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Section 1

1. Introduction

The author of this report is talking about the pharmaceutical market in Ireland and Johnson and Johnson as one of the largest multinational companies (Johnson & Johnson, 2023). The pharmaceutical investment climate in Ireland has been favourable, with the country favouring business investments, ensuring that it has a bold, skilled workforce, favourable government policies, and access to the European Union market. These have transformed the country into a significant exporter of pharmaceutical products, and despite that, they have attracted a lot of major foreign direct investment.

The report reviews the structure, size, and economic prominence of the industry, and the competitive positioning of key players in the industry that are in operation within Ireland. It also performs an analysis of the key elements which have dictated the success of Johnson and Johnson based on the renowned models, such as the Diamond Model of Porter and PESTLE analysis. This way, the report critically reviews the ease of operations in Ireland by multinational pharmaceutical firms. This report also claims that Ireland is a very competitive destination to invest in pharmaceuticals, but this competitiveness is heavily influenced by multinational companies, and not by an effective local industrial capacity, posing very serious long-term dangers to economic sustainability and strategic autonomy.

2. Industry and Country Overview.

a. Introduction to the Pharmaceutical Industry in Ireland

The pharmaceutical business is among the most significant branches of the Irish economy (Griffin and Pustay, 2020). Ireland has grown over the past several decades to become an international site of pharmaceutical production and advances. The expansion has been achieved through favourable government policies, a favourable corporate tax rate and the availability of the European Union market. This has seen a large number of multinational pharmaceutical firms open in Ireland (IPHA, 2026).

Ireland is strategically located in Europe, hence the ease with which companies can export their products to the larger world markets. Besides, advanced production of pharmaceuticals is facilitated by a well-skilled workforce, especially in the fields of science and engineering, which the country has (Daniels *et al.*, 2022). There are also research institutions and high levels of industry collaboration, which favour innovation in the sector. Thus, the pharmaceutical industry is significant in the international business environment in Ireland. These are not exclusive to Ireland, and its competitiveness is determined by the effectiveness with which these factors are integrated in relation to the other nations.

b. Size, Scope and Economic Importance.

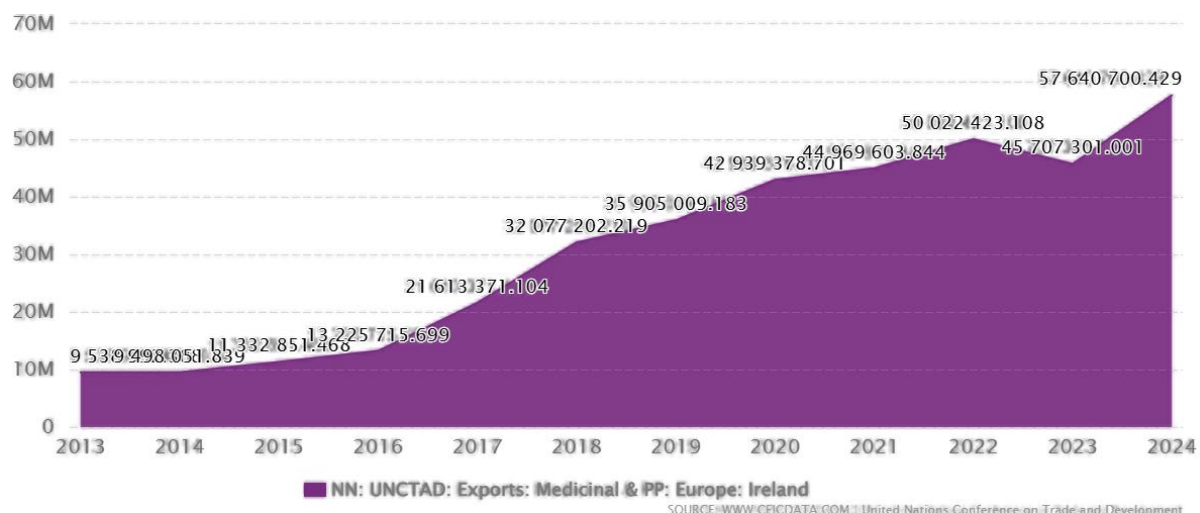


Figure 1: Pharmaceutical exports in Ireland (Central Statistics Office Ireland, 2023)

Economic significance of the sector is supported by Figure 1, which depicts that pharmaceutical products make a significant percentage of the overall exports of Ireland (OEC, 2026). This extreme degree of concentration means that the export performances have been intensified by

the multinational activity more than the domestic industrial depth, which raises concerns about the long-run sustainability of the performances (Euractiv, 2026).

The pharmaceutical industry has been among the biggest contributors to the Irish economy (FitzGerald, 2025). It constitutes a huge amount of the country's exports, as pharmaceuticals and medical products form a big percentage of the total value in exports. The global significance of pharmaceutical products in the world market has often made Ireland one of the largest exporters of pharmaceutical products on a global level.

Ireland's pharmaceutical industry offers numerous skilled opportunities in areas of manufacturing, research and control of quality, thus assisting to generate income and an economy that is knowledge-based. It is highly attracted to foreign direct investment, and it incorporates more than manufacturing, i.e. biotechnology, research (Government of Ireland, 2025). The argument in favour of depending on multinational companies is not without dangers because a shift in global taxation can make Ireland less attractive.

High dependence on international corporations poses possible threats to the Irish economy, where the multinational corporations can take their business elsewhere in case of changes in the business conditions. Besides this, the shift in global tax policies, particularly the strain on the corporate tax rate in Ireland, can make the country less appealing to foreign direct investment. There is a risk that in the future, Ireland will want to be one of the leading pharmaceutical manufacturing facilities, as there is a growing rivalry with other nations which have lower costs of production.

c. Major Firm and Competitive Positioning.

The pharmaceutical industry of Ireland has only a few domestic firms under the control of multinational firms. Big firms such as Johnson and Johnson, Pfizer, Novartis and Roche have established large-scale production and research plants in Ireland, which also constitute a large portion of the export and the employment generated. Johnson and Johnson are among the market leaders whose product portfolio is diversified to include pharmaceutical, medical device, and consumer health products, has a strong brand name across the globe, and technological products (Statista, 2024).

Pfizer, as well, considers innovation and high-research-intensive products, vaccines and biopharmaceuticals, which puts Pfizer in high-value segments too. Novartis and Roche have specialised in niche areas such as oncology and biotechnology, thus giving them competitive

advantages in the niche markets. This indicates that although diversification is what makes Johnson and Johnson competitive, other companies can compete because of specialisation. Domestic Irish companies are still small and mostly engaged in niche or contract manufacturing business. It implies that the competition in the pharmaceutical business in Ireland does not occur due to strong local industrialisation but is the result of the existence of the multinational corporations (Collinson *et al.*, 2020). This may be a sign that the competitive advantage of Ireland is a sign that this is an external and not an internal factor, thereby deterring the sustainability of the industry on a long-term basis.

Comparison of the large pharmaceutical companies in Ireland.

Company	Strategy Focus	Market Segment	Competitive Strengths	Positioning in Industry
Johnson & Johnson	Diversification & global integration	Pharmaceuticals, medical devices, consumer health	Strong brand, wide product range, global presence	Highly diversified global leader
Pfizer	Innovation & R&D	Vaccines, biopharma	Strong R&D, advanced production facilities	Leader in high-value innovative drugs
Novartis	Specialised therapies	Oncology, biotech	Focus on advanced treatments, innovation	Strong in niche high-tech segments
Roche	Personalised medicine	Diagnostics, oncology	Strong diagnostics capability, innovation	Leader in personalised healthcare
Domestic firms	Niche specialisation	Biotech, contract manufacturing	Flexibility, innovation in small segments	Limited global scale but innovative role

Compared with other companies like Pfizer and Roche, Johnson and Johnson is more diversified, and this lowers risk but risks its specialisation in high-value segments.

3. Porter's Diamond Model of National Advantage

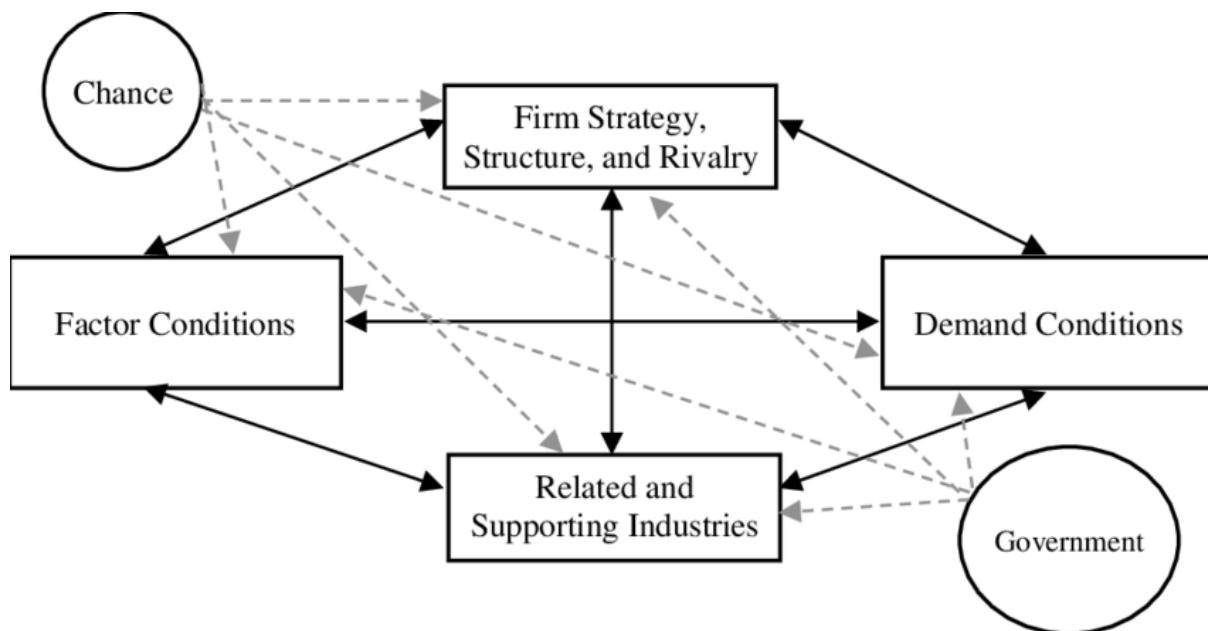


Figure: Porter's Diamond Model (Tsiligiris, 2018)

Using Porter's Diamond Model, the global competitiveness of industries is analysed. The model rests on four aspects: factor conditions, demand conditions, related and supporting industries, and firm strategy, structure and rivalry. These variables legitimate why some economies are more competitive than others in some sectors. The model can be used to explain the high performance of the pharmaceutical sector in Ireland.

The model has weaknesses. It mainly deals with domestic affairs and is not fully representative of the dominant trends of multinational corporations that dominate the pharmaceutical business of Ireland. The model, though practical, can be less representative of the external dependence of the sector.

3.1 Factor Conditions

Ireland has good factor conditions that suit the pharmaceutical business. The country has a highly educated labour force, especially in science, engineering and technology. This helps the businesses to implement better manufacturing and research processes. Ireland is also blessed with a well-established infrastructure, including transport and modern production. Innovation and development of knowledge are also supported by universities and research centres.

The other significant advantage is that Ireland has a comparatively low rate of corporate taxes that are attractive to multinational companies (OECD, 2018). This saves on the cost of

operation, and profitability is increased. This may not be a long-term gain. The tax incentives in Ireland can be reduced through tax reform by organisations such as the OECD. This means that the competitiveness of Ireland is dependent on the external policy benefits rather than domestic strength, which is a long-term risk.

3.2 Demand Conditions

The global markets largely influence the Irish market condition rather than the domestic demand. The pharmaceutical business is very much export-based, and Ireland has a low domestic market. The companies produce their products in Ireland and sell them to other nations, including the European Union and the United States. This allows the companies to have economies of scale and huge markets.

The pharmaceutical products markets continue to grow worldwide due to the ageing and declining population trend among populations. This forms good prospects for the companies in Ireland. Smaller threats are of being dependent on international demand, though. Requests may be influenced by changes in the global economy or medical policies. This means that Ireland is largely dependent on external markets in terms of its competitiveness, and it is exposed to shocks in the global markets.

3.3 Related and Supporting Industries.

Ireland boasts of well-established and supportive industries like biotechnology firms, research centers and supply chain networks. University and industry collaborate to ensure the industry comes up with new products, as well as to aid in innovation. Clusters in the industry enhance efficiency as well since firms can share knowledge, resources and services (Porter, 2023).

The regulatory regime in Ireland is also very good, and, therefore, it ensures good quality standards of production. This will improve trust in foreign consumers and exports. There is a major downfall. Local companies do not contribute to many of the innovations and investments by foreign companies. The local firms are not very large and not resourceful. This brings in an endox, strong supporting industries and poor domestic capacity. It means that the system of Irish innovation is externally stimulated, which is not a very sustainable process in the long term.

3.4 Firm Strategy, Structure and Rivalry.

Ireland has a highly competitive market in the pharmaceutical industry with many multinational firms such as Johnson and Johnson, Pfizer, Novartis and Roche. The

effectiveness, novelty and price-cutting international policies are effective in these firms. Ireland is more of a production and export hub that allows firms to enjoy economies of scale and accessibility to the global markets.

The existence of intense competition has favoured permanent production processes and innovation. This increases the industry competitiveness. The high competition also exerts a strain on cost reduction. Companies have the idea of taking production to cheaper nations. This means that competition is more efficient; it is bound to sabotage the Irish long-term positions once cost advantages erode.

3.5 Overall Evaluation

Porter's Diamond Model shows that Ireland has strong competitive advantages in the pharmaceutical industry. These are the availability of well skilled work force, good infrastructure, accessibility to international markets and good supporting industries. Such elements have made Ireland one of the major pharmaceutical production and export units in the world.

The model puts up some significant weaknesses as well. Ireland has a highly dependent pharmaceutical industry that is dependent on global demand and tax policy, among other outside influences. This has long-term sustainability problems. The dominance of multinational companies as the primary asset of Ireland is never fully reflected in Porter's Diamond.

Ireland is quite competitive, but if it is not sustained, the level of competitiveness is externally determined. The argument that this presents is that Ireland is competitive in the short term but weakly structured in the long term.

4. Analysis of Johnson & Johnson in Ireland

4.1 Introduction to the Company.

Johnson and Johnson is a popular multinational healthcare corporation that deals worldwide in pharmaceuticals, medical equipment and consumer healthcare products (Agresti *et al.*, 2024). The firm has a worldwide strategy that is directed towards efficiency, innovation and growth. Ireland is a strategic point that Johnson and Johnson is largely exploiting. It is a major manufacturing and exportation point with which the company can produce on a large scale and enter the European Union market. It also enjoys accessibility to a skilled labour force and a pleasant business climate to support its business activities. It aids the reason why the company is available in Ireland, given the ability to realise cost efficiency and manage the operations

due to the foreign direct investment (FDI). This means that Ireland is not merely a place but is an operational part of the world value chain of Johnson and Johnson.

4.2 Attractiveness of the Market PESTLE Analysis.



Figure: PESTEL Analysis (Yusop, 2018)

4.2.1 Political Factors

The business situation in Ireland is stable as well, and that is attractive to multinationals such as Johnson and Johnson. The government follows a pro-business policy and encourages foreign direct investment. In addition, Ireland is an associate country of the European Union, which presents companies with a huge single market. This eases the exportation of products by the firms in Europe.

In case there is low political risk, it will increase long-term investment decisions. It, however, possesses some risks. Through the international pressure on the corporate tax policies, especially through international organisations, such tax benefits in Ireland can be reduced in future. Besides, there are EU regulations that must be followed, and they may also impose compliance requirements. This means that the political environment is high, though there is some slight uncertainty in the long run. This implies that long-term investment decisions will be greatly backed by the political stability of Johnson and Johnson, though global tax reforms can lower the future appeal of Ireland.

4.2.2 Economic Factors

Ireland is an economy that is export-oriented and strong, promoting the pharmaceutical industry (OECD, 2025). The sector has a great position in the country, where pharmaceutical products account for about 45% of Ireland's total exports in the year 2024 and about 53% in the year 2025 (Central Statistics Office Ireland, 2025). The industry also enables employment since almost 75,000 direct and indirect jobs were created in the industry.

These make Ireland favourable to firms such as Johnson & Johnson. The country has a highly trained human resource force and high productivity, and consequently, successful production. Economic hardship has its issues, too. Labour is growing expensive, and global inflation may affect the performance of the business. Also, Ireland requires multinational firms that can be risky in case they move. There exists a strong economic environment, and on the other hand, the economy is susceptible. This implies that economic factors play a big role in Johnson and Johnson because it has a direct impact on the costs of production and export performance. Long-term stability can be undermined through increases in costs and reliance on multinational activity.

4.2.3 Legal Factors

Ireland has an excellent legal environment that protects enterprises and promotes innovation. There is a good protection of intellectual property rights that is relevant to pharmaceutical firms that thrive on research and development. The quality and safety of the product are also high, as ensured by the EU regulations, making people have more confidence in the Irish pharmaceutical products (Panteli *et al.*, 2016).

In the case of Johnson and Johnson, this serves as a huge plus as it secures its innovativeness and brand name. Stringent laws may be problematic, too. The approval of a pharmaceutical product can be a long and costly procedure. Companies are subjected to elaborate legal requirements that they are required to abide by, and these contribute to the cost of operation. In such a way, a legal system does not provide opportunities to do business but also reduces flexibility. This implies that, although the drive toward innovation is sustained by legal aspects, more operational costs are incurred, and this fact may make Johnson and Johnson less flexible in its operation.

4.2.4 Cultural Factors

Ireland boasts a well-educated and highly skilled labour force, particularly in the field of science and technology, which promotes the pharmaceutical sector and enhances the performance of the business (Lakdawalla, 2018). Being an English-speaking nation, it is easy for the US-based companies like Johnson and Johnson. Multinational companies also find it easy to integrate into the work culture, which encourages innovation, teamwork and flexibility. There are risks of talent shortages due to stiff competition for skilled workers. This may raise labour expenses and put recruitment at stake. Thus, cultural factors promote operations; however, they pressure the labour market.

4.2.5 Technological Factors

Ireland has a healthy technological base and is innovation-friendly. The industry and the universities are closely connected, and this helps companies to develop new products and optimise the processes (Leydesdorff, 2020). There are also better research and development facilities in the country.

This provides Johnson and Johnson with a growth and innovation prospect in this case. But the innovation is largely fuelled by multinational companies as opposed to local companies. This renders it as a dependence on foreign companies in technological development. In the event of such firms cutting the investment, it can impact Ireland regarding innovation. In this way, technological factors are one of the strengths, and they can also be a potential threat. This indicates that technological benefits facilitate innovation, although dependence on innovation by multinationals can hamper the independence of Ireland in the long-term.

4.2.6 Environmental Factors

The Irish laws on environmental issues are being ramped up, particularly on carbon emissions, waste disposal, and the sustainability of production. The policies directly affect pharmaceutical production since companies such as Johnson and Johnson must fulfil EU environmental policies and national objectives of sustainability. This gives opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, it makes it possible to improve corporate image and meet global requirements related to ESG because of sustainable practices. Compliance increases the operational cost and requires an investment in cleaner technologies. This implies that long-term sustainability is being backed by environmental factors, but at a short-term cost efficiency cost to Johnson, this factor may be working against them.

In general, the most important to Johnson and Johnson are economic and political factors since they directly affect costs, investment choice, and operation in the market. The PESTLE model has weaknesses, since it is not aimed at demonstrating how these effects are combined and the priority of those that are most important in terms of strategy, making it less effective in decision-making.

4.3 FDI and Entry Strategy Analysis.

The foreign direct investment (FDI) has seen Johnson and Johnson position Ireland as one of its major destinations in its international business. Ireland has some of the best merits, such as a low corporate tax rate, the availability of the European Union market and a highly skilled

workforce (Al-Hasan *et al.*, 2023). These are the factors that favour the effective manufacturing of pharmaceuticals. This decision can be explained with the aid of FDI theories. According to internalisation theory, the company would have more control over production and quality, whereas the location theory emphasises the cost and market benefits of Ireland. The OLI framework demonstrates that Johnson and Johnson enjoys high ownership potential, favourable location, and control within its company. This shows that Ireland is strategically placed in its global value chain.

Johnson and Johnson is an example of a company that is benefiting through FDI, that is, efficiency, coordination and control are better with FDI than export and licensing. Ireland will be attractive based on tax policies and world economic factors. Grabbing competition and international tax reform can lead to diminishing benefits, and the company must take into consideration long-term strategic risks.

This means that Ireland is not only a low-cost destination, but it is a strategic piece of the world value chain at Johnson and Johnson. The state is a big manufacturing and export base, and this guarantees good production and supply to the European markets. FDI in Ireland is not merely guided by cost strength but is combined with the global network of activities of the corporation, strengthening long-term competitiveness.

4.4 Strategic Positioning of Johnson & Johnson.

Johnson and Johnson has a global strategy, which is founded on efficiency, innovation and integration. Ireland has a major role in the global value chain because it is one of the manufacturing and export hubs to facilitate efficient production and market in the European markets. The economies of scale are facilitated by some advantages of the country, such as a skilled labour force, good infrastructure and a favourable business climate. This improves the level of innovation and internationalisation of the firm to secure a high level of competitive advantage. However, the intensity of companies such as Pfizer and Roche is stressful on the cost and innovation. The rise of labour and production prices in Ireland may lower the gains in the long-run and, therefore, Johnson and Johnson must always become a strategist.

Ireland is not only the location of operation but a strategic, critical entry point in Johnson and Johnson's global value chain, as it is a place where global efficiency and global integration of the market support each other.

4.5 Risk Analysis

There are also several risks that Johnson and Johnson face in Ireland, where it operates. The political risk is also comparatively low as Ireland has a stable government, and it has a pro-business environment (Dooley, 2025). It is advantageous both on the long-term investment front and on how uncertainty will be minimised on the side of the multinational companies.

It has a moderate level of economic risk. Ireland is a vibrant economy where labour costs are on the rise, and the world economic uncertainty may affect the performance of a business. The firm is also exposed to the world demand for pharmaceutical products that are subject to change and thereby influence sales and the level of production.

Pharmaceutical and EU regulations are rigid, and this implies that the regulatory risk is high. Businesses are required to achieve procedures and quality requirements, which are complicated, expensive and slow down their product introduction. Such laws require resources to be followed.

Market risk also needs to be considered since it is the pharmaceutical industry, dictated by global needs and competitiveness. Strong competition from Pfizer and Roche decreases the pressure on price and innovation.

Besides, changes in international taxation have the potential of diminishing the foreign investment attractiveness in Ireland. This is a threat that the companies can redirect their operations in the future. risks are controllable, but they should be important in long-term planning. Of these risks, regulatory/tax risks stand out as the most important because such risks have a direct impact on the long-term investment decisions and the cost of doing business. These risks demand more strategic focus by Johnson and Johnson compared to the political risk, which is relatively low.

4.6 General Evaluation and Decision.

In general, Ireland is a very viable place that Johnson and Johnson can consider because of a favourable business climate, human resources, and potential access to the European market (Grünig and Morschett, 2017). These are favourable to effective production and international distribution. This appeal is mostly pegged to multinational benefits, especially taxes. The increase in cost, international taxation, along with growing competition, could dampen the competitiveness over the long-term, hence Johnson and Johnson needs to change in a strategic way.

Factor	Strengths	Risks
Political	Stable government, EU access	Tax reforms, regulations
Economic	Strong exports, skilled labour	Rising costs, inflation
Legal	Strong IP protection	Strict laws, high costs
Cultural	Skilled workforce, English	Talent shortage
Technological	Strong R&D, innovation	Dependence on MNCs
Environmental	Sustainability focus	Higher costs
FDI	Low tax, market access	Policy changes
Competition	Strong brand, innovation	Rival firms (Pfizer, Roche)

As it is presented in the table, good economic and strategic advantage notwithstanding, the most critical risks that Ireland has would be related to cost increments, frequent pressures, and tax changes, which would affect the long-term investment activities.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, Ireland is among the most competitive investments in pharmaceuticals due to the close relationship it enjoys with the rest of the world, skilled labour force and willingness to conduct business. Largely, this competitiveness is predetermined by multinational firms and not a strong domestic industry. This is one of the structural weaknesses on which Ireland will depend heavily on the world and foreign investment. The analysis shows that although Ireland may be unusually favourable to such companies as Johnson and Johnson in terms of efficiency and availability of the markets, the advantages may be short-term. Compulsory compliance requirements and tax restructurings across borders will make it less attractive in the long term as the expenses continue to rise. Therefore, one can view Ireland as a country where lots of strategies are available in the short-term prospectivity and yet its competitiveness in the long-term will depend on the necessity of reducing the reliance on the multinational companies and increasing the national potential.

Section 2: Reflective Account (Gibbs Reflective Cycle)

Gibbs Reflective Cycle



Figure: Gibbs Reflective Cycle (Adeani *et al.*, 2020)

1. Description

In this assignment, I was expected to assess the pharmaceutical sector in Ireland and the position that Johnson and Johnson played as a multinational corporation. This was aimed at applying international business theories to a real-life scenario (Adeani *et al.*, 2020). In this manner, I have been able to exploit different sources such as scholarly books, reports and the Internet. This is because I ensured that I was familiar with the industry structure, the economic viability of the industry and its competitiveness as one of the locations of choice among the multinational companies.

I applied significant models of the Diamond Model of Porter, PESTLE Analysis and foreign direct investment (FDI) theory. Such frameworks helped me in organising my ideas, besides exploring many factors that contribute to the success of the company. I also referred to the existing data to prove my arguments and make the report even more topical. This included writing a report and revising the final work, carrying out research and seeking information that can be used. The process allowed me to know how theoretical frameworks can be used in real business scenarios as opposed to being elaborated.

2. Feelings

My first reaction was hesitation on how I should solve the assignment, where I struggled to adapt the business theories to a practical rule. It was also difficult to locate existing and current

academic material. This showed how poorly I can exercise critical thinking in the application of theoretical knowledge. But the more I developed, I became sure that I could relate theory to the case study. My research and academic writing improvement led to an improvement as well. This allowed me to identify my weaknesses and strengths, especially the fact that I need to become more skilled in critical thinking and application.

3. Evaluation

There were various strengths in my work. I also relied on a variety of books, publications, and scholarly articles, which contributed to enhancing the quality of my study (Hilton III, 2016). The report was more organised and simpler to follow using business models like Porter's Five Forces, PESTLE and FDI theory. Besides, I used data and real-life examples, which enhanced the relevance of my arguments and aligned my analysis.

There were also important weaknesses. Part of my report was more descriptive than a critical analysis of the information. This demonstrates that I knew the theories, but I could not use them initially. Another weakness I had was in academic writing, especially with clarity and proper sentence construction. The other problem was time management, as I did not find sufficient time to go through and refine my work. These were the drawbacks of my analysis in the general scope.

4. Analysis

The assignment has made me realise that in a business setting, international critical thinking is more significant than description. I was also taught that theories should not merely be explained, but they should also be assessed in terms of their strengths and limitations, as well as their practical applications. In this case, factors like skilled labour and access to the European market are benefits; there are other risks, such as cost inflation and reliance on multinational companies in Ireland (FitzGerald and Honohan, 2023). This taught me how theory can be used in practice

I also came to understand that there are various factors which are intertwined to determine the business decisions made. Theories like PESTEL made me realise that the political, economic, legal, and cultural aspects influence the way of doing business. Nonetheless, I came to know that these frameworks cannot be a checklist. Rather, they are supposed to be applied in determining the factors that have the greatest significance and how these factors affect strategic decisions.

In addition, theories of FDI helped me to know why multinational companies like Johnson and Johnson may prefer certain locations. I came to know that control, efficiency and long-term strategy are among the reasons why companies do not choose exporting or licensing, but FDI. What was more important was that I realised that implementing these theories needs to be associated with real business strategies, but not just merely explaining them. The assignment helped me become more critical in thinking and relate theory to practice.

5. Conclusion

Altogether, this activity helped me to progress my knowledge of international business and theory application into practice and became a worthwhile learning process. It improved my skills in research and enhanced my capacity to organise and plan out the arguments. More to the point, it also allowed me to acquire the skill of critical thinking by making me think and analyse the information instead of describing it. I have become more empowered in studying business environments and the effective utilisation of theoretical frameworks, despite certain challenges.

6. Action Plan

To cover this matter in future, I will endeavour to advance my critical analysis skills by making every part of my work contain evaluation, limitations, and clear judgment to the end. I shall strive to engage beyond description by always seeking to find answers to how and why issues affect business decisions. I will also consider employing more academic sources that are of higher quality, like journal articles, to boost the argument's validity.

To enhance my academic writing, I will use shorter and clearer sentences, be more attentive to organization and need not cite. Time management will also be given priority since I will begin assignments earlier and have some time to revise and improve them. Lastly, I will also keep using the practises of applying business models like Porter's Five Forces, PESTLE and FDI theory to build more analytical skills to use in future assignments.

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