# Effect of Environmental Scanning on Performance of Chemelil Sugar Company in Kisumu County, Kenya

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## Abstract

The environmental scanning been recognized as a vital management tool for well-performing companies. It includes collecting information within the organization's internal, industrial, and external environment that affect performance. The performance Chemelil Sugar Company in Kisumu County has been incompatible with the company's envisage strategic development plan. The company posted a loss of K.sh 821 million in the year June 2018, which is an increase compared to the loss of K.sh 767.25 million incurred in 2016. This formed the motive of the study to examine the effect of environmental scanning on the performance of Chemelil Sugar Company. The study was anchored on open system theory. The research adopted a descriptive research design. The target population was 60. The study focused on the heads of departments as the key respondents. The research instruments used in the study were questionnaires. The study conducted a census because the population size was small and for accuracy. The study applied purposive sampling technique. It was found that environmental scanning is positively and significantly related to performance. The results of regression analysis established that environmental scanning is positively and significantly related to performance ($\beta$=.840, p =.035). Thus, a unit increase in environmental scanning practices while holding all other factors constant, increases performance by 0.840 units. The study recommended that the company need to look at the internal analysis, industrial analysis and external analysis to maintain a higher performance level. The company can regularly analyze its industrial environment to determine its opportunities and threats using Porter's Five Factor analysis tool. In addition, it is recommended that the company need to regularly analyze its internal environmental factors to determine its strengths and weaknesses using SWOT as an analysis tool. Conducting environmental audit is necessary and the company needs to prepare plans to cope with dynamically changing environments.

**Keywords**: *Environmental scanning, performance, Chemelil Sugar Company, Kisumu County, Kenya*

## 1.0 Introduction

Performance excellence in an organization is the ultimate goal of all organizations (Karisa & Wainaina, 2020). Organizational performance can be defined as the yield or output of the company measured against the planned production (Ngui, Mukulu & Gachunga 2014). Performance measurement is an essential element in realizing organization objectives and goals. It is necessary for managers operating to familiarize themselves with factors that influence a company's performance (Haddadi & Yaghoobi, 2021). The strategic management process has been recognized as a necessity that differentiates firms from one another. Adopting an excellent strategic management process enables an organization to have a chance to survive, grow and maintain a sustainable competitive advantage (Oluoch, 2017). It is the road map towards achieving organizational objectives, vision, and strategies (Issack & Muathe, 2017). To remain relevant, they need to develop and implement strategies for sustainable competitive advantage (Sharabati & Fuqaha, 2014; Kemboi 2020; Mbithi, 2016).

It's noteworthy to state that a strategic management process (SMP) is a good tool for improving performance in organizations because it gives direction, leading to better decision-making (Gabow, 2019). The strategic management process is about making good decisions and taking corrective actions (Mcharo, 2016). The SMP, in the long run, determines the organization's performance (Wandera, Njuki, Okoth, Kinyanjui, & Macharia 2014). The first phase of SMP is environmental scanning. A company scans internal, industrial, and external environments to ensure that the opportunities and threats are identified (Gawankar, Kamble & Raut, 2015; Kamau, 2015). It is noteworthy that environmental scanning ensures that company's goals are well articulated and are aligned with the dangers associated with them (Gatheru, 2018). Environmental scanning in this context consisted of the internal, industrial and external analysis of the environment the organization operate in.

The performance of Chemelil sugar company Limited has been dismally. The performance of the company fluctuates between profit and loss. It is reported that the company recorded its first profit in 1976, henceforth, there has been no consistency in performance and both profits and losses have been reported. It was reported that the company shuts its operations in 2011 due to the financial challenges that were witnessed in the company (Ondieki, 2014). The overall operating environment has been unstable as the sugar production is intense impacting negativity on profitability. Nonetheless, a report by Auditor-General Financial Statement CSC, 2013/2014 indicated that the company can yield good results with an outstanding strategy management process. Therefore, the study was focused on examining the effect of environmental scanning on performance of Chemelil Sugar Company in Kisumu County in Kenya

## 1.1 Statement of the problem

Many organizations spent a lot of finances developing strategies yet they are not implemented. The ability of an organization to acquire a distinct position which result in good organizational performance is by using a strategic management process (Issack & Muathe, 2017). The strategic management process requires a qualified individual to realize success (Njiru, 2014). For an organization to learn its set objective and succeed, it is paramount that managers adopt SMP. In addition, the strategic management process steers an organization to maneuver a complex environment (Whitney, 2013). Chemelil Sugar Company has a 5-year strategic development plan.

Its primary objective is to increase cane supply to 840,000 tons by the end of 5years. However, the performance has been incompatible with the company's envisage strategic development plan. The company posted a loss of K.sh 821 million in the year June 2018, which is an increase compared to the loss of K.sh 767.25 million incurred in 2016 (Auditor-General Financial Statement CSC 2018/2017 & 2015/2016). In 2018 Chemelil Sugar Company sold 6,105 tons, which decreased compared to sales in 2017, which was 7,737 tons between January and August (AFA, 2018). In 2019 the company was temporarily closed and re-opened earlier 2020.

The motive of conducting the study was due to scanty literature to make the inferences. Wambua and Omondi (2016), in a case study design done on Kenya Breweries Limited in Kenya, measured environmental scanning using new markets, new products, and profit. The study was conducted in a brewery company while the current in sugar company. In addition, Karami (2012) survey research design study in the United Kingdom used descriptive statistics produced from the questionnaire to measure environmental scanning using internal and external factors. However, this study was conducted in the United Kingdom, making it unsuitable to the case of Chemelil Sugar Company. Moreover, Issack and Muathe (2017) study on public health institutions in Mandera County in Kenya, used a descriptive survey study to investigate environmental analysis and performance. However, the study focused on the health institution and may not appropriately inform the public sugar company sector. Further, Mwongeli (2018) carried out a study on environmental scanning on enhancing service delivery in the Judiciary of Kenya. However, due to the interview method used few respondents were interviewed, hence the data collected depended on the interview's ability to engage with the respondent; the current study sought to overcome the methodological weakness observed by representing the target population fairly. Thus, the study examined effect of environmental scanning on performance of chemelil sugar company in kisumu county in Kenya.

## 1.2 Research Objective

The research objective was to examine the effect of environmental scanning on performance of Chemelil Sugar Company in Kisumu County in Kenya.

## 2.0 Literature Review

## 2.1 Theoretical review

The study was anchored on open system theory. Bertalanffy developed open system theory (OST) in the year 1956. It was further advanced from the work of Emery and Trist (1960). An organization that allows the interchange of information with its external interaction is an open system. Open system theory was created to improve innovativeness, communication and enhance a company's ability to withstand a fast-changing, uncertain environment (Mbithi, 2016). An excellent open system continuously exchanges feedback with its environment, scrutinizes the feedback, and releases the important details back to the environment (Mc Manara, 2006). OST assumes that a company continuously gets information from the environment, process, and gives output to the same environment. OST supports environmental scanning objectives, which helped Chemelil sugar Company understand the environment it operates in, making the theory of great significance to this study. The organization functions in an environment where they were dependent on external factors to improve their strategies. Therefore, using the concept of an open system, the company understood its environmental demands by exploring the opportunities, the

resulting adaptation on strategy formulation, and its implementation or lack thereof. The study also explored the role external factors play in strategy formulation, how they influence a company's well-being and its role in realizing its objectives.
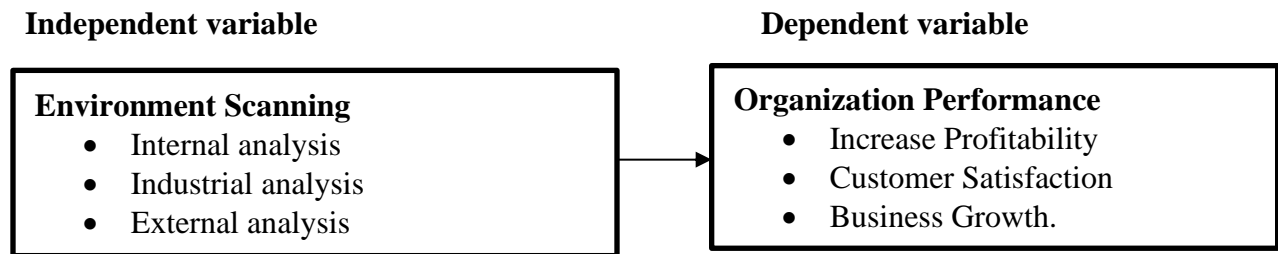
## 2.2 Empirical Literature Review

Wambua and Omondi (2016), in a case study design done on Kenya Breweries Limited in Kenya, measured environmental scanning using new markets, new products, and profit. This study adopted a stratified sampling method where 75 management staff were selected. A closed and open-ended questionnaire were self-administered to the respondents in order to collect primary data. The study used descriptive statistics to analyze data. The findings showed that environmental scanning was a significant input to performance. The current research sought to minimize the conceptual weakness by measuring environmental scanning using internal, industrial, and external factors, exploring the strength and opportunities while minimizing the weaknesses and threats the company was likely to face. In addition, Karami (2012) survey research design study in the United Kingdom used descriptive statistics produced from the questionnaire to measure environmental scanning using internal and external factors. A total of 132 respondents were randomly selected. A 5-point Likert scale was adopted to measure performance variables by self-reported rating. The study adopted a descriptive statistic to analyze the primary data collected. The findings revealed majority of respondent considered formal scanning system was essential factor in increasing firm performance. The study concluded that that it was beneficial for an organization to have an official way of examining the environment in which they operate in. However, this study was conducted in the United Kingdom, making it unsuitable to the case of Chemelil Sugar Company.

Issack and Muathe (2017) study on public health institutions in Mandera County in Kenya, used a descriptive survey study to investigate environmental analysis and performance. A census technique was used on 51 respondents to collect primary data by administering questionnaire. Inferential statistic comprising of both correlation and regression analysis was conducted and findings revealed that environmental scanning and performance are significantly and positively related. The study concluded that conducting an environmental audit was a necessity for the sustainable growth of organizations. However, the study focused on the health institution and may not appropriately inform the public sugar company sector. Mwongeli (2018) carried out a study on environmental scanning on enhancing service delivery in the Judiciary of Kenya. The study collected qualitative data using in-depth interviews on 16 respondents. The finding revealed that environmental scanning had a positive impact on service delivery by significantly influencing positively the administration of justice. However, due to the interview method used few respondents were interviewed, hence the data collected depended on the interview's ability to engage with the respondent; the current study sought to overcome the methodological weakness observed by representing the target population fairly.

## 2.3 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a representation of an expected relationship between variables. The conceptual framework that shows the relationship between environment scanning and organization performance is presented in Figure 1

**Independent variable**                                    **Dependent variable**

| **Environment Scanning** | **Organization Performance** |
|---|---|
| • Internal analysis<br>• Industrial analysis<br>• External analysis | • Increase Profitability<br>• Customer Satisfaction<br>• Business Growth. |

Source: Author (2021)

## 3.0 Research Methodology

The research adopted a descriptive research design. The design was used as the researcher was interested in getting an in-depth information from the respondents. The deign helped the researcher to collect the data by the use of the questionnaires. The target population was 60. The study was focused on the heads of departments. The basis of using the head of departments as the unit of observation was because they are involved in policy formulation and implementation, making them the decision-makers of the matters concerning Chemelil Sugar Company. The research instruments used were questionnaires. The study adopted a census method because the population size was small and for accuracy. The study applied purposive sampling technique.

## 4.0 Data Analysis and Interpretation

### 4.1 Response Rate

The response rate was 87% and was deemed satisfactory as supported by Baruch and Holtom (2008) who indicated a survey's response rate of 60% or more is considered adequate for data analysis and reporting. Out of 60 questionnaires administered, 52 were returned duly filled. 5 questionnaires were incomplete and others not returned. The summary of the response rate is presented in Table 1

**Table 1: Response rate**

| Response Rate | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Response | 52 | 87% |
| Non response | 8 | 13% |
| Total | 60 | 100% |

Source: Field Data (2021)

### 4.2 Descriptive Analysis Results

### 4.2.1 Environmental Scanning

The study sought to examine the effect of environmental scanning on performance of Chemelil Sugar Company in Kisumu County. The researcher was interested in examining the respondent's level of agreement or disagreement on various attributes of environmental scanning and the results are presented in Table 2

**Table 2: Environmental Scanning**

| Statements | SD | D | N | A | SA | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Environmental scanning (internal, industrial and external) enhances performance. | 0% | 0% | 7.7% | 84.6% | 7.7% | 4 | 0.426 |
| The company regularly analyses its Industrial environment to determine its opportunities and threats using Porter's Five Factor analysis tool. | 0% | 0% | 15.4% | 76.9% | 7.7% | 3.92 | 0.669 |
| The company regularly analyses its external environmental factors to determine its opportunities and threats using PESTEL as an analysis tool. | 0% | 0% | 15.4% | 84.6% | 0% | 3.85 | 0.376 |
| There are challenges that your organization faces when enforcing reforms in the internal, industrial and external environment. | 0% | 0% | 7.7% | 84.6% | 7.7% | 4 | 0.408 |
| The company regularly analyses its internal environmental factors to determine its strengths and weaknesses using SWOT as an analysis tool. | 0% | 0% | 15.4% | 76.9% | 7.7% | 3.92 | 0.494 |
| Organization encounters some of the opportunities that you should take advantage of. | 0% | 0% | 7.7% | 84.6% | 7.7% | 4 | 0.408 |
| Company is affected negatively by some of the operations carried out within its internal environment. | 0% | 0% | 38.5% | 61.5% | 0% | 3.62 | 0.506 |
| There are challenges that your organization faces while responding to changes in the internal environment. | 0% | 0% | 38.5% | 61.5% | 0% | 3.62 | 0.506 |
| Company is affected positively by some of the operations carried out on the industrial and external environment of the company. | 0% | 0% | 38.5% | 61.5% | 0% | 3.77 | 0.599 |
| Organization has many opportunities as well as threats they face in the industrial and external environments. | 0% | 0% | 15.4% | 69.2% | 15.4% | 4 | 0.577 |
| **Average** | | | | | | **3.87** | **0.4969** |

The results summarized in Table 2 shows that respondents agreed that environmental scanning (internal, industrial, and external) enhance performance (mean = 4.00, std. dev = 0.426), that the company regularly analyses its Industrial environment to determine its opportunities and threats using Porter's Five Factor analysis tool (mean = 3.92 std. dev. = 0.669), the company regularly

analyses its external environmental factors to determine its opportunities and threats using PESTEL as an analysis tool (mean = 3.85, std. dev. = 0.376), there are challenges that your organization faces when enforcing reforms in the internal, industrial and external environment (mean = 4.00, std. dev. = 0.408) and that the company regularly analyses its internal environmental factors to determine its strengths and weaknesses using SWOT as an analysis tool (mean = 3.92, std dev. = 0.494).

Majority of the respondents also agreed that the organization encounters some of the opportunities that you should take advantage of (mean = 4.00, std. dev. = 0.408), the company is affected negatively by some of the operations carried out within its internal environment (mean = 3.62, std. dev. = 0.506), a majority strongly agreed that there are challenges that the organization faces while responding to changes in the internal environment (mean = 3.62, std. dev. = 0.506), the company is affected positively by some of the operations carried out on the industrial and external environment of the company (mean = 3.77, std. dev. = 0.599), and lastly the respondents agreed that the organization has many opportunities as well as threats they face in the industrial and external environments (mean = 4.00, std. dev. = 0.577).

The average mean score for the attributes was 3.87 which tends to 4 (agree) on the 5 point Likert scale used in the study. The variability of responses from the aggregate mean score as shown by the aggregate standard deviation of 0.4969 is low. This aggregate mean score revealed that the attributes related to environmental scanning in Chemelil Sugar Company was high. Additionally, the low aggregate standard deviation showed that the responses concentrated around the mean and hence a stable and reliable estimator of the true mean. The narrow variation from the overall mean response confirmed that the respondents agreed that environmental scanning played a major role in the performance of this firm. These findings are consistent with findings by Wambua and Omondi (2016) and Karami (2012); who found that environmental scanning had a significant effect on an organizations performance. They concluded that environmental scanning is a significant input to performance and that when the organization has systems that consistently scan the environment, they are bound to succeed.

### 4.2.2 Organizational Performance

The organization performance was the dependent variable. Thus, the researcher examined the factors influencing performance at Chemelil Sugar Company and the results are depicted in Table 3

**Table 3: Organizational Performance**

| Statements | Sd | D | N | A | Sa | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Having a monitoring process and evaluation procedure for tracking performance increases organizational performance. | 0% | 0% | 15.4% | 84.6% | 0% | 3.85 | 0.376 |
| Your organization set clearly defined Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for each plan, do they lead to increased organizational growth. | 0% | 0% | 15.4% | 84.6% | 0% | 3.85 | 0.376 |
| Organization has experienced significant growth in the last three years. | 0% | 15.4% | 38.5% | 46.2% | 0% | 3.31 | 0.751 |
| Level of your customer's satisfaction has improved in the last three years. | 0% | 30.8% | 38.5% | 23.1% | 7.7% | 3.08 | 0.954 |
| Organization's profitability has improved in the last three years. | 0% | 30.8% | 46.2% | 23.1% | 0% | 2.92 | 0.76 |
| Organization has a monitoring process and evaluation procedure to track performance. | 0% | 30.8% | 53.8% | 7.7% | 7.7% | 2.92 | 0.862 |
| Implementation of strategies improves the profitability of your organization. | 0% | 38.5% | 46.2% | 15.4% | 0% | 2.77 | 0.725 |
| Organization has experienced low employee turnover. | 0% | 38.5% | 46.2% | 15.4% | 0% | 2.77 | 0.725 |
| Organization has expanded over the last 10 years. | 0% | 53.8% | 38.5% | 7.7% | 0% | 2.54 | 0.66 |
| All the departments and sections have adopted use of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) leading to overall improvement of the company. | 0% | 7.7% | 23.1% | 61.5% | 7.7% | 3.83 | 0.577 |
| **Average** | | | | | | **3.18** | **0.677** |

The respondents agreed that having a monitoring process and evaluation procedure for tracking performance increases organizational performance (mean = 3.85, std. dev. = 0.376), the organization set clearly defined Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for each plan, which lead to increased organizational growth (mean = 3.85, std. dev. = 0.376), organization has experienced significant growth in the last three years (mean = 3.31, std. dev. = 0.751, the level of customer's satisfaction has improved in the last three years (mean= 3.08, std. dev. = 0.954) and that the all the departments and sections have adopted use of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) leading to overall improvement of the company ( mean = 3.83, std. dev. = 0.577). However, the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statements that the organization's profitability has improved in the last three years (mean = 2.92, std. dev. = 0.76), the organization has a monitoring process and evaluation procedure to track performance (mean = 2.92, std. dev. = 0.862), implementation of strategies improves the profitability of your organization ( mean = 2.77, std. dev. = 0.725, the organization has experienced low employee turnover ( mean = 2.77, std. dev. = 0.725) and that the organization has expanded over the last 10 years (mean = 2.54, std. dev. = 0.66).

The average mean score for the attributes was 3.18 which tends to 4 (agree) on the 5 point Likert scale used in the study. The variability of responses from the aggregate mean score as shown by the aggregate standard deviation of 0.677 is low. This aggregate mean score revealed that the attributes related to performance of Chemelil Sugar Company was high. Additionally, the low aggregate standard deviation showed that the responses concentrated around the mean and hence a stable and reliable estimator of the true mean. The narrow variation from the overall mean response confirmed that the respondents agreed that different statements used to gauge performance. The findings are consistent with a study by Eren and Birinci (2013) who recommended having a monitoring process and evaluation procedure to track performance increases organizational performance. They added that organizations should set clearly defined Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for each plan. Guruwo et al., (2017) also reccomendd that monitoring and evaluation trends in performance consribute to longterm profitability.

## 4.3 Inferential Statistics Results

Inferential statistics makes inferences or implications of data in the study that was generalized about the population based on the samples.

### 4.3.1 Correlation Analysis Results

The study sought to establish the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables of the study. Pearson correlation coefficient was computed at 95 percent confidence interval. The correlation matrix is presented in Table 4

**Table 4: Correlation Matrix**

|  |  | Environmental Scanning | Organization Performance |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Environmental Scanning** | Pearson Correlation | 1.000 |  |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) |  |  |
| **Organization Performance** | Pearson Correlation | 0.474 | 1.000 |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.046 |  |
|  | **N** | **52** | **52** |

The correlation matrix in Table 4 indicates a moderate correlation between environmental scanning and performance, $r = 0.474$, $p = .046$. These means that environmental audit is necessary to improve the performance of an organization. These findings were in agreement with Asser, Waiganjo and Njeru, (2018) study which revealed a strong positive relationship between environmental scanning and performance of organization. It further implied that environmental scan practices influence performance of State Parastatals. The findings are consistent with findings by Babatunde and Adebisi, (2012) who found that management pay more attention to environmental scanning which is key in influencing an organizations performance. It further concluded that strategic environmental scanning is responsible for effective organizational performance.

### 4.3.2 Regression Analysis Results

Regression presents a model to devise a relationship between two sets of variables. It is expressed as linear regression equation that can be applied to predict the relationship between dependent variable (performance) and with the independent variable (Environmental scanning)

### 4.3.2.1 Univariate Regression Results for Environmental Scanning and Firm Performance

The study sought to determine whether environmental scanning influences performance of Chemelil Sugar Company. The researcher used a linear regression to establish the relationship between the study variables and the model summary is depicted in Table 5

### Table 5: Model Summary

| Model Summary | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1 | .586[a] | .344 | .284 | .35476 |

a. Predictor: (Constant), Environmental scanning

The coefficient of determination ($r^2$ = .344) indicated that 34.4 % of the variation in organizational performance can be explained by environmental scanning. The remaining 65.6% can be explained by other factors.

Table 6 shows the results of ANOVA analysis.

### Table 6: ANOVA

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | .725 | 1 | .725 | 5.759 | .035[b] |
| | Residual | 6.375 | 51 | .125 | | |
| | Total | 7.1 | 52 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: performance

b. Predictor: (Constant), Environmental scanning

The results indicated that the regression model influences the study positively. This is because the significance value (p = .035) was less than 0.05. Therefore, environmental scanning significantly influence performance at Chemelil sugar company.

The regression coefficient results are presented in Table 7

### Table 7: Coefficient

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .458 | 1.358 | | .338 | .742 |
| | Environmental-scanning | .840 | .350 | .586 | 2.400 | .035 |

a. Dependent Variable: performance

The results of regression analysis established that environmental scanning is significant at β= .840, t = 2.400, p = .035. An interpretation can be made that at 95% confidence level, environmental scanning practices positively influences performance at Chemelil Sugar Company. A unit increase in environmental scanning practices while holding all other factors constant, increases performance to 0.840.

The simple regression model was:

Y= 0.458 + 0.840X

Where;

Y=Performance;

X=Environmental scanning

These findings are consistent with findings from a study by Wambua & Omondi (2016) who concluded that Environmental scanning was a significant input to an organizations performance while investigating how environmental scanning influences performance of Kenya Breweries Limited.

## 5.0 Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that majority of the respondents agreed the company is affected negatively by some of the operations carried out within its internal environment. The company is affected positively by some of the operations carried out on the industrial and external environment of the company. It is also concluded that environmental scanning enhances performance and the company regularly analyses its external environmental factors to determine its opportunities and threats using PESTEL as an analysis tool. In addition, the study concluded that environment scanning is mainly inclusive of internal analysis, industrial analysis and external analysis. The coefficient of determination indicated that 34.4 % of the variation in organizational performance can be explained by environmental scanning. The results of regression analysis established that environmental scanning is positively and significantly related to performance (β=.840, p =.035). Thus, a unit increase in environmental scanning practices while holding all other factors constant would increases performance by 0.840 units.

## 6.0 Recommendation

The study recommended that the company need to look at the internal analysis, industrial analysis and external analysis to maintain a higher performance level. The company can regularly analyze its industrial environment to determine its opportunities and threats using Porter's Five Factor analysis tool. In addition, it is recommended that the company need to regularly analyses its internal environmental factors to determine its strengths and weaknesses using SWOT as an analysis tool. Since environmental scanning was found to be key influencer of the performance of Chemelil Sugar Company, the management should adopt innovative ways that improve the process to enhance performance. Conducting environmental audit is necessary and the company needs to prepare plans to cope with dynamically changing environments.

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