45-54 years	9	18.0
55 and above years	7	14.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: *Primary data*

Findings in table 4 above show that the largest proportion of respondents are within the age group of 18-24 years, making up 26.0% of the total sample. This is followed by

those aged 25-34years, who represent 22.0% of the respondents. The smallest group is the 55 and aboveyears age range, accounting for 14.0% of the sample. This implies that all age groups were represented in the sample and reflects wholesome perceptions.

4.2.3 Education level of the respondents

Table 5: Level of education

	Frequency	Percent
High school	18	36.0
Diploma	22	44.0

Bachelors	7	14.0
Masters	3	6.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: *Primary data*

Findings in the table 5 above revealed that the highest percentage of respondents among the respondents is at the diploma level, comprising 44.0% of the total sample. This is followed by those at the high school level, making up 36.0% of the respondents, followed by 14.0% who are at the Bachelors level, while 6.0% were at Masters level. This suggests that any initiatives aimed at impact of managing supply relations on international procurement strategies in Riley packaging g limited should include educational support and resources.

4.2.4 Years worked of respondents

Table 6: Years in the company

	Frequency	Percent
1 year and less	7	14.0
1-3 years	9	18.0
4-6 years	10	20.0
7-10 years	11	22.0
10 and above years	13	26.0
Total	50	100.0

Findings in table 6 above show that the highest percentage of respondents are in 10 years and above comprising 26.0% of the total sample. This is followed by those with 7-10 years working in Riley packaging , making up 22.0% of the respondents, followed by 20.0% who have worked 4-6 years, while 18.0% have worked in the company for 1-3 years, and 14.0% have worked for less than a year in Riley Packaging Limited . This suggests that any initiatives aimed at impact of

managing supply relations on international procurement strategies in Riley packaging g limited should include how many years one has spent in the company.

4.3 Findings based on the Study Objectives

4.3.1 Supply relations management

To what extent are the following supply relations management practices implemented in your department	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cost savings and reduction	1.00	4.00	2.65	1.09
Supplier capacity constraints management	1.00	5.00	3.88	1.07
Trust-based supplier relationships	1.00	5.00	3.86	1.11
Supplier lead time reduction	1.00	5.00	3.68	1.10
Supplier quality improvement	1.00	5.00	2.70	1.06
Our supplier management practices lead to	1.00	5.00	2.67	0.98

significant cost savings for our organization				
We regularly evaluate our suppliers to ensure we are getting the best prices	1.00	4.00	3.75	0.98

The results on the question to what extent are the following supply relations management practices implemented in your department show that Cost savings and reduction (mean=2.63). Supplier capacity constraints management(mean=3.88). Trust-based supplier relationships(mean=3.86). Supplier lead time reduction(mean=3.68). Supplier quality improvement(mean=2.70). Our supplier management practices lead to significant cost savings for our organization(mean=2.67). We regularly evaluate our suppliers to ensure we are getting the best prices(mean=3.75)

4.3.2 International procurement strategies

International	Min	Max	Mean	Std.
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procurement strategies				Deviation
How has the implementation of international procurement strategies impacted the lead time in your department	2.00	5.00	3.64	1.03
To what extent has supplier quality improvement impacted on cost saving and reduction in. in your department?	1.00	5.00	3.50	1.20
How effective is supplier relationship management in managing inventory levels?	2.00	5.00	3.63	1.16

The results on International procurement strategies indicate that how has the implementation of international procurement strategies impacted the lead time in your department (mean=3.64). To what extent has supplier quality improvement impacted on cost saving and reduction in. in your

department? (mean=3.50). How effective is supplier relationship management in managing inventory levels? (mean=3.63)

4.3.3 Customer feedback

To what extent do you believe that Riley packaging limited international procurement practices improve your exports experience? (1= Not at all, 5= To a very great extent)	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Availability of goods	2.00	5.00	3.64	1.03
Order fulfillment	2.00	5.00	3.64	1.03
Timeliness of deliveries	1.00	5.00	3.50	1.20
Accuracy of order.	2.00	5.00	3.63	1.16
Quality of goods	2.00	5.00	3.64	1.03

The results on the question to what extent do you believe that Riley packaging limited international procurement practices improve your exports experience show that availability of

goods (mean=3.64). Order fulfillment (mean=3.64). Timeliness of deliveries (mean=3.50). Accuracy of order (mean=3.63). Quality of goods (mean=3.64)

How satisfied are you with Riley packaging services? (1=Very dissatisfied, 5=Very satisfied)	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Quality of packaging materials				
Pricing and value for money	1.00	4.00	2.78	0.92
Flexibility and adaptability	1.00	5.00	3.14	0.98
Accuracy and attention to detail	1.00	5.00	2.59	1.14
Reliability and consistency	1.00	5.00	2.93	1.02
Customer support and after-sales service	1.00	4.00	2.78	1.01

The results on the question of what extent do you believe that Riley packaging limited international procurement practices improve your exports experience show that availability of

goods (mean=3.64). Order fulfillment (mean=3.64). Timeliness of deliveries (mean=3.50). Accuracy of order (mean=3.63). Quality of goods (mean=3.64)

4.3.4 General Perception and Open –ended questions

No. 14	What are the main challenges faced in implementing supplier quality improvement at Riley packaging limited? (1= Not a challenge, 5= very significant challenge) Challenge	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Unstructured collaboration					
2.	Too much documentation					
3.	Inefficient communication					

4.	Poor technology infrastructure					
5.	Supplier resistance					

The results on how satisfied are you with Riley packaging services show that Pricing and value for money(mean=2.78). Flexibility and adaptability (mean=3.14). Accuracy and attention to detail (mean=2.59). Reliability and consistency (mean=2.93). Customer support and after-sales service(mean=2.78)

What are the main challenges faced in implementing supplier quality improvement at Riley packaging limited? (1= Not a challenge, 5= very significant challenge)Challenge	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Unstructured collaboration	2.00	5.00	3.64	1.03
Too much documentation	1.00	5.00	3.50	1.20
Inefficient communication	2.00	5.00	3.63	1.16

Poor technology infrastructure	2.00	5.00	3.64	1.03
Supplier resistance	2.00	5.00	3.64	1.03

According to the findings on what are the main challenges faced in implementing supplier quality improvement at Riley packaging limited., the results show That unstructured collaboration (mean=3.64). Too much documentation (mean=3.50). Inefficient communication (mean=3.63). Poor technology infrastructure (mean=3.64). Supplier resistance (mean=3.64)

Managing supply relations contribute to overall performance of Riley packaging.

Respondents identified several ways of managing supply real that contribute to overall performance in Riley Packaging Limited including communication where employees and stakeholders who are accustomed to traditional procurement methods and modern procurement effectively communicate. Cost reduction when there’s effective supply relationships management this can lead to prices being negotiated, improved efficiency and lowering cost in Riley.

Additionally strong relationships can mitigate risks associated with supply chain disruptions hence Riley continuity and minimizing losses which makes business to prosper in this competitive market. . Solid supplier relationships guarantee a steady flow of high-quality materials, which lowers errors and boosts the overall quality of products. By effectively managing supplier relationships, Riley Packaging can improve its reputation, enhance customer satisfaction, increase efficiency and productivity, foster innovation and growth, and gain an edge in the market. These insights emphasize the significance of managing supplier relationships in meeting Riley Packaging's overall performance goals.

Overcoming Challenges in Supplier Quality Improvement at Riley Packaging Limited

Respondents identified several ways of overcoming challenges in supply quality improvement including Clear Communication Channels: Regular meetings, training sessions, and open

communication with suppliers to ensure understanding of quality expectations and limiting the challenge of poor communication in Riley packaging hence becoming vital to choose smooth clear communication channels. Training and Development Programs, offer training for suppliers on quality management, process control, and improvement techniques that help teach people on what to do during their presence in Riley packaging limiting unstructured collaboration in Riley packaging limited.

Additionally encourage open communication, trust, and collaboration with suppliers to drive quality improvement that is to that one way of overcoming challenges collaboration is key hence meeting competitive standards. As well as identify potential risks and develop mitigation strategies to ensure supplier quality that is key in managing challenges that are rampantly faced in Riley packaging, assessing these risks and forecasting them makes supplier quality improvement achieve its objectives.

Customer Perspective on Improvements in Riley Packaging Supply Chain Processes

Respondents want better communication about the status of their orders, any delays, and any changes. Set up a system that tracks orders in real-time and sends regular updates through email or a customer portal can be helpful to Riley packaging limited. They are also worried about long wait times for orders, which can cause problems with having enough products. A good idea to fix this is to use automated tools to make the order process faster and reduce the need for manual work in Riley this is desired from every single person Inorder to meet there expectations about Riley Packaging Limited.

Customers need to feel confident that the packaging quality always meets their standards. Boost quality control efforts and give customers access to quality reports and certifications. In today's fast-paced and competitive market, customers expect nothing but the highest quality products. By focusing on quality control and being open about their processes, Riley Packaging can meet the stricter rules set by authorities and address the growing worries of customers about product safety and sustainability. Additionally Customers have indicated a need for more flexibility in order sizes and delivery schedules to accommodate their varying needs, Riley Packaging's Flexible Ordering System (FOS) lets customers easily change order amounts and delivery dates, making it more adaptable and quick to respond to their needs. The easy-to-use online platform lets customers track orders in real-time, create custom order setups, and manage approval

processes. It also works smoothly with production and scheduling systems. This advanced system boosts customer happiness, cuts down on order mistakes and wait times, and helps business grow, making Riley Packaging stand out from other companies.

Additional comments or insights on strengthening supply relation

Respondents commented that managing supply relationships well is very important for Riley Packaging Limited's international buying plans because suppliers need to be engaged with in order to acquire quality products for the customers, to do this, Riley Packaging Limited should work on building trust with suppliers by talking to them often and being honest, working together with them to share information and resources, and helping them improve so they can do better. Also, Riley Packaging should create plans to handle risks, understand different cultures, keep an eye on how suppliers are doing and what's happening in the market, and use technology to make things easier to enhance performance and limiting challenges of poor documentation in the organization.

In conclusion considering things like the environment, social issues, and good management when choosing and working with suppliers will match the company's beliefs and reputation. By using these ideas, Riley Packaging can make its international buying better, save money, and be more successful in the market since the world today is embarking on sustainability pillars as missions in there companies so Riley packaging should enhance more on sustainability.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter includes the discussion of findings on the impact of managing supply relations on international procurement strategies in Riley Packaging G Limited in relation to the literature. In the discussion, it also summarizes all findings reported in chapter four according to questions of the study, draws conclusions, suggests recommendations and also proposes some areas for further study.

5.1 Discussion of findings

5.1.1 The effect of supplier quality improvement on cost saving and reduction

The results on the question to what extent are the following supply relations management practices implemented in your department show that Cost savings and reduction (mean=2.63). Supplier capacity constraints management (mean=3.88). Trust-based supplier relationships (mean=3.86). Supplier lead time reduction (mean=3.68). Supplier quality improvement (mean=2.70). Our supplier management practices lead to significant cost savings for our organization (mean=2.67). We regularly evaluate our suppliers to ensure we are getting the best prices (mean=3.75).

In the discussion of the results, it is found that the efforts made to improve supplier quality have been shown to help in cost reduction in a number of ways. Defect rates and subsequent rework and associated costs can be lowered considerably by enhancing supplier quality which can be beneficial to the bottom line. Similar studies have shown that the introduction of policies directed towards the improvement of supplier quality has fewer defects, sustainable cost reduction if they provide support to supplier quality improvement initiatives. Due to this, it has been possible for Riley Packaging Company to embrace JIT production and minimize production cost by rejecting the use of in house timber inventory. Because reliable suppliers can provide all the materials needed on time without compromising on quality, Riley is now able to manufacture packaging materials at the exact demand, hence no extra stock. This has not only cut the cost of holding inventories but has also cut down on wastage, obsolescence and the cost of handling the inventories. It is further pointed out by Krause et al (2007) that this JIT approach facilitated by suppliers' quality improvement has potential for dramatic savings in inventory costs. lower

rework, and lower costs for the company as a whole (Krause et al, 2000; Handfield et al, 2000). This in turn can lead into enhanced efficiency, better productivity, enhanced competitiveness and eventually business profitability. There are great benefits to organizations that include

5.1.2 Relationship between trust-based supplier relationship and quality assurance in Riley packaging limited.

The results on international procurement strategies indicate that how has the implementation of international procurement strategies impacted the lead time in your department (mean=3.64). To what extent has supplier quality improvement impacted on cost saving and reduction in. in your department? (Mean=3.50). How effective is supplier relationship management in managing inventory levels? (Mean=3.63).

The results revealed that trust-based supplier relationships have been widely recognized as a key factor in achieving quality assurance in supply chain management. The literature suggests that trust between buyers and suppliers are a critical component of a successful supplier relationship, leading to improved quality assurance and reduced quality problems (Mohr & Spekman, 1994). (Ganesan, 1994) has identified various dimensions of trust in supplier relationships, including reliability, competence, and benevolence. Reliability trust refers to the belief that a supplier will fulfill their obligations, while competence trust refers to the belief that a supplier has the necessary skills and expertise.

According to Morgan and Hunt (1994), trust is defined as the confidence in a partner's reliability and integrity, which is crucial for the establishment of long-term relationships.

First, trust can reduce the need for formal controls and monitoring, allowing suppliers to focus on quality improvement (Chen et al., 2011). Trust can mitigate the risks associated with supply chain disruptions, such as natural disasters, political instability, and economic volatility (Kouvelis et al. 2012). The literature highlights that trust-based supplier relationships may not always lead to quality assurance, as other factors such as supplier capability and buyer-supplier communication can also play a critical role (Choi and Hartley, 1996).

More so, trust can increase the willingness of suppliers to share knowledge and expertise, leading to improved quality outcomes (Dyer & Chu, 2003). Various benefits, including reduced transaction costs, improved supply chain resilience, and increased innovation (Dyer & Chu,

2003). while trust-based supplier relationships are critical for quality assurance, they require careful management and consideration of potential challenges and limitations.

5.1.3 Effect of supplier lead time reduction on timely and-assured delivery in Riley packaging limited.

The results on the question to what extent do you believe that Riley packaging limited international procurement practices improve your exports experience show that availability of goods (mean=3.64). Order fulfillment (mean=3.64). Timeliness of deliveries (mean=3.50). Accuracy of order (mean=3.63). Quality of goods (mean=3.64). The results on the question to what extent do you believe that Riley packaging limited international procurement practices improve your exports experience show that availability of goods (mean=3.64). Order fulfillment (mean=3.64). Timeliness of deliveries (mean=3.50). Accuracy of order (mean=3.63). Quality of goods (mean=3.64)

The results on how satisfied are you with Riley packaging services show that Pricing and value for money (mean=2.78). Flexibility and adaptability (mean=3.14). Accuracy and attention to detail (mean=2.59). Reliability and consistency (mean=2.93). Customer support and after-sales service (mean=2.78)

According to the findings on what are the main challenges faced in implementing supplier quality improvement at Riley packaging limited., the results show That unstructured collaboration (mean=3.64). Too much documentation (mean=3.50). Inefficient communication (mean=3.63). Poor technology infrastructure (mean=3.64). Supplier resistance (mean=3.64).

Given the above results, there is a serious agreement with the literature that by reducing supplier lead times can lead to improved delivery performance, including reduced delays and increased on-time delivery rates, increased flexibility, reduced inventory levels, and enhanced customer satisfaction (Chopra & Meindl, 2010). supplier lead time reduction improves timely delivery is by reducing the variability in lead times, allowing for more accurate planning and scheduling (Handfield et al., 2000).reduced lead times can lead to improved communication and collaboration between buyers and suppliers, reducing the likelihood of errors and miscommunication (Krause 2000). reduced lead times enable buyers to respond more quickly to changes in demand, reducing the likelihood of stock outs and overstocking (Cavinato, 2005).

Empirical studies also have supported the positive effects of supplier lead time reduction on timely and assured delivery. For example, a study by Chopra and Meindl (2013) found that supplier lead time reduction was associated with improved timely delivery in the automotive industry. Reduced lead times enhance customer satisfaction by ensuring that products are delivered more quickly. According to Daugherty et al. (1999), shorter lead times align with customer expectations for timely delivery, leading to higher levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty. Customers are increasingly demanding faster delivery, and companies that can meet these expectations gain a competitive edge.

More so, lead time reduction can result in significant cost savings. By streamlining processes and enhancing coordination with suppliers, organizations can reduce operational costs associated with excess inventory, expedited shipping, and production delays (Kumar & Sethi, 2018). Research by Kannan and Tan (2006) indicates that companies that effectively reduce lead times often experience lower overall supply chain costs. Reduced lead times significantly enhance forecasting accuracy, allowing companies to better anticipate demand and plan production accordingly. With shorter lead times, companies can respond swiftly to changes in demand, identify trends and patterns more easily, and update forecasts more frequently.

5.2 Conclusions

The study shows that effect of supplier quality improvement on cost saving and reduction is that there is real cost savings and reduction through trust-based supplier relationships as well as supplier lead time reduction. This enhances supplier quality improvement as supplier management practices lead to significant cost savings for our organization

The relationship between trust-based supplier relationship and quality assurance in Riley packaging limited was confirmed in a way that the implementation of international procurement strategies impacted the lead time in the department as well as supplier quality improvement impacted on cost saving and reduction in the department and the supplier relationship management in managing inventory levels.

The effect of supplier lead time reduction on timely and assured delivery in Riley packaging limited is that Riley packaging limited international procurement practices improved the exports

experience and availability of goods through order fulfillment, timeliness of deliveries and accuracy of order and quality of goods.

5.3 Recommendations

Supplier quality improvement should be improved through supplier lead time reduction in order to achieve cost saving and reduction. This can be done through increasing cordial supplier relationships and ensuring provision of quality goods procedures.. Trust-based supplier relationship should be improved through the implementation of international procurement strategies that impact the lead time in the department as well as supplier quality improvement that enhance cost saving and reduction in the departments and the supplier relationship management in managing inventory levels.

Supplier lead time reduction should be improved through order fulfillment, timeliness of deliveries and accuracy of order and quality of goods in order to ensure timely and assured delivery in Riley packaging limited is through exports experience and availability of goods.

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Title: The impact of managing supply relations on international procurement strategies in Riley packaging g limited.

Instructions to respondents.

Please answer all questions honestly and to the best of your ability.

Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purposes of this study.

For closed-ended questions, please select the best alternative that represents your opinion.

For open-ended questions, please provide detailed responses with diligence.

Section A: Demographic information1.

INSTRUCTION

Instruction: Tick or Write answers in full where applicable.

1.What is your age?

- a) 18-24 b) 25-34 c) 35-44 d) 45-54 e) 55 or older

2.What is your gender?

- a) Male b) female

3.What is your highest level of education completed?

- a) High school b) Diploma c) Bachelor's degree
d) Master's degree e) Doctoral degree or higher

4.What is your occupation at Riley packaging limited?

5. How many years have you worked at Riley Packaging limited?

- a) Less than 1 year b) 1-3 years c) 4-6 years d) 7-10 years

e) More than 10 years⁵.

Section B: Supply relations management

No. 6	To what extent are the following supply relations management practices implemented in your department Tick (1= Not at all, 2= To a small extent, 3= To a moderate extent, 4= To a great extent, 5= To a very great extent)	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Cost savings and reduction					
2.	Supplier capacity constraints management					
3.	Trust-based supplier relationships					
4.	Supplier lead time reduction					
5.	Supplier quality improvement					

7. Our supplier management practices lead to significant cost savings for our organization.

- (1) Strongly Disagree (2) Disagree (3) Neutral (4) Agree

8. We regularly evaluate our suppliers to ensure we are getting the best prices.

- (1) Strongly Disagree (2) Disagree (3) Neutral (4) Agree

Section C: International procurement strategies

9. How has the implementation of international procurement strategies impacted the lead time in your department?

a. Significantly increased b. Increased c. No change d. Decreased

10. To what extent has supplier quality improvement impacted on cost saving and reduction in your department?

a. Not at all b. To a small extent c. To a moderate extent d. To a great extent

11. How effective is supplier relationship management in managing inventory levels?

a. Not effective b. slightly effective c. Moderately effective

Section D: Customer feedback

No. 12	To what extent do you believe that Riley packaging limited international procurement practices improve your exports experience? (1= Not at all, 5= To a very great extent)	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Availability of goods					
2.	Order fulfillment					
3.	Timeliness of deliveries					
4.	Accuracy of order.					
5	Quality of goods					

No. 13	How satisfied are you with Riley packaging services?(1= Very dissatisfied, 5= Very satisfied) Quality of packaging materials	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Pricing and value for money					
2.	Flexibility and adaptability					
3.	Accuracy and attention to detail					
4.	Reliability and consistency					
5.	Customer support and after-sales service					

Section E: General Perception and Open –ended questions

No. 14	What are the main challenges faced in implementing supplier quality improvement at Riley packaging limited? (1= Not a challenge, 5= very significant challenge) Challenge	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Unstructured collaboration					

2.	Too much documentation					
3.	Inefficient communication					
4.	Poor technology infrastructure					
5.	Supplier resistance					

15.In your opinion, how do managing supply relations contribute to the overall performance of riley packaging?

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16.What suggestions do you have for overcoming the challenges associated with the implementation of supplier quality improvement in Riley Packaging limited?

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17.As a customer, what improvements would you like to see in Riley packaging supply chain processes?

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18. Any additional comments or insights on the impact of managing supply relations on international procurement strategies at Riley packaging limited?

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