



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



The level of efficiency of logistics management in achieving competitive advantage of refreshment businesses in Calapan City

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World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews, 2024, 24(03), 2469-2486

Publication history: Received on 18 November 2024; revised on 24 December 2024; accepted on 27 December 2024

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2024.24.3.3975>

Abstract

Success in the fast-moving beverage industry hinges on meticulous planning and preparation, with efficient logistics management being crucial for streamlining operations and overcoming the inherent complexities of managing multiple tasks. The success of business processes is highly dependent on its efficient logistics management which includes optimizing facilities, inventory, and transportation. Inventory management, customer service, and space optimization are the main elements incorporated in logistics management. Competitive advantages are factors that differentiate any businesses from their competitors. Through implementing these logistics management, such as improving inventory control, providing excellent customer service, and optimizing space, refreshment businesses can gain a competitive advantage by enhancing efficiency and customer satisfaction. The study comprised 69 refreshment businesses from Calapan City in its sample size. Using descriptive-correlational quantitative research design and a 4-point Likert scale range of interpretation, the data collected from the respondents were analyzed and interpreted. The study found a significant and strong positive correlation between the efficiency of logistics management and the level of competitive advantage in terms of inventory management, customer service, and space optimization. The overall correlation between logistics management and competitive advantage is positive. The findings indicate that all these indicators have a substantial impact on competitive advantage. Among all the indicators, the constraints of Vietnam's refreshment businesses are infrastructure and regulation, while the Philippines faces seasonal demand and oversupply patterns during the peak seasons, like Christmas seasons. Inventory management and customer service have the most impact on competitive advantage. Consequently, a number of recommendations have been put forth to help refreshment businesses manage their logistics management more efficiently in order to continuously acquire, enhance, and maintain their competitive advantage.

Keywords: Logistics management; Inventory management; Customer service; Space optimization; Competitive advantage

1. Introduction

The beverage industry is demanding and competitive, and efficient supply chain management is pivotal for the success of such a business. This involves people management, handling multiple responsibilities, and creating a comfortable environment. The modern style of the beverage businesses is offering a variety of cold and hot drinks, and there is also an elaborate logistics system that maintains an ideal drink, atmosphere, and staff. Logistics functions such as inventory, relations with customer service, and space optimization are some of the practices aimed at achieving great impact and providing a competitive edge for the refreshment businesses. Effective logistics management can lead to cost savings and operational efficiencies, allowing refreshment businesses to offer competitiveness, maintain profitability, increase efficiencies, enhance production rates, and achieve higher customer and vendor satisfaction.

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Logistics management within the refreshment sector of Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines should suggest the best way to manage product returns and the sustainability concerns of other countries operating within the same industry. According to Nation, Journal [1] Australia can learn from Malaysian logistics management practices, including advanced technologies, corporate policies, and sustainability, which are also prevalent in Thailand. In Calapan City, businesses are not fully utilizing demand forecasting techniques to optimize their inventory levels. The market for refreshments is characterized by seasonal demand patterns, which create difficulties for better inventory and resource practices. Deveshwar [2] posited that shortage is one of the challenges that beverage shops experience, and in order to minimize the resultant effects, effective inventory management should be adopted. Calapan City's refreshment businesses face stockouts and overstocking, necessitating cost reduction and improved customer service through staff friendliness, interaction, and response time. Zefarian et al. [3], relates to how an organization is prepared to meet the wants and needs of its consumers. Calapan Refreshment businesses customer service aims for efficient service, effective problem-solving and personalized customer experiences and customers seek excellent customer service delivery from the staff. Customers look for more efficient customer services that will meet their needs. Another common observed dilemma in most refreshment businesses in Calapan City is lack of spaces for customers and staff. There is a shortage of indoor and outdoor spaces, which hinders the ability to serve a larger number of customers and allows staff to prepare services more quickly. Space optimization enables the business to serve more customers, get interested and make more fresh visits, and make more sales. Measures such as sales per unit area, turnover rate, and service delivery effectiveness give an indication of the utilization of space resources [4]. Businesses must meet the needs and ask preferences in layout and space allocation for better business operations and service to the customers.

Contract logistics services empower business owners to do customer communication, advertisement, and coffee brewing, while they can do the packing, storage, and freight transportation themselves. By doing this, the business has taken a step in saving on the cost of transportation, warehousing and operation creating a competitive price. Just in Time (JIT) primarily enhances operational efficiency by reducing costs and increasing turnover through logistics outsourcing, thereby enabling businesses to execute strategic tasks and maintain competitiveness. In addition, as per the Porter Theory of National Competitiveness, international and domestic competition are a matter of innovation and continuous progress, which means companies can get a monopolistic advantage. This way the approach of contract logistics takes on the supplier's role, as the companies can pay more attention to branding and customer satisfaction. Besides, the institutional theory has been in the business for over a year with logistics outsourcing that helps to link the core competencies and the customer expectations. This results in efficient business, which in turn helps in meeting the social requirements, building confidence, and the uniqueness of the business.

The research problem or gap that this study aims to fill is the relationship between logistics management efficiency and the level of competitive advantage of refreshment businesses in Calapan City. The study analyzes three major practices of logistics management: inventory management, customer service, and space optimization, and establishes their role in the competitive edge of the refreshment businesses, emphasizing the importance of efficient logistics management in gaining a competitive advantage in the market. The study provides a detailed analysis of logistics management in the refreshment industry, offering a framework for optimizing operations, enhancing market position, and improving performance and profitability.

1.1. Review of Related Literature

1.1.1. Logistic Management Practices

Ficker [5] stated that efficient logistics management practices involve organizing key supply chain elements, such as facilities, inventory, and transportation, to improve efficiency and customer satisfaction in refreshment businesses. Some of the widely used Logistics Management Practices are Inventory Management, Customer Service and Space Optimization. Efficient logistics management practices can significantly enhance a business competitiveness through various operational aspects. Businesses that invest in logistics practices not only enhance their operational effectiveness but also lead to competitive advantage. According to Purwaningtyas [6], inventory management is a crucial logistics practice that directly affects a business' ability to serve customers efficiently. With effective inventory tracking, businesses can efficiently manage stock levels, reducing waste and ensuring a steady supply of popular products. This is especially important in a market where consumer preferences change quickly, and the ability to adapt can set successful businesses apart from their competitors. Furthermore, efficient inventory management enhances operational efficiency, leading to better customer service and satisfaction. Moreover, Adeleke [8] defines customer service as an important part of logistics management that helps create a competitive advantage. Refreshment businesses that focus on providing a wonderful customer experience, with well-trained staff and efficient service, can build loyalty and encourage repeat visits. The emotional connection customers form with refreshment businesses, especially those involved in community activities and offering outstanding service, can improve customer retention. Additionally, using management systems to track customer preferences and feedback can help improve services and

marketing, ensuring they meet customer expectations. Đoković [9] stated that incorporating sustainable practices into logistics management is essential for optimizing space. Sustainable entrepreneurship aims to balance economic goals with environmental responsibility, often resulting in innovative space utilization strategies that reduce waste and improve operations.

Inventory Management

Stevenson [9] defines inventory management as a framework that firms utilize to manage their inventory. This framework encompasses the recording and observation of stock levels, the estimation of future requests, and the determination of the optimal timing and method for inventory arrangement. Moreover, it is a method that companies use to organize, store, and replace inventory to maintain an adequate supply of goods while minimizing cost. Prabha et al. [38] stated that the relationship between inventory management and logistics management is integral to enhancing organizational performance and operational efficiency, as effective inventory management directly influences logistics operations by ensuring that the right products are available at the right time, thereby minimizing stockouts and reducing costs. The implementation of effective inventory management practices can significantly enhance a company's financial performance, as demonstrated by case studies indicating increased profitability through efficient control.

Inventory management is an essential logistics management practice that directly influences a refreshment business' capacity to serve customers effectively. It can be measured through various aspects, including tracking inventory mobility, inventory turnover, ensuring optimal inventory levels, demand forecasting, and inventory control [10]. Furthermore, the implications of insufficient inventory management extend beyond monetary losses and may encompass the possible loss of important inventory goods, directly affecting a company's profitability. Hence, the use of strategic inventory management helps businesses in improving financial performance, mitigating waste, and enhancing service delivery leading to the achievement of a competitive advantage.

Customer Service

Customer service, according to Zefarian et al. [11], is defined by an organization's readiness to satisfy the needs and preferences of its consumers as well as its commitment to consistently exceeding their expectations. Moreover, service quality is a reflection of consumers' evaluative views of services obtained at a certain time. It was further explained that service quality entails comparing customer expectations with actual performance. According to Koesworodjati [12], customer service is an integral part of logistics management, directly influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty. Through implementing efficient customer service practices within logistics, businesses can significantly enhance the overall customer experience.

Customer service is vital to the success of refreshment businesses, directly influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty, and ultimately, the bottom line. It can be measured through various aspects, including the customer friendliness and welcoming demeanor of staff, effective communication, a commitment to service quality, and the speed and effectiveness of service responses [13]. Effective communication, as highlighted by Bolton et al. [14], is crucial for delivering excellent customer service. Clear and open communication helps manage customer expectations and fosters trust. Additionally, well-trained employees, as emphasized by Rilopari et al. [15], can significantly improve service delivery and customer satisfaction. Through these key areas, businesses especially in the refreshment sector can enhance their customer service quality and ultimately drive customer loyalty and satisfaction. Hence, it is increasingly recognized as a crucial logistics management practice that can help businesses achieve a competitive advantage. As highlighted by Darussalam [16], prioritizing superior service quality is essential for sustaining competitiveness in an increasingly crowded marketplace.

Space Optimization

Jin. et al. [17] define space optimization as effective space design aimed at ensuring that the atmosphere created toggled the customers engaged and visited the place more often. Customers are greatly influenced by arrangements such as seating, walking patterns, and the appearance of the place, making them comfortable and at home. In respect of efficient logistics management, it is crucial for the realization and sustenance of a competitive edge. It helps in enhancing the uninterrupted movement of goods and services to the customers. A clear design and a clear understanding of the space infrastructure framework ensure the smooth movement of products and goods in the marketing chain, thus enhancing competitive advantage [18].

Space optimization can be measured through the overall ambiance of the place, the number of people seated, and the arrangement of pathways, as well as people's preferences about the positioning of such layouts. Business environments also focus on space efficiency, as highlighted by Djausal et al. [19] every transition allows for better flow of movement

and increases the versatility of an environment, which helps in having a huge range of clientele. An increase in space utility also has positive effects in terms of the ambiance of the space, which in turn expands the clientele base. High seating customer satisfaction was recorded by Haktanir [20] showing seating and settings of pathways are crucial for the customer. It is argued by Widyaningsih et al. [21] that socializing, working, or relaxing is the aim of patrons visiting the Refreshment Business shops. Some areas may suit visitors best; the adjustable environment allows them to find the most comfortable armchair, cushioned bench, or private corner. Comfortable seating designs can add to a sense of relaxation and well-being, which can improve visitors' coping experiences in the coffee shop. Sim [22] stated that owners who adopt a market-oriented approach are better able to align their offerings with customer preferences, guiding decisions on layout and space allocation. Refreshment businesses are able to increase customer turnover through spatial efficiency, which lowers waiting periods and enhances service quality, all of which are vital issues in a competitive setting [23]. To that end, in space optimization, efficient logistics management can include the use of more easily accessible locations in relation to clients or suppliers. This can help logistics, lower transportation costs, and increase competitiveness.

1.1.2. *Competitive Advantage*

Comănescu et al. [24], consider competitive advantage within a company as an ability to have products that compete in terms of price, quality, and diversity. Success is experienced if resources such as production, management, and marketing, as well as financial and technical aspects, offer sustainable superiority over rivals in terms of costs, variety, quality, or cost-effectiveness. In addition, Taheri et al. [25], see competitive advantage as potential, or factors, which increase the ability of an organization to beat others by supplying greater value to the customers. Better and more responsive distribution will lead to competitive advantage, as advocated by Prokhorova et al. [26] as they can cut lead-times and costs and increase the reliability of delivery. Hence, such improvements in efficient logistics management should be seen as investments into the optimization of logistics operations that will provide a competitive advantage through a better market position and growth within a given time period.

There are several ways to measure the competitive advantage of efficient logistic management, such as product quality, demand forecasting of stocks, innovations in inventory management, utilization of location, and digital technologies for customer service development. In the first measurement, according to Armstrong [27], product quality measures competitive advantage by assessing customers' perception of products or services' qualities and advantages compared to desired goals and existing options. Also, it has been pointed out as an internal determinant for customer satisfaction and loyalty, which also explains competitive edge as cited in Razak et al. [28]. For the second measurement, concerning the work of Aquino [29], which deals with the inventory control of a certain coffee firm, certain principles for gaining a competitive edge through efficient control of logistics with regard to the need for demand estimating, good materials, and good inventory records come into play. Being superior in demand forecast such that there would be no overstocking or running out of stock with the competitors being at a loss would also be a big boost for an entity. In the third measurement, regarding Hui [30] innovation was described as one of the critical factors in achieving market performance. Innovations drive competitive advantage for businesses by improving logistics and inventory management, reducing lead times, controlling stock levels, and enhancing service delivery to achieve customer satisfaction. With regard to the research carried out by Rahmasari [31], it indicates that innovation affects successfully improving the capability to deal with competition. For the fourth measurement, from the study of Safitri [32], strategic location optimization can make a competitive advantage, save transport costs, and streamline operations, which will boost competitiveness, profitability, and customer and vendor satisfaction. In the fifth measurement, in accordance with the study of Akkartal [33], the answer given by another company stated that they allocated a large budget to the development of digital technologies, and this situation increased their competitive advantage by improving customer service. Furthermore, investing in digital technologies enhances data tracking, decision-making, and resource allocation, providing companies with a strategic edge and driving long-term success.

1.2. **Theoretical Framework**

The study is anchored on Just-in-Time (JIT) Inventory Management, SERVQUAL Model, and Space Syntax Theory.

1.2.1. *Just-in-Time (JIT) Inventory Management*

The Just-in-Time (JIT) inventory management, originally developed by Toyota Motor Company in Japan, focuses on aligning supply with demand to minimize excess inventory, reduce waste, and improve efficiency, especially in industries with fluctuating demand or perishable goods. It ensures that products are available in the right quantities at the right time, helping businesses reduce costs, optimize cash flow, strengthen supplier relationships, and maintain high product quality.

1.2.2. SERVQUAL Model

The Servqual Model, developed by Berry and Parasuraman in the 1980s, is a tool used to measure the gap between customer expectations and actual service delivery, helping businesses assess and improve service quality. This model helps businesses assess customer service and logistics management, identify satisfaction gaps, and make targeted improvements to improve service quality and sustain a competitive advantage.

1.2.3. Space Syntax Theory

The space syntax theory, developed by Bill Hillier in the 1970s, analyzes spatial relationships and their impact on human behavior and interactions, with applications in urban planning and commercial spaces. For refreshment businesses like coffee shops, this theory provides a framework to optimize spatial design, enhancing customer engagement, employee productivity, and ultimately gaining a competitive edge.

1.3. Conceptual Framework

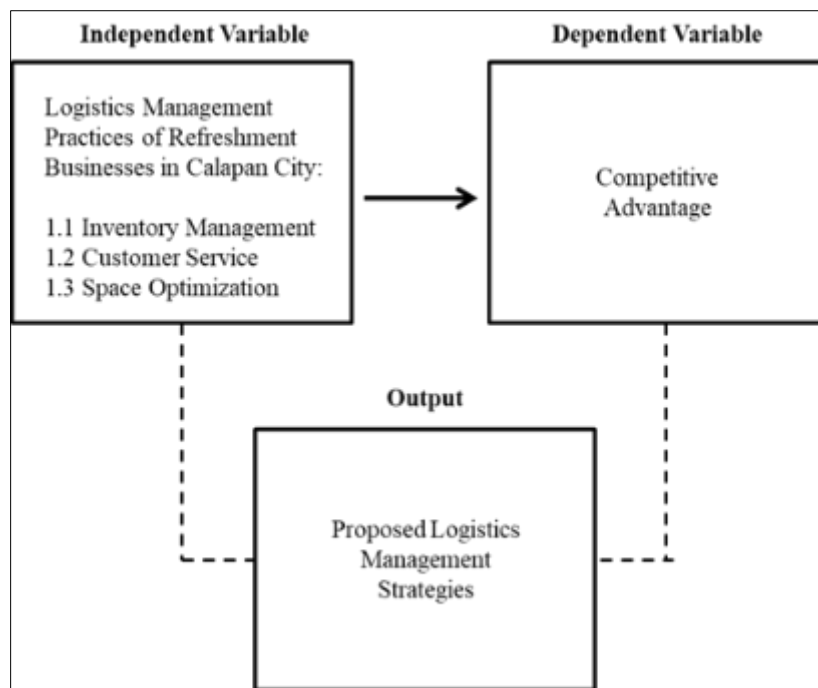


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 assesses the efficiency of logistics management in Calapan City refreshment businesses using a three-element framework: the independent variable, Logistics Management Practices such as Inventory Management, Customer Service, and Space Optimization; the dependent variable, Competitive Advantage; and the output of the study, using data to determine the relationship between the two.

1.4. Statement of the Problem

The study aims to determine if there is a significant relationship between the efficiency of logistics management and the level of competitive advantage of refreshment businesses in Calapan City. It seeks to provide answers to the following questions:

- What level of efficiency do logistics management practices achieve in refreshment businesses in terms of:
 - Inventory Management;
 - Customer Service; and
 - Space Optimization?
- To what degree do refreshment businesses in Calapan City possess a competitive advantage?
- Is there a significant relationship between the efficiency of businesses' logistics management practices and the level of competitive advantage?
- Based on the findings of the study, what strategies on logistics management may be proposed?

1.5. Hypothesis

- H0: There is no significant relationship between the efficiency of logistics management and the level of competitive advantage of refreshment businesses in Calapan City.

2. Material and methods

2.1. Research Design

Descriptive-correlational quantitative research design is used in this study. As defined by Salaria [34], a descriptive-correlational quantitative research design is a methodological approach that seeks to describe and analyze the relationships between two or more variables without manipulation. This approach is particularly useful for finding correlations and patterns in data, which aids in comprehending how various aspects relate to one another. Researchers collected data from various refreshment businesses through structured surveys and statistical analysis was performed to identify correlations between the logistics management efficiency and competitive advantage of the refreshment businesses in Calapan City.

2.2. Subject and Sampling

The respondents of this study are the owners or managers of the refreshment businesses in Calapan City. In line with this, *Purposive Sampling Technique* was utilized. It is a non-probability sampling technique where researchers intentionally select participants based on specific characteristics relevant to the study's objectives. This method is particularly valuable in qualitative research, as it allows for the inclusion of individuals who possess unique insights or expertise related to the phenomenon being investigated [35]. Using the list of registered refreshment businesses provided by the Business and Licensing Department of the City Government of Calapan, the researchers conducted a preliminary survey to identify businesses that met the study's criteria and would be included as subjects in this research. Out of a total population of 83 refreshment businesses, 69 business owners/managers met the criteria to participate in this study. The criteria included being a registered owner/manager of a refreshment business, having a business that has been operational for at least 3 years, and implementing logistics management practices such as inventory management, customer service, and space optimization in business operations.

2.3. Data Gathering Procedure and Instrumentation

In this study, data collection is carried out through the use of survey questionnaires and thorough analysis of the major findings. The researchers developed the questionnaire by carefully adapting relevant questions from previous studies, ensuring that the questions were aligned with the objectives of the research. This approach allowed the researchers to collect the necessary data while maintaining consistency with established research practices. The researchers distributed the survey questionnaires to 69 owners of refreshment businesses in Calapan City who had met the criteria. The questionnaire was structured to measure various indicators relevant to the study that includes inventory management, customer service, space optimization, and competitive advantage, with each indicator containing five (5) distinct items. These items were designed to capture a comprehensive range of responses, with each item assessed using a 4-point Likert scale. This scale with response options of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree, allows for an in-depth understanding of the participants' perspectives on key factors related to logistics management and competitive advantage.

Table 1 Scaling and Quantification of Data in Self- Made Questionnaire

Likert Scale	Range	Description	Interpretation
Strongly Disagree	1.00 - 1.49	Strongly Disagree	Low Efficient/ Low Competitive
Disagree	1.50 - 2.49	Disagree	Moderately Efficient/ Moderately Competitive
Agree	2.50 - 3.49	Agree	Efficient/ Competitive
Strongly Agree	3.50 - 4.00	Strongly Agree	Highly Efficient/ Highly Competitive

The questionnaire was validated by the academic expert in order to ensure its relevance and clarity. The researchers then distributed the paper-and-pencil questionnaires to the respondents of the study who are the owners of the refreshment businesses, having ample time to answer and comprehend each item to gain a secure and sound participation. Furthermore, the researchers guaranteed the confidentiality of each response and its exclusive use for

the study's purpose. Tabular data was provided as the responses were systematically encoded for easier analyzation and assessment. This procedure provided a reliable and significant evaluation of the relationship between the logistics management efficiency and level of competitive advantage of refreshment businesses in Calapan City.

2.4. Reliability

For the purpose of determining the dependability and consistency of the measures of the survey results, the Test-Retest methodology is utilized. *Test-retest methodology* refers to a systematic approach used to evaluate the reliability and accuracy of measurement tools by administering the same test to the same subjects at two different points in time. This methodology encompasses two key concepts: reliability, which assesses whether the test produces consistent rankings across administrations, and agreement, which examines if the test yields identical values on both occasions [36]. In order to determine whether or not the results are consistent, the identical set of sample questionnaires was given to ten (10) respondents at a one-week interval. This was done in accordance with the requirements of this approach. The pre-test and post-test data that were collected were subjected to statistical analysis using Pearson's R, which resulted in the acquisition of insights on the stability and consistency of the responses during the allotted time period. The data demonstrated that the questionnaires were accurate and consistent, and they also revealed that the reliability coefficient for each item changed from 0.643 to 1 during the course of the study. Accordingly, this can be categorized as having a moderate level of reliability, a high level of reliability, and a very high level of reliability.

Table 2 Pearson's R of Logistics Management Practices

IV: Logistics Management Practices	Pearson's R Result	p	Interpretation
Inventory Management	0.985	0.001	Very Highly Reliable
Customer Service	0.650	0.042	Moderately reliable
Space Optimization	0.887	0.001	Highly reliable

Table 3 Pearson's R of Competitive Advantage

Dependent Variable: Competitive Advantage	Pearson's R Result	p	Interpretation
	0.898	0.001	Highly reliable

The interpretation used in this analysis were based on the following:

A scale of interpretation is used to measure the strength of the correlation between the logistics management practices and the competitive advantage of refreshment businesses in Calapan City. A correlation of 0.00 indicates no relationship, while 0.01 - 0.20 represents a negligible correlation. 0.21 - 0.40 is a low, weak relationship, and 0.41 - 0.70 indicates a moderate, more reliable connection. 0.71 - 0.90 shows a strong, highly reliable correlation, and 0.91 - 0.99 signifies a very strong, near-perfect relationship. This scale helps assess how closely variables are related and guides data interpretation.

2.5. Data Analysis

To gather the necessary data, a survey was distributed to 69 refreshment businesses. The responses were manually inputted into Microsoft Excel for analysis. Descriptive statistics, including the calculation of mean and standard deviation, were utilized to understand the central tendencies and variability within the dataset. In addition, this study used statistical tools such as Jamovi, the weighted mean, and Pearson's correlation coefficient to analyze and interpret the data. Jamovi, as noted by Ahmed and Muhammad [37], is a user-friendly software for structured datasets, offering features like descriptive statistics, non-parametric tests, regression, and variance analysis, making it ideal for this study. The weighted mean, calculates an average by assigning different weights to data points, providing a more accurate trend by accounting for data significance. Unlike the simple mean, it adjusts for variations by multiplying each data point by its weight and dividing the total by the sum of the weights. Pearson's correlation coefficient (r), measures the strength and direction of a linear relationship between two variables, ranging from -1 (perfect negative correlation) to +1 (perfect positive correlation), with 0 indicating no correlation [38]. Positive values indicate that as one variable increases, so does the other, while negative values show an inverse relationship. These techniques were used to examine the

relationship between Logistics Management Efficiency and Level of Competitive Advantage of refreshment businesses in Calapan City.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. What level of efficiency does logistics management practices achieve in refreshment businesses in terms of:

3.1.1. Inventory Management

Table 4 Mean Perception Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Inventory Management

	Item	Mean	Rank	Description	Interpretation
1.	My business regularly maintains an appropriate quantity of inventory to ensure that business goals and customer demands are met all the time.	3.43	1	Agree	Efficient
2.	My business tracks how frequent inventory is sold and replenished within a given period.	3.3	4	Agree	Efficient
3.	My business ensures optimal inventory levels and high-quality stock, while delivering value to customers.	3.41	2	Agree	Efficient
4.	My business considers forecasting demand based on previous sales or seasons in order to provide enough stock of inventory.	3.29	5	Agree	Efficient
5.	My business organizes the availability of items as well as records the lost and available stock.	3.33	3	Agree	Efficient
	Overall Mean	3.35		Agree	Efficient

Table 4 presents the mean perceptions of Refreshment Businesses regarding Inventory Management. It illustrates the highest mean of 3.43 that businesses maintain an appropriate quantity of inventory, the lowest mean of 3.29 for considering forecasting demand based on previous sales, and an overall mean of 3.35 reflecting a general efficient inventory management among the respondents.

The results reveal that the highest mean score 3.43 was obtained from item 1, which states, "My business regularly maintains an appropriate quantity of inventory to ensure that business goals and customer demands are met all the time." indicating a strong positive perception regarding their inventory management efficiency. With this result, the businesses generally believe they are efficient in maintaining adequate inventory levels to meet both their operational needs and customer demands. According to one of the businesses questioned, the owner stated *"Our inventory is well-stocked. We've also built strong relationships with many reliable suppliers. As a result, we're able to consistently meet our customers' needs and keep them satisfied."* This aligns with Ferrater-Gimena et al. [39] research, which suggests that efficient inventory management practices entail holding an appropriate quantity of inventory to ensure that business goals and customer demands are met all the time.

However, the lowest mean score of 3.29 was obtained from item 4, which states, "My business considers forecasting demand based on previous sales or seasons in order to provide enough stock of inventory". This indicates that refreshment businesses in Calapan City may not be fully utilizing demand forecasting techniques to optimize their inventory levels. One of the business owners explained *"Before, we didn't really study demand forecasting. We mostly relied on our intuition and observed sales trends."* With this, businesses need to improve their demand forecasting practices to reduce the risk of stockouts or overstocking. This finding aligns with Owusu-Andoh et al. [40], which suggests demand forecasting is crucial as it enables companies to adjust inventory levels to match customer demand, reducing excess stock and lowering holding costs.

The findings revealed that all items regarding Inventory Management obtained an overall mean score of 3.35. This indicates that while they recognize the importance of efficient inventory management practices, they may benefit from additional training and resources to improve their skills in areas such as forecasting. The businesses may be successful in meeting immediate customer demand, however, they may not be proactively planning for future demand. As

emphasized by Asante et al. [41], accurate demand is efficient for inventory management, as it helps businesses anticipate future demand and adjust their inventory levels accordingly.

3.1.2. Customer Service

Table 5 Mean Perception Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Customer Service

	Item	Mean	Rank	Description	Interpretation
1.	My business has good customer service since We have friendly staff and a welcoming atmosphere.	3.61	1	Strongly agree	Highly Efficient
2.	We deliver clear and open communication that helps manage customer expectations and fosters trust.	3.54	2.5	Strongly agree	Highly Efficient
3.	We train employees to have skills and knowledge in improving service delivery.	3.49	5	Agree	Efficient
4.	Our commitment to quality service fosters lasting customer relationships.	3.54	2.5	Strongly agree	Highly Efficient
5.	We focus on providing fast and effective service responses.	3.52	4	Strongly agree	Highly Efficient
	Overall Mean	3.54		Strongly agree	Highly Efficient

Table 5 presents the mean perceptions of Refreshment Businesses regarding Customer Service. It illustrates the highest mean of 3.61 that indicates that businesses maintain good customer service, the lowest mean of 3.49 for employee training and an overall mean of 3.54 reflecting a generally highly efficient customer service among the respondents.

The highest mean score of 3.61 was observed for the statement "My business has good customer service since we have friendly staff and a welcoming atmosphere." indicating that the business is having a friendly staff and a welcoming atmosphere. Other factors that contribute to customer satisfaction are efficient service, effective problem-solving, or personalized customer experiences. According to one of the business owners, *"One of the things we are most proud of is the good customer service provided by our employees. We always make sure that we cater to the needs of our customers while maintaining the quality of service. Because that's the most important thing, to make them feel like they will always want that kind of service."* These findings align with Liu et al., [42], customer service is vital to the success of refreshment businesses, directly influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty, and ultimately, the bottom line. It can be measured through various aspects, including the friendliness and welcoming demeanor of staff, clear and open communication, a commitment to quality service, and the speed and effectiveness of service responses.

However, the lowest mean score of 3.49 was found for the statement "We train employees to have skills and knowledge in improving service delivery." This suggests that the business should put a strong emphasis on employee training and development. Businesses should recognize the importance of well-trained staff in delivering excellent customer service. One of the respondents stated that *"Training and development programs are very important, but they are quite expensive and it's also difficult to find time for them, especially since the staff is always busy."* It is important to consider training and development programs because well-trained employees, as emphasized by Rilopari et al. [43], can significantly improve service delivery and customer satisfaction. Through these key areas, businesses especially in the refreshment sector can enhance their customer service quality and ultimately drive customer loyalty and satisfaction. Hence, it is increasingly recognized as a crucial logistics management practice that can help businesses achieve a competitive advantage.

The findings revealed that all items regarding customer service obtained an overall mean score of 3.54. This indicates that customers may be generally satisfied with the service provided, however, there may be areas where improvements can be made to enhance the overall customer experience. These findings suggest a need for ongoing training and development to equip employees with the necessary skills to address customer concerns and exceed expectations. As stated by Rilopari et al. [44], training programs give employees the right skills and knowledge which can improve service delivery and customer satisfaction.

3.1.3. Space Optimization

Table 6 Mean Perception Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Space Optimization

	Item	Mean	Rank	Description	Interpretation
1.	My business has indoor and outdoor spaces that attract a wider range of clientele.	3.32	1	Agree	Efficient
2.	My business has seating arrangements and pathways.	3.22	4	Agree	Efficient
3.	My business provides spaces where people come together for social interaction, work, or leisure.	3.29	2	Agree	Efficient
4.	My business provides comfortable seating arrangements.	3.23	3	Agree	Efficient
5.	My business asks for customer preferences in layout and space allocation.	3.14	5	Agree	Efficient
	Overall Mean	3.24		Agree	Efficient

Table 6 presents the mean perceptions of Refreshment Businesses regarding Space Optimization. It illustrates the highest mean of 3.32 that businesses have indoor and outdoor spaces, the lowest mean of 3.14 for asking customer preferences in layout and space allocation, and an overall mean of 3.24 reflecting a general efficiency of space optimization among the respondents.

The results reveal that the highest mean score was obtained from item 1, which states, "My business has indoor and outdoor spaces that attract a wider range of clientele." indicates that refreshment businesses in Calapan City recognize the importance of having well-designed and versatile spaces to attract and retain customers. This suggests that these businesses are investing in creating inviting indoor and outdoor environments that cater to diverse customer preferences and needs. According to one of the business owners, *"Having both indoor and outdoor seating is a big deal. It attracts different kinds of customers. Some prefer a cool, air-conditioned space, while others prefer an open-air area where they can breathe deeply."* This aligns with Djausal et al. [45], which states that by creating seamless transitions between indoor and outdoor spaces, businesses can offer customers a versatile experience that caters to their diverse needs and desires. This approach not only maximizes the use of space but also enhances the overall ambiance, attracting a wider range of clientele.

Meanwhile, the lowest mean score of 3.14 was obtained from item 5, which states, "My business asks for customer preferences in layout and space allocation". This indicates that the refreshment businesses may not be actively seeking customer input to optimize their space design. While having indoor and outdoor spaces is important, it's equally crucial to ensure that these spaces are designed in a way that meets the needs and preferences of customers. One of the business owners stated *"To be honest, we haven't thought about asking our customers about their preferred layout. We still rely on our own taste and what we see as good design in other restaurants."* With this, businesses need to enhance their space optimization efficiency. Businesses should consider conducting customer surveys, organizing focus groups, or simply asking for feedback from customers. This relates with the research of Owusu-Andoh et al. [46], which suggests understanding consumer behavior is essential for optimizing space. Research shows that owners who adopt a market-oriented approach are better able to align their offerings with customer preferences, guiding decisions on layout and space allocation.

The findings revealed that all items regarding Space Optimization obtained an overall mean score of 3.24. These findings suggest that while businesses are aware of the importance of having well-designed spaces, they may not be fully utilizing customer feedback to create truly customer-centric environments. Through actively seeking customer input and incorporating their preferences into the design process, businesses can enhance their space optimization practices and improve customer satisfaction. As stated by Aprilia [47], understanding consumers for optimizing space utilization is important. Through analyzing customer preferences, habits, and movement patterns, businesses can design spaces that are not only aesthetically pleasing but also functional and efficient.

3.2. To what degree do refreshment businesses in Calapan City possess a competitive advantage?

Table 7 Mean Perception Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Competitive Advantage

	Item	Mean	Rank	Description	Interpretation
1.	My business ensures to offer quality customer service in order to provide customer satisfaction.	3.57	1	Strongly agree	Highly Competitive
2.	My business focuses on seeing the future demand which leads to reducing overstocking or stock outs in achieving competitive advantage.	3.41	3	Agree	Competitive
3.	My business has the ability to develop creative solutions or innovations in inventory management.	3.48	2	Agree	Competitive
4.	My business utilizes locations that are more accessible to customers and suppliers that will achieve competitive advantage.	3.39	4	Agree	Competitive
5.	My business allocated a budget in digital technologies for customer service development.	3.13	5	Agree	Competitive
	Overall Mean	3.39		Agree	Competitive

Table 7 presents the mean perceptions of Refreshment Businesses regarding competitive advantage. It illustrates the highest mean of 3.57 that businesses ensure to offer quality customer service, the lowest mean of 3.13 for allocating a budget in digital technologies, and an overall mean of 3.39 reflecting a general competitiveness among the respondents.

The results reveal that the highest mean score 3.57 was obtained from item 1, which states, "My business ensures to offer quality customer service in order to provide customer satisfaction." This indicates that customer service provides the most significant impact on the refreshment businesses in achieving competitive advantage. They recognize the importance of excellent customer service as a key driver of competitive advantage. In addition, these businesses are committed to delivering high-quality service, addressing customer concerns promptly, and building strong customer relationships. One of the business owners stated *"Of course! It's important to us to provide good service to our customers. That's why we always make sure that our staff are friendly and patient."* This finding aligns with Ikrimatul Fathiyah et al. [48], which states that quality is a characteristic of a product or service that supports its ability to provide satisfaction to customer needs.

However, the lowest mean score of 3.13 was obtained from item 5, which states, "My business allocated a budget in digital technologies for customer service development." This suggests that these businesses may rely on traditional methods of customer service, such as face-to-face interactions and phone calls. According to one of the businesses, one owner stated *"We haven't invested much of our budget in digital technologies yet. We're still focusing more on traditional customer service methods, like face-to-face interactions."* While traditional methods are important, incorporating digital technologies can also significantly improve customer experience and efficiency. This finding aligns with Akkartal et al. [49], which suggests allocating a budget to the development of digital technologies, increases their competitive advantage by improving customer service.

Table 8 Descriptive Statistics

Indicators	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Interpretation
Inventory Management	3.35	0.478	3	Efficient
Customer Service	3.54	0.487	1	Highly Efficient
Space Optimization	3.24	0.603	4	Efficient
Competitive Advantage	3.39	0.458	2	Efficient

The findings revealed that all items regarding competitive advantage obtained an overall mean score of 3.39. This indicates that the variability in scores across different items suggests that there are areas of strength and weakness in their competitive strategies. These findings also suggest that while businesses may be aware of the importance of

competitive advantage, they may not be fully using all available tools and strategies to differentiate themselves from competitors. As stated by Safitri et al. [50], identifying and addressing their competitive weaknesses, businesses can enhance their market position and achieve long-term success.

The descriptive statistics reveal that respondents demonstrated an understanding of Inventory Management, Customer Service, Space Optimization, and Competitive Advantage.

Customer Service emerged as the most efficient factor, achieving a mean score of 3.54. This suggests a solid understanding of customer service principles and their critical role in fostering customer loyalty and driving business success. This finding aligns with existing research highlighting the direct correlation between excellent customer service and positive business outcomes [51]. As one respondent articulated, *"We communicate clearly and respectfully, ensuring customers feel heard and understood."* This excerpt underscores the practical application of core customer service tenets, emphasizing effective communication and empathetic listening.

Inventory Management and Competitive Advantage also demonstrated efficient levels with mean scores of 3.35 and 3.39. This indicates an awareness of the crucial link between effective inventory practices and strategic market positioning. As one respondent said, *"I understand that having the right products available at the right time is crucial for meeting customer demand and maintaining satisfaction"*. This finding aligns with literature emphasizing the role of inventory management in achieving cost efficiency and responsiveness to market demand, thereby contributing to competitive advantage [52].

Space Optimization, while also efficient, had a slightly lower mean score of 3.24. This suggests that while respondents acknowledge the importance of efficient space utilization, there's potential for further development in this area. As stated by one of the respondents, *"I believe we could significantly improve our operations by optimizing our space."* This finding aligns with research that emphasizes the importance of space optimization for streamlining operations, reducing handling costs, and improving overall efficiency [53].

Overall, these results imply that respondents have a strong background in important areas of efficient logistics management, especially inventory control and customer service. Strengthening space optimization and its competitive advantage could enable businesses to fully capitalize on these prospects and achieve success.

3.3. Is there a significant relationship between the efficiency of businesses' logistics management practices and the level of competitive advantage?

Correlation

Table 9 Summary of r and r² DV: Competitive Advantage

IV	r	r ²	p	Interpretation
Inventory Management	0.655	0.429025	<.001	Significant
Customer Service	0.717	0.514089	<.001	Significant
Space Optimization	0.478	0.228484	<.001	Significant
OVERALL (Logistics Management Practice)	0.69	0.4761	<.001	Significant

The correlation analysis reveals a strong positive relationship between efficiency of businesses' logistics management practices and the level of competitive advantage.

Customer Service demonstrates the strongest correlation with competitive advantage, with an r value of 0.717 and an r² value of 0.514089. This indicates that approximately 51.41% of the variance in competitive advantage can be attributed to customer service. This implies that the quality of customer service directly contributes to over half of a business's competitiveness in the market. As said by one of the respondents, *"Our reputation is everything. Good customer service is really important"*. For instance, Islam et al. [54] highlight how strong customer relationships can lead to increased customer loyalty, positive word-of-mouth referrals, and enhanced profitability, all of which contribute to a stronger competitive position.

Inventory Management also shows a positive correlation with competitive advantage, with an r value of 0.655 and an r² value of 0.429025. This suggests that approximately 42.90% of the variance in competitive advantage can be

attributed to inventory management. With this, it indicates that efficient inventory practices play a substantial role in businesses' ability to compete effectively. According to one respondent, *"Effective inventory management helps us avoid stockouts and ensure we can fulfill orders promptly, which is crucial for customer satisfaction and retention"*. This aligns with research highlighting the importance of inventory management in achieving operational efficiency and responsiveness to customer demand, both of which are key drivers of competitive advantage [55].

Space Optimization has a positive correlation with competitive advantage, with an r value of 0.478 and an r^2 value of 0.228484. This indicates that approximately 22.85% of the variance in competitive advantage can be attributed to space optimization. This means that as space optimization improves, competitive advantage tends to improve as well. As stated by one respondent, *"Optimizing space reduces the risk of accidents and injuries, which is important for our employee well-being and can also avoid workplace incidents"*. This focus on efficiency through space optimization is supported by research emphasizing the importance of effective layout and design for minimizing handling costs and maximizing throughput [56].

Overall, the efficiency of logistics management, specifically Inventory Management, Customer Service, and Space Optimization have a substantial impact on Competitive Advantage. As indicated by a correlation coefficient of **0.69**, surpassing the significance level of **0.4761**. This statistical significance implies a notable relationship between overall logistics management efficiency and level of competitive advantage. Therefore, the higher the efficiency of logistics management, the higher the level of competitive advantage. This aligns with Tukamuhabwa et al. 's [57], view that logistics management is a key process for creating customer value and achieving a sustainable competitive advantage.

3.4. Based on the findings of the study, what strategies on logistics management may be proposed?

Findings of the study have revealed that several areas of logistics management practices need improvement. In inventory management, forecasting demand based on historical sales data has yielded the lowest mean performance. To address this, the implementation of a Just-In-Time (JIT) inventory system is proposed. This approach will enable businesses to more effectively align with consumer demand and potentially enhance forecasting accuracy by emphasizing real-time data. Additionally, businesses must prioritize investment in employee training and development, as it has shown the lowest mean score in customer service performance. The proposed strategy is to implement a Customer Feedback System which will offer valuable insights into customer needs and preferences, thereby enhancing employee skills and knowledge to deliver exceptional service. Finally, businesses should integrate customer preferences into their layout and space allocation strategy. It is proposed to implement a formal Space Optimization System, which involves gathering and analyzing customer feedback on store layout. This approach will help businesses to enhance the customer experience and potentially boost sales, while creating a store layout that maximizes space utilization and aligns with customer preferences.

4. Conclusion

- Calapan City refreshment businesses are efficient in inventory management, customer service, and space optimization. They maintain appropriate inventory levels to meet customer demand but may not fully utilize demand forecasting techniques. They focus on friendly, welcoming service, but may need to invest in employee training and development. They recognize the importance of both indoor and outdoor spaces but may not actively seek customer input to optimize their design and layout. To address this, it is recommended that small-scale refreshment businesses in Calapan City should enhance inventory management with demand forecasting, invest in employee training for improved customer service, and actively seek customer feedback on space utilization to optimize their layouts. These improvements will strengthen operations, increase customer satisfaction, and enhance competitiveness.
- Results showed that the refreshment businesses in Calapan City are competitive. This illustrates that they focus on offering quality customer service for customer satisfaction, anticipate future demand to reduce overstocking and stockouts, develop creative solutions in inventory management, and utilize accessible locations for customers and suppliers. In line with this, businesses must consider investing in digital technologies for customer service development to further enhance customer satisfaction and streamline operations. Hence, it is recommended to enhance their competitive edge, Calapan City refreshment businesses should build on their existing strengths by implementing digital tools like customer feedback systems, self-service kiosks, and online ordering/inventory management software. This will streamline operations, improve communication, personalize service, and drive growth in the digital market.
- There is a significant relationship between the logistic management efficiency and the level of competitive advantage of the refreshment businesses. This portrays that efficient logistic management makes their operation run smoothly and ensures customer satisfaction and boost performance, helping it stay ahead of

competitors. Therefore, the higher the efficiency of logistics management, the higher the level of competitive advantage. As this study demonstrates a positive correlation between logistics efficiency and competitive advantage, refreshment businesses should invest in logistics technology and automation, optimize supply chains, prioritize customer-centric logistics, and monitor performance. Continuous improvement through data analysis and trend monitoring will enable businesses to stay competitive and achieve long-term success.

- The proposed logistics strategies encompass several key components designed to optimize operations and enhance the customer experience. These include the implementation of a Just-In-Time (JIT) inventory management system to ensure timely product availability and minimize storage costs, the establishment of a robust customer feedback mechanism to facilitate continuous service improvement, the optimization of store layouts to maximize space utilization and enhance in-store customer flow, and the deployment of targeted online advertising campaigns to expand market reach and drive customer engagement.
- Future researchers can use this study as a reference for research related to Logistics Management. They could investigate other important logistics practices, such as how businesses manage their IT systems for business operations, packaging practices, and order process management to better understand which areas play a big role in giving companies a competitive edge. This can learn more about how logistics can help companies perform better, cut expenses, and differentiate themselves in the marketplace by investigating these additional practices. This would give a more comprehensive understanding of how various logistics strategies affect a business's performance.

Compliance with ethical standards

Acknowledgments

The researchers offer profound gratitude to the Almighty for His divine guidance and unwavering presence throughout this research journey. His grace has been a constant source of strength, illuminating their path and enabling them to overcome the challenges encountered during this endeavor. They acknowledge that without His presence, this work would not have been possible.

The researchers gratefully acknowledge the invaluable contributions of Mr. Russell V. Villarma, MBA, their esteemed thesis adviser. His exceptional mentorship, coupled with his insightful guidance and unwavering support, played a pivotal role in the development of this study exploring the Level of Efficiency of Logistics Management in Achieving Competitive Advantage of Refreshment Businesses in Calapan City. His expertise and constructive feedback helped them refine their research, while his patient encouragement inspired them to pursue excellence and grow as researchers.

The researchers extend their sincere gratitude to their esteemed panel members, Ms. Marife Lopez, MBA; Ms. Cristy Melo, PhD; and Ms. Michelle B. Luzon, MBA, for their invaluable insights and constructive feedback during their thesis defense. Their contributions were crucial in refining their arguments and ensuring the validity and rigor of their research.

This study would not have been possible without the generous contributions of the owners and managers of the refreshment businesses in Calapan City. Their willingness to share their time and expertise through interviews and data provision was instrumental in shaping their understanding of how logistics management contributes to competitive advantage in their industry. Researchers are deeply grateful for their participation.

Finally, the researchers want to thank their families, friends, and colleagues for being there for them throughout this whole process. Their constant support, encouragement, and understanding, along with their patience and helpful feedback, were essential in helping them get through the tough times and stay on track.

Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to disclosure.

Statement of ethical approval

Approval was obtained from all parties involved before data collection to ensure the protection of the respondents' rights and well-being.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all participants included in the study. They were provided with information about the research and its purpose, allowing them to voluntarily participate while keeping their identity anonymous.

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