

Established 2000
**Midlands State
University**



FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT

**EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT AND FIRMS'
COMPETITIVENESS: A CASE STUDY OF DELTA
SORGHUM BEER PRODUCTS**

BY

SHARON MARIGA

REGISTRATION NUMBER: R102336Q

*This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Bachelor of
Commerce Marketing Management Honours Degree at*

Midlands State University.

MAY 2014

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF THE STUDENT

MARIGA SHARON

DISSERTATION TITLE

Employee empowerment and firm's competitiveness: A case study of Delta Sorghum beer products.

DEGREE TITLE

Bachelor of Commerce Marketing Management Honours Degree

YEAR THE DEGREE IS GRANTED

2014

Permission is hereby granted to the Midlands State library to produce single copies of this research project and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purpose only. The author reserved the other publication rights of neither the dissertation nor extensive reproduced without the author's permission.

SIGNED

.....

PERMANENT ADDRESS

14 ODZI ST DOMBOTOMBO
,MARONDERA ,ZIMBABWE.

DATE

MAY 2014

APPROVAL FORM

I, the undersigned Sharon Mariga do acknowledge that the above named student has consulted me for supervision of his/her research project /dissertation until completion. I therefore do/do not advise the student to submit his/her work for final assessment.

.....

.....

SUPERVISOR

DATE

.....

.....

CHAIRPERSON

DATE

.....

.....

STUDENT

DATE

Dedication

This project is dedicated to my mother and my guardian who has seen me through my education.

Acknowledgement

First and most importantly, I acknowledge the Almighty God who gave me the life, wisdom, guidance and strength you made it possible for me.

I would also want to thank my friends, the whole marketing department your efforts were greatly appreciated, and classmates for their support May God bless you all.

To my supervisor your efforts were greatly appreciated, you made the road seem all too easy with your guidance. Thank you and may you continue to help other students too.

Table of Contents

Release Form	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Approval Form.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgement	iv
Table of Contents	v
Abstract.....	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF APPENDIX	xiii
CHAPTER ONE	1
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background to the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem	4
1.3 Research Objectives	4
1.4 Research Questions	4

1.5 Assumptions	5
1.6 Significance of the Study	5
1.7 Delimitations	6
1.8 Limitations	6
CHAPTER TWO	7
2.0 Concept of Employee empowerment and firms' competitiveness.....	7
2.1 Employee involvement and development of new products	10
2.1.1 Employee involvement and decision-making.....	11
2.2 The association between employee participation and firms' competitiveness.	14
2.3 Empowerment practices	15
2.3.1 Delegation: Shifting authority and responsibility.....	15
2.3.2 Training	17
2.3.3 Participative decision-making	17
2.3.4 Open flow of information.....	18
2.4 Summary	19
CHAPTER THREE	20

3.0 Introduction	20
3.1 Research Design	20
3.2 Population.....	21
3.3 Sampling Methods and Techniques	21
3.3.1 Sampling Frame.....	22
3.3.2 Sample Procedure	22
3.3.3 Sample size	23
3.4 Data Sources.....	24
3.4.1 Secondary Data.....	24
3.4.2 Primary Data.....	24
3.5 Research Instruments	24
3.5.1 Questionnaires	25
3.5.2 Personal Interviews.....	25
3.5.3 Focus Groups	26
3.6 Data collection procedure and administration.....	26
3.6.1 Questionnaires	26

3.6.2 Personal Interviews.....	26
3.6.3 Focus Group Discussions	27
3.7 Validity and Reliability of findings.....	27
3.8 Data analysis and Presentation tools	28
3.9 Summary	28
CHAPTER FOUR.....	29
Data Analysis and Presentation.....	29
4.0 Introduction	29
4.1 Response rate.....	29
4.2 Analysis of responses on employee involvement in decision making regarding new product development	30
4.2.1 Analysis of responses on ways in which employees have been involved in decisions regarding development of beer products.	32
4.2.2 Analysis on responses on participation in decision-making.....	33
4.3 Analysis of the responses on the association between employee participation and firms' competitiveness.	34
4.3.1 Customer perception and knowledge	34
4.3.2 Analysis of responses on factors leading to low sales volume of sorghum beer.....	36

4.4 Analysis of responses on empowerment practices in place at Delta Chibuku.....	37
4.5 Summary	39
CHAPTER FIVE	40
5.0 Summary	40
5.1 Conclusions.....	41
5.1.1 Employee involvement in decisions regarding development of products	41
5.1.2 Association between employee participation and firm’s competitiveness.....	41
5.1.3 Identifying empowerment practices	41
5.2 Recommendations	42
5.3 Suggestions for further research.....	42
REFERENCES	43
Appendices.....	48

Abstract

The research study was concerned with employee empowerment and firm's competitiveness. The researcher sought to find out if there is an association between employee empowerment and firm's competitiveness. Moreover, the researcher sought to find out if employees at Delta Chibuku were involved in decision making regarding development of products and ways in which they are involved .In addition the researcher wanted to establish the extent to which Delta had put in place empowerment practices and assess their effectiveness towards the firm's competitiveness. An exploratory research design was used with the aid of a descriptive research design to develop initial insight and to provide direction for further study. A sample size of 85 respondents was used consisting of 40 employees, 30 customers and 15 managers from a population of 200 employees and 1500 customers respectively. Questionnaires and interviews were used as research instruments to gather data from the respondents. The overall response rate was 86% for questionnaires and 53% for interviews thus giving validity and reliability of findings. Findings show that a large portion of employees at Delta Chibuku are not involved in decision making regarding development of beer products .Findings also reveal that management at Delta only involve workers that have the knowledge and skill necessary in the development of beer products. Moreover findings indicate that, empowerment practices at Delta Chibuku include training, participative decision making and open information flow, even though the employees do not feel empowered, thus negatively impacting on the performance of beer products although several employees have agreed that they have sufficient skills to perform their jobs. Results show that only 5% of the employees are involved in idea generation, 15% in market testing, 30% in testing of the product whilst the remainder in commercialisation. Only employees with adequate skill and abilities are involved. Recommendations included the use of other empowerment practices at Delta Chibuku like collaborative work, flat organisational structures and skill and knowledge based pay systems and delegate authority and responsibility and allow decision joint decision making for the success of firm.

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
Figure 4.1 Pie chart showing employee responses to involvement in Npd.....	33
Figure 4.2: Pie chart showing ways in which employees have been involved.....	35
Figure4.3: Pie chart showing contribution made towards decision making.....	36
Figure 4.4 Bar graph showing customer perception and knowledge of product.....	38
Figure 4.5: Bar graph showing reasons for decline for sorghum beer sales.....	39
Figure 4.6: Bar grapgh showing responses on practice of successful empowerment.....	41

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
Table 1.1 Delta Corporation market share and main competitors.....	2
Table 3.3: Sample size.....	28
Table 4.1.: Showing response rate.....	34

LIST OF APPENDIX

End user customer questionnaire.....	46
Employee questionnaire.....	50
Management interview guide.....	54

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This study examines the association between employee empowerment and firm's competitiveness in the beverage sector in Zimbabwe. This chapter focuses on the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, delimitations, limitations, literature review, methodology, data analysis and presentation.

1.1 Background to the study

Delta Corporation is a company in beverages manufacturing and distribution. It is listed on the Zimbabwean Stock Exchange and is one of the top quoted companies in terms of market capitalization. Its beverage business manufactures and distributes traditional sorghum beer, sparkling beverages and lager beers. Delta enjoys outright market dominance with 96% market share in lager beer, 90% market share in traditional beer and 70% market share in sparkling beverages. In the agro-industrial sector, the company is involved in Barley malting, manufacture of PET injection and blow moulded plastic products, food processing, manufacture and distribution of wines and spirits. The buyers of Delta include trade customers, strategic customers, end user customers and key account customers. As any other business the success in the beverage industry, does not come overnight, it requires long-term investment of finances, effort and even partnership. Critical success factors in the beverage industry include consumer knowledge, setting goals and meeting the goals. This involves knowing which kind of consumer to cater for which is very important in the beverage industry to maintain dominance and to compete with other products available in the market. Table 1.1 below summarizes Delta's market share and main competitors.

Table 1.1 showing Delta Corporation market share and main competitors.

MAJOR SEGMENTS	DELTA'S MARKET SHARE	MAIN COMPETITORS	GROSS SALES (\$m)
Lager Beer/Clear beer	99%	Heineken/Windhoek/Amsteel	352
Sorghum beer Traditional beer	93%	Brewing local Authorities Ingwebu/Go beer/Simba	118
Sparkling Beverages (Carbonated Soft Drinks)	98% of franchise area 92% of Market	Pepsi	231
Wines and Spirits	70%	Various fragmented competitors	11

Source: Delta Imara Investor Conference Presentation, September 2013.

Between 2010 and 2011 Delta's gross sales for sorghum beer showed a staggering decline with a 7% volume decline in 2010, making the annual gross sales for Sorghum beer for that year US\$75 million. In 2011, Delta experienced a growth of 6% in Sorghum beer, making the annual gross sales for that year US\$79.5 million. This was not good enough because still Sorghum beer was not performing well against Delta's other products. Lager beers had a 40% volume increase, making the annual gross sales for lager beer for the year 2010, US\$150 million. In 2011, lager beer experienced a 61% growth making the gross annual sales for that year US\$240 million. Sparkling beverages having a 53% volume increase and at the same time experienced a 63% growth making the gross annual sales for the year 2011 US\$140 million. Both Lager beer and Sparkling beverages were performing quiet well as compared to sorghum beer. Delta IES Conference Report (May 2011).

Between 2012 and 2013 there was a slight increase in the market share of Sorghum beer but still sorghum beer was not performing well as compared to Lager beers. In 2012, sorghum beer

recorded US\$81 million with a market share of 92% against lager beer, which recorded US\$298 million with a market share of 98% in that year, in 2013; sorghum beer recorded US\$ 118million with a market share of 93% against Lager beer, which recorded US\$352 million with a market share of 99% that year. Delta Imara Investor Conference (September 2013).

Delta's Chibuku was introduced to Southern Africa in 1962 that is when Shake Shake was introduced into the market. Just a few years later, Chibuku 2litre and Thabani were introduced. Thabani was introduced in the market for the Southern region of Zimbabwe. Over the years not much products were introduced by Delta in the sorghum beer division. Delta was only able to change the packaging of the Chibuku Shake Shake and the Chibuku 2litre over the years. Thus, there has been few or no innovation in the sorghum segment at Delta over the years. A recent addition to the traditional beer family is ChibukuSuper, which was launched in 2013. Chibuku Shake Shake has been seen less on the market and Chibuku 2litre's production has been reduced.

Given the overall performance of Delta as a whole, it has been doing quite well in the market. Lager beers are the main contributors to the market share, growth and sales profits at Delta as compared to Sorghum beer, which has not been performing well over the years. When assessing performance firms do not just focus on sales turnover or profitability, one area of focus is that of employee empowerment. When a Company is successful, employees are normally regarded to be behind the success of the company, hence the purpose of this research to establish the association between employee empowerment and the competitiveness of a company.

Delta's Chibuku division has been experiencing numerous cases of absenteeism this has led to reduced production. Over the years not much products were introduced in the Sorghum beer division. There has been little or no innovation that is there have been few innovations to talk about at Delta in the sorghum beer division that can be attributed to lack of empowerment practices at Delta. In addition, Delta's Chibuku division has also suffered sales decline in its sorghum beer products. This research seeks to establish if employee empowerment is associated with competitiveness of the firm's products in terms of sales and innovation processes.

A similar research was done in Nigeria, by OwolabiLateefKuye and Abdul-HameedSulaimon of the University of Lagos. Their research was on employee involvement in decision-making and firms' performance in the manufacturing sector in Nigeria. The manufacturing sector in Nigeria has been a crucial subsector, but little is probably known about the influence of its employee involvement in decision making on firms' performance.

1.2 Statement of the problem

There have been numerous complaints regarding the current beer products with some customers complaining about sub-standard sorghum beer in terms of thickness levels, packaging whilst others are complaining of low alcohol content levels. There has been few or lack of innovation in Delta's sorghum beer division, and the sales of existing productscontinue to go down. This research seeks to establish if employee empowerment is related to firm's competitiveness in terms of sales and innovation processes at Delta Chibuku.

1.3 Research Objectives

- To identify the empowerment practices at Delta.
- To assess the extent to which employees are involved in decisions regarding development of new products in the Sorghum beer division at Delta.
- To establish if there is an association between employee participation in development of new products and firm's competitiveness in terms of sales.

1.4 Research Questions

- To what extent are employees involved in decisions regarding development of new products in the Sorghum beer division at Delta?
- Is there an association between employee participation and firm's competitiveness?
- Which empowerment programs have been put in place at Delta Chibuku?

1.5 Assumptions

- Sample size would provide accurate findings and needed conclusions about the research.
- There would be no language barriers.
- There would be maximum participation from respondents.
- Respondents would provide truthful findings.

1.6 Significance of the Study

To the Company

- Delta to value the significance of employee involvement in the development of products.
- Delta to adopt employee involvement in New Product Development as a growth strategy that would increase the market share and maintain dominance through motivated staff after being involved in the innovation process.
- Ensures long-term business success.
- Quality products and Services since employees are motivated to do their best.

To the Society

- Quality products and services since employees are motivated to do their best in ensuring the creation of new products.

To the Researcher

- Understanding aspects of employee empowerment on NPD .Research will enable the researcher to tackle research problems by finding appropriate solution to problems that arise during the research

1.7 Delimitations

- The study focuses on Delta's sorghum beer only.
- Study focuses on two variables, employee empowerment and firm competitiveness.
- Data was collected through Customers, Employees and Management at Delta Beverages.
- Data period is from the year 2010 to date.
- Research focuses on Delta's Harare sorghum production plant.

1.8 Limitations

- The researcher used 5% of the total population to do the research, sample size results may not be generalised to the whole population, and however an approved model was used in drawing the sample size.
- Time is limited as researcher is a student, however an attempt was made to use weekends as free slots.
- Obtaining information from the company was a problem hence researcher informed the company that the research was done to fulfil the requirements of the degree programme to gain co-operation.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Employee empowerment and firms' competitiveness

When a company is flourishing, employees are normally regarded to be behind the success of the company. Many businesses looking to improve their performance believe that empowering employees will help them reach this goal. Various scholars believe that the success of any company is based on employee empowerment. Employee empowerment is an approach that enable employees to make decisions about their jobs and take accountability for their results.

Empowerment has been a subject of great discussion, but remain a concept that is defined poorly and is commonly used in rhetorical sense (Mondroos and Wilson, 1994).The make use of the term “power” appear to be frequent all through the definition of empowerment. Cogner and Kanungo (1998) focused on power as the focal point of empowerment and they opine that power is often redistributed by changing control so that employees have the power to make and employ their own decisions .Similarly, Legge (1995) argued that empowerment should be seen in terms of a redistribution model whereby power equalisation is promoted for trust and collaboration.

Cogner and Kanungo (1998) make a distinction between relational and motivational meanings of empowerment where the motivational dimension suggests that a process through which initiative will need to pass foremployees to feel motivated whilst the relational aspect examines the relationship between the managers and workers both before and after empowerment. Cook and Macaulay (1997) define empowerment as a change management tool that helps organisations create an environment where every individual can use his or her abilities and energies to satisfy the customer. Its nature lives over issues of how employees use their abilities and whether there are limits to responsibilities, the amount of power employees enjoy. Similarly, Heathfield (2007) as cited by Holden (2001) defines empowerment as the process of enabling a person to think, act and take action , have power over work and decision making in autonomous ways. He goes on further to describe it as the state of feeling confident to have power over one's own destiny and

abilities. Cook and Macaulay (1997) and Heathfield (2007) all view empowerment as a state of giving an employee the confidence to take control of one's' abilities .Their focus being on how employees use their abilities and energies to do a job.

Wilkinson (1998) defines empowerment as a managerial led scheme where there is no belief of workers having a right of say, the employers decide whether and how to empower employees. A variety of programs and schemes are regarded as empowerment and they differ with the power that employees actually put into effect. Most are deliberately designed not to give workers important roles in decision-making but somewhat secure an improved employee input to the organisation. Honold (1997) acknowledges that empowerment is a managerial controlled trend that operates on a work base rather than on a planned level within the organisation. Honold (1997) views empowerment as having power over one's work, independence on the job, variations of teamwork and pay systems that associate pay and performance. She goes on to categorise empowerment into five groups namely leadership, the individual empowered state, collaborative work, structural or procedural change and the multi-dimensional perspective that encompasses the other four categories. Both Honold and Wilkinson agree that empowerment is a managerial phenomenon where empowerment is work based but their views conflict where Wilkinson (1998) opines that in empowerment employees have no right of say as the employers are the ones who decide who to empower and how to empower whilst Honold (1997) argues that there is control of one's' work and pay systems are focused performance.

On leadership, Honold (1997) opines that the leader must set the situation and environment necessary for carrying out empowerment schemes. In a situation where power has to be delegated, the employees need the necessary training, development and support and team building to allow this to occur. This is strongly in accord with Wilkinson (1998) concept of empowerment of being managerial led. Empowerment as a concept has gained reputation in the management field over the years and has made focus on management practices intended to empower employees such as delegation of decision-making and the provision of increased access of information and resource for individuals at lower levels of the organisation. Through empowerment, organisations allow employees to take several roles and responsibilities at the

same time exerting greater authority at work while enjoying increased independence. (Dare and Tremblay, 2007).

Some authors define empowerment in terms of its dynamic interaction. According to Pastor (1996), he stated, “empowerment is part of a process or an evolution that goes on whenever you have two or more people in a relationship, personally or professionally”. Lee and Koh (2001) discussed the inter-subjective personalities of the subordinate and supervisor. Both Pastor (1996) and Lee and Koh (2001) opine that empowerment is the combination of the psychological state of an employee that is influenced by empowering behaviours of the employers. While Honold and Wilkinson define empowerment as a managerial phenomenon authors like Pastor (1996) view empowerment as a dynamic interaction where empowerment occurs where there are relationships whether personally or professionally.

Employee empowerment according to Ghosh (2013) is the process of shifting authority and responsibility to employees at lower level in the organisational hierarchy. Ghosh (2013) goes on further to say that employee empowerment occurs when a person works for years for the same company and develops a detailed idea, knowledge, skill, ability over the job and when such a person is given overall charge of the work he does with adequate authority and responsibility he can make his own decision and effectively and efficiently accomplish the job.

Empowered employees are geared up to perform better and make every effort to do their best in achieving individual goals, team goals and organisational goals. However, all the definitions cited above do not directly address the concept of employee empowerment and firm's competitiveness in terms of sales.

2.1 Employee involvement and development of newproducts

Employee involvement as defined by Rose (2001) is the extent to which employees and their representatives should and do enter into joint decision making with management and its representatives. In support of this definition is Spreitzer (1996) who defines employee involvement as joint decision making between employers and employees. Both authors agree that employee involvement is joint decision making done by employers and employees. Employee involvement is also known as participative decision making.

Yang and Konrad (2010) opines that employee involvement for both traditionally dominant groups and historically marginalised groups is important to organisational innovation and they argue that historically marginalised groups need to be involved because they are more likely to bring knowledge and new ideas to the organisation. In support of this notion is Crawford and DiBenedetto(2008) who highlight that high involvement of traditionally dominant groups without involving members of the historically marginalised groups will lead to less innovation caused by low creativeness levels for idea generation. Also high involvement of historically marginalised groups without involving traditionally dominant groups in an organisation is likely to limit organisational originality. Members in the traditionally dominant groups are likely to have the longest time in the organisation and have greater knowledge of organisation specific knowledge. Therefore Van Knippenberg et al(2004) opines that their inclusion in the process of collaborating new ideas is likely to take advantage of fit to the organisation benefits to performance outcomes.

According to Yang and Konrad (2010), the empowerment practiced by workers in an organisation utilising high involvement practices results in innovation because it engages employees in the idea generation to contribute to organisational knowledge. In these practises employees are more involved in decision-making processes as well as, share ideas and incorporate them into the work processes. Participation of employees in these involvement practices increases the probability that a workforce with a higher percentage of historically marginalized groups will generate a variety of ideas and engage in development and implementation of these ideas. Employee involvement depends on the management's willingness

to consult employees on certain issues, which affect them when developing new products (Batt2000). It also depends on management's willingness to involve subordinates in coming up and developing a new product. Employee involvement is one-side as management may not be prepared to engage employees in the decision making process as they decide the extent to which they want to involve employees in product development.

Employee involvement is only meaningful when a planned context has been established through leadership, systems and processes, which are supplemented with the suitable tools. Rushing to involve employees with little concern as to how these mechanisms will relate to the rest of the organization or how the organization must be prepared to change and adapt to employee involvement, can short circuit the best-intended efforts (Beardwell et al 2004).

Rose(2001) and Spreitzer(1996)cited agree that employee involvement involves the opportunity for employees to be included in the decision making process by an organization but the authors did not highlight the extent to which employees should be included in decision making regarding development of new products. Beardwell et al (2004) however opines that employee involvement will backfire if it is rushed without considering its effects on the organisation as organisation should be prepared for it and employees should be able to adapt so that both parties enjoy the full benefits of employee involvement. Organizations may however include high-level employees taking it as employee involvement whereas the employees that face the real encounter are also the low-level employee. The definitions however are directed at employee involvement in decision making regarding development of products.

2.1.1 Employee involvement and decision-making

Pace(1989) defines employee involvement as a process of empowering employees to make decisions and solve problems fitting to their lives and the process may involve realigning power, knowledge and information to lower levels in the organisation but it may not. Similarly, Rose (2001) defines employee involvement as the extent to which employees and their representatives should and do enter into joint decision making with management and its representatives. These authors agree that employee involvement is necessary in decision-making. Mitchell (1973)

supports Rose (2001) where he defines employee involvement as decision making which is sometimes referred to as participative decision making which is concerned with shared decision making in the workplace. Locke and Schweiger (1979) define employee involvement as joint decision making between managers and subordinates as supported by Spreitzer (1996). These authors are agreeing to joint decision making in firms.

Noah (2008) however defines employee involvement as a special form of delegation in which the subordinate gains greater control and freedom of choice in respect to bridging the communication gap between the management and the workers. Noah (2008)'s view on employee involvement involves high and low levels of employee involvement where a high level of involvement means that all employees are involved in the planning process. Whereas according to Barringer and Bleudorn (1999) a low level of involvement indicates a restricted planning process, which involves the top management only. A high level of involvement in decision-making allows the influence of the frontline employees in the planning process. This however means that participation by employees in the planning process surrounding potential innovations may facilitate opportunity recognition throughout the organisation. (Zivkovic et al 2009).

Various scholars however highlight that there cannot be a discussion of employee involvement and decision making without including culture. Sagie and Aycan (2003) proposed a framework that links decision making to the culture of the organisation based on Hofstede's two dimensions of power distance and individualism-collectivism. According to Menzel et al (2006), power distance signifies how individuals regard power differentials within the organisation. In high power distance culture ,decision making is perceived as a management privilege and employees are not involved in decision making process as such employees consider it their right to participate in decisions that concern them(Saige and Aycan 2003).Individualism-collectivism helps to identify the person or group involved in making decisions .

According to Sagie and Aycan (2003) there are four approaches to participative decision making namely face-to-face, collective, pseudo and paternalistic participation. Face to face participative decision-making is a direct superior interaction where employees rather than their representatives are involved in the decision making process. However, the employees involved are those

employees who possess the needed knowledge and information not necessarily possessed by the superior. According to Sagie and Aycan (2003), managers generally provide opportunities for participation based on one's merits. Collective participative decision-making involves the indirect involvement of employees in the decision making process through work committees and work councils whilst paternalistic participative decision-making represents the relationship between a superior and subordinate that are likened to the relationship of the teacher and student. The superior is trusted and expected to make the right decisions and assumed to know what is best for the subordinate. In this case, subordinates believe that the superior will act as their representative. Therefore, employees rarely take part in the work decisions. (Sagie and Aycan 2003). Finally, pseudo participative decision making takes the form of participation through management directive under the mask of participation. Sagie and Aycan (2003) note that managers pretending to be participative will not be able to earn the employees trust as they are aware of the difference between democracy and dictatorship.

However, the four approaches to participative decision making do not highlight the direct involvement of employees in decision-making and they do not make direct reference to the involvement of employees in decisions regarding development of new products. In addition, to have employees involved in decision-making the employees' interests should be aligned to the organisations' interests to create a win-win situation so that any potential benefits from employee involvement can be enjoyed. It becomes unnecessary if employee's interests and choices are different.

A similar research was done on employee involvement in decision making was done in Nigeria by Kuye and Sulaimon of the University of Lagos. Their research was on employee involvement in decision making and firms' performance in the manufacturing sector in Nigeria. Research was done in 2011. The findings for that study indicated that organisations with high employee involvement in decision-making outperform organisations with low employee involvement.

2.2 The association between employee participation and firms' competitiveness.

Inadequate research has been done on the relationship between employee participation and firms' competitiveness as mainly available literature has been related to job satisfaction and results showed that there is a positive relationship between employee participation and job satisfaction. According to Chinyowa (2014) as cited in The Herald, empowering employees increases their satisfaction and morale at the workplace. There are many studies done on employee empowerment and job satisfaction but not on the relationship between employee participation and firms' competitiveness.

The study by Hitt, Shimizu and Koachhar (2001) as cited by Bakari and Nzuve (2012) found a positive relationship between human capital and firm's competitiveness in a sample of professional organisations. Wood (2007) as cited by Bakari and Nzuve (2012) did a similar research and found that employee empowerment was the key to improving performance and promoting innovation among manufacturing firms in Ireland. Outcomes of the study show that empowerment is the only practice that has considerable effects on performance in all the companies he surveyed. Study also showed that performance in companies that empowered their employees was 7% higher than that of companies that did not empower their employees

However, several scholars have argued that employee participation contributes to organisational effectiveness as it has the capability to enhance quality of decision-making and promotes commitments in the place of work. Wagner (2006) argues that employee participation may, for the most part make employees feel good about their jobs and the firms that they work for but do nothing to increase firm performance. According to Dale (2004) as cited by (Ghosh 2013), everyone in the firm from top to bottom from offices to technical service from headquarters to local depots should be involved because employees are the source of ideas and innovation and their expertise, experience and knowledge get ideas harnessed. Wagner and Dale disagree on employee participation as Dale (2004) speaks of involvement of everyone in the organisation in the practice whilst Wagner (2006) argues that whilst employees can participate in work processes it makes them feel good but does not do anything to increase the performance of a firm. According to Chinyowa (2014) as cited in The Herald (2014), employee participation does

not only benefit an organisation's employees and customers but also impacts positively on the bottom line as these employees act as partners in ensuring the organisation achieves profitability.

The researcher notes that companies have a good chance to be competitive by exploiting their best asset, employees. There is an association between employee participation and firms' competitiveness even though there has not been enough research directed at the relationship. Employees that participate in the company activities create quality products leading to high sales volumes and high levels of customer satisfaction as their involvement ensures that there is continued production in the organisation. However, more researches should be done on the relationship between employee participation and firms' competitiveness.

2.3 Empowerment practices

There are a lot of human resource practices and systems that are used by firms to achieve strategic goals one of them being employee empowerment, which is considered the most valuable and effective. Employee empowerment enhances job involvement, job satisfaction and career fulfilment.

2.3.1 Delegation: Shifting authority and responsibility

According to Burke (1986) as cited by Ghosh (2013), empowering implies the granting of power, delegation and authority. Empowerment practices similarly, are intended to delegate power and authority by managers to their subordinates. Burke emphasises the transfer of power, authority to the employees by management. He opines that for empowerment to be of significance there should be transfer in the power away from management to low-level workers. Firms implement empowerment as a means to motivate employees for their growth, development in an attempt to achieve business goals.

To further understand authority and responsibility in an organisation in respect to empowerment it is important to understand the perspectives of empowerment(Ghosh 2013). Perspectives of empowerment include social, growth, organisational and psychological perspective.

Ghosh(2013) opines that, social perspective of empowerment is when people develop their social base during childhood which is formed through their bringing up which is adopted by their family or society. Ritual activities by members of the family and society, which enable the participation and involvement of people forms a pattern in a persons' ego, which demands similar treatment at work placesGhosh (2013). In a bid to completely make useof their resources managers transfer of authority along with responsibility to lower level managers to allow them to make quality decisions at the shortest possible time.Growth perspective empowerment is when employee performance is essential in aiding to the competitiveness of the organisation. At times even when people are good at their jobs they cannot give their best they need power and authority and independence in decisions regarding their areas of work whilst psychological perspective involves the satisfaction of esteem needs in achieving organisational goals (Ghosh 2013). In support of the statement are Lee and Koh (2001) who have noted the significance of psychological state of employees in the empowerment process. Lastly, in this dynamic era that has seen shifting market environments organisations feel that for growth and competitiveness they have to transfer authority and responsibility to lower level employees from the manager. Lee and Koh and Ghosh agree that, organisations require highly incorporated set of practices to motivate employees to be successful and to bring into being value that is out of this world.

Successful empowerment practices involves activities such as shift of authority by manager, recognition of authority with responsibility by subordinate ,independent decision making by subordinate and value added performance by subordinate. For effective employee empowerment practices, firms should take on a culture of trust, competitiveness and trialling. This will however make however make employees aware in cost cutting measures and create value in products and quality oriented. Organisations also need to create a culture of trust were a relationship between boss and subordinate to conquer problems that come in the way of successful implementation of empowerment programs. For empowerment to do well, it goes back to an individual's background, personal goals and future aspirations. (Ghosh 2013)

2.3.2 Training

DeCenzo (2003) defines training as a learning experience that seeks a relatively permanent change in individual that will improve his or her ability to perform the job. According to Ivancevich (2004) training is a systematic process of altering the behaviour of employees in a direction that will achieve organisational goals. Employees involved in ongoing training feel that the employer is interested in them doing a better job and the employer cares about their welfare. Ivancevich opines that training can be a means for positive change in any organisation as employees will be more satisfied and motivated to perform.

Ghosh (2013) opines that by training employees organisation will be developing skills of empowered employee. He also encourages that tailor-made training be given to empowered employees and should be designed in such a form that it enhances skill to excel performance and this will help the empowerment process to function. According to Spreitzer (1996) educative efforts enables employees to build knowledge, skills and abilities not only to do better in their own work but also to learn about skills that increases individual performance and organisation performance.

Spreitzer (1996) and Ivancevich (2004) agree that training enables employees to drive their efforts towards organisational goals .It does not only improve an individual's ability to do a job but also helps in achieving organisational goals. However, DeCenzo (2003) and Ivancevich (2004) agree that improving ones skills and abilities to perform a better job is through training. For power to be delegated the management should create a setting necessary for the execution of empowerment schemes such as training and development.

2.3.3 Participative decision-making

Leopold (2002) defines participative management as the process of empowering employees to assume greater power supporting him is Torrington (2002) who notes that it is a means by which employee commitment and organisation commitment can be improved. Employees may have

input and influence over decisions from high level strategic decisions to routine day to day decisions about how to do their own jobs.(Spreitzer,1996).

Sagie and Aycan (2003) highlight there are four approaches to participative decision making namely face-to-face, collective, pseudo and paternalistic participation. Face to face participative decision-making is a direct superior interaction where employees rather than their representatives are involved in the decision making process.Sagie and Aycan(2003)However, the employees involved are those employees who possess the needed knowledge and information not necessarily possessed by the superior whilst collective participative decision-making involves the indirect involvement of employees in decisions that are related to labour management issues.(Sagie and Aycan 2003).Paternalistic participative decision-making represents the relationship between a superior and a subordinate. The superior is expected to make the right decisions and assumed to know what is best for the subordinate. Therefore, employees rarely take part in the work decisions. Finally, pseudo participative decision making takes the form of participation through management directive under the mask of participation (Sagie and Aycan, 2003).

However, several Rose (2001) and Mitchell (1973) agreed that participative decision-making is concerned with joint decision-making between managers and subordinates in the work situation. Of the four approaches to participative decision, making only face-to-face participative decision-making indicates a direct involvement of employees in decision-making and the use of this approach to participative decision making to enable the success of empowerment practice.

2.3.4 Open flow of information

According to Spreitzer (1996), this includes flow of information upwards and downwards in the organisation so that employees have line of sight about how their behaviour affects firm performance. Downward communication which is also known as top down communication includes house journals, company newsletters, meetings, memos, notice boards, emails, employee reports and regular briefing sessions often with videos as well (Beardwell et al 2004). This involves communicating the current performance of the organisation that is in terms of

sales, manufacturing and products whether good or bad such that employees can remain committed to the organisation. Dessler (2003) opines that employees cannot do their jobs if they do not know what their goals are and therefore through effective communication organisation communicate the organisation's expectations regarding their performance and what their responsibilities are. The vision of the organisation is shared and made known to every employee and the role that the employees play in it. Downward communication can be used to give feedback on performance of products, employees and the organisation in. Management can use downward communication to inform employees about the new product before the launch or during the development of the new product such that they move towards the same goal.

Upward communication also known as down up communication where information comes from the shop floor. This can be through meetings, reports and briefings however organisations should according to Beardwell et al (2004) use of schemes like attitude survey, quality circles and total quality management and customer care programs to solve their problems as they involve two way communications as employee involvement mostly deals with communication

2.4 Summary

This chapter has given explanations, views and opinions on literature cited by different authors on subjects of employee empowerment and firm's competitiveness, employee involvement in decision-making and empowerment practices. The concept of empowerment has been a subject of debate as there is no one definition of empowerment. The way authors view empowerment differs as others view it as a management phenomenon while others view it as an inter-subjective concept and others viewing it as a relationship between two or more people in an organisation whether personally or professionally. Several authors agree on employee involvement being joint decision making between manager and subordinate in a work situation. Employee involvement should not be rushed, as organisations need to adapt to the change process so that they do not short circuit the benefits of the concepts. It becomes unnecessary if employees' interests do not meet organisational interests. There are limited researches on the association between employee participation and firm's competitiveness and thus the current research aims at establishing the relationship between the two variables in an organisation.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design, how the research subjects are to be selected, the research instruments to be used to collect data, the source of the data to be used, the data collection procedures and data presentation and analysis.

3.1 Research Design

According to Burns and Bush (2010), a research design refers to a set of decisions that make up the master plan specifying the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing the information needed to solve a problem. David and Sutton (2004), state that a research design provides the framework for research process involving the collection and analysis of data .There are three types of research designs commonly used namely exploratory, descriptive and causal research designs. In this research, exploratory and descriptive research designs are used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data.

Exploratory Research

Exploratory research is most commonly unstructured, informal research that is undertaken to gain background information about the general nature of the research problem. It is informal that is there are no formal set of objectives, sample plan or questionnaire, Burns and Bush (2010). According to Wilson (2006), exploratory research is a research intended to develop initial idea and insights and to provide direction for any further research needed. The researcher conducted informal interviews and informal focus groups discussions with informed sources. This enables the researcher to gain understanding of the relationship between Delta employees and its management.

Descriptive Research

The descriptive research method is appropriate for this study because the study seeks to assess the association between employee empowerment and firm's competitiveness. The research method enabled the researcher to establish ways of collecting employee suggestions and identify employee contributions to product innovations. It also enables the researcher to find out about how, where, when employees are involved in decisions regarding development of new products. The descriptive research design was used to respond to the who is involved in the decisions regarding development of new products at Delta, what strategies Delta implements to ensure the employees are empowered and how employee participation contributes towards firm's competitiveness. According to Burns and Bush (2010) descriptive research is undertaken to obtain answers to questions of who, what, where and how. The instruments used under this study are personal interviews and questionnaires.

3.2 Population

Hair et al (2003), defines population as an identifiable group or aggregation of elements (e.g. people, physical entities) that are of interest to the researcher and pertinent to the specified information problem. The population under study consists of Delta employees, management, distributors and customers at the headquarters in Harare. Delta employees 185, management 15, customers 1 500. Total population for this study is 1 700.

3.3 Sampling Methods and Techniques

Hair et al (2003), defines sampling as the selection of a small number of elements from a larger defined target group of elements and expecting that the information gathered from the small group will allow judgements to be made about the larger group. Researcher made use of both probability and non-probability sampling methods. For probability methods researcher adopted stratified random sampling and for non-probability sampling researcher used judgemental sampling and convenience sampling.

3.3.1 Sampling Frame.

Sampling frame is defined as the population or database of all members of a target population David and Sutton (2004). Kumar (2011), defines sampling frame as the list of population members used to obtain a sample in which the researcher refers to. The sample size was drawn from the target population. In this study, the sampling frame consists of management, walk-in clients and trade customers. The research consists of employees from various departments necessary for this study.

3.3.2 Sample Procedure

Stratified Random sampling

According to Hair et al (2003), Stratified random sampling is a probability sampling method in which the defined target population is divided into groups, called strata and samples are selected from each stratum. Researcher used stratified random sampling to choose the employees to give questionnaires. The researcher used stratified random sampling because it produces a more reliable and accurate results as each and everyone under the study are represented. The researcher divide the employees into strata according to the level they are in that is top management, middle management, employees from various departments and shop floor workers.

Judgemental Sampling

According to Wilson (2006), judgemental sampling is a non-probability procedure where a researcher consciously selects a sample that he/she considers most appropriate for the research study. Researcher used judgemental sampling to choose employees to interview, so as to probe further since questionnaires give little information Researcher made use of judgmental sampling for management and staff, this allowed the researcher to use own judgment to pick out the

managers and staff that were likely to be involved in decisions regarding innovation processes at Delta –Chibuku Division.

Convenience Sampling

Convenience sampling involves selecting respondents based on their availability for the study and is well known for saving time and costs. It was used for customers at Delta –Chibuku Division.

3.3.3 Sample size

The researcher adopted The Rule of Thumb by Gay to derive the sample size. According to Dr. Young, Gay suggests that 10% of large populations and 20% of small populations as minimums. The rule of thumb however states that for a population of between 1001-5000 a sample of 5% is used as a representative of the whole population. Therefore, the sample size for the research under study consists 85 respondents.

Size of population	Sampling percent
0 - 100	100%
101 - 1 000	10%
1 001 - 5 000	5%
5 001 - 10 000	3%
10 000 +	1%

Source: Dr. Rick Yount, 4th edition, 2006. Population and Sampling

5% × 1 700 = 85 respondents as the sample size.

The sample size includes 5 top management, 25 customers, 50 employees from various departments and 15 employees in the middle management.

3.4 Data Sources

The researcher adopted the use of primary and secondary data sources.

3.4.1 Secondary Data

Burns and Bush (2010) define secondary data as the information previously gathered by someone other than the researcher and some purpose other than the research project at hand. According to Burns and Bush (2010), secondary data is divided into two, internal and external secondary data. Internal secondary data is data that has been collected within the firm for example sales records, databases containing information on customers, sales, suppliers and any other facet of business a firm may wish to track. External data is the data obtained outside the firm for example publications, internet and journals. The researcher used company journals dating from 2010 to date, internet, annual sales reports, internet and product write ups as secondary data for this study.

3.4.2 Primary Data

According to Burns and Bush (2010), primary data refers to information that is developed or gathered by the researcher specifically for research project at hand. The researcher used questionnaires, focus groups and personal interviews as primary data for this study.

3.5 Research Instruments

These are methods used by the researcher to collect data during the research process. These include company journals, sales reports, questionnaires, personal interviews and focus groups.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

According to Wilson (2006), a questionnaire is a research instrument designed to generate the data necessary for accomplishing a project's research objectives. The researcher used structured questions because they save time and the amount of thinking and efforts of the respondent. Questionnaire was used to maintain uniformity and flow of information. The questionnaire consists of closed ended questions and open-ended questions. Closed ended questions were used because they require the respondent to make a selection from a predefined list of responses. Closed ended questions also assisted the researcher in making comparisons of responses and to generalize the findings. The questions in the questionnaire were made to be simple, understandable and logical at the same time so that even low-level employees were able to respond and give valid and truthful responses. Questionnaires were issued to customers and employees at Delta Chibuku Division. For accurate results, the researcher used a pilot study before distributing the questionnaires to Delta-Chibuku division employees and customers. Questionnaires were used because they are easy to analyse and less time consuming.

3.5.2 Personal Interviews

Interviews can be one on one, group based, and may be more, less formal/structured that is with a rigid set of questions in a specified sequence, or informal/unstructured that is less rigid. Open-ended questions were used because respondents can reply in their own words. Researcher carried out interviews for management to facilitate accuracy of results obtained from the research and to probe further for more information. Interviews were done by the researcher to get that internal information that cannot be drawn from secondary sources or any other sources. These interviews provided face-to-face interaction with the subject matter. Interview also allowed the researcher the opportunity to ask extra questions other than those written down in the interview guide. In the interview, the researcher took to use an interview guide to guide the researcher on what to ask. Open ended questions helped the researcher to get recommendations and suggestions in terms of employee empowerment and innovation processes.

3.5.3 Focus Groups

Focus group interviews are a formalized process of bringing a small group of people together for an interactive, spontaneous discussion on one particular topic or concept Hair et al (2003). These normally consist of 6 to 12 participants, Focus Group discussions were targeted to the general employees. For the group discussion the researcher used a guide with structured questions. Researcher engaged in an unstructured discussion that lasted for 45 minutes to get ideas, attitudes, feelings and experiences about employee empowerment and innovation processes at Delta –Chibuku Division.

3.6 Data collection procedure and administration

3.6.1 Questionnaires

- Questions were designed based on objectives to be achieved and research questions.
- Researcher conducted pilot survey with friends to make sure that respondents would be able to respond to the questions. The pilot study ensured that the researcher would find out if there are errors, omissions or sensitive issues discussed.
- Administered questionnaires to Delta Chibuku Division employees with the help of friends for half the day and had to collect them the same day.

3.6.2 Personal Interviews

- Obtained permission to conduct research from the responsible authorities.
- Booked for appointments with management and employees to allow them to prepare and create time for the interview
- Prepared interview guide with open-ended questions before the interview.
- Interviews were scheduled to be 5 minutes long each
- Responses were recorded on paper and smart phones

3.6.3 Focus Group Discussions

- Selected the appropriate participants who can best provide adequate information through discussion
- Prepared guide for discussion
- Discussion was conducted during lunch hour at the firm's canteen
- Respondents were provided with open ended questions
- Discussion outcomes recorded on paper and smart phone

3.7 Validity and Reliability of findings

- Pilot Study-A pilot study was done before the questionnaires were distributed. Researcher used a pilot survey to measure if questions are meaningful, logical, not sensitive and purposeful for the study. Questionnaires were given to friends and schoolmates in order to help correct any errors and to adjust language if it is not understandable to avoid repetition and ambiguity.
- Triangulation-The researcher used triangulation that is the multiple use of research instruments for example personal interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires in one research.
- Researcher used a large sample size of 85 respondents
- Researcher asked simple questions in the questionnaires, focus group discussions and personal interviews approved by the supervisor

3.8 Data analysis and Presentation tools

Results were presented and analysed using pie charts, bar graphs, tables and statistical packages for social scientists. Tables were used for recording raw data questionnaires. The main aim being to make sound conclusions to the topic under study. This enabled easy analysis of data.

3.9 Summary

The chapter identified the research methodology, research design, research instruments and the sampling methods that were used by the researcher in conducting the research project. The chapter explained how validity and reliability of data was achieved. The next chapter looks at data presentation, analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher presents interprets and analyses data collected from the research to enhance understanding of data. Data was obtained from questionnaires and interviews. Hence, analysis was done in both quantitative and qualitative terms .The chapter gives a summary of the findings.

4.1 Response rate

A total of 70 questionnaires were distributed to Delta Chibuku employees and customers. 40 were distributed to Delta Chibuku employees whilst 30 were distributed to customers. Personal interviews were also conducted .The following table summarizes the response rate obtained from each respondent category.

Table 4.1 Showing response rate

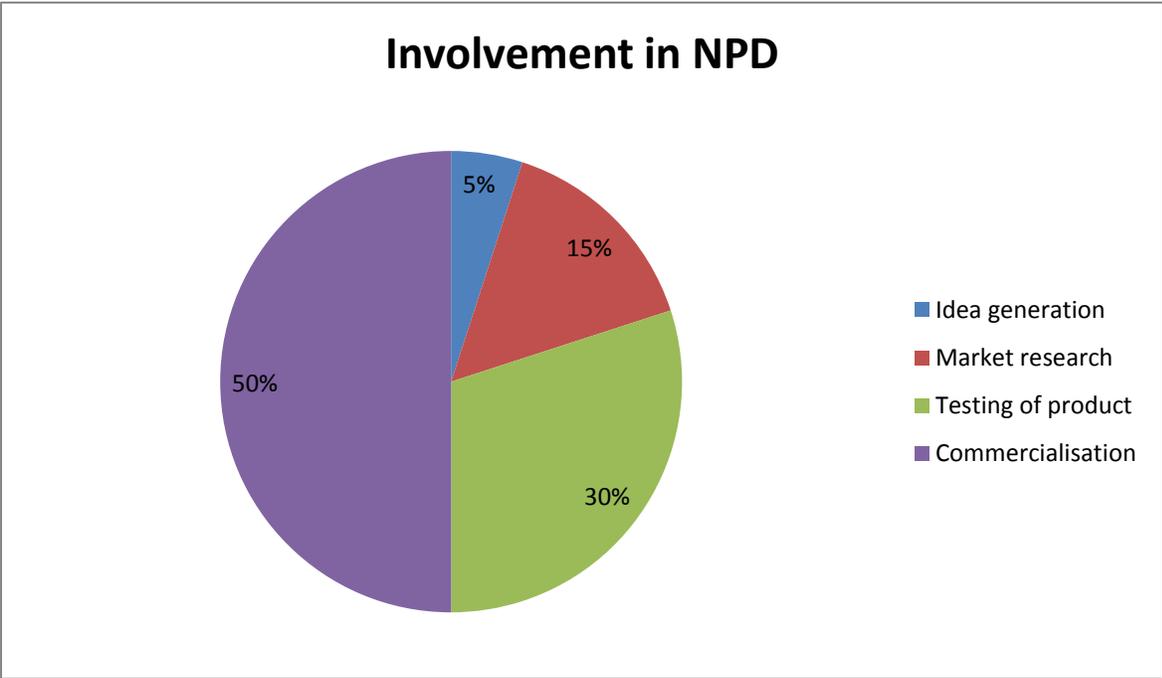
Respondent category	Number of questionnaires distributed	Number of questionnaires collected	Response rate %
Employees	40	30	75
Customers	30	30	100
Management	15	7	47
Total	70	67	95

The total percentage response rate was 95%. Response rate was ranging from 47%-100% .The high response indicated above can be attributed to the fact that respondents generated a lot of interest for the topic under study. The high response could mean that the researcher could reach sound conclusions. The percentage response rate for interviews was 47% which was average.

Some respondents who were not interested in the topic under study might have caused this and some respondents were absent when the interviews were done.

4.2 Analysis of responses on employee involvement in decision making regarding new product development

The research sought to gather responses on the level of involvement of employees in decision making regarding development of beer products at Delta Chibuku. The pie chart below summarizes the stages in which the employees were involved. This information relates to those people who are involved in the decision making regarding beer products at Delta.



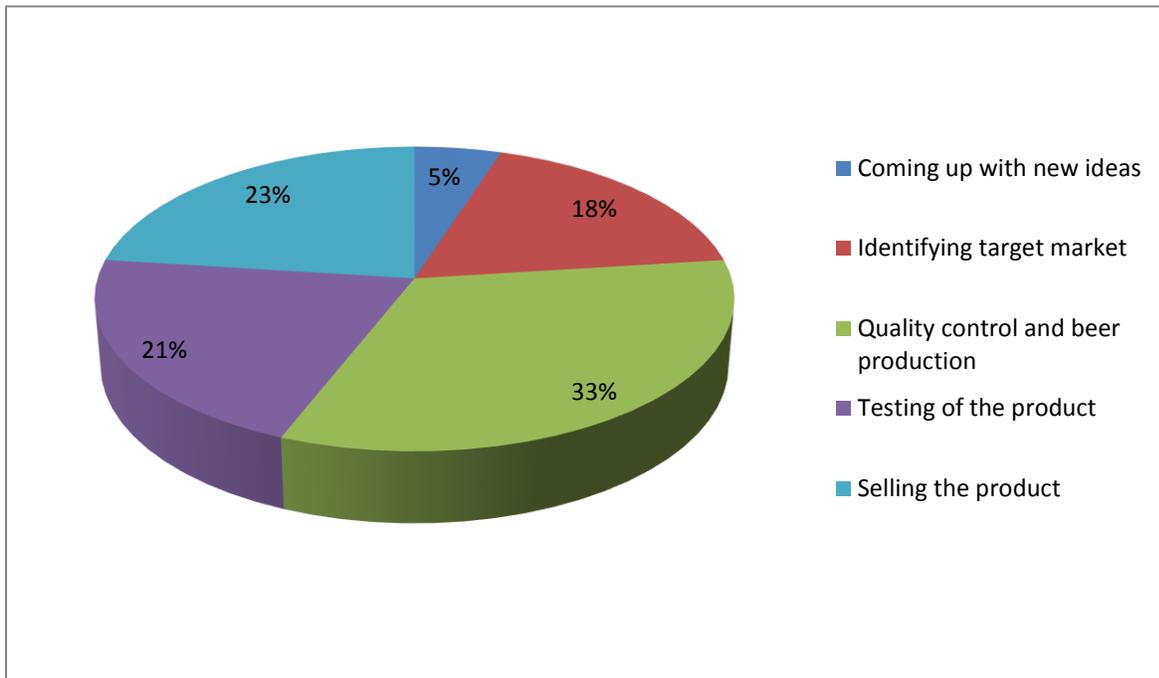
Source: Primary data

Fig 4.1 Pie chart showing employee responses on areas they participate in, in the NPD process

As shown in Fig 4.1 above, 5% of the respondents stated that they are involved in idea generation while 15% indicated that they are involved in market research where 30% are

involved in testing of the product and 50% are involved in commercialisation. The 5% who mentioned that they are involved in decisions regarding development of beer products indicate that they are involved in idea generation meaning that 95% are not involved in idea generation at all. A small percentage is involved in idea generation as in agreement with views from Delta Chibuku management who stated that there is need to involve employees that understand the new product development process thereby overlooking the other employees. While 15% mentioned involvement in market research are from the research, development, sales, and marketing departments as these are the departments responsible for identifying the target market. The results from the 15% are in agreement with views expressed in interviews with management where they stated that there is need to involve employees with the necessary skills, abilities and competencies to do a particular job. The 30% that indicated involvement in testing the product include employees from the production department and the general employees. Whilst the 50% that mentioned that they are involved in commercialisation, these results are also in agreement with management, views were they state that all the employees play a part in the commercialisation of the product.

4.2.1 Analysis of responses on ways in which employees have been involved in decisions regarding development of beer products.



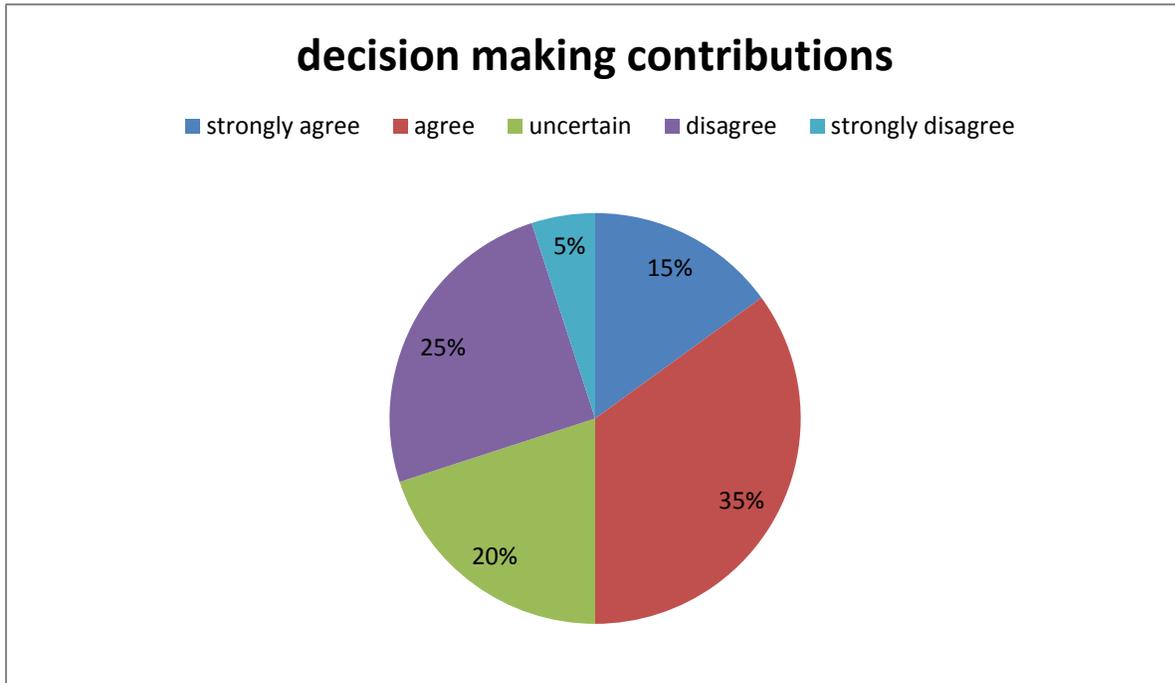
Source: Primary data

Fig4.2Pie chart showing ways in which employees have been involved in decision making regarding development of beer products.

As depicted above in Fig. 4.2 5% of the respondents come up with new ideas, while 18% identify target market where 21% test the product and 33% produce and control quality of beer and 23% sell the beer products. Results show 5% of the respondents come up with ideas this is agreement with management view who state that they only involve employees with adequate skill. This result is supported by Sagie and Aycan (2003) as cited in the literature review where they argue that the employees involved are those employees who possess needed knowledge and information. 18% of the respondents indicate that they identify the target market whilst 33% produce and control quality of beer; this is also in agreement with management view that they

involve employees with necessary skills and competencies to do the job.23% of the respondents sell the beer products whilst 21% test the product.

4.2.2 Analysis on responses on participation in decision-making



Source: Primary data

Fig 4.3 Pie chart showing contributions made towards decision making by employees that are considered.

As depicted in Fig. 4.3 above, 35% of the respondents agree that all their contributions regarding decision-making are always considered and management takes time to listen to them and allow them to participate in decision-making.25% disagree while 20% neither agree nor disagree where 15% strongly agree and 5% strongly disagree. Results show that 35% agree and 15% strongly agree that their contributions are always considered and managementtakes time to listen to them. This result is supported byMitchell (1973) cited in the literature review where the author argues that employeeinvolvement is concerned with shared decision-making.Whilst 25% of the

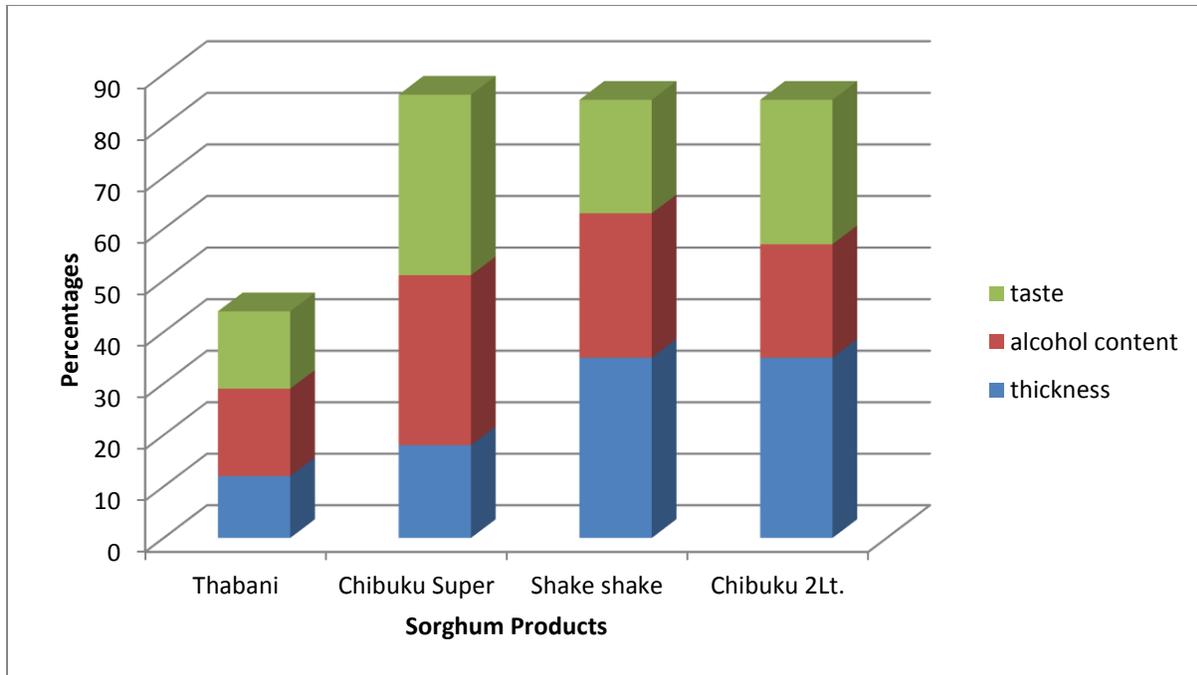
respondents disagree and 5% disagree, Sagie supports this result and Aycan (2003) cited in the literature review where they opine that these kinds of employees are involved in paternalistic participative decision making where subordinates believe their superior to be their representatives and thus they rarely take part in work decisions.

4.3 Analysis of the responses on the association between employee participation and firms' competitiveness.

Research seeks to establish if there is an association between employee participation at Delta Chibuku. Moreover, its competitiveness in terms of sales. Questionnaires were distributed to both employees and customers to assess the competitiveness of Delta Chibuku. As such, the researcher used customer perception and knowledge of Chibuku beer products to assess the competitiveness of Chibuku products.

4.3.1 Customer perception and knowledge

Information was drawn from three variables of quality in terms beer products taste, thickness and alcohol content. This information helped determine if Delta Chibuku employees are playing their role in maintaining quality of beer products through employee empowerment.



Source: Primary data

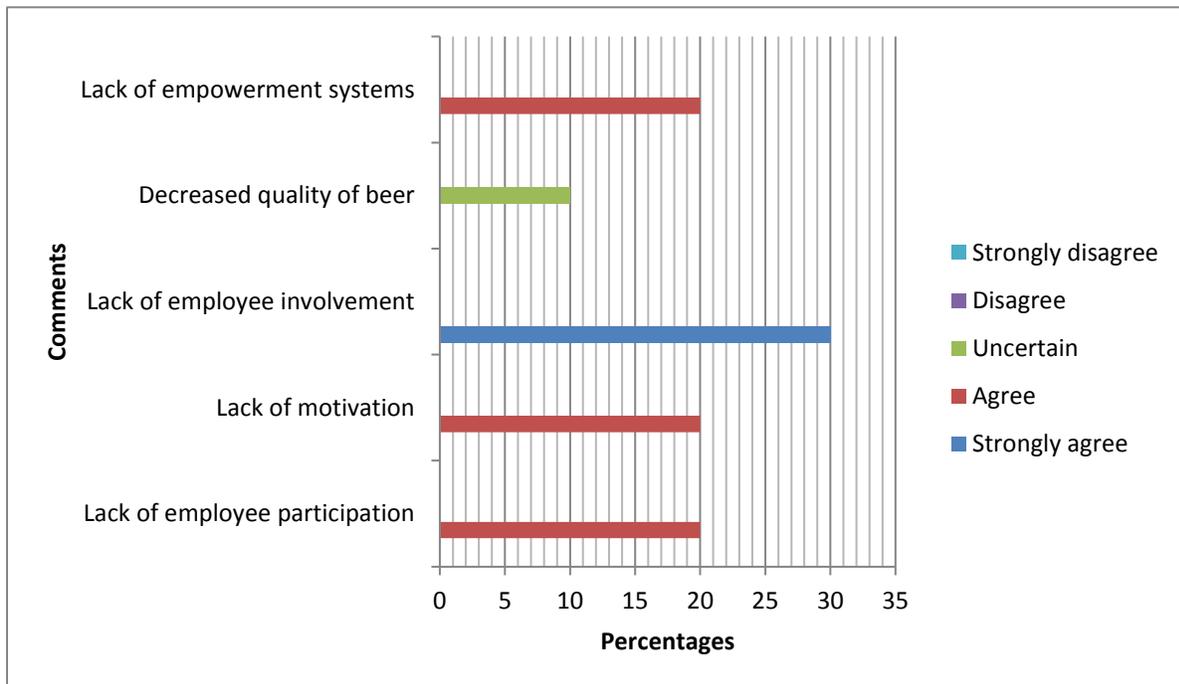
Fig 4.4 Bar graph showing customer perception and knowledge of Chibuku beer products

As shown in the graph above respondents were asked to rate Chibouk products. 12% rated the thickness of Theban as good while 18% said Chibouk Super was good where 35% said Shake Shake was poor and Chibuku 2litre's thickness levels were rated as fair. 17% of the respondents rated the alcohol content of Thabani as high, while 33% said Chibuku Super has low alcohol content where 28% of the respondents said Shake Shake is average and 22% said Chibuku 2Litre as high. 15% of the respondents rated the taste of Thabani as good while 35% said Chibuku Super was poor where 22% said Shake Shake has a good taste and Chibuku 2litre as good. Of the respondents who rated the thickness levels of Chibuku products, 12% rated Thabani as good which means that 88% of the respondents do not agree that the thickness levels of Thabani is good. The 35% who rated the thickness level of Chibuku Super as good, 65% however do not agree. This is because of lack of employee participation in the development of the beer products. Ogbonna supports this and Harris (2000) cited in the literature review who argues that participation of employees in decision-making and sharing information throughout the

organisation strengthened the innovation capability. Of the respondents who rated the alcohol content of Chibuku beer 38% rated the alcohol content of Chibuku Super as low and 22% rated the alcohol content of Chibuku 2litre as high. 62% however do not agree they rate the alcohol content of Chibuku Super as high whilst 72% do not agree that the alcohol content of Chibuku 2litre as high. This is because of lack of involvement of employees and lack of communication both upward and downward between the management and its subordinates.

4.3.2 Analysis of responses on factors leading to low sales volume of sorghum beer

Employees gave information pertaining what they thought could be the reason for low sales in sorghum beer. The bar graph below summarizes the factors leading to low sales volume of sorghum beer.



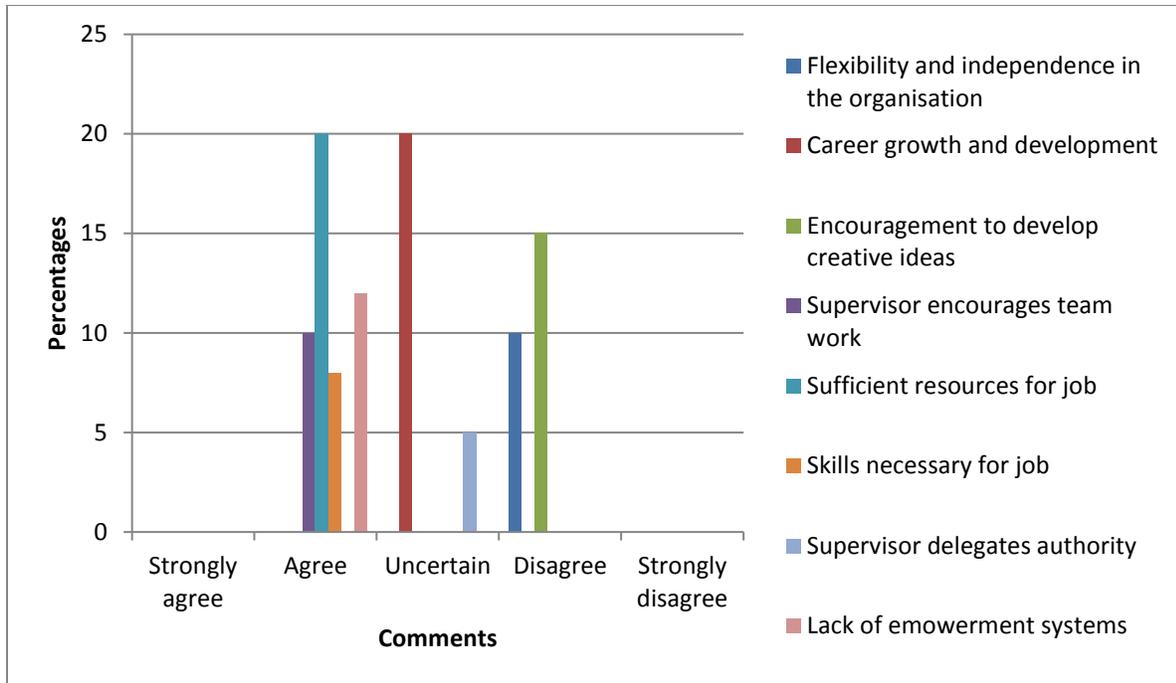
Source: Primary data

Fig 4.5: Bar graph showing reasons for decline in sales for sorghum beer

As depicted above in Fig. 4.3, 30% of the respondents strongly agree that low sales are due to lack of involvement of employees in decisions regarding development of products at Delta Chibuku. While 60% agree that decline in sales is due to lack of motivation, employee participation in the organisation and lack of empowerment systems. 10% neither agree nor disagree, that low sales revenue for sorghum beer is due to decreased quality of beer. None of the respondents disagree or strongly disagree rather they all agree and strongly agree that low sales of sorghum beer is due to lack of involvement, participation, motivation and empowerment systems respectively. Results show that there is an association between employee participation and firm's competitiveness in terms of sales. When employees are empowered, they generate quality products and they perform better using their skills and abilities, which then leads to business excellence.

4.4 Analysis of responses on empowerment practices in place at Delta Chibuku.

Statements in the questionnaire represented the characteristic practices of successful empowerment. Results show that respondents agree that they have mastered the skills necessary for their jobs and 20% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that their position allowed career growth and development. To add on 10% of the respondents disagreed that there is enough flexibility and independence allowed in the organisation and 15% disagree that they are encouraged to develop creative and innovative ideas. 20% of the respondents however agree that they normally get sufficient resources to do their jobs and 10% of the respondents agree that supervisors encourage teamwork. In addition, 12% of the respondents agree that low morale in the organisation is due to lack of empowerment systems at Delta Chibuku. 5% of the respondents neither agree nor disagree on the supervisor delegating authority. Below is a bar graph summarising the data



Source: Primary data

Fig 4.6 Bar graph showing response on practices of successful empowerment in organisations

Researcher asked management during the interview of the empowerment strategies in place at Delta Chibuku and how they have contributed to the organisation's competitiveness. Results from the interview indicate that the empowerment practices at Delta Chibuku include training, open flow of information, delegation of authority and responsibility and participative decision-making. These practices have contributed to the effectiveness of Delta Chibuku through increased product knowledge of the employees. Moreover, these practices have been effective in reducing labour turnover at Delta Chibuku. Management however highlighted that apart from the strategies that they have in place at Delta there are sufficient resources for employees to do their jobs and employees have the necessary skills to perform their job. Management views are in agreement with Spreitzer (1996) who is cited in the literature review, he argues that the empowerment practices in an organisation include training, open flow of information and participative decision-making.

4.5 Summary

The chapter presented the results of the research of the data collected through questionnaires and personal interviews. Delta Chibuku has an extra mile to go in empowering their employees and to put several empowerment practices in place for successful empowerment. Data was presented using tables, bar graphs and pie charts. The next chapter gives summary, conclusions and recommendations of the research.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Summary

The research study was concerned with employee empowerment and firm's competitiveness. The researcher sought to find out if there is an association between employee empowerment and firm's competitiveness. Moreover, the researcher sought to find out if employees at Delta Chibuku were involved in decision making regarding development of products and ways in which they are involved. In addition the researcher wanted to establish the extent to which Delta had put in place empowerment practices and assess their effectiveness towards the firm's competitiveness. A descriptive research design was used with the aid of an exploratory research design to develop initial insight and to provide direction for further study. A sample size of 85 respondents was used consisting of 40 employees, 30 customers and 15 managers from a population of 200 employees and 1500 customers respectively. Questionnaires and interviews were used as research instruments to gather data from the respondents. The overall response rate was 86% for questionnaires and 53% for interviews thus giving validity and reliability of findings. Findings show that large portions of employees at Delta Chibuku are not involved in decision making regarding development of beer products. Findings also reveal that management at Delta only involve workers that have the knowledge and skill necessary in the development of beer products. Moreover findings indicate that, empowerment practices at Delta Chibuku include training, participative decision making and open information flow, even though the employees do not feel empowered, thus negatively impacting on the performance of beer products although several employees have agreed that they have sufficient skills to perform their jobs. Results show that only 5% of the employees are involved in idea generation, 15% in market testing, 30% in testing of the product whilst the remainder in commercialisation. Results show that not all departments are involved and only employees with adequate skill and abilities are involved.

5.1 Conclusions

Research made the following conclusions:

5.1.1 Employee involvement in decisions regarding development of products

For those respondents who indicated involvement in decisions regarding development of new products, only 5% are involved in decisions regarding idea generation. Employees are only involved in idea generation, market testing, testing of the product and commercialisation stages of the development process as only those employees who possess the needed knowledge and skill are involved. DeltaChibuku employees' involvement in influencing final decision is shallow, as the employees are de-motivated. They do not influence final decision since they are only able to contribute and management does decision implementation. Empowered employees are the drivers to successful products.

5.1.2 Association between employee participation and firm's competitiveness.

Delta Chibuku's competitiveness customer perception and knowledge on the beer products was used to assess the role that is played by employees in maintaining quality of beer products. Results show that the quality of sorghum beer is average meaning that it is neither poor nor good and it is not performing well in the market as the sales continue to go down, this could be attributed to unempowered employees.

5.1.3 Identifying empowerment practices

90% agree and strongly agree that low sales of sorghum beer are due to lack of involvement, motivation, participation and empowerment systems. 10% neither agree nor disagree that authority is delegated to them. Management has indicated the existence of empowerment practices at Delta in the interviews conducted. Empowerment practices included training, participative decision-making and open flow of information. They have also indicated that they provide enough resources for the employees to perform their jobs. However, Delta employees

are not empowered and there has been low morale in employees even when they have mastered skills to perform their job.

5.2 Recommendations

After analysing the findings, the researcher managed to come up with recommendations to the company and these are discussed below. In light of the conclusions discussed above Delta Chibuku should enhance its competitiveness through empowering employees. Delta should explore other empowerment practices like collaborative work, flat organisational structures and skill and knowledge based pay system. Spreitzer (1996) who opines that for successful empowerment organisations should put in place six empowerment practices namely training, participative decision making .open information flow, skill, knowledge based pay systems, flat organisational structures, and collaborative work supports this.

Delta management should delegate authority and responsibility to low-level employees and allow for joint decision making for the success of the firm. This is supported by Burke (1986) who opines that for empowerment to take meaning there should be a shift in the power away from management to shop floor. Delta should involve employees in decision-making. Kemelgor (2002) who echoes that when employees are involved in contributing their own ideas in decision making as it maximizes viewpoints and diversity of perspectives supports this.

5.3 Suggestions for further research

The research looked at employee empowerment and firm's competitiveness. Future study should however be extended to other segments of the beverage company such as sparkling beverages and lager beer.

REFERENCES

1. Batt(2000) Strategic segmentation in frontline service:Matchin customer employees and human resource systems,International Journal of Human Resource Mnagement
2. Beardwell et al(2004)Human Resource Mnagement :A contemporary Approach 4thed,London Prentice Hall
3. Burns A. and Bush R.(2010) Marketing Research,6thEd,Pearson Education, Prentice Hall, One Lake New Jersey
4. BrunettoY. And Farr-Wharton R. (2009) The moderating role of trust in SME owner/managers' decision making about collaboration. Journal of Small Business Management,45(3) 362,387
5. BakariT.andNzuveS.(2012) The relationship between empowerment and performance in the City Council of Nairobi, Problems of Management in the 21st CenturyVol 5 pg.83
6. Barringer B. And Bluedorn A. (1999)The relationship between Corporate Entrepreneurship and Strategic Management Journal,20;421-444
7. Cakar N. and Erturk A. (2010) Comparing innovation capability of small and medium sized enterprises: Examining the effects of organisational culture and empowerment ,Journal of Small Business Management,48(3),325-359
8. Chinyowa B.(2014) The Herald Zimbabwe,Thursday 20 februarypp 9
9. Cogner and Kanungo(1998)The empowerment process:Intergrating theory and practice, Academy of Management review13(3)17
10. Cook and Maucaulay(1997) Practical steps to empowered complaint management:Managing Service Quality Vol 7,Number 1,1997 pg 39-42
11. Crawford M. And DiBenedetto A. (2008) New Products Management ,9thEd,McGrawHill,London
12. David M. and Sutton C. (2004) Social Research London: Sage Publication
13. DeCenzo (1998)Human resource management ,6thed, Prentice Hall, USA
14. Dr.Erturk,International Journal of Business and Social Science,Vol 3No 14 special issue- July 2012

15. Dr. Yount (2006), Research design and statistical analysis for Christian Ministry Research Fundamentals
16. Dressler(2003)Human Resource Management 9th Ed New Jersey, Prentice Hall
17. Ghosh A.(2006)Human resource management (With case)Manas Publications, New Delhi,353-354
18. Ghosh(2013) Employee empowerment: A strategic tool to obtain sustainable competitive advantage, International Journal of Management, Vol 30 No.3Sept 2013
19. Hair et al (2003), Marketing Research: Within a changing information environment, 2nd Ed, Tata McGraw-Hill
20. Honold(1997)A review of the literature on employee empowerment ,Empowerment in organisations,Vol 5No.4
21. Holden L.(2001) Chapter 13:Employee involvement and empowerment; in Humana Resource Management contemporary approach, pp 559-597,Pearson education limited
22. HofstedeG(1980) Cultures consequences,BeverlyHill,CA,Sage publications
23. Ivancevich J.(2004)Business and management principles and guidelines, New Delhi
24. KeenyS,Reid M. and Donnelly E(1990) Manpower training and Development,EnglewoodCliffs,Prentice Hall.
25. Kemelgor B.H(2002) A comparative analysis of corporate entrepreneurial orientation between selected firms in the Netherlands and the US entrepreneurship and Regional development,14,67-87
26. Knight -Turvey N (2006) Influencing employee innovation through structural empowerment initiatives:The need to feel empowered; Entrepreneurship theory and practice
27. Kruger R. Focus Groups :A practical guide for applied research,2ndEd,Sage Publications
28. Kumar R. (2011) Research methodology a step by step guide for beginners,3rdEd,London,Sage publications

29. Kuye L. And Sulaimon A.(2011) Employee involvement in decision making and firms performance in the manufacturing sector in Nigeria, Serbian Journal Of Management6(1) 1-15
30. Lawler E, (1990) High-involvement management: Participative strategies for improving organisational performance, a Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass.
31. Lee M. and Koh J. (2001) Is empowerment really a new concept? International Journal of Human Resource Management12(4)684-695
32. Leat M. (2007), Exploring employee relations, 2nd Ed, Butterworth, Heinmann, USA.
33. Legge(1995)Human resource management :Critical analysis
34. Locke and Schwiger (1979)Participation in decision making :One more look.Researching organisational behaviour
35. McKeena E. And Beech N.(2004) The essence of Human Resource Mangement ,Prentice Hall of India,NewDehli
36. Menzel et al(2006)Developing characteristics of an intrapreneurship supportive culture Eindhoven centre for innovation studies; moving towards systems integration
37. Mitchell T. (1973)Motivationand Participation, an intergration,Academy of Management Journal,16;670-679
38. Noah Y. (2008) A study of worker participation in management decision making within selected establishment in Lagos, Nigeria Journal of Social Science7(1) 31-39
39. Ogbonna E. and Harris L.(2000) Leadership style, organisational culture and performance :Empirical evidence form UK companies,The International Journal of Human Resource Management 11(4) 766-788
40. Pace(1989)Moving towards systems Intergration,surveyof business.Vol25 No.1
41. Pastor J. (1996) Empowerment: What it is and what its not. Empowerment in organisations 4(2)5-7
42. PreussG. And Lautsch(2002) The effect of formal vs. informal job security on employee involvement programs, Industrial relation,57(3) 517-541
43. Rose R.(2001)Empowered by empathy:25 ways to fly in spirit,Women'sinstitutionWorld wide.

44. Sagie A. and Aycan Z. (2003) A cross cultural analysis of participative decision making in organisation, Human Relation 56(4) 453-473
45. Sashkin M. (1976)Changing toward participative management approaches: A model and methods, Academy of management reviewJuly75-86
46. Shadur M A (1999) the relationship between organisational climate and employee perceptions of involvement: The importance of support. Group and organisation management24(4) 479-505
47. Spreitzer G. And Mishra A. (1999) Giving up control without losing control: Effects on managers involving employees in decision-making. Group and organisation management 24(2) 155-187
48. Spreitzer G. (1996) Taking Stock: A review of more than twenty years of research on empowerment at work
49. Torrington.(2002)Personnel management; Human resources management, Prentice Hall
50. Trot P. (2005) Innovation and New Product Development, 3rd Ed, Prentice Hall
51. Tulloch (1993).The reader's digest oxford wordfinder, Clarendon, Oxford.
52. VanKnippenberg ,DeDreu and Homan (2004) Work group diversity and group performance:Anintergrative model and research agenda.Journal of Applied PsychologyVol. 89(6) 1008-1022
53. Wagner R. And Harter J. (2006)The element of great managing, New York Gallup Press
54. WagnerJ. (1994)Participation's effects on performance and satisfaction: A reconsideration of the research evidence. Academy of Management Review19,312-330
55. WellinsR.Byham W., Wilson J. (1991) Empowered Teams: Creating self-directed work groups that improve quality, productivity and participation,Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, Calif.
56. Williamson M.(2008) The effects of expanding employee decision making on contributions to firm value in an informal reward environment,ContemporaryAccounting Research25(4) 1184-1209
57. Wilkinson A.(1998)Empowerment theory and practice, Personal Review 27(1) 50-56

58. Wilson (1999), Learning and Training for individuals and organisations, London, Kogan Page Limited
59. www.delta.co.zw
60. [www.theherald-jobs and studies.com](http://www.theherald-jobsandstudies.com)
61. Yang Y. and Konrad A.(2010)Understanding diversity management practices:Implications of constitutional theory and resource based theory.Group and Organisation Management 36,6-38.
62. Zivkovic (2009)Developing motivational model as a strategy for Human resource management in small enterprises under transitional economy,Serbian journal of management. 4(1) 1-27

Appendices

Appendix A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DELTA CHIBUKU CUSTOMERS

Dear sir/madam

My name is **Sharon Mariga**; I am a student at the Midlands State University who is currently studying for a Bachelor of Commerce Marketing Management Honours Degree. I am conducting a study on **employee empowerment and firms' competitiveness**. I will be grateful for your assistance by filling-in the questions below. You are assured of anonymity and that all your responses will be used for academic purposes only. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Please note: Your response to this questionnaire will be treated in confidence.

Instructions of completion

Please tick in the appropriate boxes and insert your answers in spaces provided. You are kindly requested to complete all the questions. Thank you for your contributions.

1. Kindly indicate your gender.

Female Male

2. Kindly indicate your age.

18-25years 26-30years 31-35years 36-40years 40+years

3. Indicate your customer type.

End user customer Trade customer

4. For how long have u been buying Chibuku beer?

Less than a year 1-5years 6-10years 11-15years 15+years

5. Which of the following Delta Chibuku beer do you frequently buy? Multiple answers are accepted.

Thabani Shake ShakeCku 2litre ChiSuper

6. Which of the following reactions do you show when you fail to get the product you require from Delta Chibuku?

Disappointment Complain Switch brands

7. Which of the following effects do you think are a result of lack of employee empowerment at Delta? Multiple answers are accepted.

- a. Low sales of sorghum beer
- b. Delays in delivery of Chibuku to the designated outlets
- c. Chibuku Super is not found in outlying areas
- d. Sub-standard Chibuku beer
- e. Other

(Specify).....
.....
.....

8. Please give your opinion on the following statements on a 5 point likert scale where:

- 5 - Strongly Agree**
- 4 - Agree**
- 3 – Uncertain**
- 2 – Disagree**
- 1 – Strongly Disagree**

	5	4	3	2	1
a) Delta sorghum beer products have high thickness levels as compared to other beer products from competitors.					
b) Delta sorghum beer products have low alcohol content.					
c) I will buy lager products if Chibuku products are not available.					
d) I will buy from competitors if Chibuku produces sub-standard beer.					
e) The taste of Chibuku beer can be said to be very good as compared to beer from other breweries.					
f) Poor performance of Chibuku Super on the market is caused by lack of employee involvement in new products.					
g) Chibuku Super is not found in outlying areas because of lack of employee involvement in decision-making in development of new products.					
h) Low sales volume of Chibuku Super is due to inadequate involvement by employees in decision making in development of new products.					
i) Delays in delivery of Chibuku beer to designated outlets is due to lack of empowerment of employees.					
j) Delta Chibuku employees are not motivated leading to low sales volume for Chibuku products.					
k) Low sales volume of Chibuku beer is due to decreased quality of beer caused by low worker morale.					
l) Good remuneration systems retain employees at Delta Chibuku.					
m) Low morale at Delta is caused by lack of empowerment systems.					

n) Delta Chibuku employees are motivated and stay at Delta because of good working conditions.

--	--	--	--	--	--

Appendix B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DELTA CHIBUKU EMPLOYEES

Dear sir/madam

My name is **Sharon Mariga**, I am a student at the Midlands State University who is currently studying for a Bachelor of Commerce Marketing Management Honors Degree. I am conducting a study on **employee empowerment and firms' competitiveness**. I will be grateful for your assistance by filling-in the questions below. You are assured of anonymity and that all your responses will be used for academic purposes only. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Please note:Your response to this questionnaire will be treated in confidence.

Instructions of completion

Please tick in the appropriate boxes and insert your answers in spaces provided. You are kindly requested to complete all the questions. Thank you for your contributions.

1. Kindly indicate your gender.

Female Male

2. How long have you been working for Delta Chibuku?

Less than a year 1-5years 6-10 years 11+ years

3. Which department are you in?

Sales and Marketing Human Resource

Finance Research and Development

Production

Other.....

4. Are you involved in decision making regarding development of new products in the sorghum beer segment?

Yes No

5. If yes, in which areas have you participated in?

Testing of the product Market research

Idea generation Commercialisation

6. In what ways have you been involved in decisions regarding development of beer products?

.....
.....
.....

7. Which of the following types of beer have been introduced in the time that you have been at Delta Chibuku?

Thabani Shake Shake Chibuku 2Litre Chibuku Super

8. For the named product above, were you involved in the product development process?

Yes No

9. State the stages in which you were involved.

.....

10. Employee participation in the development of sorghum beer has yielded the following benefits.

Increased product knowledge Increased quality of beer

Increased sales volume Worker morale

Other (Specify).....

11. Which of the following will make you remain at Delta Chibuku?

Good working conditions Financial benefits Incentives

Other (Specify).....

12. Please give your opinion on the following statements on a 5 point likert scale where:

- 5 - Strongly agree**
- 4 - Agree**
- 3 - Uncertain**
- 2 - Disagree**
- 1 - Strongly Disagree**

	5	4	3	2	1
a) All our contributions regarding decision-making are always considered.					
b) Management communicates the division's progress in terms of sales and product performance.					
c) Employee participation improves performance of products on the market in terms of sales.					
d) Lack of motivation has resulted in low sales volumes for Chibuku beer.					
e) Involvement increases worker morale that leads to the development of quality products.					
f) Management takes time to listen to employees and allow them to participate in decision-making.					
g) I will leave Delta Chibuku if I am not allowed to participate in Delta's decision and work processes.					
h) Low morale at Delta is caused by lack of empowerment systems					
i) My supervisor delegates authority to me.					
j) My position allows for career growth and development.					
k) I am encouraged to develop creative and innovative ideas.					
l) I normally get sufficient resources to do my job.					
m) My supervisor encourages teamwork.					
n) There is enough flexibility and independence allowed in the					

organization.					
o) In my organization, employees are encouraged to take quick action to improve product quality.					

Appendix C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MANAGEMENT

1. How long have you been working for Delta Chibuku Division?
2. What are the strategies in place for empowering employees?
3. Can you comment on the effectiveness of these empowerment strategies and how they have contributed to the organization's competitiveness in terms of sales and innovation processes?
4. Do you discuss and communicate the division's progress in terms of sales and performance of products?
5. How has been Sorghum beer products performing in terms of sales against other Delta products?
6. State ways in which employees are involved in decisions regarding the development of new Sorghum beer at Delta?
7. When do you start to consult employees when making decisions in respect to development of new products?
8. How have empowerment systems contribute towards the labour turnover of the Delta Chibuku ?