

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The sustained success of an organization hinges on its ability to consistently provide top-notch services and products. However, despite the potential to learn and achieve ongoing excellence, many organizations face challenges in upholding such performance due to three primary factors. Firstly, a misalignment between the organization's goals and its operational structure results in misguided priorities and performance evaluation. Secondly, a deficiency in understanding the competitive environment hampers senior management, causing a misfit between organizational objectives and market realities. Lastly, a disparity between necessary conduct for strategy execution and meeting market demands disrupts alignment with customers. This is so true for employee behaviour in management (Kennedy & Daim, 2010).

In the 21st century, establishing market dominance relies significantly on new product development as a foundational strategy. The beverage industry's key sectors are experiencing rapid growth in competition, accompanied by dynamic and swift changes. The successful survival and expansion of businesses are intrinsically tied to the imperative of introducing new products. The ability to develop these new products to compete in existing or new markets is a core competency of many successful firms (Schimmoeller & Schimmoeller, 2010).

The change of many factors is gradually influencing consumers' tastes, and this is gradually leading to the demand for new products. Understanding consumer

needs is paramount for successful product development (Perttunen et al., 2021). Yet the failure rates of new products in consumer markets are still high and the inability to address consumer demands is a leading cause of the phenomenon (Louvain, 2016). In a changing landscape, outdated product designs struggle to captivate customer attention, highlighting the need for differentiation and distinctiveness to secure a competitive advantage. In the face of globalization's challenges, the importance of New Product Development has risen significantly. Playing a crucial role in guaranteeing a company's endurance, competitiveness, financial achievements, enduring expansion, and overall lasting presence. (Theanachor et al., 2021).

The Beverage industry originated in 700 B.C. encompassing both Alcoholic and non-alcoholic product categories. The 19th century witnessed shifting perspectives as the temperance movement advocated for moderate alcohol consumption and even prohibition. Co-creation empowers stakeholders to shape product attributes, retaining essential elements while discarding others. It plays a pivotal role in driving new product development, largely fueled by emerging markets across diverse industries.

The challenges within the realm of factors influencing new product development are crucial for stimulating innovation, facilitating well-informed decision-making, and ensuring market competitiveness. Notable issues identified during the research encompass insufficient consumer research, management's difficulty in understanding consumer needs, absence of structured training

programs, neglect in training marketing personnel for new products and markets and a lack of awareness regarding government rules and regulations

The problems for new product development are important and require research due to the following reasons:

- a) **Customer-centric approach-** Understanding consumer behaviour, preferences, and market trends helps the Sierra Leone Brewery create products that have a higher likelihood of success in the market.
- b) **Skill development and performance improvement-** Lack of training programs can hinder employee skills and performance in new product development. Researching and implementing effective training programs enhances employee knowledge, capabilities, and productivity. Well-trained employees contribute to the successful development and launch of new products.
- c) **Legal compliance:** Researching government rules and regulations is essential to ensure that new products comply with legal requirements. Noncompliance can result in legal consequences, fines, product recalls, and reputational damage. Understanding and adhering to regulations minimize risks and help businesses navigate complex legal frameworks.
- d) **Market expansion and diversification:** Failure to train marketing personnel for new products and new markets can limit market expansion efforts. Researching and providing appropriate training equips marketing teams with the skills and knowledge required to effectively

promote and penetrate new markets, enabling successful market entry and diversification.

- e) **Competitive advantage:** Researching consumer needs, market trends, and emerging technologies will provide the industry with a competitive edge. By understanding customer preferences and market gaps, Sierra Leone Brewery Limited can develop innovative products that outperform competitors, increasing market share and profitability.

SLBL was chosen because it shows initiative in developing new products, a practice they have adopted to align with the changing market demands. Additionally, competition from other countries in terms of product shipment has led SLBL to focus on producing new products, aiming to encourage citizens to prefer locally produced items over imports.

The research aims to address problems faced by SLBL, particularly concerning the adoption of new products. The focus is on understanding the infrastructure, processes, and techniques involved in the production of these new products. By doing so, the goal is to raise awareness among the public, shedding light on the processes and raw materials involved in creating these products, such as sorghum.

One specific problem faced by SLBL is the challenge of product adoption. When SLBL introduces a new product within the country, consumers struggle to adopt it due to various reasons. These reasons include the customers financial status, health conditions (especially concerning sugary and highly alcoholic beverages), and other factors contributing to a low level of product consumption like the region's restrictions on the consumption of alcoholic beverages can serve

as a deterrent for individuals to partake in such drinks and the availability and accessibility of alcoholic beverages may be limited in such regions, further influencing individuals' decisions not to consume them.

Studying new product development in the beverage industry, with a focus on Sierra Leone Brewery, yields numerous advantages. The diverse range of drinks in this sector, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic, presents an opportunity for in-depth research catering to varied consumer preferences. The dynamic nature of the beverage industry, influenced by consumer trends and cultural shifts, is particularly evident in Sierra Leone Brewery, operating within an emerging market. This setting offers insights into strategies tailored for growing economies and highlights the impact of cultural factors on product development and consumer behaviour. Beyond business strategies, Sierra Leone Brewery's role in the community and its socioeconomic contributions can be assessed, shedding light on its broader impact on the local economy. The study also delves into how beverage companies, including Sierra Leone Brewery, approach sustainability in response to contemporary consumer concerns. Furthermore, it provides a glimpse into the competitive landscape, regulatory challenges, and the role of innovation and technology in the industry. Ultimately, analyzing Sierra Leone Brewery offers a dual perspective, essential for understanding the balance between global market trends and local consumer preferences, making it a comprehensive subject for studying new product development in the beverage industry.

New product development (NPD) is pivotal for a company's growth and long-term viability, involving the entire process of bringing a new product or service to

the market. The importance of NPD is shaped by several factors influencing research and implementation strategies. In competitive markets, continuous innovation is essential, allowing companies like the Sierra Leone Brewery Limited (SLBL) to expand portfolios and capture more market share, fostering sustainable growth. New products also serve to differentiate offerings, creating a unique value proposition that attracts and retains customers. Adapting to evolving consumer preferences is crucial for success, with NPD research enabling companies to stay attuned to changing needs and align products with current and emerging demands, enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty. Technological advancements play a vital role, enabling the creation of cutting-edge products that appeal to tech-savvy consumers and improve production efficiency. Regulatory and environmental considerations are significant, necessitating thorough research to ensure compliance and reduce the risk of setbacks. Adequate resource allocation, aligning NPD initiatives with overall strategic goals, and addressing internal capabilities are essential for success. Globalization introduces challenges and opportunities, with NPD research helping companies understand diverse cultural preferences when expanding into new markets. Agility in response to rapid industry trends is crucial, providing a competitive advantage and contributing to overall success. In summary, NPD is critical for businesses aiming to stay competitive, meet customer needs, leverage technology, comply with regulations, and adapt to a dynamic business environment. Thorough research into factors affecting NPD is key to mitigating risks and ensuring successful product launches.

New Product Development (NPD) is a vital strategic process for the Beverage Industry, playing a key role in strengthening market demand and competitiveness. In the rapidly evolving landscape of this industry, where consumer preferences and market trends undergo constant change, the introduction of innovative and attractive products is essential for sustained growth. NPD allows the company to stay ahead by creating distinct offerings that cater to shifting consumer needs. Whether through the continuous introduction of new beverages or the enhancement of existing ones, the company seizes untapped market segments and adeptly responds to emerging trends. Additionally, a well-executed NPD strategy boosts competitiveness by fostering brand differentiation and customer loyalty. By introducing unique flavours, innovative packaging, or healthier options, the beverage industry not only meets consumer expectations but also surpasses competitors. Thus, embracing NPD as a strategic imperative empowers the beverage industry to navigate the competitive landscape successfully, ensuring long-term viability and growth in the ever-evolving market.

This intricate process involves collaboration among diverse stakeholders, spanning multiple stages from ideation to market launch. Consumer involvement is foundational, beginning with comprehensive market research using surveys, focus groups, and interviews to understand needs and preferences. Consumer feedback serves as inspiration during idea generation, and product testing with a select group refines prototypes. Open feedback loops with consumers are crucial, fostering an iterative approach for products that resonate with the target audience. Employees, crucial in NPD, contribute to cross-functional teams, participating in

ideation, screening ideas, and ensuring alignment with company goals. In R&D and design, employees create prototypes, refine features, and ensure technical feasibility. In the beverage industry, deeply engaged in NPD, players monitor market trends, comply with regulations, manage supply chains efficiently, and develop marketing strategies for successful product launches.

This research employs a comprehensive approach, integrating empirical evidence with theoretical analysis to investigate the underlying factors contributing to challenges in new product development and provide evidence-based practical solutions. By merging practical observations with established theories from the fields of innovation, marketing, and organizational studies, this combined approach bolsters the proposal's robustness. Supported by empirical evidence, several factors affecting new product development are evident: Consumer research, as demonstrated in numerous studies, is crucial for new product development, enabling companies to gain insights into consumer preferences, challenges, and unmet needs through surveys, focus groups, and market analyses. Additionally, various sectors, including healthcare, finance, and technology, must adhere to government regulations, failure to comply with them can result in legal consequences, penalties, and reputational damage. Furthermore, the research consistently underscores the positive impact of training programs on employee performance, emphasizing that training enhances skills, knowledge, and job satisfaction, ultimately leading to increased productivity and innovation. Lastly, the research highlights the pivotal role of marketing in the success of new products, emphasizing the importance of well-trained marketing personnel in

effectively communicating product benefits, identifying target markets, and developing impactful marketing strategies.

Theoretical analysis reveals essential insights into addressing these challenges. Consumer-driven innovation emerges as a foundational strategy, wherein identifying and meeting consumer needs becomes paramount for successful product development. In-depth research into consumer preferences and behaviours aligns the industry's offerings with customer demands, fostering greater acceptance and adoption of new products.

Likewise, from a market expansion perspective, understanding and complying with government regulations serve as a theoretical prerequisite for entering new markets or expanding into different regions. This regulatory knowledge helps the industry navigate complex compliance procedures, reducing entry barriers and facilitating growth. Lastly, considering the third challenge, focusing on employee engagement and retention through training programs signals a commitment to employee development, elevating morale, job satisfaction, and retention rates. Engaged and motivated employees are more inclined to actively contribute fresh perspectives and innovative ideas to the industry's new product development efforts.

Within the SLBL Beverage Industry, the Corporate Affairs department is generally responsible for the creation of new products. While departments such as sales, marketing, supply chain, and production play pivotal roles at various stages of the product development cycle, the Corporate Affairs department takes the lead in conceiving and developing new beverages. This department is charged with

conducting research, experimenting with ingredients, and crafting innovative recipes that align with consumer preferences and market trends. After successfully testing a new product concept, the Corporate Affairs department hands it over to the production department for large-scale manufacturing. The production department's role encompasses scaling up the production process, ensuring quality control, and meeting the demand generated through sales and marketing efforts. In essence, while sales, marketing, supply chain, and production contribute significantly to the overall product lifecycle, the initiation and innovation of new products typically originate within the Corporate Affairs department in the SLBL Beverage Industry.

In the dynamic landscape of the beverage industry, addressing consumer concerns is paramount for successful new product development (NPD). A notable concern is the heightened focus on health and wellness, with consumers expressing wariness about sugary drinks and artificial additives. There exists a clear opportunity for improvement by developing beverages with reduced sugar content, natural ingredients, and functional additives aligning with health-conscious preferences. Sustainability is also a significant factor, with eco-friendly packaging solutions addressing the environmental impact of beverage packaging. Flavour variety and innovation are critical for consumer satisfaction, and NPD can respond by introducing diverse and unique options, considering regional preferences. Functional benefits, such as enhanced energy or relaxation, are sought after, presenting an avenue for NPD to incorporate adaptogens, herbs, or natural extracts. Convenience is key, with on-the-go options meeting the needs of busy consumers.

Transparency in labelling and clean ingredients is crucial for building trust while addressing price sensitivity and exploring cost-effective strategies for healthier options is essential. Lastly, catering to the demand for personalized experiences through customization options enhances overall satisfaction and brand loyalty in a market where individual preferences matter.

1.1.1 Research Gap

In the domain of factors affecting new product development at the SLBL, research gaps showed were the research variables: time, pricing, packaging, new product testing, competition, market targeting, promotion, and product branding have been inadequately explored or left unaddressed. These gaps are evident in problems such as insufficient consumer research of factors affecting new product development, the consequences of overlooking government regulations, the absence of structured training programs, and the inadequacy of training for marketing personnel during new product launches in the industry. So this research strives to bridge these gaps, aiming to cultivate a deeper comprehension of the intricate factors that shape new product development, ultimately furnishing valuable insights to optimize and enhance the effectiveness of this process.

Previous research has uncovered a diverse array of unexplored areas and knowledge gaps within the field of new product development (NPD). These gaps, identified in various studies, present significant opportunities for enhancing my understanding of key NPD aspects. This study aims to address these research gaps, spanning methodological advancements, organizational dynamics, regulatory

responses, and competitive advantages. A summarized table of these research gaps will guide in comprehending NPD processes more comprehensively. By referencing and addressing these gaps, provides insights that inform future strategies, enrich existing literature, and offer practical guidance for researchers and industry practitioners.

1.1.2 Previous Research Gap Analysis

Tabel 1. 1 Previous Research

No	Author/Year	Title	Unit of Analysis	Method	Theory	Gap	Findings
1	(Yilmaz et al., 2020)	Lean holistic fuzzy methodology employing cross-functional worker teams for new product development projects: A real case study from the high-tech industry	New product development projects	This lean holistic fuzzy methodology involves four steps: analyzing the current system with FVSM, segmenting processes with FDSM, forming worker teams via fuzzy optimization, and designing the future state using FVSM techniques.	The methodology is based on the lean principle and employs fuzzy logic to address uncertainties encountered in new product development projects	The paper introduces a novel holistic fuzzy methodology for NPD projects, making a valuable contribution to both theoretical and practical aspects of the literature while offering guidance to researchers and industry practitioners	Using cross-functional teams decreased lead time and operational costs in new product development, as shown by a real case study in a high-tech startup producing robotic prosthetics.
2	(Bai et al., 2017)	Organizational Structure, Cross-Functional Integration and Performance of New Product Development Team	The study examines how organizational structure, cross-functional integration, and team performance in new product development differ between manufacturing and high-tech	The study utilizes a multilevel linear model (HLM) to analyze survey data from Chinese manufacturing and high-tech industries. It employs HLM to assess regression coefficients and investigate the mediating	The study is grounded in the theory that a company's organizational structure influences cross-functional integration in new product development teams,	The study fills a research gap by exploring the relationship between organizational structure, cross-functional integration, and team performance, underscoring the lack of systematic	The organizational structure affects cross-functional integration and new product development team performance. Mechanical structures hinder integration, while organic structures enhance it, with integration

No	Author/Year	Title	Unit of Analysis	Method	Theory	Gap	Findings
			industries in China	role of cross-functional integration	subsequently impacting their performance	research on this topic	significantly boosting team performance.
3	(Andersen et al., 2020)	The strategic responses of start-ups to regulatory constraints in the nascent drone market	Start-ups in the nascent drone market	Inductive, qualitative study involving 49 interviews with start-ups, potential customers, industry actors, and regulatory authorities. Textual sources such as legal documents, industry reports, and trade press were also used for triangulation	The study builds on the concept of temporal orientation, which refers to the evolutionary stage of the market that a start-up's intended market application is oriented towards	The study addresses the lack of understanding of start-ups' responses to regulatory constraints in the nascent drone market	The study categorizes start-ups into three temporal orientations: present, future, and bridging, each with a specific market focus
4	(L. Zhou et al., 2020)	Unleashing the dynamics of product-market ambidexterity in the pursuit of international opportunities: Insights from emerging market firms	Emerging market firms, specifically four Chinese multinational firms	Longitudinal multiple case study approach. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of the processes and mechanisms associated with strategic ambidexterity in the context of internationalization	The study explores ambidexterity theory in emerging market firms, examining how they pursue international opportunities through strategic ambidexterity.	The study addresses the gap in understanding how firms balance exploration and exploitation during internationalization, focusing on how they adapt this balance in response to changing environmental conditions	The study shows that incremental internationalization begins with product exploitation and market exploration, while accelerated internationalization focuses on market exploration and exploitation, with firms sustaining strategic priorities

No	Author/Year	Title	Unit of Analysis	Method	Theory	Gap	Findings
							through ambidexterity, offering a dynamic perspective for emerging market firms
5	(Bendig et al., 2018)	Performance implications of cross-functional cooperation in new product development: the mediating role of organizational learning	Functional units within German companies in various industries	A survey, where data was collected from 331 German companies	Concept of cross-functional cooperation, which refers to the simultaneous occurrence of cooperation and competition across firm functions	Lack of insight into how competitive advantage emerges under conditions of cross-functional cooperation and the contingencies that affect the cooperation-performance relationship	The study affirms that organizational learning mediates the link between cross-functional cooperation and firm performance, with power sharing influencing this relationship
6	(Hsu & Fang, 2009)	Intellectual capital and new product development performance: The mediating role of organizational learning capability	Taiwanese IC design companies	Two-stage research design, including interviews and a research survey	Relationship between intellectual capital, organizational learning capability, and new product development performance	No studies on the link between intellectual capital and organizational learning, and the mediating role of organizational learning in intellectual capital and new product development performance	Research shows that human and relational capital positively influence new product development performance through organizational learning capability, with relational capital having the most significant impact in Taiwanese IC design companies, while

No	Author/Year	Title	Unit of Analysis	Method	Theory	Gap	Findings
							structural capital has a minor negative effect
7	(Che et al., 2023)	Digital Transformation Drives Product Quality Improvement: An Organizational Transparency Perspective	Firms	Empirical analysis	Organizational transparency theory and organizational information processing theory	The study aims to fill the gap in the literature by exploring the benefits of collaboration in quality activities and how it enhances product quality from the perspective of organizational transparency theory	Collaboration in quality activities improves product quality through enhanced information disclosure, and its impact varies depending on the level of quality culture and top management involvement, with partial collaboration generally leading to better quality than full collaboration
8	(Cooper & Kleinschmidt, 1988)	Resource Allocation in the New Product Process	Over 200 industrial new product projects	Extensive study and analysis	The study aimed to address the gap in understanding resource allocation in the new product process	The question of resource allocation in the new product process had not been extensively addressed before the study	The study revealed that successful projects had more resources (both money and manpower) allocated to marketing activities compared to failures
9	(Blais et al., 2023)	Performance measurement in new product development	Small and medium	Qualitative research approach through multiple case studies	Resource-based view, dynamic capabilities, situation	Limited studies on performance measurement in new product	The activities and indicators used in the NPD process are adapted to the context

No	Author/Year	Title	Unit of Analysis	Method	Theory	Gap	Findings
		projects: findings from successful small and medium enterprises	enterprises (SMEs)		awareness, and contingency theory	development projects in SMEs	of each SME, ensuring better management of new product development projects and reducing failure rates. The research identified common stages and activities in the NPD process of successful SMEs and highlighted the indicators used by SMEs to manage the performance of their NPD projects
10	(Kim, 2023)	Customer Experience Design for Smart Product-Service Systems Based on the Iterations of Experience–Evaluate–Engage Using Customer Experience Data	The article addresses the design framework for customer experience data in smart product-service systems and the evolution of customer experiences through the iterations of	The article discusses the Context-Based Activity Modeling (CBAM) method and the Context-specific Experience Sampling and Analysis (CESA) method for the acquisition and accumulation of customer experience data	The paper introduces the framework of customer experience data and discusses the design reasoning model, visual thinking iterations, and the concept of zero-party data	The article identifies challenges related to determining the types of customer data needed for customer experience design, as well as how to effectively acquire them, highlighting the need to establish a framework for	The findings highlight a framework for customer experience data, showcase smart product-service system cases, and discuss the importance of zero-party data and context-driven design in enhancing customer experiences during the digital transformation era.

No	Author/Year	Title	Unit of Analysis	Method	Theory	Gap	Findings
			experience-evaluate-engage			customer experience data	
11	(Lagrosen, 2005)	Customer involvement in new product development: A relationship marketing perspective	The study focuses on new product development processes in industrial manufacturing companies	Qualitative, multiple case study based on in-depth interviews in three small companies and three large multinational enterprises	Relationship marketing perspective is used as the theoretical basis for analyzing customer involvement in new product development	The study aims to create an increased understanding of new product development processes concerning customer involvement, specifically focusing on the phases of the process in which customers are involved and in what way they are involved	The findings emphasize the significance of cross-functional teams and customer participation in new product development. The study suggests a framework for managing customer involvement at various relationship levels and underscores the underutilization of formal methods, recommending their promotion based on their value

No	Author/Year	Title	Unit of Analysis	Method	Theory	Gap	Findings
12	(Djamasbi et al., 2014)	Designing for Success: Creating Business Value with Mobile User Experience (UX)	The study focuses on the user experience of an actual e-commerce website before and after it was optimized for mobile devices	The study employed two user studies to monitor mobile experience changes, utilized web analytics to track behavior changes post-website optimization for mobile devices, and assessed participants' subjective experiences using the System Usability Scale (SUS).	The study addresses the importance of mobile optimization in improving the user experience of a mobile website and looks at user experience from a business point of view	The study underscores the importance of user experience research in both theory and practice. It emphasizes the necessity for additional research to enhance the generalizability of the findings	The findings indicate that optimized websites can significantly enhance a company's ROI. Google Analytics revealed increased Unique Page Views, reduced Bounce Rate, and higher sales following mobile optimization.
13	(Ali, 2003)	Investigating the Impact of Cross-Cultural on CRM Implementation: A Comparative Study	The impact of cross-cultural factors on CRM implementation in multinational organizations	Qualitative approach using a comparative case study	Draws concepts from structuration theory to develop a theoretical basis for analysis	Addresses the lack of literature on the impact of cross-cultural factors on CRM implementation in multinational organizations	The findings identify cultural factors crucial for successful CRM project implementation, emphasizing the significance of CRM system characteristics, particularly in training services. The study offers prescriptive guidelines for managers implementing CRM systems in

No	Author/Year	Title	Unit of Analysis	Method	Theory	Gap	Findings
							multinational environments
14	(Azzine Shiratori et al., 2021)	The customer journey in a product-service system business model	The study focuses on the customer journey within a product-service system (PSS) business model, specifically examining the interaction between a gas distributor company and its customers	The study utilized a case study approach, conducting interviews with the PSS company and three different customers to compare the planned customer journey with the actual customer journey	The study aims to link the literature from PSS and customers' journey map, exploring how the customer journey can support PSS and contribute to both PSSs and customer journey literature	The study addresses the lack of theoretical content in the literature about the application of customers' journey in a PSS, as well as the absence of case studies in this area	The study pinpointed touchpoints to streamline efforts in the customer journey, contributing to literature and practice by illustrating continuous company-customer interaction, identifying pain points, and offering insights to enhance the customer experience in a Product-Service System (PSS)

Examining the research gaps identified by prior scholars in the field of new product development, my findings have not only addressed but also resolved these gaps, thereby paving the way for innovation and success in the realm of new product development.

Now, let's pinpoint research deficiencies within this context by addressing the designated gaps:

1. Rapid Technological Change:

Research Gap: While the research theory underscores the significance of harmonizing suppliers, manufacturers, and distributors, it does not explicitly address the ramifications of rapid technological advancements on these collaborative endeavours. The beverage industry is profoundly affected by technological progress, which can substantially impact the functioning of supply chain and distribution processes.

2. Continuous Learning:

Research Gap: The research theory discusses the optimization of supply chain processes but does not distinctly emphasize the necessity for perpetual learning and adaptability within supply chain and distribution teams. Given the continually evolving nature of the beverage industry, there is a pronounced need for ongoing learning and adaptation.

3. Cross-functional Teams:

Research Gap: While the theory underscores the imperative of integration within the supply chain, it does not extensively address the pivotal role played by

cross-functional teams in facilitating this integration. Cross-functional teams are instrumental in bridging gaps and enhancing coordination across the supply chain.

4. Regulatory and Legal Constraints:

Research Gap: Although the research theory acknowledges the critical importance of maintaining regulatory compliance, it does not delve into the specific complexities and restrictions posed by diverse legal requirements and regulations in various geographical areas. This gap is particularly salient, considering that beverage products often confront stringent regulatory oversight.

Addressing these research gaps would substantially enrich the comprehensive understanding of how factors such as rapid technological change, regulatory and legal constraints, continuous learning, and cross-functional teams affect the application of supply chain and distribution theory in the beverage industry. Therefore, researchers should delve into these areas to better optimize the processes associated with new product development, ensuring they remain adaptable, compliant, and efficient in the context of a dynamic industry landscape.

1.2 Research Authenticity

Studying new product development in the beverage industry, focusing on Sierra Leone Brewery, has several key benefits. The beverage sector, known for its wide variety of drinks, offers an excellent opportunity for thorough research. This industry includes both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, allowing for a detailed exploration that caters to diverse consumer preferences.

The beverage industry operates in a dynamic market shaped by consumer trends, cultural influences, and changing market demands. Analyzing Sierra Leone Brewery provides valuable insights into how the beverage industry adapts to these dynamic forces, especially in the context of Sierra Leone being an emerging market. This unique perspective allows for evaluating strategies and innovations tailored for growing economies.

Sierra Leone Brewery, operating within a specific cultural context, provides an excellent chance to study how cultural factors impact product development, marketing, and consumer behaviour. This understanding is crucial for global business studies, emphasizing the need to align products with local values.

Moreover, the beverage industry, including Sierra Leone Brewery, has significant socioeconomic impacts, such as employment and contributions to local economies. Researching Sierra Leone Brewery helps assess the company's role in the community and its broader impact on the local economy.

In the era of heightened sustainability awareness, studying a beverage industry company sheds light on how they approach sustainability in product development, packaging, and overall business operations. This reflects the industry's responsiveness to contemporary consumer concerns.

Analyzing Sierra Leone Brewery also provides insights into the competitive landscape of the beverage industry, understanding how companies differentiate themselves, handle competition, and aim for market leadership.

Furthermore, the beverage industry, subject to various regulations, offers an opportunity to explore how companies like Sierra Leone Brewery navigate and

comply with regulatory challenges, providing a nuanced understanding of the industry's regulatory landscape.

The industry's focus on innovation and technology is another crucial aspect. Sierra Leone Brewery, as a representative case, allows for exploring how technology and innovation play pivotal roles in developing and marketing new products.

Finally, Sierra Leone Brewery's operation within a specific country provides a dual perspective essential for new product development. Understanding the balance between global market trends and local consumer preferences is vital for creating successful strategies.

In summary, Sierra Leone Brewery, within the broader beverage industry, is a rich subject for studying new product development. This choice offers a holistic understanding of business strategies, market dynamics, and the interplay of cultural and socioeconomic factors in the industry

In contrast, the previous studies referenced, cover a wide range of theories and concepts, exploring theoretical frameworks and models that could be applied across industries. While comprehensive and diverse, it doesn't dive deeply into a specific industry context. The authenticity of these studies lies in their theoretical foundation, drawing from concepts such as lean principles, organizational structures, customer value propositions, ambidexterity, and more, aiming to understand broad principles and their application in different settings.

The research studied at Sierra Leone Brewery Limited provides tangible insights that directly impact decision-making and strategies within the brewery and

potentially the broader brewing industry. On the other hand, the previous studies offer conceptual frameworks that can be adapted and applied across different industries and organizational contexts. Both approaches have authenticity in their respective focuses: one in empirical analysis within a specific industry context, and the other in the theoretical exploration of principles with broader potential applications.

1.2.1 Study Contribution after the Research

The research conducted on the factors influencing new product development at Sierra Leone Brewery Limited, where variables like time, cost, price, promotion, packaging, competitors, and target market were examined, holds substantial potential for the brewing industry, scholars, and experts.

Certainly, here are the elements of the study's contributions following research on the factors influencing new product development at the Sierra Leone Brewery Limited:

Industry Advantages: The study's findings delivered valuable insights for the Brewing Industry, particularly in the context of optimizing new product development processes. Sierra Leone Brewery Limited leveraged these insights that address pressing challenges within the industry, such as understanding consumer preferences, navigating government regulations, and enhancing the training of marketing personnel. The industry enhances the quality and competitiveness of its products. These research-derived insights potentially serve as a model for other companies within the brewing sector, offering guidance on

how to refine their new product development strategies. This, in turn, also led to more effective resource allocation, improved cost management, and enhanced marketing practices, thus elevating the industry standards as a whole.

Scholarly Contributions: Academics and researchers specializing in fields related to product development, management, and marketing stand to benefit significantly from the empirical data and insights yielded by this study. This research also served as a valuable reference point for future academic inquiries, possibly paving the way for the creation of fresh theories and models within the domain of new product development. Scholars may use the study's findings as a springboard for further exploration of the intricate relationships among the identified variables, enabling hypothesis testing and the advancement of knowledge in their respective areas of study.

Expert Guidance: Industry experts and practitioners can harness the recommendations and insights derived from the study to refine their approaches to new product development. The identification of key factors affecting the process, encompassing aspects such as time, cost, pricing, promotion, packaging, competition, and the target market, provides professionals with pragmatic guidance to enhance their decision-making processes. Furthermore, the research underscores the importance of addressing issues concerning understanding consumer needs, compliance with government regulations, and the enhancement of marketing personnel training. These insights present experts with a structured framework for managing common challenges within the brewing industry, potentially leading to more effective strategies and heightened product quality.

In conclusion, this study's contributions extend across multiple dimensions. It holds the potential to optimize new product development practices within the Brewing Industry, offers an invaluable reference point for scholars to explore and extend their research, and provides industry experts and practitioners with practical insights to enhance their strategies and decision-making. This comprehensive approach may lead to advancements and positive changes within the field of new product development at Sierra Leone Brewery Limited, with the potential to influence and elevate the entire brewing industry.

1.3 Research problems

The research problem holds significant importance for Sierra Leone Brewery Limited's product development, impacting the company's growth and survival in a competitive business environment. While new product development is crucial for the brewery industry's competitiveness, the company grapples with challenges in effectively managing key factors influencing the success of its initiatives.

Issues such as a limited understanding of consumer preferences, inefficient internal processes, and insufficient market research present hurdles to creating and launching innovative products that resonate with the target audience. These challenges may lead to missed market opportunities and potential competitive disadvantages for Sierra Leone Brewery Limited. Identifying and analyzing these influential factors is essential for developing optimized strategies and frameworks that can elevate the company's competitive position.

Furthermore, the prevalent allocation of organizational resources to insufficiently researched product ideas in Sierra Leone underscores the urgency of addressing these challenges. Conducting thorough research becomes imperative to avoid outright product failures or marginal successes. Through a comprehensive understanding and resolution of these issues, Sierra Leone Brewery Limited can align its product development efforts with market expectations, maximizing the benefits offered to consumers and reinforcing its competitive position in the market.

1.4 Research Questions

Considering the challenges highlighted in the research, the study has formulated specific research questions to investigate the factors influencing new product development at the Sierra Leone Brewery Limited. These inquiries aim to address the intricacies and hurdles identified earlier, providing a structured framework for understanding the dynamics of new product development within the context of the brewery. The research questions serve as a guide for exploring and gaining insights into the various aspects that impact the successful initiation and execution of new product development initiatives within the Sierra Leone Brewery Limited.

1. How do consumer preferences, market trends, technology, and competition interact to shape the success of new product development at Sierra Leone Brewery Limited?

2. How do internal processes, resource allocation, collaboration, and decision-making at Sierra Leone Brewery Limited contribute to effective new product development, and which specific organizational capabilities foster successful innovation?
3. What challenges does Sierra Leone Brewery Limited face in implementing new product development strategies due to limited resources, regulatory constraints, and market dynamics, and how do these challenges influence customer choices and preferences for new products?
4. How can Sierra Leone Brewery Limited enhance its new product development process for greater effectiveness and competitiveness, considering influencing factors and challenges?

1.5 Research objectives

Based on the presented problem statement, the research objectives for the study on factors affecting new product development at the Sierra Leone Brewery Limited are as follows:

1. To Identify and examine the key factors that influence the process of new product development at the Sierra Leone Brewery Limited, considering both internal and external factors such as consumer preferences, market trends, technological advancements, and competitive landscape.
2. To analyze internal processes and organizational capabilities that contribute to effective new product development, such as resource allocation, collaboration, and decision-making in Sierra Leone Brewery Limited.

3. To examine challenges and barriers in implementing new product development strategies, including limited resources, regulations, and market dynamics. To study customer choice and preferences for new product development.
4. To get recommendations and strategies to enhance the new product development process, taking into account the identified factors and challenges at Sierra Leone Brewery Limited.

These research objectives will guide the study in exploring and understanding the factors that influence new product development at Sierra Leone Brewery Limited and provide valuable insights for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of their product innovation efforts.

1.6 Significance of the Research

The research findings have significant implications for the beverage industry and the general population by showcasing the potential of new product development to generate business opportunities and enhance existing enterprises, leading to increased profitability and productivity.

In the fast-changing and highly competitive beverage industry creating new products is essential for success in the case of Sierra Leone Brewery Limited (SLBL), a notable producer of both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, NPD emerges as a pivotal driver for preserving market presence and fostering growth. This research endeavour, in "Factors Affecting New Product Development in the SLBL Industry," transcends a mere examination of the industry dynamics; it

represents the critical exploration into the core of innovation and prosperity for SLBL. The research takes a deep dive into the details and variables shaping the NPD process, serving as an indispensable compass guiding the company's future direction. These research variables encompass critical aspects such as time, cost, promotion, packaging, competitors, price, product name, target market, and new product testing, ensuring that the findings are comprehensive and practically applicable.

Certainly, here is a concise list of the significance of the research:

1. **Sustaining Competitiveness:** In a marketplace defined by shifting consumer preferences and intense competition, NPD proves indispensable for SLBL's enduring triumph. A grasp of the factors influencing NPD empowers the company to sustain innovation and uphold its competitive edge.
2. **Market Relevance:** The rapid evolution of consumer tastes necessitates adaptability for staying pertinent. This research equips SLBL to craft products that resonate with the market, fostering lasting customer loyalty and financial viability.
3. **Resource Optimization:** Insights from this research illuminate the path to resource allocation efficiency. By understanding the impact of discussed variables like time and cost on NPD, SLBL optimized resource allocation for maximum efficiency and return on investment.

4. **Regulatory Compliance:** A profound comprehension of the government regulations and their influence on NPD streamlines compliance efforts, diminishing risks and averting costly delays.
5. **Enhanced Marketing Strategies:** Illumination of variables like promotion, packaging, and product name empowers SLBL to craft targeted and compelling marketing strategies, instrumental for product success.
6. **Consumer-Centric Approach:** Resolving the challenge of not understanding consumer needs is paramount. This research empowers SLBL to align its NPD initiatives with consumer desires, paving the way for consumer-focused product development.
7. **Employee Training and Development:** Insufficient training may thwart innovation and NPD. This research underscores the importance of comprehensive training programs, ensuring preparedness for all personnel involved in NPD, including marketing teams.
8. **Efficient Supply Chain:** Harnessing the principles of supply chain distribution theory elevates SLBL's operational efficiency. Effective logistics and distribution are pivotal in ensuring new products are accessible when and where consumers require them.

In conclusion, this research carries profound significance for SLBL, offering a well-lit path to pioneering NPD excellence. By scrutinizing the factors shaping NPD, SLBL becomes better equipped to innovate, respond to market shifts, allocate resources judiciously, uphold regulatory compliance, refine marketing strategies, and deliver consumer-centric

products. This outcome transcends academia, serving as a strategic guide that empowers SLBL to adeptly navigate the intricate landscape of NPD within the dynamic and fiercely competitive beverage market.

1.7 Theories used by Previous Studies

The study comprehensively investigates diverse research theories covering organizational strategies, market dynamics, and performance across various contexts. It explores clusters of theories, including lean principles and fuzzy logic for new product development uncertainties, emphasizing the impact of organizational structures on cross-functional teams. Other clusters delve into areas like customer value propositions, adaptive selling, ambidexterity theory, and cross-functional cooperation. The research also examines the interplay between intellectual capital, organizational learning, and new product development performance, aiming to bridge knowledge gaps in resource allocation using theories from resource-based views, dynamic capabilities, situation awareness, and contingency theory.

In summary, the research spans a wide range of topics, addressing issues in new product development, organizational dynamics, sales strategies, and global market entry. It explores concepts such as lean principles, organizational structures, customer value propositions, ambidexterity, cross-functional cooperation, intellectual capital, and organizational learning. Additionally, the study investigates theories on organizational transparency and information

processing, aiming to clarify complexities in resource allocation within the new product development process.

The article by Yong Se Kim, titled "Customer Experience Design for Smart Product-Service Systems," focuses on the Iterations of Experience–Evaluate–Engage Using Customer Experience Data. It concentrates on the design framework for customer experience data in smart product-service systems, utilizing Context-Based Activity Modeling (CBAM) and Context-specific Experience Sampling and Analysis (CESA) methods. The theoretical framework includes the design reasoning model, visual thinking iterations, and the concept of zero-party data. The study identifies gaps in determining customer data types for effective design and acquisition. The findings highlight a comprehensive framework for customer experience data, emphasizing the significance of zero-party data and context-driven design in enhancing customer experiences during the digital transformation era.

Previous study on customer involvement in new product development uses a qualitative, multiple-case study approach in industrial manufacturing companies. Grounded in a relationship marketing perspective, the study underscores the importance of cross-functional teams and customer participation in new product development. Lagrosen proposes a framework for managing customer involvement, highlighting the underutilization of formal methods, and suggesting their promotion based on their value in optimizing the new product development process.

The collaborative work of other study assesses changes in mobile experience before and after optimization for mobile devices using two user studies, web analytics, and the System Usability Scale (SUS). It emphasizes the significance of mobile optimization for enhancing user experience from a business standpoint. Identifying a research gap, the study underscores the importance of user experience research in both theory and practice, advocating for further research to improve generalizability. Key findings reveal that optimized websites significantly boost a company's ROI, evident in increased Unique Page Views, reduced Bounce Rate, and higher sales documented through Google Analytics after mobile optimization.

Other study investigates the impact of cross-cultural factors on CRM implementation in multinational organizations using a qualitative approach with a comparative case study and drawing on structuration theory. The study explores the impact of cross-cultural factors on CRM implementation, emphasizing the significance of cultural factors for successful CRM project implementation, especially in training services. The study concludes by offering prescriptive guidelines for managers involved in implementing CRM systems in multinational environments.

Previous study also focuses on the customer journey within a product-service system (PSS) business model. Using a case study approach, the study compares planned and actual customer journeys, aiming to bridge the literature from PSS and customers' journey maps. Addressing a literature gap, the study provides theoretical content on the application of customers' journeys in a PSS and introduces case studies in this domain. The findings identify touchpoints for

customer journey improvement, contributing to both literature and practice by illustrating the continuous interaction between the company and the customer, pinpointing customers' pain points, and offering insights for improving the customer experience within a PSS.

1.8 Theory used for this Research on Factors Affecting New Product

Development

In the realm of new product development (NPD) within the beverage industry, the incorporation of supply chain management (SCM) grand theory has been used and unfolds as a systematic and strategic approach to pivotal elements that significantly influence the triumphant introduction of new products. The supply chain conjures up images of products or supplies moving from suppliers to manufacturers to distributors to retailers to customers along a chain. This is certainly part of the supply chain, but it is also important to visualize information, funds, and product flows along both directions of this chain (Chopra, 2007). A push/pull view of the supply chain is very useful when considering strategic decisions relating to supply chain design. The goal is to identify an appropriate push/pull boundary such that the supply chain can match supply and demand effectively.

In the beverage industry, where innovation through new product development (NPD) is pivotal for maintaining competitiveness and meeting evolving consumer demands, a finely tuned Supply Chain Management (SCM) strategy is essential. This tailored approach must address specific factors influencing the introduction

of innovative products. Key considerations for SCM in the beverage industry encompass strategic raw material sourcing and stringent quality control to maintain ingredient consistency, especially when introducing novel flavours. Establishing strong collaborations with suppliers is crucial for timely deliveries and adaptation to changing product specifications during NPD. Accurate demand forecasting, accounting for seasonal variations and consumer trends, allows for optimized inventory levels and production schedules. The optimization of distribution networks ensures efficient delivery of new products to retailers and consumers, considering potential requirements for specialized transportation. SCM must also account for packaging requirements specific to innovative beverage products, incorporating sustainable materials and aligning with environmental and regulatory considerations. Regulatory compliance, encompassing labelling, health claims, and safety standards, is paramount to ensure that new products meet legal and industry requirements. Emphasizing speed to market, SCM should streamline processes, minimize production lead times, and optimize logistics to swiftly respond to changing consumer preferences. The growing trend of customization in the beverage industry necessitates SCM flexibility in production processes to accommodate personalized options. Prioritizing supply chain visibility is crucial for monitoring the movement of goods, identifying bottlenecks, and improving overall efficiency.

Furthermore, SCM should incorporate sustainable practices, including waste reduction, recycling initiatives, and responsible ingredient sourcing, aligning with consumer expectations and industry trends. In essence, a well-crafted SCM

strategy tailored to these factors is integral to the successful and sustainable introduction of new and innovative beverages to the market (Adekuajo et al., 2023).

Employed the pull processes scenario in the beverage industry, where the customer demand is known signifies a supply chain strategy that directly responds to the actual customer demand signals. This approach holds several implications for factors affecting new product development in the industry. Pull processes prioritize the customer-centric approach, aligning production and distribution with real-time data on the customer orders or consumption signals. This not only reduces the risk of overproduction and excess inventory but also contributes to lower holding costs and minimizes the threat of product obsolescence. Furthermore, the approach enhances responsiveness to dynamic market conditions, allowing for just-in-time manufacturing, minimizing lead times, and promoting adaptability to market dynamics. Efficient resource utilization is achieved by producing items based on confirmed customer demand and optimizing the raw materials, production capacity, and overall resources. The pull processes enable a more customized and personalized approach to new product development, tailoring offerings to meet diverse preferences and potentially increasing customer satisfaction. Strategic inventory management is also facilitated by knowing the customer demand, allowing the industry to stock appropriate levels of materials and finished goods, reducing excess inventory while ensuring the availability of popular products.

New product development has become significantly important for the manufacturing industries. It's an important factor in driving the success or failure of a company where the growth and development of the company solely depend on its ability to introduce a new product. Therefore, new product development is the criterion that cannot be questioned by the company in maintaining a competitive advantage. The modern business environment nowadays is focused on the development and integration of the supply chain.

Supply Chain has become an important topic that emphasizes variables that might affect the company and new product development. This study aims to determine the relationship between some of the supply chain variables that might affect the growth of new product development for the manufacturing industries. Numerous crucial elements within the supply chain have played a significant role in fostering the success of new product development. (Bartier, 2015).

1.8.1 Theoretical Benefit for this Research

The theoretical advantages of this research are derived from its potential to enhance understanding of how the dynamics of supply chain and distribution influence the process of developing new beverage products. Through the examination of these variables: time, price, packaging, new product testing, competitors, market targeting, promotion, and product naming,

The research unlocked several benefits during this study:

- Streamlining the Supply Chain: Recognizing opportunities to simplify the supply chain, expedite time-to-market, and curtail costs.

- **Maximizing Profitability:** Crafting pricing strategies that strike a balance between profit maximization and competitive positioning.
- **Elevating Product Attractiveness:** Elevating packaging and branding to captivate and retain customer interest.
- **Proactively Mitigating Risks:** Grasping and preemptively countering competitive threats and navigating regulatory challenges.
- **Enhancing Market Penetration:** Precisely targeting and effectively engaging the designated market segment.

In Conclusion, this research revolves around the application of supply chain and distribution theory to comprehend the intricate dynamics of new product development within the beverage industry. It discerns the critical factors influencing success and offers insights into the optimization of supply chain processes, ensuring regulatory compliance, and the training of personnel to gain a competitive edge in the marketplace. By scrutinizing these elements, the research aims to augment the overall efficiency and effectiveness of new product development in the beverage sector.

1.8.2 Practical benefits

Understanding and effectively managing the factors that affect new product development provides several practical benefits for the industry:

- **Increased Innovation:** By comprehending the factors that influence new product development, the industry fosters a culture of innovation and

generates creative ideas for new products that meet customer needs and stand out in the market.

- **Improved Success Rate:** Knowledge of these factors enhances the chances of launching successful products by considering market demand, competition, consumer acceptance, pricing, and distribution channels, leading to better financial outcomes.
- **Efficient Resource Allocation:** Understanding these factors helps the industry allocate its resources effectively, focusing investments on areas that have the greatest impact on new product success, optimizing efforts, and minimizing waste.
- **Competitive Advantage:** Effective management of these factors enables the industry to gain a competitive edge by introducing innovative products ahead of competitors, capturing market opportunities, and building a reputation for innovation and brand differentiation.
- **Adaptation to Market Changes:** Knowledge of these factors allows the industry to adapt to evolving market conditions by monitoring changing consumer preferences, emerging technologies, regulations, and competition, enabling it to proactively adjust its strategies and stay ahead.
- **Increased Customer Satisfaction:** Understanding these factors helps the industry develop products that better meet customer needs, leading to higher customer satisfaction, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth.

To encapsulate, a pragmatic comprehension of the variables influencing new product development has equipped the organization to make knowledgeable

choices, foster innovation, optimize resource allocation, secure a competitive edge, respond to market dynamics, and produce products that meet customer anticipations. These benefits ultimately contribute to improved financial performance and long-term business success.

1.9 Literature Review

The literature review on new product development (NPD) highlights the significance of launching fresh products in the market to sustain business prosperity. It underscores how NPD contributes to the company's growth, impacts profit performance, and plays a crucial role in business planning (N. Bhuiyan, 2011).

New product development (NPD) is commonly acknowledged as a fundamental approach to product strategy that involves significant risks and is considered one of the most demanding aspects of staying competitive in the business world (Ying et al., 2018). New product development plays a vital role in the success and growth of companies, particularly in the dynamic and competitive beverage industry.

The literature review for the thesis research on factors affecting new product development in the beverage industry emphasizes the use of supply chain management. This theoretical framework underscores the seamless integration of suppliers, manufacturers, and distributors to optimize operations and reduce costs. It particularly highlights the importance of optimizing distribution networks and logistics for efficient product delivery to diverse markets. The integration of

blockchain technology in the supply chain processes, including raw material involvement, processing, and customer transportation, is explored for enhancing resource efficiency. This approach is compared to previous theories that cover a broad spectrum of organizational tactics, market fluctuations, and performance, including lean principles, fuzzy logic, cross-functional teams, customer value propositions, ambidexterity theory, cross-functional competition, intellectual capital, organizational learning, transparency, and information processing.

In contrast, the previous studies referenced, cover a wide range of theories and concepts, exploring theoretical frameworks and models that could be applied across industries. While comprehensive and diverse, it doesn't dive deeply into a specific industry context.

Examining the thorough investigation of a wide range of research theories encompassing strategies within organizations, changes in market dynamics, and performance across various situations. The study delves into clusters of theories, including lean principles and fuzzy logic for addressing uncertainties in new product development, highlighting the influence of organizational structures on cross-functional team integration. Another cluster explores customer value propositions, adaptive selling in B2B sales, ambidexterity theory, and cross-functional competition. The research also investigates the interplay between intellectual capital, organizational learning capabilities, and new product development performance. The broader context aims to bridge knowledge gaps in resource allocation by integrating theories from a resource-based view, dynamic capabilities, situation awareness, and contingency theory.

The research theories cover a broad spectrum, addressing issues related to new product development, organizational dynamics, sales strategies, and global market entry. Concepts such as lean principles, organizational structures, customer value propositions, ambidexterity, cross-functional cooperation, intellectual capital, and organizational learning are explored. The study also delves into theories on organizational transparency and information processing, aiming to elucidate the complexities of resource allocation within the new product development process.

The article by other research titled "Customer Experience Design for Smart Product-Service Systems, focused on the Iterations of Experience–Evaluate–Engage Using Customer Experience Data." The study focuses on the design framework for customer experience data in smart product-service systems, utilizing Context-Based Activity Modeling (CBAM) and Context-specific Experience Sampling and Analysis (CESA) methods. The theoretical framework includes the design reasoning model, visual thinking iterations, and the concept of zero-party data. The study identifies gaps in determining customer data types for effective design and acquisition. The findings highlight a comprehensive framework for customer experience data, emphasizing the significance of zero-party data and context-driven design in enhancing customer experiences during the digital transformation era.

The study on customer involvement in new product development is discussed. The qualitative, multiple case study focuses on industrial manufacturing companies, employing in-depth interviews grounded in a relationship marketing perspective. The study emphasizes the importance of cross-functional teams and

customer participation in new product development. Lagrosen proposes a framework for managing customer involvement and highlights the underutilization of formal methods, suggesting their promotion based on their value in optimizing the new product development process.

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Other studies investigate the impact of cross-cultural factors on CRM implementation in multinational organizations. Utilizing a qualitative approach with a comparative case study and drawing on structuration theory, the study explores the impact of cross-cultural factors on CRM implementation. The findings underscore the significance of cultural factors for successful CRM project implementation, emphasizing the importance of CRM system characteristics, especially in training services. The study concludes by offering prescriptive guidelines for managers involved in implementing CRM systems in multinational environments.

Other research focuses on the customer journey within a product-service system (PSS) business model. Using a case study approach, the study compares planned and actual customer journeys, aiming to bridge the literature from PSS and customers' journey maps. Addressing a gap in the literature, the study provides theoretical content on the application of customers' journeys in a PSS and introduces case studies in this domain. The findings identify touchpoints for customer journey improvement, contributing to both literature and practice by illustrating the continuous interaction between the company and the customer, pinpointing customers' pain points, and offering insights for improving the customer experience within a PSS.

The comprehensive approach aims to bridge knowledge gaps in resource allocation within the new product development process by integrating insights from various theories, such as the resource-based view, dynamic capabilities, situation awareness, and contingency theory. In summary, the literature review addresses a wide range of domains, providing insights into the complexities of new product development, organizational dynamics, sales strategies, and global market entry.

The literature review emphasizes the importance of introducing new products to maintain business success, showing how new product development contributes to company growth, affects profitability, and plays a vital role in business strategy.

NPD literature review underscores the importance of launching new products for business success, demonstrating how it drives company growth, affects profitability, and plays a vital role in business planning. NPD is a fundamental

strategy, especially in the dynamic and competitive beverage industry, where consumer preferences constantly change. For Sierra Leone Brewery Limited (SLBL), a producer of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, NPD is essential for competitiveness and meeting consumer demands.

This literature review delves into the historical evolution of New Product Development (NPD), the theoretical framework guiding it, the key variables shaping the process, common research challenges, success stories, encountered difficulties, and the roles of a consumer-centric approach, regulatory compliance, training and development, and resource allocation in NPD.

The historical overview of NPD in the beverage industry highlights the industry's adaptation to changing consumer preferences and the importance of this historical context in understanding NPD's role today. The theoretical framework introduces the concept of efficient supply chain distribution as crucial for successful NPD. Key variables, such as time, cost, promotion, packaging, competition, pricing, product name, target market, and new product testing, are individually examined to reveal their impact on NPD. Common research problems, including the lack of consumer research, regulatory awareness, training programs, and well-trained marketing personnel, are addressed. Success stories and case studies illustrate contributing factors to NPD achievements, while challenges and failures help understand underlying causes. The review also explores the adoption of a consumer-centric approach, regulatory compliance, training, and development in NPD, emphasizing their importance. Finally, resource allocation in NPD is examined, highlighting its significance for efficient and cost-effective product

development. Effective resource allocation, cross-functional collaboration, and streamlined decision-making frameworks significantly impact the development process.

In conclusion, the literature review provides a recap of the key findings, highlighting common themes, best practices, and existing research gaps. This structured approach offers a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing NPD in the beverage industry and serves as a solid foundation for this research, particularly within the unique context of SLBL.

1.10 Research Framework

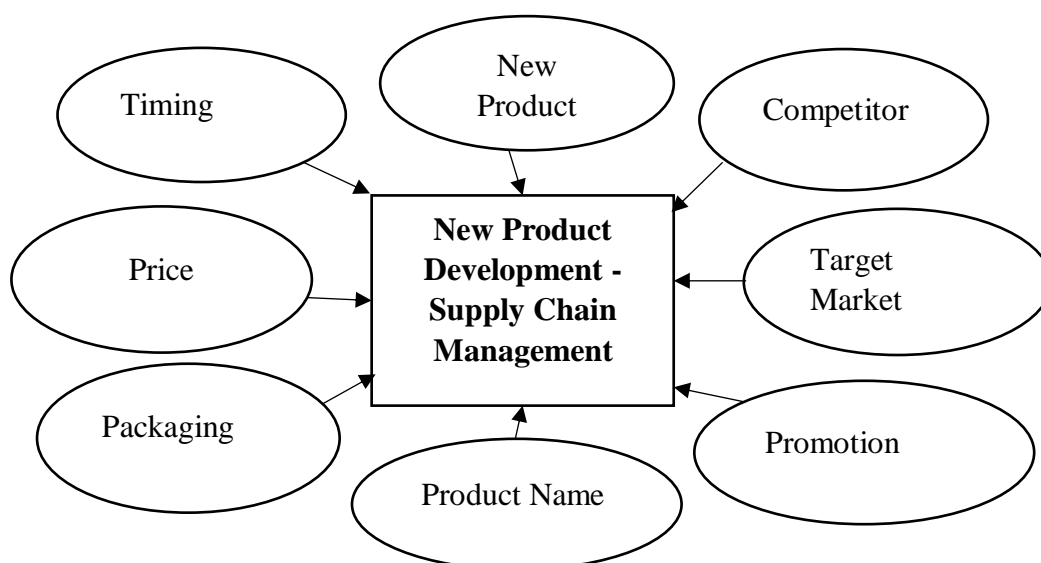


Figure 1.1 Research Framework Model

The research framework model for the beverage industry underscores the strategic importance of supply chain management in new product development. It positions supply chain decisions as crucial components aligning with broader business goals. The model highlights the interconnectedness of factors,

emphasizing the need for a holistic approach to decision-making, where choices in one area can impact others. Agility in adapting supply chain strategies is emphasized, especially in a rapidly changing industry. The collective contribution of factors, such as target market considerations and effective promotion, aims to enhance market positioning and overall success. A customer-centric focus is emphasized, recognizing the significance of aligning the supply chain with consumer preferences. Timely decision-making is crucial in the fast-paced beverage industry, considering seasonal demand and market trends. Understanding the competitive landscape is stressed, allowing companies to position their products effectively.

Lastly, the model advocates for an integrated approach, promoting collaboration among cross-functional teams for a cohesive supply chain strategy. In essence, the model serves as a practical guide, highlighting the importance of integration, adaptability, and a customer-centric focus for successful new product launches in the beverage industry.

Arrows connecting the central box ("New Product Development - Supply Chain Management") to the surrounding factor boxes indicate the influence and impact of these factors on the supply chain management aspects of new product development. The arrows also represent the interconnections and interdependencies among the different factors. This visual representation showcases how these factors interact and affect the supply chain and distribution of a new product. It illustrates the relationships and dependencies among these factors and emphasizes their significance in successfully launching and distributing the new product to the target

market. These factors collectively contribute to the successful development and implementation of a new product by considering various aspects of supply chain management, including timing, pricing, packaging, promotion, target market, competition, and product testing. By considering these factors, the industry can enhance its new product's market positioning, customer appeal, and overall success.

1.11 Conceptual and Operational Definition/Pull System in Supply Chain Management

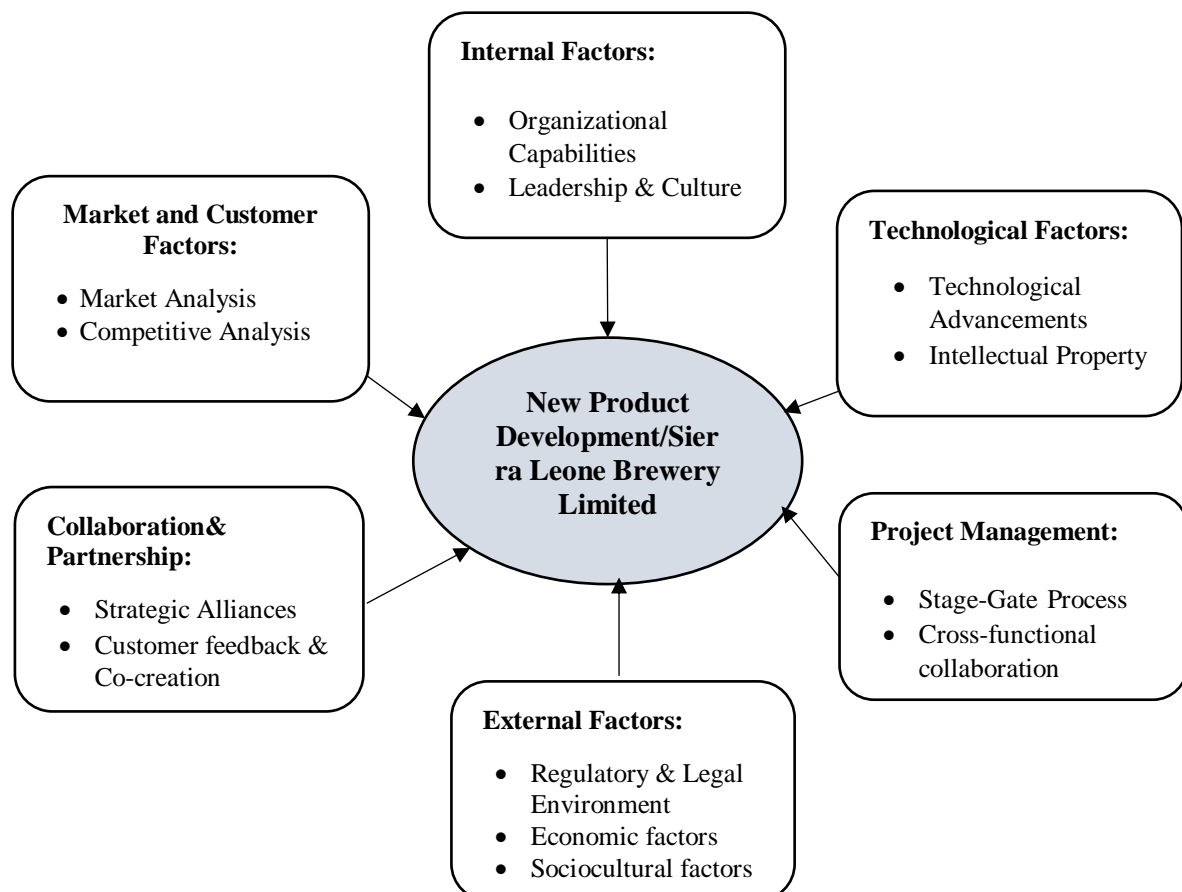


Figure 1.2 Conceptual Framework for Factors Affecting New Product Development

The pull system within supply chain management functions as a responsive method for production, aligning operations with real-time demand rather than relying on predictive forecasts. In the specific context of Sierra Leone Brewery

Limited (SLBL) and its new product development (NPD) procedures, the conceptual and operational framework reveals the complexities of factors that impact the introduction and launch of both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.

Looking at this Conceptual framework of Pull System in Supply Chain Management this system at SLBL for NPD ensures that the creation and production of beverage products directly respond to existing market demand. This strategy enhances supply chain adaptability and efficiency by avoiding the forced introduction of products based on predictions, aligning seamlessly with the dynamic nature of Sierra Leone's brewery industry. This operational framework highlights the interconnectedness and interdependence of various factors influencing SLBL's NPD process. Arrows extending from the central "New Product Development" box illustrate the directional impact of elements like market research, raw material sourcing, regulatory compliance, consumer preferences, competition, and internal capabilities. From the findings, the connections from "Market Research" to "New Product Development" showcase how market insights shape the features and direction of emerging products. Also, links between "Regulatory Compliance" and "New Product Development" underscore the critical role of adhering to legal and industry standards during the development phase.

This visual representation underscores the holistic and dynamic nature of NPD at SLBL, illustrating that factors are interconnected rather than isolated, forming a cohesive system conceptual framework illustrating factors influencing new product development offers an organized depiction of essential elements and their interconnections, encompassing the influential factors on NPD at SLBL:

1. Internal Elements:

- **Organizational Capabilities:** Resources, technological expertise, and financial strength, including robust R&D capabilities, play a vital role in shaping SLBL's innovation capacity. Looking at the Sierra Leone Brewery Limited (SLBL), there are no strong organizational capabilities, including robust resources, technological expertise, and financial strength, so they should try to invest in research and development (R&D) for new product innovation and also ensure that they have the necessary infrastructure and expertise to develop and produce new beverages in response to market demand.
- **Leadership and Culture:** The leadership and culture that supports innovation and risk-taking in the industry are also crucial. So the SLBL's leadership should foster a culture of experimentation and creativity, to encourage employees to generate and explore new ideas. This dynamic culture can lead to a higher success rate in introducing innovative products to the market.
- **Technological Considerations:**
Assessing and adopting new technologies is also crucial for the efficiency of the industry in the product development process. So the implementation of advanced brewing technologies like Automated Fermentation Control Systems with advanced software and sensor systems that can monitor and control fermentation parameters such as temperature and yeast activity in

real-time, ensuring precise control over the fermentation process for consistent alcohol content and flavour can really enhance production capabilities, reduce costs, and potentially lead to the creation of unique beverages. The use of Carbonation Control Systems for precision carbonation systems precisely to regulate the level of carbon dioxide in beverages like sodas and sparkling water, ensuring consistent fizziness could also be of help to the industry. Systems like Flavor and Aroma Encapsulation a microencapsulation technology protects volatile flavour and aroma compounds, preventing degradation during processing and storage. This technology is often used in non-alcoholic beverages to maintain the integrity of natural flavours and as a result, nice aromas for beverages would encapsulate the appetite of consumers.

2. External Factors:

- **Regulatory and Legal Environment:** Adhering to industry-specific regulations and intellectual property laws is also crucial. Compliance ensures that SLBL's new products meet legal standards and avoid potential legal challenges. By so doing, the industry should engage legal professionals by seeking legal advice from professionals experienced in the beverage industry to guide them through the regulatory landscape and also should be in consultation with lawyers specializing in beverage law to ensure that the beverage products are compliant with all relevant regulations.
- **Market and Customer Dynamics:**

Market Analysis: Conducting a thorough market analysis involves understanding market dynamics, customer needs, and preferences, especially the taste, and price of beverages that will suit their demand also the SLBL should use market research tools to gather real-time data on consumer trends, enabling them to tailor new products to meet current market demands.

Competitive Analysis: Actively monitoring and analyzing competitors' strengths and weaknesses is essential. By so doing this approach allows SLBL to identify gaps in the market, capitalize on competitors' weaknesses, and differentiate its new products effectively.

- **Economic Factors:** Evaluating economic conditions and market trends is crucial for assessing the viability of new products. SLBL needs to consider factors such as consumer purchasing power, inflation rates, and overall market stability. The industry should conduct thorough market research to understand consumer preferences, their behaviours in terms of certain drinks, and purchasing power, by analyzing demographic data, economic indicators, and inflation rates. The industry should also stay updated on market trends and changes in consumer behaviour that identify emerging trends that align with the economic conditions.
- **Sociocultural Factors:** The consideration of societal values, cultural norms, and social trends is also crucial for the industry. SLBL must tailor its new products to align with cultural preferences and social trends to enhance product acceptance and demand by conducting in-depth cultural

research to understand the values, norms, and traditions of the target audience, and also considering regional, ethnic, and demographic variations. Also, ensure that product development teams are culturally sensitive and well-informed about the preferences of the target market. The industry should engage with consumers on social media platforms to stay informed about emerging social trends and cultural shifts and should be using social media as a tool for cultural listening and participation, adapting marketing strategies based on real-time feedback and conversations.

3. Collaboration and Partnerships:

- **Strategic Alliances:** It's also crucial with collaborating partners, suppliers, and external experts to provide SLBL with additional resources and expertise. SLBL should be forming partnerships with local farmers for sorghum raw material sourcing or collaborating with research institutions for cutting-edge brewing techniques to enhance the innovation process.

4. Customer Feedback and Co-creation: Involving customers in the development process through surveys and user testing is practical. Actively seeking and incorporating customer feedback ensures that the new products align with market preferences, increasing the likelihood of successful market adoption

5. Project Management:

- **Stage-Gate Process:** Implementing a structured stage-gate process ensures efficient resource allocation. SLBL uses this approach to systematically assess and advance each stage of product development, aligning resources

with actual market demand at each gate. Implementing a stage-gate process allows the beverage industry to allocate resources efficiently by making informed decisions at each stage of the new product development cycle. It ensures that resources are directed toward projects with the highest potential for success while minimizing the risk of resource wastage on unsuccessful initiatives. Regular reviews and assessments at the gate checkpoints enable adaptive management and continuous improvement throughout the development process.

- **Cross-functional Collaboration:** Encouraging collaboration among different departments, such as Supply chain, marketing, operations, and finance, is vital. Cross-functional teams working together facilitate a holistic approach to NPD, ensuring that diverse perspectives contribute to the success of the product.

This conceptual and operational framework serves as a comprehensive guide for NPD stakeholders at SLBL, providing insights for strategic decision-making within the distinctive context of Sierra Leone Brewery Limited. It underscores the interconnected and dynamic nature of factors influencing the success of new beverage products in Sierra Leone's brewery industry.

1.12 Variable Measurements

Tabel 1. 2 Variable Measurements

Variables	Indicators	Items
Time	Time to Market (Wind & Mahajan, 1997)	Measure the duration from the initiation of the new product development process to its actual launch in the market.

Variables	Indicators	Items
		Evaluate the efficiency of the product development timeline and identify any delays or bottlenecks.
Price	Pricing Strategy (Rao et al., 2023)	Analyze the cost analysis, competitive pricing, and pricing elasticity of the new product. Assess the appropriateness of the pricing strategy in attracting customers while maintaining profitability.
Packaging	Packaging Design and Compliance (Olabode et al., 2023)	Evaluate the functionality, aesthetics, protection, and compliance with regulations of the packaging design. Assess if the packaging aligns with the brand image and effectively communicates the product's value.
Product Name	Brand Recognition (Ballantyne & Aitken, 2007)	Measure the effectiveness of the chosen product name in creating brand recognition and resonating with the target market. Assess if the name aligns with the product's positioning and differentiation.
Target Market	Market Segmentation (Rajagopal & Sanchez, 2005)	Identify and understand the specific market segment(s) the new product is targeting. Analyze customer demographics, psychographics, and behaviours to tailor marketing strategies and product features accordingly.
Competitor	Competitive Analysis (He et al., 2023)	Analyze competitors' strategies, strengths, weaknesses, and positioning in the market. Assess how the new product differentiates itself from competitors and identify opportunities for competitive advantages.

Variables	Indicators	Items
New Product Testing	Customer Feedback Incorporation (Koufteros et al., 2005)	Measure the time taken to gather feedback from customers and stakeholders during the testing phase. Assess how quickly customer insights and feedback are incorporated into the product development process to drive iterative improvements.

By utilizing these variable measurements and indicators, the industry can gain valuable insights into the effectiveness of its new product development efforts. This information can guide decision-making, identify areas for improvement, and enhance the overall success of new product introductions.

1.13 Research Methods

The research methodology was designed to delve into the obstacles faced by Sierra Leone Brewery Limited (SLBL) as a case study been chosen because the subject under examination is new, comparable research is challenging to find, and the study aims to enhance researcher comprehension of this particular phenomenon as a case study with qualitative data in developing new products and to identify effective strategies for improvement. The central focus of the study is to understand the various factors influencing the new product development process within SLBL. This investigation specifically incorporated insights into the development of both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. The approach adopted in this research facilitated a thorough examination of the challenges encountered in the new product development domain. It emphasized the individual perspectives and narratives within SLBL's beverage new product development processes. The aim was to comprehensively explore the experiences of individuals involved, considering their

viewpoints. By evaluating how these processes impact the market, the research sought to provide a nuanced understanding of the dynamics at play. Additionally, the study delved into customer preferences, aiming to uncover insights that contribute to a more informed approach to new product development strategies.

This method also allowed for the evaluation of market trends, market share, and customer response to new and improved products. Inadequate research or the management's failure to grasp consumer requirements impeded the company from providing products or services that resonate with its intended audience. Neglecting thorough market research and customer preferences led the businesses at risk of offering products that fall short of expectations and fail to address specific requirements. Neglecting compliance with government rules and regulations also led the industry to legal entanglements, financial penalties, or even the discontinuation of business activities.

Insufficient training programs within the company further hindered the company's progress. When employees lack the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfil their roles effectively, it results in underperformance and dissatisfaction among customers. Insufficient training for marketing staff in adapting to new products and emerging markets constrains a company's ability to venture into untapped areas and successfully market inventive offerings, thus hindering potential growth prospects. The industry should place research funding at the forefront, stay current with regulations, create thorough training programs, and offer ongoing education to their marketing teams.

1.13.1 Research type

Certainly, the phenomenological research approach has been applied to this study on factors affecting new product development in the Sierra Leone Brewery Limited (SLBL) industry, which produces both alcoholic and non-alcoholic products and incorporates variables such as time, cost, promotion, packaging, competitors, price, product name, target market, and new product testing. The Phenomena in this research have encompassed a wide range of focuses in terms of: **Social Aspect:** In the social dimension of this study, phenomenology involved the lived experiences and perceptions of various stakeholders within the SLBL industry, such as consumers, management, and marketing personnel. The consumers' social backgrounds and lifestyles impacted their preferences in factors affecting new product development at Sierra Leone Brewery Limited (SLBL) by influencing their choices regarding time, cost, promotion, packaging, competitors, price, product name, target market, and new product testing.

The management's social interactions and collaboration have a substantial impact on the development process, affecting the allocation of resources, decision-making, and coordination within the organization. Effective collaboration also led to more efficient product development, whereas challenges in collaboration have resulted in delays, increased costs, and potential issues with product quality and promotion strategies. Understanding and optimizing both consumer preferences and internal collaboration is critical for successful new product development in the SLBL industry

Economic Aspect: phenomenology in terms of economic aspects helped the economic implications of the variables discussed.

Pricing strategies employed by the industry have a profound impact on consumer choices and significantly influence market dynamics. When pricing strategies are effectively implemented, they sway consumer behaviour and shape the competitive landscape. Offering lower prices attracted price-sensitive consumers, while premium pricing also signals quality and exclusivity, attracting a different segment of the market. Dynamic pricing, discounts, bundling, or value-added pricing all elicited specific responses from consumers.

Financial constraints experienced within the industry played a crucial role in decision-making related to the development of new products. At the consumer level, limited budgets or financial concerns have made affordability a paramount consideration when choosing new products. Consumers may be more willing to try new products if they perceive them as cost-effective or if discounts and financing options are available. Financial constraints within the industry affected resource allocation for product development leading to decisions about whether to invest in innovation, streamline costs, or explore partnerships for financing.

Understanding the intricate interplay between pricing strategies, consumer choices, market dynamics, and financial constraints is essential for shaping successful new product development strategies. It involves a delicate balance of catering to consumer needs while ensuring sustainable financial viability in a competitive marketplace.

Technological Aspect: Utilizing phenomenology as a research type within Sierra Leone Brewery Limited (SLBL) offers a comprehensive exploration of employees' engagement with technological shifts. This research delves into various dimensions, including employee experiences, perceptions of technological shifts, reactions to technological progress, obstacles encountered, outlook on advantages and disadvantages, embracing or resisting new technologies, and the impact on roles and responsibilities.

This research type provides a qualitative and comprehensive understanding of how employees navigate, perceive, and respond to technological changes within SLBL, uncovering the intricate dynamics of these experiences and their influence on employees' roles and responsibilities in the evolving technological landscape of the brewery industry.

This phenomenological research, conducted within SLBL, delves into the multifaceted dimensions of how employees interact with technological shifts. It explores their real experiences, perceptions, reactions, and the challenges they faced when adapting to technological changes. Additionally, it uncovers how employees perceived the benefits and drawbacks of these technological shifts, their willingness to embrace or resist new technologies, and the consequent impact on their roles and responsibilities. By employing phenomenology, this research provides a qualitative and comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics of technological change within SLBL and its implications for the workforce.

1.13.2 Research variable

Using a case study on factors affecting new product development at the Sierra Leone Brewery Limited using the variables below, this research study typically consisted of interviews, focus groups, and observations. Here's an overview of the substance of the research study

1. **Timing:** Explored the decision-making process behind the timing of new product launches. (Su & Rao, 2011)
2. **Price:** Investigated how pricing decisions are made during new product development. (Baykasoğlu et al., 2017)
3. **Packaging:** Examined the role of packaging in new product development. And also explored how packaging design, materials, functionality, and aesthetics are chosen to appeal to the target market, enhance product visibility, and communicate brand values. (Rundh, 2016)
4. **Product Name:** The significance of product naming during new product development was also explored. Investigated how the industry develops and chooses product names that align with the brand, evoke desired associations, resonate with the target market, and differentiate the product from competitors. (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006)
5. **Promotion:** Investigate the promotional strategies employed during new product development. Examined how the industry creates awareness, generates interest, and drives adoption through advertising, public relations, social media, and other marketing communication channels. (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016)

6. Target Market: The process of identifying and understanding the target market for new products also known. Also explored how the industry conducts market research, segments the market, defines buyer personas, and tailors product features and marketing messages to meet the needs and preferences of specific target segments.(Ansari & Mela, 2003)
7. Competitor: Explore the competitive landscape and its impact on new product development. Has investigated how the industry analyzes competitors, identifies their strengths and weaknesses, and develops strategies to differentiate their products and gain a competitive advantage.(Schwarz et al., 2019)
8. New Product Testing: Explored how the industry gathers feedback, conducts user testing, and makes iterative improvements to ensure the product meets customer expectations and addresses any potential issues. (Deszca et al., 1999)

The research phenomenon in this study understands the factors affecting new product development from the perspectives of industry professionals, stakeholders, and consumers. The study also uncovered insights, patterns, and underlying motivations to enhance understanding of the complex dynamics involved in bringing new products to market successfully.

1.13.3. Types and Sources of Data

In this study for factors influencing new product development in Sierra Leone Brewery Limited (SLBL) key primary data sources used in the analysis included

both primary as well as secondary data sources were used to arrive at possible conclusions concerning the objectives of the study.

The primary data was collected using in-depth interviews that involved key stakeholders such as the managers in SLBL, the product developers in the company, marketing personnel within the organization, and consumers of the products from SLBL. All these interviews provide insight and useful information in terms of strategic decision-making, technical difficulties, market trends, consumer buying behaviours, and employee viewpoints. Besides the interviews, certain structured questionnaires are also used to source some qualitative data from SLBL's employees in consideration of procedures of resource allocation, regulatory compliance, and market research going on inside the organization.

The secondary data derived from a deep literature review, obtained from pertinent documentation such as; articles most especially from Science Direct, textbooks, thesis, published and unpublished data, journals and internet information through the Google Hunt device, industry reports, market data, sales records and internet sources, supplements the primary data. A combined holding of both primary and secondary data builds a wholesome analysis of factors that influence new product development at SLBL. It gives the organization a very strong foundation for sound decision-making and strategic planning that considers both internal dynamics and wider market trends.

1.13.4 Data Collection Technique

The collection of data started just after approval by the supervisors, however, the data collection is carried out via this process. Interviews were conducted for

those who preferred to be interviewed and the targeted audience was allowed to choose whether they should be interviewed. The research embarked on personal observation of the organization through casual, informal, and non-participatory visits for observation. When engaging with the organization, individuals were requested to provide their consent, with an assurance that participation is voluntary and they retained the freedom to discontinue their involvement at any point. The organization also received a guarantee of protection from harm, the assurance of confidentiality for all gathered information, and the understanding that data could solely be utilized for research purposes.

Utilizing a range of stakeholders, including managers, product developers, marketing personnel, and consumers, as primary informants in this research thesis focused on the determinants of new product development at Sierra Leone Brewery Limited (SLBL) is imperative for several compelling reasons.

Initially, it allows me to tap into a wealth of expertise and insights that each group uniquely possesses. Managers of the SLBL offer a high-level perspective, providing insights into strategic decision-making and resource allocation processes that significantly impact new product development. Product developers also contribute specialized technical knowledge and elucidate the specific challenges they face during the development phase. Simultaneously, marketing personnel bring insights into prevailing market trends and consumer preferences, providing a holistic view of the company's internal dynamics and external market conditions.

Moreover, involving these internal stakeholders, namely managers, product developers, and marketing personnel, grants me an invaluable internal perspective.

This internal view unveils SLBL's strengths and weaknesses, internal resource constraints, and insights from past new product development experiences. This knowledge is instrumental in devising strategies that align with the organization's existing capabilities and address any internal hurdles effectively.

Furthermore, the inclusion of consumers as research participants is pivotal. As the ultimate end-users of SLBL's products, their preferences, needs, and perceptions significantly influence the success of new products. Gathering direct feedback from consumers allows me to ascertain their expectations, likes, dislikes about current offerings, and their desires for future products, thus ensuring that the company's product development efforts remain consumer-centric.

The amalgamation of these diverse stakeholder groups grants this research a comprehensive understanding of the determinants of new product development. While managers, product developers, and marketing personnel offer an internal organizational perspective, consumers provide an external view, ensuring a well-rounded analysis. This approach not only enhances the reliability and accuracy of my findings through data validation but also empowers my research with practical recommendations. It enables me to tailor my conclusions and suggestions to the specific context of SLBL, addressing real challenges and seizing opportunities identified by those directly involved in or affected by the new product development process.

1.13.5 Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis methods employed in this research focused on the influences on new product development at Sierra Leone Brewery Limited (SLBL) pertain to

processes for handling and making sense of the gathered data. These methods are vital for deriving significant insights from the study (Yazan & De Vasconcelos, 2016) postulated that analysis consists of “examining, categorizing, tabulating, or otherwise recombining the evidence to address the initial propositions of study.

For this study, the Stage-Gate Model with an explanation-building approach has been utilized. Stage-gate model for New Product Development (NPD) accepts a significant investment of effort during the initial planning stage, with a focus on identifying and elaborating on requirements and product specifications (Conforto & Amaral, 2016). This model breaks down the process into stages and gates, enabling an exploration of how time, cost, packaging, pricing, and other factors influence the progress of each stage and the decision-making process.

The Stage-Gate model serves as a widely adopted structure for overseeing the new product development (NPD) procedure in a methodical and organized manner. The stage-gate[®] model is presented as an example of a successful and innovative NPD approach that is frequently used by various industries, and which addresses the links between assessment phases (Whynacht & Duinker, 2015). It segments the NPD processes into discrete stages, each separated by a gate. The primary purpose of this model is to empower Sierra Leone Brewery Limited to make well-informed decisions at each gate, determining whether to proceed with the project as-is, make adjustments, or discontinue its production process of the new product.

Utilizing the Stage-Gate model with an explanation-building approach in the industry is a well-structured strategy. It provides a systematic means of evaluating

the complexities of new product development in this unique context. This method offers several key advantages.

- a) It brings a structured and systematic approach to new product development, well-suited for the industry's multifaceted variables.
- b) It aligns with addressing identified research problems, including consumer research gaps, regulatory awareness issues, training deficiencies, and marketing personnel preparation.
- c) The model also facilitates effective risk management, efficient resource allocation, and quality control and market alignment mechanisms.

So the use of the Stage-Gate model with explanation building is an exceptional framework for this research thesis in the SLBL industry. It offers structured evaluation, problem resolution, risk management, resource efficiency, and quality control, ensuring a comprehensive approach to navigating the complexities of developing both alcoholic and non-alcoholic products within the SLBL industry

Resource allocation decisions are made at each gate based on the production progress and potential, and the model encourages continuous improvement by learning from past stages. Depending on the organization's needs, some stages run in parallel, especially when speed to market is crucial. Overall, the Stage-Gate model's division into stages and gates helps Sierra Leone Brewery Limited mitigate risks, control costs, and systematically investigate how the various variables influence each stage, thereby enhancing project management and the likelihood of successful new product development.