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A

Business Consultancy Report

On

Supply Chain Challenges Identified at Marks and Spencer

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Executive Summary

Supply chain management is an important aspect for any retail organization to ensure that final product is reached to end consumer successfully. However, lack of sustainable supply chain could impact the operational process negatively specially in retailing business. This report intends to determine how supply chain disruption within Marks & Spencer (M&S) have created issues in their operational services. M&S delivers different product portfolios including clothing, cosmetics, home decor, and food production. As per reports, supply chain process is struggling into the organization because of sales drop in the previous two years. The common challenges identified were lack of sustainability into their warehouse and supply labour shortage. This report's objective is to evaluate different supply chain challenges which could impact company's current business process in near future. Furthermore, to identify mitigation techniques which could help them making solid improvements with suppliers and relationships to customers both.

The company is having issues managing inventories, sustaining operations, and making products available as a result of the decrease in its supply chain. Additionally, the distribution network issue has made it more difficult to keep the company services resilient. The delivery of clothing and household goods to Marks & Spencer was delayed due to logistical difficulties in the UK. The company's equity administration procedure has been impacted by the absence of forecasting in the supply chain process. Due to the fact that the products accessibility may be effectively managed, this has made it difficult to sustain the services of the business operations.

The absence of a supply chain will have an impact on the stakeholders, including the suppliers and employees. The total delivery of the output is hampered by the lack of experience in logistics and transportation. The employment break further worsens the shortage of workers, because encourages employers to hire workers who are underqualified for the job. Since they don't have a healthy work-life balance, individuals will suffer greatly, which will adversely impact the overall quality of the projects. Owing to their poor performances, external stakeholders like suppliers struggle to sustain positive relationships with the company.

The analysis was useful in identifying the key strength of the supply chain network, which is knowledge of the products and their quality, which enhances the effectiveness of selling activities. Nevertheless, the capacity of the online business to meet client demand was a tremendous failure. It is crucial for M&S to integrate new channels since its rivals are launching

and getting successful which might pose a danger. Furthermore, technological factor is mandatory in making improvements for efficiency and performance in stock management and sales operations.

There were several significant recommendations made, such as the use of a sustainability scorecard to monitor the efficiency of supply chain management. To effectively handle inventory control and logistics, technology must be adopted such as demand forecasting and stock journey mapping provides effective vision. Building ties with suppliers and customers was another option for effectively addressing problems. The most recent proposal is a supply chain council programme that maintains regulatory control over business operations strategically. Overall, these changes will help Marks & Spencer to overcome their supply chain concerns and improve business processes in retail successfully.

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Introduction

Marks and Spencer are a very popular retailer for food, clothing, finance, homeware, and energy services among customers across the globe. The portfolio of products consists of different variety including menswear, womenswear, kids, cosmetics, home decoration, footwear and home furnishings (Toms and Zhang, 2016). They themselves market products through online and franchise stores. Furthermore, Marks and Spencer banks provide different financial services such as current account and savings, credit cards, mortgages, and insurance, as well as energy services through fully renewable energy. The firm has operations in different countries including Europe, Asia, and Middle East and its headquarters is situated in London. The revenue generation for Marks and Spencer was 10 billion euros in UK and 900 million euros internationally in the first quarter of 2022 (Smith, 2022).

Marks and Spencer are facing issues in its supply chain process due to sales drop in this firm (Mooney, 2019). Some issues reported include driver, warehouse and supply labour shortage with depletion in sales performance and increasing retailer's pressure for delivery. This report is based on finding challenges that a firm is facing for maintaining the current affairs in its services. The examination of the problems can help in maintain new strategies so that the operations in the business can be done successfully.

This report is consisting of the problems involved in the supply chain of Marks and Spencer. Furthermore, the problem the firm can face in future from the consultant's perspective has been stated in this study. The purpose of this report has been determined. The impact of the issues on stakeholders using stakeholder analysis matrix is made in this current study. The secondary data explores previous research on understanding how challenges could be overcome successfully. Furthermore, recommendations will guide the firm to make new changes and assess their supply chain management for conducting future business operations.

Challenges the Client is Facing

Nature of Challenge: Supply chain and Operational

Marks and Spencer are facing issue in sales drop in clothing and home sales products. This is due to improper availability of supply chain in the firm. It has been observed that 5.5% fall was recorded by M&S in the year 2019 for the limitations in the supply chain (Mooney, 2019).

Scope of Challenge

The reduction in the firm's supply chain has created problems in maintaining the operations appropriately. The availability and complexity in deliveries were found for maintaining the excess stock in the firm. This has created issues in managing the product availability and inventory management in the business firm. The interruption in the supply process has impacted the production process of the business development. Therefore, the involvement of the issue in maintaining the supply chain has affected the operation management in the retail firm. Moreover, the problem in the supply chain has affected maintaining the resilience of the business services. There are challenges faced by UK logistics for which the delay in Supply of clothes and home products was provided to Marks and Spencer (Barker, 2021). This affected the maintenance of supply products in the firm. The impact of the pandemic has emerged inflation, which has affected in managing the retail margins in Marks and Spencer. The lack of forecasting in the supply chain process has affected the stock maintenance process of the firm. This has created problem in maintain the services of the business operations as the availability of the products can be maintained properly. Moreover, in future, the problem of improper supply of the products can impact on the brand reputation as the customers will not get their products properly. This can create a gap in managing the loyalty of the customers in the competitive market. It may also impact on growth environment compliances regulations in Marks and Spencer. Therefore, the demands of the customers are required to be managed with proper inclusion of quality services.

Evidence

Some of major issues identified in the firm's operational processes were reported in previous news reports. CIPS is credible source and working as a global membership firm to report on issues related to procurement and Supply chain practises. The firm have observed customer experience is lower because of lack of waste reduction and no processes adopted for forecasting and stock count management (Donati, 2022). Furthermore, food item supply request needs fresh food preparation which takes more time and increase trading cost. Overall, the purpose is to identify optimising in strategies, and reducing packaging cost from food product portfolio. According to (Green, 2021) logistics have become difficult because of disruptions such as temporary dispatch ports closures, limited sea container, and destination port congestion which create delay in inventory from supplier to inventory to store. Whereas, supply chain concerns in clothing store have created more demands for completion of process source to self. The next report is published by Logistics Manager who works an authentic source being a monthly

magazine for UK industrial, retail, and commercial firms to determine competencies on modern logistics and supply chain management. The report by Mooney (2019) provides that store deliveries within the firm occurs in single which increase operational cost and also disrupt supply chain processes fully.

Project Purpose

The purpose of this report is to find the supply chain challenges which are involved in Marks and Spencer by which the profit generation of the business is getting affected. Supply chain management is a valuable business process because it helps to advantage over competitors, increase customer value, and cost efficiency. As suggested by Raut *et al.* (2019), the analysis of the issue from the perspective of business management provides a clear view. This increases the quality and the scalability of the report. The identification of the problem in Marks and Spencer has raised awareness among the management so that they can apply proper opportunities to manage the business operations appropriately. This helps in securing the strategies of the firm to manage the business in the competitive market. The involvement of the stakeholder analysis can help in analysing the effects of the issues on them. This will help in maintaining supply chain management services so that business management can get improved in the firm.

Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholders Associated with the Challenge

Stakeholder analysis helps in understanding the influences of the people in business development process. As per the views of Geldres-Weiss *et al.* (2021), the inclusion of stakeholder analysis can help in determining the strategic views of the individuals and issues that are included in the project. For the problems involved in Marks and Spencer with the supply chain management, the main stakeholders are customers, suppliers, CEO and employees. Among these stakeholders' employees and CEO are the internal stakeholders. However, customers and supplier are the external stakeholders for this firm. The employees are facing challenges in providing the appropriate stocks of the products to the customers. Moreover, the CEO has faced loss in sales due to delay in sales in Marks and Spencer (Barker, 2021). Significant improvement in the availability of the products for the customers is important for maintaining peak trading for the development of the performance of the employee. This has impacted the employees to manage their interest in the firm.

The supply chain issue is one the most potential issues that are required to be solved in a short duration of time to maintain the business development in the firm. The late supplying of the products is creating loss in the business. The problem in retaining the services of the firm can be managed through the inclusion of proper remedies by which supply management problems can get reduced (Sharma, 2020). For Marks and Spencer, the suppliers are required to be closely managed to mitigate the issues. Moreover, the inclusion of transport optimisation process for managing the flow of good can be beneficial for the firm. The lack of availability of the products is reducing the visits of the customers in Marks and Spencer. This is impacting on the sustaining the customers for a long duration of time in the firm. Therefore, modernizing and integrating the network of the supply chains can help in maintaining the services of the firm. This can help in managing the demands of the customers can help in mitigating loss of supply in the firm.

Power/Interest Grid

<u>High Power, Low Interest</u> Supplier	<u>High Power, High Interest</u> CEO Sponsors
<u>Low Power, Low Interest</u> Employees	<u>Low Power, High Interest</u> Customers

- High Power, High Interest: The CEO and sponsors will be affected more because performance degrade will increase their value into competitive sphere.
- High Power, Low Interest: The suppliers will cut off to provide materials to the firm and shift with other competitors which decrease supplier relationships.
- Low Power, Low Interest: The employees will not leave the firm as there is no scope for improvement or change in supply chain operations.
- Low Power, High Interest: The customer demands good quality product and will be more affected as they will not have proper demands for product and services.

Stakeholder Assessment

The CEO of the firm aims to accomplish customer demands for matching unrealistic target for which pressure is built on management internally and suppliers externally. Furthermore, a poor

supply chain performance could impact employees' performance negatively by losing them to the competitors. According to (Sutia et al., 2020), supply chain performance provides a background on firm environment, their work conditions, behaviours and perception change in the employees as per the work in Marks and Spencer operations. The employee cut-off also increases labour shortage which as a result employs people who lack skills for workload (Wilshaw et al., 2021). The cut down on operational stores by the firm in aligning supply chain management have provided dropout of employees working for many years.

The lack of experience in logistics and transportation create issue in overall production delivery. Employees will go through major deficit as they don't have work life balance and could hamper project quality negatively. The external stakeholder such as the suppliers is having problem in maintaining good relationship with the firm due to lack of their performances. As per previous research accomplished (Wilshaw et al., 2021), Marks and Spencer and their supplier managers have found overtime and stress as primary impact. The different brands offered by the firm focuses on price and have reduced time for production and supply which decreases opportunity to become more flexible.

Evaluation and Analysis with secondary data

Supply chain management for the firm Marks and Spencer have found major issues into their logistics, depleting cost, and overall transportation process. To determine how these challenges are resolved it is important to analyse current supply chain processes for the firm. The secondary data analysis evaluation is helpful to evaluate current supply chain processes and identify where a need to change in required for better performance as in domain of retail business.

Evaluation of Secondary Data

SWOT Analysis

SWOT stands for Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat analysis which is adopted as analytical tool for secondary data evaluation. The SWOT approach will help in understanding supply chain effectiveness and applicability in addressing short- and long-term firm's cost objectives at Marks and Spencer.

Strengths

- **Product Knowledge:** Marks and Spencer have full knowledge to how a high-end value product will target customers. The firm sell products with a strong brand image and

clothing is customized as sophisticated, stylish, and modern with customer's demand for product. Furthermore, the firm provide food product is provided as per customers requirement through a differentiated specialist strategy.

- **Quality of Product:** Marks and Spencer have rich quality products which are sold into the marketplace. There quality of clothing is very unique due to large range of branded collaboration. The material and texture of product as within standards due to wide range of brands in the UK. For instance, different brands from designers are sold into stores including North Coast, Autograph, Collezione, Big & Tall, Blue Harbour, Indigo collection, Portfolio, Classic, Per Una, and Limited Collection (Price, 2022).
- **Capital Situation:** Marks and Spencer are just not expanded into UK, however international expansion is accomplished with help of franchise agreements, retail businesses, retail joint ventures. As per estimation around 1463 outlets are globally and 1035 in the UK itself merged with online and physical stores (Wilshaw et al., 2021). Furthermore, it operates in 59 territories such as Europe, Asia and the Middle East, India and food business growth in Hong Kong and Europe. The capital investment made in past 2 years have found 11% trade growth after opening of 10 new regional stores (Marks and Spencer Group, 2022).

Weaknesses

- **Scalability in Supply Chain:** Supply chain is poor and previously failed to offer merchandise for international access on online stores. For example, the product viability was missing at stores of Marks and Spencer on Christmas season as demand of food and clothing was not accomplished in the year 2017.
- **Lack of Resources:** The resources for effective supply chain are missing because currently firm does not have accurate channel plans and an effective system configuration which could track stock journeys from port to customer through stock holding and consolidation points properly (Marks and Spencer Group, 2022). The stock trap will create an issue for company to manage properly and implement legacy system approach.

Opportunities

- **Brand Expansion:** The expansion of brand should be done by opening store in different countries such as India, Russia, Brazil, Poland, and Indonesia (Marks and Spencer

Group, 2022). The opening of online stores focusing on ethnic and culture-based wear would be new opportunity.

- **Adoption of Modern Technologies:** The supply chain for food business is poor and generate food waste. An opportunity will be developing a system that describe forecasting, space, range, and ordering process to improve customer demand on particular product (Marks and Spencer Group, 2022). Hence, a modern approach will be helpful to make changes into speed, operational effectiveness, availability and cut-off from costs.
- **New Legislation:** The code of conduct for improved supply chain operations should be provided to suppliers and third parties with external publications.

Threats

- **High Competition:** The competitors into retail business in the UK have very structured supply chain network. The other brands will increase and capitalize market as Marks and Spencer have fellow competitors including Amazon, Tesco, John Lewis, ASDA, Debenhams, Sainsbury, Sports Direct, Morrisons, Gap, and Next (Kapustina et al., 2018). The shutting off stores into UK, France, and China will drop position of company negatively.

PESTLE Analysis

The supply chain and operational issues have occurred within Marks and Spencer which are affected by several factors. The PESTLE analysis has been adopted to understand the current situation of supply chain framework and new issues which could appear if factors impact negatively.

Political Factors:

The political factor such as the European Commission's free trade agreements have affected the firm positively by making product import easy and reduction in source costs. On the contrary, British EU referendum published on 23 June 2016 made a drop in the sales process; as well as market share loss while seeking place into new market was also responsible due to cost structure (Addison, 2016). In addition to this, in 2016 some of stores were closed due to lack of growth into new market with global uncertainties. Hence, a new political change or policy have affected company's growth negatively. The green strategy approach provided by

Marks and Spencer does not incline with UK's energy efficiency scheme also known as the green deal, and sudden changes into green measures legislation.

Economic Factors:

Marks and Spencer have always focused on bringing higher quality products and consumer satisfaction their major priority even in time of financial crisis. Sales was decreased shortly but created a strong presence into UK customers for receiving clothing which is valuable and is quality oriented. The strategy for economic revenue was helpful in earning marketplace with improved sales into countries such as India, and Hong Kong. However, it changed since the pandemic have occurred company have found tremendous concerns such as macroeconomic issues, falling commodity prices, fluctuations and a sudden drop following the Brexit vote which decreased consumer interest. As per (Wood, 2022) lockdown closed Marks and Spencer clothing selling space which found reduction in sales around £600m in the six months to 26 September as well as loss of clothing with turnover of £917m, compared with £1.55bn this time last year, and making a £107m loss. The logistics was difficult and lockdown stopped customer demands from reaching of supplies from online and offline stores both.

Social Factors:

The social values are changing with generation shift as youngsters are more interested in buying product and service through online platforms. The consumer behaviour of each generation is different through shopping process, channels, and technology for product accessibility. For improving supply chain customer demands should be taken into consideration within context of Marks and Spencer for higher and lower quality products. Presently company should adopt a framework which address all the requirements of customer as per target groups with changing culture. Marks and Spencer have developed a Plan A as strategic sustainability plan which focuses on building relationships with customers and suppliers and the communities in which operations are undertaken to improve supply chain process (Wilson and Beard, 2014). However, lack of understanding on consumer preferences have made it difficult to improve quality of product as per generational demand.

Technological Factors:

The shopping experience within and their online clothing business could be improved through adoption of new technology by integration of mobile, and online platform as compared with physical experience due to ease of use, and convenience of door step delivery (Noh and Lee,

2018). The multichannel delivery platforms are required so that company could improve their distribution process. The supply chain is poor because of lack of technology associated systems such as for stock journeys, and demand forecasting. However, launch of big data projects and predictive analytics systems are developed which helps consumer assistance and their demand for new change.

Legal Factors

Marks and Spencer will get affected negatively with different legal factors including lack of Health and safety regulations, consumer rights, environmental and antitrust policies. For example, Behind the Barcode have provided the customers an omni-channel benefit by offering them to order items online for doorstep delivery and in-store collection through product-in store scan (Corporate M&S, 2022). However, with this method if implemented globally legal issues could appear if laws and regulations are not followed to a specific region. The UK have adopted to exit the EU which have created legal issues as people cannot access product or service from common market which decrease sales and overall supply chain framework (Gysegom et al., 2019). Henceforth, legal concerns are arrived because accessibility for product expansion is strongly opposed with this change.

Environmental Factors:

The Marks and Spencer have adopted an environmental and ethical plan which helps them to conduct business operations in and outside the company for ethical sourcing, waste reduction and accomplishing stakeholder requirements. However, European and international rules and regulations related to environment must adhere so that business practises are done successfully. The negative effects for lack of environmental policies could create issue with supply chain operations such as environmental pollution energy consumption and carbon emissions (Mukhtar, et al., 2019). The supply chain process will be at halt because emissions observed in logistics and transportation process could impact adversely.

Analysis and Summary of Results

As per analysis, the key challenge identified for the company Marks and Spencer is its poor supply chain management framework. Due to this issue, company have closed many of their existing stores located into UK. Furthermore, logistics and transportation have become difficult to operate within the management process. The food products of Marks and Spencer supply chain are also lower because of complexity in keeping products with limited shelf lives. The

lack of forecasting and stock allocation system are also responsible for inventory control. In addition to this, lack of clothing, home, and food product supply on-time could result in brand reputation and decrease customer loyalty immensely. Some major key factors or forces that have created supply chain and operational disruption at Marks and Spencer includes lack of technological support system, pandemic raise in inflation, no forecasting operations, shift in government regulations such as British EU referendum, and lack of sustainable practises. Furthermore, major resources are not presented within the company which makes their sales a huge drop. The customer delivery model and practise should have improvement which could result in more sales.

The key actors for this supply chain framework are the brands who work as producer of offering clothing and work with the company to sell their product and service. Marks and Spencer are retailer who will provide this product and service to the customers. Lastly, customers who will buy products and services from the company related to clothing, home appliances, decoration, and food products are major receiver who would like to have quality-oriented products as per demands. All key actors impact supply chain process if they do not have stakeholder requirements accomplished successfully.

The company have not manufactured any of products and completely dependent on their suppliers. Due to this reason, it is extremely important to develop relationships with suppliers by collaboration to earn sustainability. With help of such framework, M&S will have several benefits such as innovations with optimized packaging, load sharing in transportation, improvisation into product development, reduction of Environmental and social risks, effective material sourcing, adoption of high labour standards management of supply and reputational risks.

Recommendations

Sustainability scorecard

Marks and Spencer have adopted a silver for their sustainability card in terms of product volume received by suppliers. Sustainability scorecard was helpful to bring all suppliers together by offering them a best practice (Barry and Esta Ellis, 2017). Furthermore, it focuses on three important changes in production process including environment, lean manufacturing and ethical implications. However, the sustainability scorecard as a supply chain practise is not helpful for suppliers to check and adapt with control over operations. A recommendation will

be changing scorecard method by fixing what measures must be required by suppliers to become adaptable for the practise.

Technological adoption

Technology will be a valuable resource for making improvements in inventory control of supply chain management process at Marks and Spencer's food product delivery. For example, adoption of RFID technology, blockchain, big data, and Internet of things are helpful in making supply chain framework successful as compared with traditional excel based operations. As per Xu and Zhao (2016), RFID technology will provide retailers to determine exact location and quantity for inventory which end up in completion of customer demands for products such as food items, clothing brands, and other home décor items. The chance for fraud and security threats will be reduced in traditional SCM adopted by company by adoption of blockchain by (Agarwal et al., 2022). This technology approach will help in building transparency in transaction authority verification successfully. Henceforth, planning and production allocation method such as Plan for Every Part and Every Part Every Interval will provide M&S to gather supply chain concerns and design production process with on-time delivery structure.

Demand forecasting for inventory control

The company could make optimization into their inventory process as they are facing issues with higher cost to store clothing and other material inventory. With advance of AI and machine learning demand forecasting platform will be another recommendation that should be adopted by Marks and Spencer. The demand forecasting platform will conduct assessment on qualitative and quantitative forecasting to gather data sources for supply chain framework. The social media trends, news reports, competitor research, customer feedback and preferences will help to produce stock market journeys (Husna et al., 2021). The adoption of analytics platform with technology integration will implement accuracy level in supply chain maintenance.

Building Supplier Relationships

The supplier relationships should be built with transparency and clearance on what is actually required in delivery of food products as well as clothing and other projects undertaken at Marks and Spencer. The recommendation is to build an open communication supplier network in which they are provided with objectives and plans on certain product portfolio (Phan et al., 2019). The online portal offers a way to keep track record with different suppliers and grouped as per portfolio categories. Marks and Spencer provide communication with suppliers where all the documents related to policies and practise guidance are offered them. However, sourcing

practices and complete understanding on required objectives is still incomplete for which new transformations are mandatory.

Adaption of supply chain council

One of the recommendations for retail business such as Marks and Spencer are to develop a supply chain council by adoption of model which helps to structure the supply chain operations in a successful manner. Furthermore, a council approach helps the company to understand how to improve process, seek customer demands into consideration, take supply chain strategic decision making, adoption of process re-engineering, benchmarking, and measurement successfully (Chopra et al., 2022). Hence, supply chain operations reference model is proposed which will address, improve and communicate supply chain initiatives into the firm to suppliers and customers both.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the inclusion of supply chain management problems in Marks and Spencer is due to loss of sales in the firm. This creates challenges in delivering the products from the suppliers to the retail shop at the appropriate time. The lack of availability of the products is affecting the fundamental process of the firm. Including stakeholder analysis has helped in finding the effects of the problems among the critical stakeholders of the firm. The customer, employees, and suppliers are the primary stakeholders affected by this problem. The involvement of optimised network in the firm with the suppliers can help in maintaining the values of the product in the business processes. The styles and availability of the products is important for maintaining replenishment of the systems in the firm. Thus, the potentiality for enduring the loss in the business requires cost reduction and store technology is required.

In addition to this, secondary data collection and analysis was accomplished by applying analytical models such as SWOT and PESTLE analysis to review supply chain management process within the organization. SWOT was helpful in determining major strength of supply chain network which is understanding of product knowledge and product quality which makes the selling operations more successful. However, online store capability in offering customer demand was huge failure. As the competitors are launching new channels it is important for M&S to implement or they could be potential threat. PESTLE analysis was helpful in conducting how factors could impact or improve company's supply chain network if adopted correctly. For example, political shift will create loss in sales whereas, economic conditions since pandemic have created shortage for buying process. Hence, to overcome these challenges,

supply chain sustainability should be primary focus area. Some important recommendations identified were sustainability scorecard, technological adoption, demand forecasting and legacy planning for inventory control, building supplier relationships, and supply chain council programme.

Assignments Help Provider

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