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Section 1

1. Organisational Context and Overview

Company Background and Historical Development

Nestle is a Swiss multinational food and beverage corporation that was established in 1866 by Henri Nestle. The company was originally formed to manufacture infant food that would reduce the mortality rate of children, and it grew by way of constant innovation, strategic mergers and acquisitions. Nestle has, over the years, grown to become one of the largest consumer goods companies across the globe, where it operates in over 180 countries (Nestlé, 2026). Its history shows that it has been very adaptive to evolving consumer demands, having grown away from its simple nutrition products to a wide range that deals with coffee, confectionery, dairy, bottled water, and pet care.

The mission of Nestle is to improve the quality of life and provide a better future, with the vision focusing on providing high-quality, safe, and nutritious products all over the world. The business model of the company is to create value by means of well-managed brands, vast global distribution channels and massive research and development (R&D). With innovation, and more so in health and nutrition as key priorities, Nestle plans to react positively to the changing consumer preferences and maintain growth in the long-term competitiveness.

Industry Overview, Competitors and Market Position

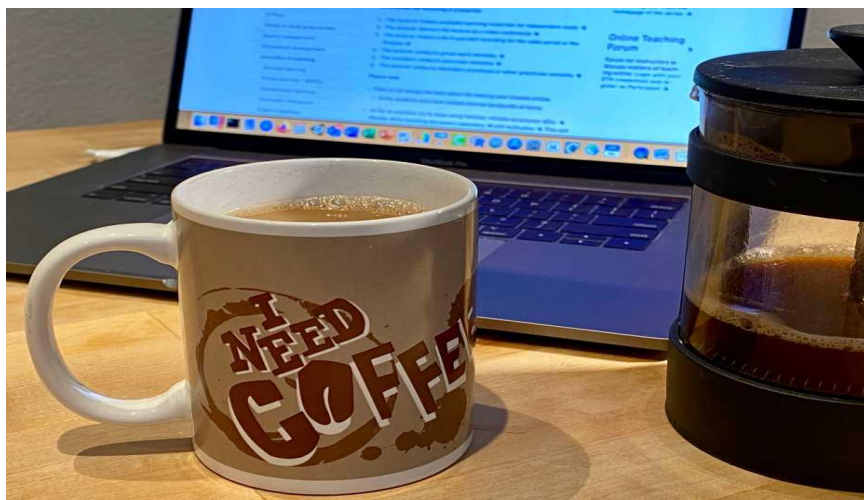


Image: Coffee (Nestlé, 2026)

Nestle is in the global food and beverage industry, which is very competitive, dynamic and influenced by the rapidly changing consumer behaviour. The rising demand for healthier and more nutritious products and increased sustainability issues, as well as the emergence of digital transformation, are the major trends that will shape the industry. Also, there are stringent regulatory provisions associated with food safety, labelling and environmental provisions that add more complexity to companies in this industry (Nestlé, 2026).

The competition that the company is exposed to includes large multinational corporations like Unilever, PepsiCo, and Danone, and many regional and local brands. Such competitors act within the same product lines, which increases competition. Nevertheless, Nestle has a solid market share with its diversified product line, international location, and solid brand image.

Nestle is well established as a market leader in various markets, especially in coffee and nutrition products. Economies of scale, customer loyalty, and constant innovation have helped it to gain an edge over its rivals. Nevertheless, the company should be able to adjust to the demands of sustainability, regulatory shifts, and changing consumer preferences in order to remain at the top of its game.

2. External and Internal Environment Analysis

External Environment Analysis (PESTEL Framework)

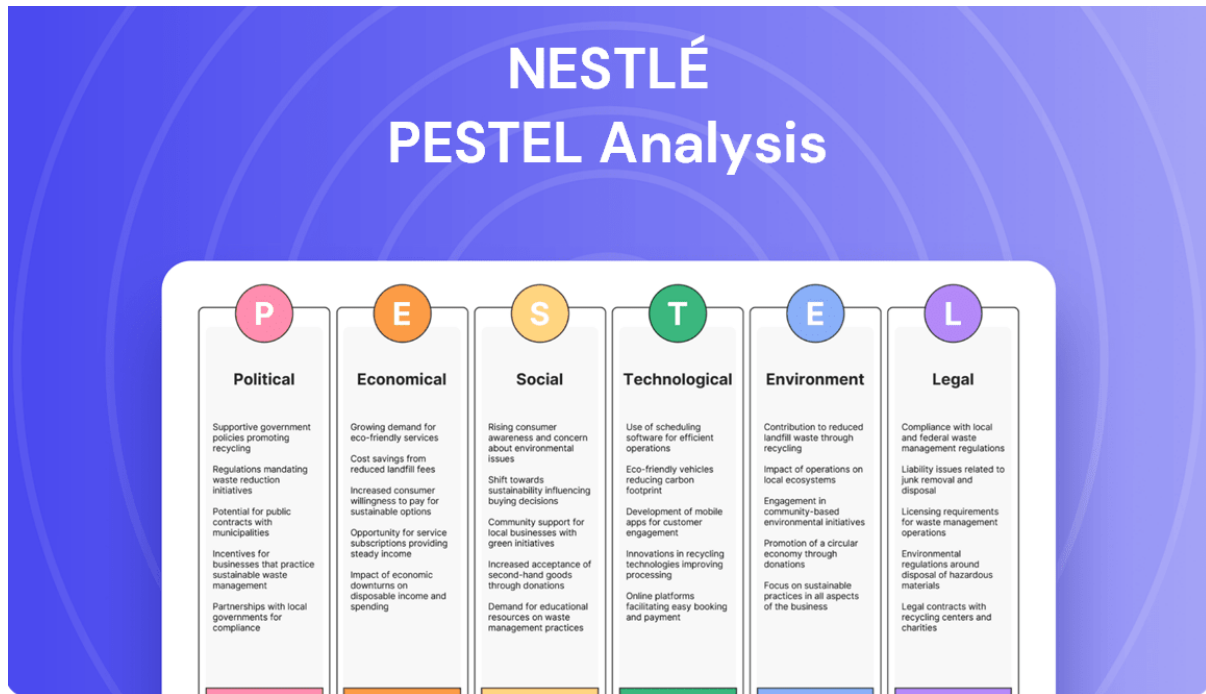


Image: Nestlé PESTEL Analysis (Varma and Ravi, 2017)

The PESTEL analysis framework helps to analyse the macro-environmental factors impacting Nestlé: political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal factors. This model helps with strategic planning and risk assessment, but is also said to be static and not to focus on dynamic environmental factors.

Political Factors

Political factors play a major role in Nestlé's business, given its global operations across multiple jurisdictions. Food safety, taxes and trade restrictions, as well as sugar content labelling, affect the supply. The rise in state intervention on matters of public health has resulted in adjustments in products to lower sugar content and enhance nutrient profiles. Furthermore, geopolitical factors have led to increased production costs, with global food prices rising by around 2.4% per month and 3.1% per year in early 2026, and sugar prices exceeding 7% (Reuters, 2026).

Critical Analysis: Political regulations may constrain strategic opportunities through regulatory costs and restrictions. However, they also offer opportunities for differentiation through the ability to innovate health products and comply. But PESTEL doesn't reveal the important political factors.

Economic Factors

Nestlé is also influenced by economic factors, namely inflation, real income and raw material costs. 2025 and 2026 have seen varied global food inflation, with global food prices up by 3.1% per annum and sugar 9-10% per annum (United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, 2016). Nestlé had an average annual price rise of 2.8% in 2015 to compensate for this (Nestlé, 2016). But inflation reduces real disposable income (particularly in emerging markets), and we consume lower-cost products.

Critical Analysis: The mixed blessings of costs. Increases in input costs can be absorbed by Nestlé, though if inflation continues, purchasing habits and product choices may change, and consumers may favour less expensive products. PESTEL is partly misleading as it does not consider these different responses.

Social Factors

Trends in consumer behaviour are fast evolving, with an increased focus on healthier, ethical and sustainable consumption. The worldwide growth rate of health and well-being promotion of food is 9.1% annually, since 2026 (Grand View Research, 2026). Nestlé has responded by focusing on health and nutrition. But unhealthy content and sustainable practices are still challenges for brand image development.

Critical analysis: Social change creates opportunity for innovation and calls for transparency. Nestlé is on the defensive as wellness continues to gain ground, but some of the company's moves seem reactionary, leading to a mismatch between reality and image.

Technological Factors

Technology enables Nestlé to embrace digital transformation via e-commerce, automation and data analytics. Worldwide e-commerce revenues will increase by

7.2% in 2026 to \$6.88 trillion (Shopify, 2026). Technology development allows for superior customer engagement and supply chain management, but is expensive to adopt and carries a risk of cybersecurity.

Critical Analysis: Technology is a form of competitive advantage, but disruptive change could weaken the long-term value of PESTEL as its ability to predict technological innovation is limited.

Environmental Factors

Nestlé's strategies must consider environmental sustainability. Weather change: effects on food supplies, like coffee and cocoa (Henry, 2021). Water, carbon and plastics also pose a threat to brands and businesses. Nestlé wants to achieve net-zero carbon emissions and cut packaging.

Critical Analysis: Water scarcity, climate change and sustainability promote strategy and differentiation. But sustainability measures may be costly and have an unclear immediate payoff.

Legal Factors

Nestlé faces a web of food safety, labelling and environmental legislation. Litigation related to water and marketing has damaged its reputation.

Critical Analysis: Rules are needed to constrain businesses, but they are costly. PESTEL highlights legal issues, but not solutions.

Priority Judgement: Key Strategic Forces Affecting Nestlé

In the case of Nestlé, the six PESTEL factors that pose challenges are economic, social and environmental. Economic pressures influence price, profits and wealth, causing cost and pricing considerations. Social factors impact on the market for healthier food, which pressures Nestlé to develop new products and explore new business opportunities. Environmental factors impact the organisation too, with sustainability and climate change affecting the supply chain and brand, and their future business interests. These interact to influence strategic planning, placing a focus on competitiveness, innovation and sustainability in a dynamic marketplace.

Critical Success Factors and Strategic Challenges



Image: Critical success factors (CSFs) (Sathyan and Jagadeesha, 2021)

Critical Success Factor (CSF)	Linked PESTEL Pressure	Related VRIO Capability	Strategic Implication for Nestlé
Strong brand reputation	Social pressure for healthier and trusted products	Valuable and rare global brand portfolio	Strong brands help to build customer loyalty and allow price premiums under competitive conditions (Ansoff <i>et al.</i> , 2018).
Continuous product innovation	Technological and social change	Strong R&D capability	Innovation allows Nestlé to adapt to emerging consumer trends and priorities for health.
Efficient global supply chain	Economic inflation and political trade barriers	Organised distribution network	An efficient supply chain lowers costs and increases

			product availability worldwide.
Adaptation to regulations	Political and legal requirements	Organisational capability and compliance systems	Responsibility to regulation helps ensure against market withdrawals and reputation attacks

The company is facing many challenges, including inflation, sustainability, competition and consumer shifts (Fuentes *et al.*, 2020). Nestlé's future success hinges on striking an equilibrium between innovation and sustainability, cost-efficiency and deluxe positioning.

Internal Environment Analysis

The internal environment deals with the resources, capabilities and core competencies of Nestle.

Key Resources and Capabilities

Nestle has many strategic resources:

- Brand Portfolio: Well-known brands (e.g., Nescafé, KitKat) worldwide.
- Financial Strength: Revenue is high (CHF 89.5 billion in 2025) (Nestlé, 2026).
- Adequacy in R&D: Ongoing investment in innovation.
- Global Distribution Network: Operation in more than 180 countries.

These resources give Nestle the ability to experience economies of scale and dominate the market.

Core Competencies

Nestle has the following core competencies:

- Innovation of products in health and nutrition.
- Strong brand management.

- Efficiency of the global supply chain (Jabbar and Hussein, 2017).

These capabilities enable Nestle to diversify its products and react well to changes in the market.

VRIO Analysis



Image: VRIO Analysis (Larbi, Asare-Danquah and Ackah, 2024)

The VRIO framework assesses the sustainability of the competitive advantage of Nestle through its resources.

Resource/Capability	Valuable	Rare	Inimitable	Organised	Competitive Implication
Brand Portfolio	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sustained Advantage
R&D Capability	✓	✓	Moderate	✓	Temporary Advantage
Distribution Network	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sustained Advantage
Financial Resources	✓	×	×	✓	Competitive Parity

Critical Evaluation of VRIO

According to the VRIO analysis, Nestlé continues to maintain a competitive advantage from its hefty portfolio of brands and widespread distribution reach. Nestlé has a presence in 185 countries, more than 30 billion Swiss franc brands and an annual R&D expenditure of CHF 1.7 billion with 22 centres for ongoing innovation (Nestlé, 2026). Nestlé's sales in 2015 were CHF 89.5 billion, cementing its market position. Nestlé's scale and distribution advantage are greater than those of competitors like Unilever, which has a lower global turnover and fewer brands under its control. But R&D capabilities can be replicated (Morden, 2016).

Limitation of VRIO: VRIO operates under a condition of stability and fails to consider the fast-changing external factors like technological upheaval or regulatory alterations (Amason and Ward, 2020). Thus, it ought to be coupled with external analysis to have a comprehensive perspective.

Internal Strengths and Competitive Advantage

Internal strengths are key in creating and maintaining a competitive advantage for Nestlé in the global food and beverage industry (Nestlé, 2026). The high customer loyalty and good brand portfolio of the company are also among its major strengths. Nestle benefits by having well-established brands like Nescafé and KitKat, which increase consumer confidence and enable the company to sustain premium pricing strategies, which facilitate profitability. The other major strength is that it can attain economies of scale. The high global presence of Nestle facilitates high production, thus lowering unit cost and enhancing the efficiency of its operations (Lynch, 2021). This cost advantage enhances its competitiveness with the global and local competitors. In addition, the innovation ability is one of the core competencies of Nestle. The ability to adapt and keep up with the evolving consumer preferences, especially the rising demand for healthier and sustainable products, is enabled by sustained investment in research and development (R&D) (Eweje and Bathurst, 2017). This will enhance its long-term strategic position.

Critical Discussion

Although these strengths stand, there are several limitations. A diversified product portfolio means more complex operations and could decrease the efficiency of an organisation (Vertigans and Idowu, 2021). Also, long-term commitment to innovation may exert strain on the short-term financial results, especially in times of economic instability.

On a critical note, a few scholars claim that in dynamic and volatile markets, competitive advantage is becoming more of a transient nature. This is because the benefits can be easily copied or substituted due to the rapid technological changes and evolving consumer behaviour. Thus, Nestle needs to be able to renew and modernise its capabilities to be able to remain in the market.

Synthesis: Linking Internal and External Factors

One of the main points of strategic management is the correspondence between the internal capabilities and the demands of the external environment. Nestle can show this alignment by using its internal strengths to respond to the external pressures. To take the case of the increasing need for healthier products, its robust R&D capacities respond to the need, and the rising issues regarding sustainability are addressed through its CSR programmes (Camilleri, 2017). Equally, economic forces like inflation are curbed in terms of pricing strategy and cost management.

This incorporation underscores the fact that the capacity of Nestle to match its internal capabilities with the external opportunities and threats is critical to the long-term competitive advantage in a very dynamic market environment.

3. CSR and Sustainability Objectives

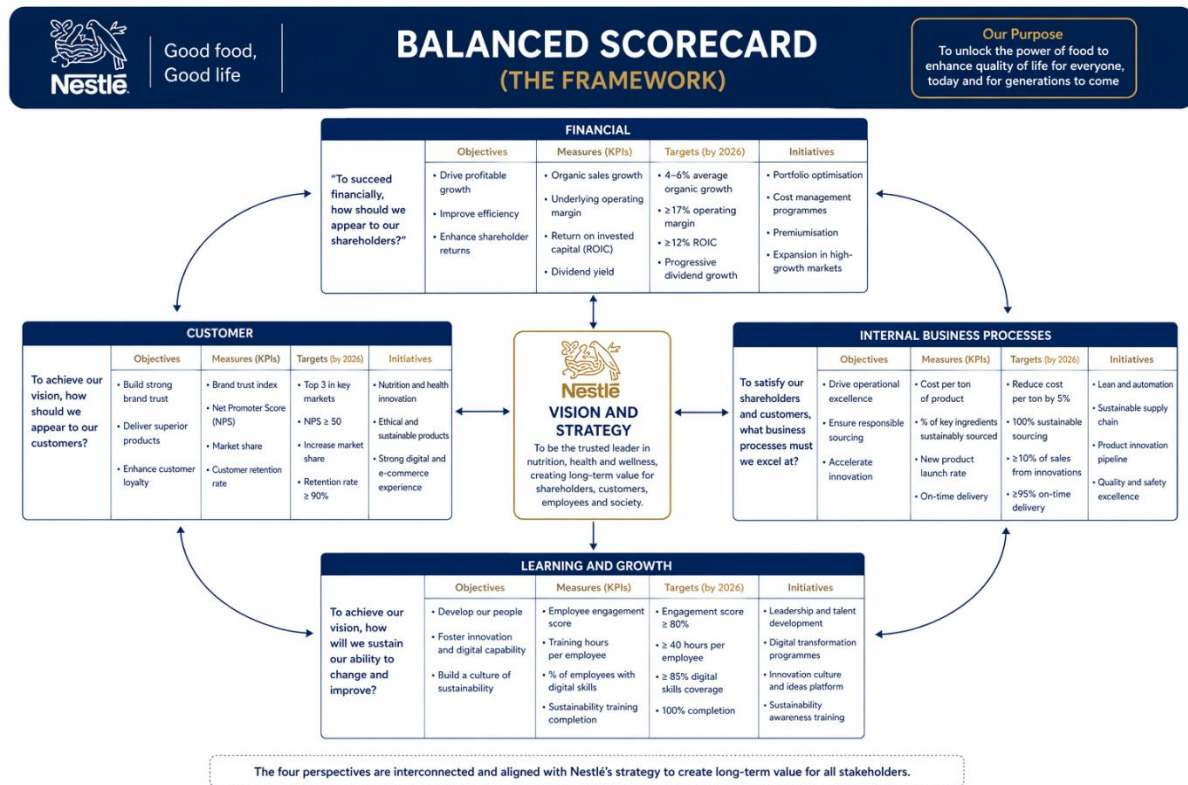
Nestlé's corporate social responsibility (CSR) approach is founded in its Creating Shared Value (CSV) strategy, which integrates social and environmental issues into business. It is dedicated to sustainable sourcing, environmental and social development to achieve business sustainability (Amason and Ward, 2020). Nestlé's CSR goals are to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, 33% reduction in the use of virgin plastic compared to 2018 and to support farmers to improve their economic situation by implementing sustainable sourcing programmes. The initiatives

are connected to the business objectives to improve its image and brand value, comply with regulations and meet the demands of consumers for a sustainable and ethical brand (Eweje and Bathurst, 2017).

Recent years' progress demonstrates these objectives. Nestlé will have reduced 24.5% of greenhouse gas emissions by 2025 (based on 2018 targets) and exceeded its mid-term climate goals. Further, in 2025, 27.6% of key ingredients are produced with regenerative agriculture, heading towards its 50% goal for 2030. Furthermore, 96.7% of first-tier supply chains of key ingredients (cocoa, coffee, soy, sugar and palm oil) were deforestation-free. With respect to packaging sustainability, Nestlé achieved 40.8% of packaging with recycled content, and improved on phasing out new plastics.

Despite improvement, there are areas to work on. Nestlé continues to be criticised for plastic waste, water use and the nutritional value of some products. Sustainability targets are being set high, but are difficult to achieve globally. Some consider CSR as having the potential of "greenwash" rather than a business transformation approach (Camilleri, 2017). Further, sustainability initiatives tend to strain finances in the short run, which may lead to a conflict between shareholders' interests and sustainability. Overall, Nestlé's CSR is aligned with its business strategy and provides benefits. However, recent results show relative improvement, and more still needs to be done in all sustainability areas.

4. Comprehensive and holistic view of the organisation



The Balanced Scorecard, which is a complete framework used to evaluate the performance of organisations by incorporating both financial and non-financial analysis. In the case of Nestle, this is especially applicable because it is in line with its mission to improve the quality of life and people having a healthier future. The four lenses, which include the financial, customer, internal business processes, and the learning and growth, provide a comprehensive picture of the value creation and maintenance by the organisation (Bailey *et al.*, 2018).

Financial Perspective

Perspec tive	Objectiv e	KPI	Current Baseline	Target	Strategic Initiative	Risk
Financial Perspecti ve	Improve long- term profitabili	Organic sales growth, operating	Organic growth around 7.2% and	Maintain sustainable organic growth of	Portfolio optimisati on, cost manage	Excessive focus on short-term profit may

	ty and shareholder value for Nestlé	profit margin, return on invested capital (ROIC)	strong operating performance in 2025 (Nestlé, 2026)	4–6% with improved margins	ment programmes, and expansion into high-growth markets	reduce investment in sustainability and innovation
Critical Evaluation	Balance financial performance with long-term value creation	Investment in R&D and sustainability spending	Strong revenue generation but rising operational costs	Maintain competitiveness while supporting CSR goals	Strategic allocation of resources across business units	Overemphasis on financial targets may weaken long-term innovation capacity (Armstrong, 2021)

Customer Perspective

This school of thought focuses on customer satisfaction, brand loyalty and market share. Nestle strives to provide quality, healthy and sustainable products to suit the changing consumer preferences. The KPIs involve the customer satisfaction ratings, brand equity, and market share in the product categories (Hill, Schilling and Jones, 2017). Targets are working to build brand trust and to enter health-oriented segments. The key ones are product re-formulation (reduced sugar and salt content), internet marketing and tailor-made consumer interaction.

Critical Insight: Although it focuses on the value delivery to its customers, the ongoing problems of health impact and sustainability practices may damage the reputation of

Nestle, which can adversely affect consumer trust and influence further brand loyalty and market performance.

Internal Business Processes Perspective

The internal processes school of thought puts emphasis on operational efficiency and innovation. Nestle has the goals of enhancing supply chain efficiency, product quality and quickening the innovation cycles (Lynch, 2022). The KPIs are efficiency in production, time to market of new products, and performance metrics of the supply chain. Some examples of targets are reducing the cost of operations and increasing sustainable behaviours, such as minimising waste. The digitalisation of operations, automation, and sustainability sourcing programmes are some of the key initiatives.

Critical Insight: Process improvements are more efficient, but large-scale global operational changes are big, take a lot of resources, coordination, and time, which makes the implementation process complex and may present a challenge in ensuring consistency across international markets (Wheelen *et al.*, 2018).

Learning and Growth Perspective

This school of thought deals with organisational capability, the development of employees and innovation. The goals of Nestle are to develop the skills of employees, to innovate and to develop a powerful organisational culture. KPIs include employee engagement, training hours, and output of innovative ideas. Targets are interested in lifelong learning and retention (Whittington *et al.*, 2020). The strategic initiatives involve leadership development programmes, investment in R&D and digital skills.

Critical Insight: Although investing in human capital aids in long-term growth and the ability building, intangible results like the performance of innovation, creativity and knowledge transfer within the organisation are hard to quantify.

Overall Evaluation

In general, the Balanced Scorecard facilitates strategy alignment for Nestlé in financial, customer, process, and learning and growth perspectives. Yet, the weakest perspective is the environmental and customer perspective, with issues relating to

plastic waste, nutrition, and sustainability reporting. It could also result in customer suspicion, exceeding the sustainable agenda and practices.

5. Strategic Choices and Implementation

The choice of strategy is what determines the attainment and maintenance of competitive advantage by the organisation (Barney and Hesterly, 2015). In the case of Nestle, business-level and corporate-level strategies are very important in determining its long-term performance in a very competitive global market.

Business-Level Strategy: Cost Leadership vs Differentiation



Image: Business-Level Strategy (Fleisher, 2018)

In business, Nestle mostly uses a differentiation approach, where they concentrate on the quality of its products, brand image, and innovation. Nestle distinguishes itself by providing different, high-quality products, which suit various consumer segments. This approach will help the company to set high prices and establish a high level of customer loyalty.

On the other hand, the cost leadership strategy aims at reducing the cost of production so as to promote low prices. Although Nestle enjoys the benefits of economies of scale, complete adoption of cost leadership might not be appropriate, as it focuses on quality and brand value (Gamble, Peteraf and Thompson Jr, 2015). Price-only competition might undermine brand perceptions and decrease profit margins.

Evaluation and Recommendation: Nestle should use differentiation as the best approach because this style is the one that would fit well in its strong brand portfolio and innovative capabilities. Nonetheless, a mixture of the strategy with cost efficiency is also desirable to be competitive in price-sensitive markets.

Critical Insight: Differentiation may add costs and complexity to operations, and the cost leadership may reduce innovation. Thus, it is necessary to strike a balance between the two methods.

Corporate-Level Strategy: Diversification and International Expansion

At the company level, Nestle has diversification and globalisation strategies. The company deals in various product lines like coffee, dairy, confectionary and health nutrition to mitigate risk and to increase revenue lines (Grant, 2018). Also, it is present in more than 180 countries, which shows its effective internationalisation strategy.

Diversification enables Nestle to diversify risk and to capitalise on the market opportunities. Nonetheless, it can also add complexity to management and blur the strategic focus (Fogel, 2016). International expansion allows the company to enter new markets and realise economies of scale, at the cost of exposing the company to political, economic, and cultural risks.

Evaluation and Recommendation: Nestle must proceed with its diversification campaign, especially in the growing segments like the plant-based and health-conscious products (Nestlé, 2026). It is also advisable to expand into the emerging markets, which have great potential for growth.

Critical Insight: Over-diversifying may result in reduced efficiency, but expanding internationally may open up to foreign risks. Therefore, it needs to be strategic and selective of the market.

Strategic Implementation and Change Management

Whatever the change, Nestlé can apply change management by using the SAFE criteria to analyse if the strategic initiatives are suitable, acceptable and feasible. Sustainability and digital transformation are suitable as they meet consumer and

environmental needs. Benchmarking allows us to compare existing sustainability initiatives with new initiatives to enhance.

McKinsey 7S Element	Current Situation at Nestlé	Strategic Fit / Importance	Improvement Recommendation
Strategy	Focus on differentiation, sustainability, and global expansion.	Supports competitive advantage.	Improve digital transformation.
Structure	Global divisional structure by region and product.	Enhances coordination.	Increase cross-regional collaboration.
Systems	Strong supply chain, R&D, and quality systems.	Improves efficiency.	Expand automation and analytics.
Shared Values	Commitment to health and sustainability.	Builds brand identity.	Improve transparency.
Style	Collaborative leadership.	Supports innovation.	Speed decision-making.
Staff	Skilled global workforce.	Enables operations.	Enhance training.
Skills	Strong branding and R&D.	Maintains advantage.	Develop e-commerce capabilities.

The McKinsey 7S Framework shows that Nestle is very well aligned between its strategy, systems and organisational capabilities. Nevertheless, digital skills, sustainability transparency, and internal coordination are areas of concern that should be enhanced to enhance strategic implementation. This framework facilitates change

management since internal organisational factors are aligned with long-term strategic objectives.

Critical Assessment: Although Nestle has managed to adapt to most external pressures, there are areas where it has been criticised for lagging, especially in sustainability. This implies that strategic intent is not necessarily in line with execution.

Overall Evaluation

The strategic decisions made by Nestle have shown a perfect match between the company's internal competencies and market needs. Differentiation and diversification offer a strong base for competitive advantage, whereas international expansion contributes to growth (Bailey *et al.*, 2018). The success of such strategies, however, lies in their appropriate implementation and in continuous adjustment to the rapidly changing global environment.

6. Strategic Evaluation and Recommendations

It is necessary to assess the effectiveness of Nestle's current strategy to ensure it helps it maintain a competitive edge (Lynch, 2022). In this section, the SWOT analysis, Ansoff Matrix, and BCG Matrix are used to critically evaluate the company's strategic position and provide justifiable recommendations.

Strategic Evaluation Using SWOT Analysis



Image: SWOT Analysis of Nestle (Jain and Singh, 2020)

The strong brand portfolio, large distribution network, and heavy investment in research and development are the strengths of Nestle. These aspects allow the firm

to stay on top of the market and retain customers. Nevertheless, weaknesses such as criticism of sustainability practices and a complicated product portfolio can decrease the efficiency of operations. Nestle can also take advantage of the opportunity of growing demand for healthier and sustainable products, and also expanding markets (Nestlé, 2026). On the other hand, threats are stiff competition, an increase in the cost of inputs and regulatory pressures.

Critical Insight: SWOT is a very useful summary of both internal and external factors. It is not in-depth, and it does not prioritise issues, which restricts its usefulness in strategic decision-making.

Ansoff's Matrix Analysis

The Matrix created by Ansoff indicates the growth strategies of Nestle:

- **Market Penetration:** Enhancing the presence in the current markets by marketing and product enhancement.
- **Product Development:** Diversification in terms of healthier and innovative products, including plant-based alternatives (Whittington *et al.*, 2020).
- **Market Development:** Entering into the emerging markets.
- **Diversification:** Expanding into new lines, such as health science and pet care.

Evaluation: Nestle has emphasised product development and in-market development, and this is in line with current consumer trends. Nonetheless, diversification is riskier because the markets are unfamiliar and more requirements are required to invest.

BCG Matrix Analysis

The product portfolio of Nestle can be analysed with the help of the BCG Matrix:

- **Stars:** Coffee products (e.g., Nescafé) that grow and have a large market share.
- **Cash Cows:** Dairy and bottled water items that are bringing about consistent income.
- **Question Marks:** Vegan and healthy foods.
- **Dogs:** Poor or decreasing lines of product.

Critical Insight: The BCG Matrix assists in the allocation of resources but simplifies complicated processes in the market and overlooks outside forces.

Recommendations for Strategic Improvement

Strengthen Sustainability Strategy

By 2030, Nestlé should cut by 33% the amount of virgin plastics used and 50% its emissions, using its sustainability and supply chain departments. These include recyclability and carbon emissions. This aligns with stakeholder theory (Barney and Hesterly, 2015), brand image and regulatory compliance. However, there is a risk of high cost.

Expand Health-Focused Product Portfolio

There will be an upward trend in the investment in health and nutrition products as the demand of consumers increases (Grant, 2018). This promotes the differentiation strategy and increases long-term growth potential.

Enhance Digital Transformation

Nestle also needs to invest more in e-commerce and data analytics to enhance customer engagement and efficiency. This shows the significance of dynamic capabilities in the adjustment to technological change.

Justification of Recommendations

The recommendations are justified by strategic management theories such as Michael Porter's differentiation strategy, which emphasises innovation and uniqueness for competitive advantage (Fogel, 2016). Diversifying into health-related offerings is in line with market trends, which Unilever's sustainable brands have achieved to fuel growth. Also, the Resource-Based View (RBV) promotes the idea of using Nestle resources in terms of R&D and brand to maintain long-term competitive advantage in dynamic markets.

Overall Evaluation

The existing strategy of Nestle is robust but must be constantly adjusted. Although its diversified portfolio and global footprint offer some stability, the key to its success in the future is in good responsiveness to sustainability issues, innovation, and responsiveness to changing consumer needs (Armstrong, 2021).

Section 2: Reflective Account Using Gibbs Reflective Cycle

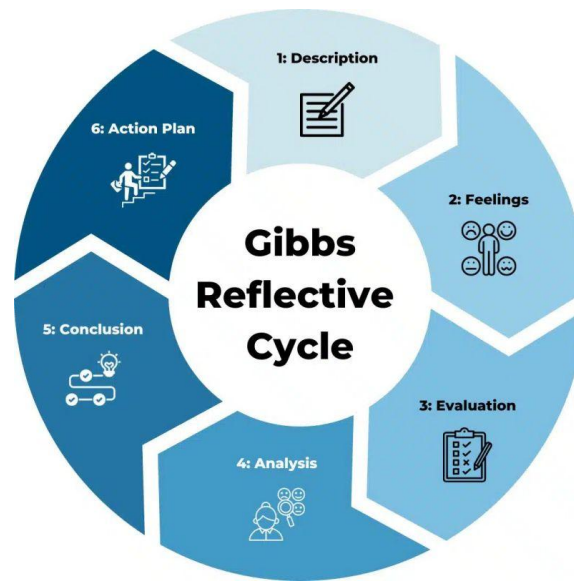


Image: Gibbs Reflective Cycle (Adeani, Febriani and Syafradin, 2020)

Description

To accomplish this evaluation, I conducted an extensive strategic analysis of Nestle by applying various strategic management conceptual frameworks. This has been done by analysing the external and internal environment of the organisation and using models including PESTEL, VRIO, SWOT, Matrix created by Ansoff and Balanced Scorecard (Lynch, 2022). I also concentrated on the critical analysis of the strategies of Nestle as opposed to merely describing them. I relied on the information found in academic journals, textbooks and industry reports published in the recent past to support my analysis and made sure that my work was founded on credible and current information. This served to enhance the credibility and scholarly standards of my arguments. In the process, I gained an understanding of the necessity of relating theory to practical business cases. The use of these models on a real-life case helped me to have a clearer picture of the process of strategic decision-making. In general, this process enhanced my skills in the ability to analyse, evaluate and relate theory with practice.

Feelings

Initially, on the first day of working on the assignment, I was so stressed by the complexity of the task, especially since it involved the application of a number of different strategic models, as well as critical analysis. Being a novice in academic English, I also had a concern about whether I would be able to articulate my thoughts clearly, logically, and professionally. The anticipation of going beyond mere description and giving an assessment further complicated the work (Grant, 2018). Nevertheless, I got more and more confident as I worked through the materials and began to implement the models step by step. I also came to understand that it was far simpler and more significant to tie theory with real-life cases, especially when it came to the example of an existing company like Nestle. This method enabled me to understand the application of strategic theories in practice. Gradually, I felt more at ease in organising my arguments and putting my ideas across, which in the end made the learning process more interesting and worthwhile.

Evaluation

This assignment has been a rewarding and challenging experience, given that it required the application of a number of models to review how Nestlé has chosen its strategy (Fogel, 2016). My strategy was to use several models (PESTEL, VRIO, SWOT and the Balanced Scorecard) in order to provide a structured analysis. I also incorporated current data and business situations in the report to make it more relevant.

But I identified areas for improvement. First, I was more descriptive of the theoretical models rather than critical. I discovered through peer review that in academic work, we should identify limitations and possible arguments and evidence to support assertions. For example, in the PESTEL part, initially, I just described the external factors, without prioritising them. I subsequently included an evaluation of the major factors - economic, social and environmental factors - and their links to strategy. This improved the analysis in the report.

I found it hard to condense a mass of information and maintain the logical flow. This helped me to build my critical analysis, organisation and academic writing skills.

Analysis

This experience showed that critical thinking is very significant in strategic management. I also realised that not just any models, like PESTEL or SWOT, can be implemented; one has to look at their applicability and constraints in the real world. As an example, PESTEL is applicable in the identification of the external factors. It lacks prioritisation of these factors and is not effective in anticipating the quick changes in the environment (Hill, Schilling and Jones, 2017). Likewise, the VRIO analysis can be used to evaluate internal resources and capabilities, but it is based on a relatively stable environment that is not necessarily representative of market dynamics. I also got to know the importance of linking up both internal and external factors purposefully. It was imperative to analyse the reaction of the internal strengths of Nestle, including its research and development potential and excellent brand equity, to the external forces, including the sustainability requirements and the shifting consumer tastes (Wheelen *et al.*, 2018). This strategy allowed me to come up with a more holistic and integrated analysis. In general, the process enhanced my skills in synthesising complex information, critical thinking, and making informed strategic decisions.

Conclusion

Overall, I can state that this assignment has contributed greatly to my knowledge of strategic management and the application of the theoretical frameworks in practice. In the process, I have been able to become more analytical and more confident about my ability to critically assess business strategies. I also enhanced my academic writing, especially in the way I organised my argument and gave it evidence that is well-supported and pertinent. Various strategic models assisted me in learning how various tools may be used to study real-life organisations. It also boosted my skills in merging theory and practice in a significant manner. Nevertheless, I understand that it could be improved. Specifically, I should learn to create more critical arguments with more counterarguments and sophisticated evaluation. Another approach that I want to refine is the connection between various parts of my report as a means of providing a more rational and logically related analysis in future academic work.

Action Plan

In order to improve my research and analytical abilities in the future, I will use a wider scope of academic sources, especially recent journal articles and high-quality reports. This will assist me in coming up with more current and supported arguments. Another area I will work on to enhance my critical evaluation is to always seek to determine the strengths, weaknesses, and assumptions of every model I apply, as opposed to description. Besides, I am planning to work on my academic writing by training myself to write more clearly developed sentences, applying the right academic vocabulary and being formal in the whole work. I will be more attentive to the coherence and logical connection between paragraphs. In addition, I will set time aside to plan, write and revise my assignments so that they will be well organised and accurate.

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