

The Competitiveness of Nations: Literature Review

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Abstract:- Countries strive to ensure that they are and remain competitive. Many countries such as Germany, Denmark, United States of America, South Korea, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland and Japan have employed strategies to ensure that the local product are competitive against those from other countries. These countries adopted the Porters’ Diamond Model to ensure that they have a competitive edge. Porters’ Diamond Model is made up of the following four (4) factors; demand conditions, related and supporting industries, factor conditions and organization, strategy, structure and rivalry. The manipulation of these factors helps countries improve their competitiveness.

Keywords:- Competitiveness; Strategies; Quality; Positions.

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Manda (2018), the more prominent percentage of business related concepts have been just centered on cost and another hypothesis was fundamental that should pull in an exhaustive comprehension of rivalry that contains segmented markets, products which are differentiated, the innovative differences and economies of scale. He proposed this new theoretical concept is able to evaluate why imports have effective strategies over local manufacturers. For this reason, Porter (1990) made an assessment in ten nations (USA, Germany, Denmark, South Korea, Britain, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, Japan and Singapore) including distinctive financial qualities of 100 divisions for a period of four (4) years in an attempt to discover the components that decide the seriousness of countries and sub-segments to come up with the factors that determines how competitive countries are with regard to the local brands.

II. THE PORTERS’ DIAMOND MODEL

Manda (2018) searched for an answer as to why few countries’ brands are more competitive than others. He likewise attempted to clarify how firms increase prevalent situations in specific divisions of the nation on worldwide intensity, hence him coining the Diamond model to recognize factors favoring the positions of competitive nations and segments, and to make the hypothetical underpinnings of this interaction of countries and industry competitiveness themes because of his investigation. The model makes a structure that

decides the standards of rivalry in an industry and makes it imperative to have tasks to carry to ensure firms in the sector can have a long-term competitive edge.

Porter's Diamond is one of the most well-known and commonly used frameworks for analyzing a country's competitive advantage (Angwin, Cummings, & Smith, 2011). Despite criticism for its methodological consistency and the validity of some of its key components, the frameworks remain a standard bearer for study. Porter (1990) related the determinants of nations’ competitiveness to the Diamond theory. The diamond model is made up of the following four (4) factors; demand conditions, related and supporting industries, factor conditions and organization, strategy, structure and rivalry.

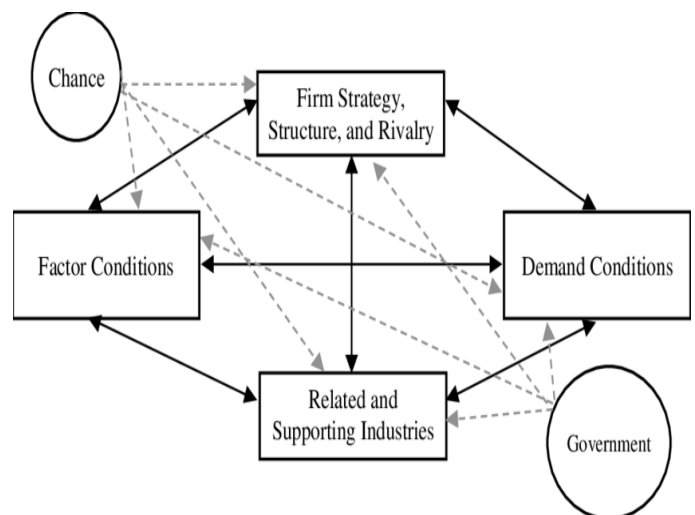


Fig 1: Porters’ Diamond model
Source: Porter (1990)

A. Demand conditions

The second major factor of national competitive advantage, according to Manda (2018), was the demand conditions that revealed the nature of local demand. This is one of the most fascinating aspects because it pertains to the nature of consumers in the local market. Demand circumstances in a specific industry are the pressures brought on by consumer demands for products, prices, and services. Demand influences the formation of certain factor conditions.

They affect the rate of innovation and its impact on regional brands. For instance, Japanese car buyers put pressure on the industry to make products that meet certain customer-required standards by imposing strict rules on the manufacturers of Japanese cars. Due to this, the sector is better able to compete with imported brands. Demand conditions are assessments of the public's interest in a unit's research, and they can be understood in terms of a unit's success at disseminating research and attracting funding and people to assure investigation. Jin & Moon (2006) postulate that the size of the country's market and the buyer's or customers level of maturity are known to constitute demand conditions. In other words, corporations would spend money to attain economies of scale if their home or local market was large enough. For businesses to satisfy the most sophisticated and demanding clients in the world, they must uphold high standards and modernize their operations to adapt to substantial obstacles (Deniz, Seckin, & Cureuglu, 2013).

B. The local demand conditions

According to Manda (2018), the local demand aspect is made up of the three characteristics namely; the divided structure of demand, the sophistication of buyers and trying to be futuristic about the consumer demands. Nisipeanu (2013) agrees with Porter (1990) when he posits that a nation's brands become competitive when there is effective segmentation of the local market, differentiation of products and the reduction in the manufacturing costs. Nisipeanu (2013) citing Cojalu (1997) states that the Government is supposed to come up with regulations that supports the local industry especially in the areas of the local manufacturers' competence. This can be enhanced through allowing the local manufacturers to create effective networks with the manufacturing value chain.

Nisipeanu (2013) further clarifies that countries do have reasonable competitive advantage only when the perceived local demand affords the local manufacturers a clear understanding of the consumers demands better than the foreign manufacturers would understand. The clearer knowledge of the customers' demands would enhance the local firms' competitiveness against foreign brands. Porter (1990) contends that the sophistication of the demand, as opposed to the demand measure or magnitude, is significantly more crucial. Because producing high-quality products becomes a clear goal for industry players if they are to withstand the strain of competition, an industry is pushed to be innovative if there is sophisticated demand and a demanding market.

C. The demand size and growth potential

Kharub & Sharma (2016) suggest that the demand size of the local market gives an absolute advantage on the local firms to innovate and satisfy it before the foreign firms with competing brands come in. The advantage only comes in when the local demand encourages growth through investment. When there are a lot of customers demanding the product, it forces the industry players to be innovative in the quest to satisfy the customers. The early local demand has the ability to foster quick investment by local industry players than the foreign rivals which further supports early saturation and increase in support of local firms by the local manufacturers.

D. Related and support industries

Shuster & Dogl (2012) posit that countries become competitive when there is an establishment of supporting industries to those in manufacturing. This is only made possible when there is a manufacturing industry ready to create strong value chains with supporting industries. According to Chinomona & Maziriri (2017), the governments' support towards local industries can never be over emphasized. In South Africa and Ghana for example, the governments stimulated the demands and the manufacturing of quality products by local firms through policy and legal frameworks which makes foreign brands to be unaffordable, which initiatives have been supported by the buy local campaigns such as Proudly South African. The Zambian situation seem to be a different matter as government seem to be passive in the support of local brands.

E. Factor conditions

Factor conditions are enablers for any industry to be competitive. According to Karkkainen (2008), factor conditions are a compulsory element to be considered if an industry is to be competitive in any given nation. The competitiveness of an industry is mostly determined by the availability of the resources that favors the production of the required products. Porter (1990) posits that there are two important factors under factor conditions that are needed for an industry to be competitive and these are; basic factors and advanced factors.

According to Porter (1990), basic factors are factors such as the natural resources, land, climate and demographics. These are factors that have little effect on the competitiveness of a firm or nation. The advanced factors which are regarded as important to the firm or nation's competitiveness include skilled labor, specialist knowledge and capital. Karkkainen (2008) posit that manipulating the advanced factors enhances the company's competitive advantage.

F. Government's role

Porter (1990) stated that the Government plays a critical role in supporting the local industries to become competitive. The Government has an influence on the international competitiveness of a firm. The freedom of foreign firms in a country has more to do with the tolerance of the Government. Davis & Ellis (2000) posit that for the local firms to be competitive, the Government have a role to help promote the local products and services within the country and in an international market.

Many Governments have introduced an initiative through buy local campaigns to help promote local products within a nation as they also encourage exporting into international markets. According to Shuster & Dogl (2012), the Government has an ability to influence the demand conditions and industry competition within a country, sometimes through policy guidance.

G. Chance for local firms

Porter (1990) postulates that chance refers to unpredictability of occurring events that are not under the control of the company. The discontinuities caused by chance

might result in advantages for some businesses and drawbacks for other ones, making them crucial for maintaining global competitiveness. Businesses may gain favorable situations while others may lose. The firm or nations' competitiveness is as a result of being quick in innovating than others. Davis & Ellis (2000) posit that the swiftness of firms in a particular industry to come up with innovation to meet the changing customer needs makes the companies have a competitive advantage the competitors. This therefore entails that investing in innovation gives an industry a competitive advantage against its competitors.

H. Firm strategy, structure and rivalry

Manda (2018) states that the country's competitive advantage also comes from local company's strategies, structure and rivalry. For the companies to effectively compete, Porter (1990) suggests that they are supposed to come up with effective marketing strategies and structures. The internal or local rivalry forces the firms to be innovative, hence producing quality products.

III. DIAMOND MODEL FOR GERMANY AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Michael Porter is recognized as a leading expert on national strategic policy and, more recently, the application of competitive analysis to the social and environmental aspects of business operations. Porter (1990) developed a model that is generally accepted and used to assess a country's competitive advantage. The following is an illustration of the framework has been used in Germany on the automotive industry;

A. Factor conditions for Germany automotive industry

Some countries have thrived on factor conditions, such as Germany which has science and engineering schools or Universities that support the development of a highly skilled, competent, and productive workforce (Nair, Ahlstrom, & Filer, 2007). This plentiful human capital enables ongoing evolution at a rate that competitors will find challenging to match. Germany as a country has professional engineers from renowned local universities and the government has been emphasizing on scientific research, which has helped in enhancing the quality production of products in the automobile industry.

B. Demand conditions for German automotive industry

German consumers have high standards for contemporary, innovative, high-performance vehicles (Zhang, 2019). There are some demand requirements for German homebuyers. Local purchasers want more powerful or quick cars because some areas of Germany do not have speed limits. As a result, the sector has been attempting to create new engines to satisfy customers' needs and fulfill specific goals.

C. Related and supported industries for German automotive industry

In Germany, the steel and iron sector is closely related to the automobile sector and supports the it, which enhances the supply of the high-quality materials required for production of quality and required cars (Dogl, Holtbrugge, & Schuster,

2012). In order to fulfill the demand for ongoing innovation, Germany has a sizable IT infrastructure. The automotive industry in German has been receiving support from Banks for capital, improved levels of education that produces highly skilled labor force, components suppliers and a strong IT infrastructure. Siemens, for example, uses technology to provide creative IT solutions and performance improvements (Siemens, 2019).

D. Firm structure and rivalry for German automotive industry

The competition that propels innovation and quality in the domestic market is normally brought by the local companies strategies. Businesses typically invest in research and innovation to avoid falling into a strategic wear-out when there is fierce competition and rivalry among industry participants in the local market. The reason behind investing in R & D is to out-compete each other by creating more creative and high-quality goods and services. According to Zhang (2019), there is a lot of competition between Mercedes, BMW and VW. The existing fierce competitions combined with strong customer standards foster greater innovation and quality in the quest to satisfy the consumer's needs.

E. Government's role in the German's automotive industry

Government is essential to the growth of every industry. By encouraging and sponsoring scientific study as well as starting the construction of more roads and canals in the nineteenth century, the government significantly contributed to creating the regional advantage. The German government committed €3 billion to research initiatives in 2017, proving its support for both education and research (FMF, 2017). In addition to this, Zhang (2019) posit that the German government has also made investments in road infrastructure, especially non-speed-limited autobahns. This commitment by the government in German helped the development of the automotive industry. It is easier to comprehend why Germany's luxury high-powered vehicle manufacturing business has a regional edge when all of these Porter's Diamond elements are well manipulated to advantage the industry.

F. Chance in the German automotive industry

The "Worldwide Harmonized Light Vehicle Test Procedure," a new piece of law adopted by the European Union, is a more serious and trustworthy method of measuring CO2 emissions (Gospadinova & Miccoli, 2020). Real pollution will probably lead to higher production and consumer taxes. As a result, the market for greener, more efficient automobiles is currently shifting in favor of them, particularly in the EU. This legislation to a larger extent has been behind the innovative improvement by the local automotive industry players in German.

Many car manufacturers have suppliers in Germany who can purchase parts from them. Volvo, for example, buys parts from Brose, a German manufacturer, such as windows, door panels, and seats (Brose, 2016). As a result, Germany's highly trained workforce aids global competitors. In these circumstances, Dogl, Holtbrugge, and Schuster (2012) advise businesses to assess their competitive advantage in both their own nation and the foreign country using a "double-diamond"

strategy. German producers, however, are not completely reliant on the domestic market. Mercedes, for instance, purchases cylinder heads from the Mexican manufacturer Nemak (Brandstetter, 2014).

IV. PORTER'S DIAMOND MODEL FOR BANGLADESH'S READY-MADE GARMENTS (RMG) SECTOR

In Bangladesh, the market for ready-made clothing (RMG) has been one of the main economic drivers. It generates the majority of the nation's export revenue, making up 84.21% of all export revenue (BGMEA, 2020). Additionally, the industry has taken steps to increase its competitiveness on a global scale. WTO (2019) posit that Bangladesh has in the recent past overtaken China as the world's second-largest apparel exporter. In their study, Chowdhury & Zabeen (2020) used porter's diamond model to evaluate Bangladesh's global competitiveness with specific consideration to the RMG industry.

A. Factor conditions for Bangladesh's RMG Sector

Different nations have different endowments of elements or resources like land, labor, and money (Hill, 2011). Due to the softness of the fabric, which makes production automation challenging, the RMG business mainly relies on labor-based assembly (Kabeer & Mahmud, 2004). Human resources continue to be a key component in the sector's performance in boosting its competitiveness as a labor-intensive industry. There is no requirement for personnel with technical or complicated abilities because garment production involves jobs that are relatively low-skilled (Acevedo & Robertson, 2016). The nation's Gross National Income (GNI) per person reached \$500 in 2004. (The World Bank, 2020). And about 50% of people were living in poverty at the start of the new millennium. Bangladesh's unemployment rate has been below 5% since 1991 (The World Bank, 2019), however when underemployment is taken into account, the picture is different. According to BBS (2011), Bangladesh's underemployment rate was 20.31% in 2010. Anyone who is employed but puts in fewer than 35 hours per week is said to be underemployed.

According to the World Economic Forum (2019), Bangladesh has had poor infrastructure amenities, which has made it difficult for almost all firms to run effectively there. The research also shows that, in terms of infrastructure quality, the nation comes in at number 114 out of 141, with the electricity crisis topping the list of issues. According to the World Bank (2013), there is a considerable gap between the demand for electricity and the capacity of the grid, which frequently results in power outages that seriously reduce productivity. The textile factories reported 61 power disruptions on average each month, with each outage costing them 4.7% of annual sales and lasting an average of 1.1 hours.

According to the World Economic Forum (2019), Bangladesh is ranked 108th in the world where road quality is concerned. The country has poor quality road network which doesn't support efficient movement, hence reducing the competitiveness of many industries. Another critical

infrastructure feature is the port facility. Bangladesh is ranked 92 in the world for port infrastructure quality (World Economic Forum, 2019). While port facilities are better than other infrastructural facilities, they do not support or enhance many local industries competitiveness. In Bangladesh, it is evidenced that the local infrastructure has hampered the RMG sector's competitiveness.

B. Demand conditions for Bangladesh's RMG Sector

According to Porter (1990), the conditions of domestic demand for the goods or services of an industry will result in the establishment of a national competitive advantage. Porter (1990) believes that the competitive advantage of an industry or sector comes from affluent and demanding local consumers, despite the fact that he acknowledges that the size and growth rate of the domestic market are significant in developing an industry. The local consumers put pressure on local businesses to continually innovate and improve quality, features, and service standards which to a larger extent results into competitiveness of businesses.

Before the shift to ready-made clothing quickened in the early 1990s, Bangladeshis used to buy unstitched clothing and commission local tailors to create ensembles for them (Islam, Azim, Anwar, & Uddin, 2014). Bangladesh was previously categorized as a low-income nation, but it was later changed to a lower-middle-income nation (The World Bank, 2016). The World Bank estimates that 31.5% of Bangladesh's population is impoverished as of 2011. This shows that about a third of people regularly struggle to achieve their basic necessities. It is therefore far too idealistic to anticipate complexity and demand from this audience. This offers yet another convincing indication that domestic demand conditions had nothing to do with Bangladesh's RMG sector's competitive edge.

C. Related and supporting industries for Bangladesh's RMG Sector

According to Khan & Molla (2014), the existence of globally or locally competitive supplier industries or associated industries helps to form a competitive sector. They also stress the significance of supporting and connected industries. A sector's competitiveness is increased when it has a large number of providers. Related industries, or those that share a characteristic or business line, can offer some advantages. Similar industries frequently work together on initiatives and even form alliances in an effort to increase competitiveness. The core textiles sector (suppliers of yarn and fabric), the apparel and textile machines sector, and the accessories sector all support the RMG market. Synthetic fibers and home textiles (such as producers of bedspreads, curtains, and pillow coverings) are connected enterprises.

A study by Mahmud (2019) found that local suppliers could satisfy 90% of the demand for knitwear and 40% of the demand for woven clothing. Just 5% of the fabric required by RMG companies with an eye toward export was provided by the primary textiles sector in 1993–1994; however, by 1998–1999, this figure had increased to 19%. (Quasem, 2002). According to these data, the expansion of the primary textiles industry was driven by the rise in demand for fabric and yarn

in the RMG sector. Bangladesh is fully dependent on imports for apparel and textile machines as well as spare components (Haque, 2008).

The accessory sector experienced a remarkable expansion, going from 17 enterprises in 1991 to 1733 firms in 2019 (BGAPMEA, 2020). Previously reliant on imports, the sector became self-sufficient and started to gain from exports (Khan & Molla, 2014). Home textile exports reached a total of \$851.72 million in 2018–19 (Mamun, 2020), up from \$75.6 million in 2001–2002. (Fair Wear Foundation, 2013). Since it helped establish the primary textiles industry, which in turn helped the home textiles industry grow and become more competitive, one could say that the RMG sector has indirectly aided the growth of the home textiles business. It is obvious that none of the pertinent industries supported the competitiveness of the RMG industry.

D. Firm strategy, structure and rivalry for Bangladesh's RMG Sector

The primary driver of a nation's competitive advantage in a given market is competition (Porter, 1990). Due to fierce domestic competition, businesses are forced to grow outside of their own markets. As mentioned in "Demand Conditions," the local market for ready-made clothing expanded nearly ten years after Bangladesh started exporting clothing to other countries, demonstrating unequivocally that domestic rivalry had no impact on the development of the RMG business. Additionally, overseas businesses joined the local competition (Mirdha, 2015). The Keraniganj apparel hub, which served the majority of the domestic RMG market, has no official export connection, according to the CBSG (2015) study. It is evident that the RMG industry did not grow as a result of regional rivalry as a result.

As of 2019, Bangladesh had 4621 garment manufacturers based on exports, according to BGMEA (2020). Compared to other nations that produce clothing, the country's garment factories are often more larger (Fair Wear Foundation, 2013). According to a McKinsey & Company analysis from 2013, Bangladesh exports more clothing than nations with bigger manufacturers, like India (11,000 factories) and Pakistan (7500 factories). Bangladesh has a strong position in the global market thanks to its great production potential. The majority of the factories in Bangladesh's RMG sector are owned by local businesspeople, making the sector almost totally private. On the other hand, multinational companies control large plants. 25 of the major factories outside the EPZs are owned by foreigners (UNCTAD, 2012).

Numerous benefits resulted from the involvement of foreign businesses. In the beginning, multinational corporations had a better grasp of the global market because of their expanded global reach and familiarity with a range of countries. Additionally, they had better partnership networks in place. Additionally, their presence aroused the attention of international purchasers to Bangladesh as a viable sourcing location. Additionally, the sector rose to prominence across the globe as a result of international businesses setting a benchmark for quality and efficiency in both manufacturing and management. Last but not least, they pushed their

international suppliers to build facilities in Bangladesh, allowing the sector to integrate backwards.

E. The role of Government and Chance in Bangladesh's RMG Sector

Despite playing a crucial role in the national climate, Porter (1990) considered government to be a factor of national competitive advantage in his conceptual analysis. Instead, he views the government as a force that shapes the national gem. He asserts that regulations, legislation, and directives supporting or opposing the national diamond are how the government achieves this. He adds chance to the list of driving forces on the national diamond, arguing it can alter the competitiveness of an industry.

The competitiveness of the RMG industry has been significantly impacted by the government (Ahmed, Greenleaf, & Sacks, 2014; Ahamed, 2013). The industry was able to expand its industrial infrastructure while preserving price competitiveness in the early years because to reduced tariffs on capital equipment and raw materials (Yunus & Yamagata, 2012). By cutting operational expenses, special bonded warehousing facilities for duty-free fabric and accessory imports increased the sector's output (Ahmed, Greenleaf, & Sacks, 2014).

The back-to-back loan facilities also helped early participants get working capital financing. RMG clusters were created as a result of foreign direct investment drawn by EPZs (Ahamed, 2013). Haider (2007) asserts that rather than supporting the RMG sector explicitly, the EPZs were created to encourage export-based industrialisation. The growth of the sector was significantly fueled by random events. Due to the Multifibre Arrangement (MFA) quota restrictions placed on nations like South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan, businesses in those nations had to relocate their production to neighbouring Least Developed Countries (LDCs), which led to the industry's expansion. Bangladesh and other Asian LDCs benefited from these relocations, which made their industrial sectors more competitive.

V. PORTER'S DIAMOND MODEL FOR BELGIAN BEER INDUSTRY

The Belgian beer market has been examined using Porter's diamond model. The methodology identifies strong national competitiveness that companies can take advantage of. These Porter's Diamond components deal with the hard economic factors that determine a nation's competitiveness; but, if any of these parts of Belgium's national competitiveness were copied elsewhere, would the performance of the industry be repeated? According to Angwin, Mellahi, Gomes, and Peter (2016), culture has an impact on how competitive the beer sector in Belgium is. With an average consumption of more than 200 liters of beer per person and even beer museums, Belgium is one of the biggest producers of beer. Smith (2017) asserts that beer has grown to be a significant component of Belgian culture. The popularity and size of the Belgian beer business might not have increased to what they are now without a beer culture.

A. Factor conditions for Belgian Beer industry

Belgian beer is prepared with some of the best natural ingredients that are readily available in the nation (Angwin, Mellahi, Gomes, & Peter, 2016). Belgian beer manufacturers find it simple to access the necessary resources due to the accessibility of the natural resources utilized in the manufacturing of beer. The nation has maintained its well-established apprenticeship and internship programs. This ensures a pool of highly qualified individuals who can maximize the value of the premium element.

Mamun, Zayed, and Hossain (2013) assert that factors including location, access to skilled personnel, and research facilities are crucial for boosting an industry's competitiveness. The availability of natural and human resources has aided Belgium's beer industry.

B. Demand condition for Belgian Beer industry

According to Angwin, Mellahi, Gomes, and Peter (2016), beer has ingrained itself so deeply into Belgian society that it is now referred to as the nation's beverage. Belgians have enjoyed beer for a very long time, thus the different flavors are well known to the public. They are quite susceptible to change, so there is a big market for fine beer. Belgian customers have a high demand for high-quality beer, thus the industry is compelled to manufacture high-quality beer to meet this need.

C. Related and supporting industries for Belgian Beer industry

According to the factor conditions, the hops producers are pretty close to Belgian breweries. Breweries can adapt swiftly to market demand thanks to the consistent supply of necessary natural resources that is made possible by this. Smit (2010) asserts that if an industry is close to its support industries, shipping costs can also be reduced. Brewers now have quicker access to and distribution of their products because to Belgium's development becoming a "hub" for extensive distribution networks.

D. Firm strategy, structure and rivalry for Belgian Beer industry

Swinnen (2011) asserts that Belgium has more breweries per person than any other nation. This promotes fierce competition and competition among firms in an effort to raise quality and set themselves apart through taste. Many brewers are open to working together provided the advantages are equitable, notwithstanding their rivalry. For instance, according to Keene (2019), Rodenbach and Dogfish collaborated to strengthen the competitive advantages in order to boost taste and flavor.

E. Government and Chance factors for Belgian Beer industry

According to Angwin, Mellahi, Gomes, and Peter (2016), the Belgian government has long made investments in beer education and training. The government made the decision to increase the excise tax on alcohol. Despite this, beer is still reasonably priced in Belgium. There are numerous chances to raise competitiveness in Belgium. This is a result of their proximity to one another and shared participation in

the EU, which comprises the nations that consume the most beer globally.

VI. CONCLUSION

Countries that have effectively used the elements of Porters' Diamond model have managed to enhance their competitive edge. Literature seems to suggest that countries that have adopted the model (Porter's Diamond model) did focus on the available natural resources and effectively used them to advantage the country against other countries. Porters' Diamond Model has helped some countries in championing the buy-local campaigns.

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