

**Czech University of Life Sciences Prague**

**Faculty of Economics and Management**

**Department of Management**



**Master's Thesis**

***“Marketing Strategy of Hindustan Unilever Ltd.”***

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# CZECH UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES PRAGUE

Faculty of Economics and Management

## DIPLOMA THESIS ASSIGNMENT

Bc. Atman Trivedi

Business Administration

Thesis title

**Marketing Strategy of Hindustan Unilever Limited**

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### **Objectives of thesis**

The aim of the diploma thesis is to create a marketing strategy of consumer good company. As part of the creation of the strategy, our own suggestions and recommendations will be used to manage the marketing area of this brand.

### **Methodology**

The theoretical part of the work is based on current sources focused on marketing issues. The empirical part of the thesis focuses on the identification, definition and analysis of the company's marketing environment, analysis of the current state of marketing strategy and the design of their own recommendations and possible changes in the marketing strategy of the selected company.

For example assumed Outline as under:

- SWOT analysis
- STEP Analysis
- Competitor analysis
- Porter's Five forces
- Marketing Mix
- EFE and IFE analysis

**The proposed extent of the thesis**

60-80 pages

**Keywords**

Marketing strategy, services, marketing mix, marketing communication, analysis of external and internal environment

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**Recommended information sources**

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Prague on 30. 11. 2023

### **Declaration**

I declare that I have worked on my master's thesis titled "Marketing Strategy of Hindustan Unilever Limited" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the master's thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break any copyrights.

In Prague on date of submission                      30.11.2023

### **Acknowledgement**

My deepest gratitude is extended to my supervisor **Ing. Stanislav Rojík**, Ph.D. and other faculty members who collaborated with me on this specific research so that the results would be worthy of their efforts. In addition, I want to thank my fellow peers for their invaluable assistance in helping me solve some of the most difficult problems I encountered into while conducting my research. They made it possible for me to make sure that a suitable value was obtained for this investigation. Last but not the least, I want to thank my parents as well for supporting effortlessly till the very last instance of my research work.

Thank You

### **Abstract**

Marketing strategies are considered an integral part of business operations as they help the relevant firm to develop necessary strategic actions based on the assessment of internal markets and customers. With reference to this argument, the following study has been designed to explore the capability of Hindustan Unilever Limited to develop appropriate marketing strategies in order to operate in the Indian market. The selection of the organisation has been done on the basis of their current position in the Indian market of Fast Moving Consumer Goods. With the help of the analysis that has been performed in this study, it is expected that an insight of their marketing strategies would be attained both in terms of internal and external environmental perspectives. For performing this, a set of theories and frameworks has been utilised so that a formal way of analysing the macro and micro environmental factors can be done. Therefore, the external and internal environments of HUL have been described with the use of strategic tools such as SWOT analysis, EFE matrix and IFE matrix in order to illustrate various details with proper evidence.

**Keywords:** Marketing, Strategy, services, marketing mix, marketing communication, analysis of external and internal environment

### **Abstraktní**

Marketingové strategie jsou považovány za nedílnou součást obchodních operací, protože pomáhají příslušnému zemědělskému podniku vyvinout nezbytná strategická opatření na základě posouzení nelegálních trhů a zákazníků. S odkazem na tento argument byla navržena následující studie, která prozkoumala schopnost společnosti Hindustan Unilever Limited vyvinout vhodné marketingové strategie pro působení na indickém trhu. Výběr organizace byl proveden na základě jejich současné pozice na indickém trhu rychloobrátkového spotřebního zboží. S pomocí analýzy, která byla provedena v této studii, se očekává, že bude dosaženo vzhledu do jejich marketingových strategií jak z hlediska interního, tak externího environmentálního hlediska. K tomu byl použit soubor teorií a rámců, aby bylo možné provést formální způsob analýzy makro a mikro faktorů prostředí. Proto bylo vnější a vnitřní prostředí HUL popsáno pomocí strategických nástrojů, jako je SWOT analýza, EFE matice a IFE matice, aby bylo možné ilustrovat různé detaily s náležitými důkazy.

***Klíčová slova:*** Marketing, strategie, služby, marketingový mix, marketingová komunikace, analýza vnějšího a vnitřního prostředí

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## **Introduction**

The aspect of marketing and promotion is an integral part of business development that involves fundamental operations from the team of Research and Department, so that the customer requirements and market trends can be analysed and accordingly the operations can be performed. This thesis is developed so that a comprehensive marketing strategy can be developed for the business development of Hindustan Unilever, evaluating all the require factors (Hindustan Unilever, 2023). The impact of this marketing strategy on the business development of Hindustan Unilever has also been examined in this thesis, focusing and signifying a dynamic framework for the same (Hindustan Unilever, 2023). A lot of marketing models and theories have been implemented with respect to the business dynamics of Hindustan Unilever that has facilitated in framing proposals and recommendations, which can be best implemented in developing the branding of this brand.

Mission statement: *“To put unequivocal focus on building brands with the purpose to make a positive difference in the society and the environment”*.

With the help of this mission statement, Hindustan Unilever claims to improve the health and wellbeing of people of the nation, reduce the environmental impact of their business activities and enhance livelihoods. These three major goals has been in listed under the Hindustan Unilever sustainable living plan which is considered as their major mission as a part of their contribution towards the environment (hul-performance-highlights.hul.co.in, 2023).



**Figure 1.1: Mission and Vision of Hindustan Hindustan Unilever**

(Source: Extracted from hul-performance-highlights.hul.co.in, 2023)

## **1. Objective of the work and methodology**

### **1.1 Objective of the work**

The aim of the thesis is to critically design a comprehensive Marketing Strategy for the business development of Hindustan Unilever Ltd

The primary objectives of the thesis are listed below

- To evaluate the marketing strategy for Hindustan Unilever Ltd.
- To develop a marketing framework for Hindustan Unilever Ltd
- To analyse the factors which affect marketing and promotion of Hindustan Unilever Ltd
- To assess the impact of effective marketing on the business development of Hindustan Unilever Ltd.
- To identify the problems which hinder the marketing and promotion of Hindustan Unilever Ltd.
- To recommend and customise suggestions and recommendations manage branding of Hindustan Unilever Ltd.

## **1.2 Methodology**

The thesis has been segmented in three major sections, signifying theoretical background, practical part and results of the research and proposal of the marketing strategy. All the theoretical and subjective data and information insights regarding the concept of Marketing, its models, frameworks and theoretical have been provided under the section of Theoretical Background. This section also highlights regarding the aspects of the field of service marketing, focusing on the organisation of events happening in the same context. The key areas in the thesis have been characterised in the form of marketing tools which can be used within the marketing strategy of Hindustan Unilever, that has helped in the realm of strategic planning and servicing. When it comes to the practical part of the thesis, particular methods have been used on the lines of developing the marketing strategy with the implementation of marketing tools and framework like SWOT Analysis, Competitor Analysis, Marketing Mix, Porter's Five Forces Analysis and many more. The evaluation of the results has been reflected in the Result Section, signifying the marketing strategy and marketing mix proposal. As a part of the marketing strategy of Hindustan Unilever, the Result Section has also provided scheduling plan and budget plan for the systematic implementation of the same.

## **2. Theoretical background**

### **2.1 Marketing**

#### **2.1.1 Definition of marketing**

Any effort made by a business to increase demand for its goods and services is known as marketing. Producing and providing products to customers or other companies are all part of promotional activities. As per the views of Ye *et al.*, (2021) affiliates in the company conduct some advertising for businesses, depending on the nature of the product line, trends in the market and requirements in the market. Advertising to certain demographics is an approach commonly used by those who work in public relations and marketing for various companies. Advertisements are made with particular audiences in mind and often feature well-known faces endorsing the product, along with distinctive slogans, eye-catching packaging, and extensive media coverage.

According to the marketing regulation, every effort made by a business to attract and retain customers is part of marketing. A portion of the role also involves networking with clients, both

current and prospective, to the business development of the company. As opined by Chowdhury *et al.*, (2022) this could involve anything from practicing golf with customers to meeting for coffee or a dinner to promptly responding to emails and calls. In the simplest form, marketing is all about connecting businesses with people who are interested in what they have to offer. Ensuring profitability is the end goal of product matching with clients, when it comes to marketing and advertisement.

### 2.1.2 Marketing of services

To promote a service instead of a physical good is the objective of service marketing (Marketing of Services). Marketing services, as opposed to selling physical goods, focuses on developing substantial relationships with consumers and meeting their requirements. Services are unique in marketing since they are intangible, inseparable, variable, and perishable, and vary from one company to another. As stated by Brennan *et al.*, (2020) personalized experiences, computerized customer help, automated and contactless transactions, and round-the-clock customer support are some of the modern advancements in the realm of service marketing. Customers nowadays assume that they will always have access to a variety of items and services whenever they want to buy them.

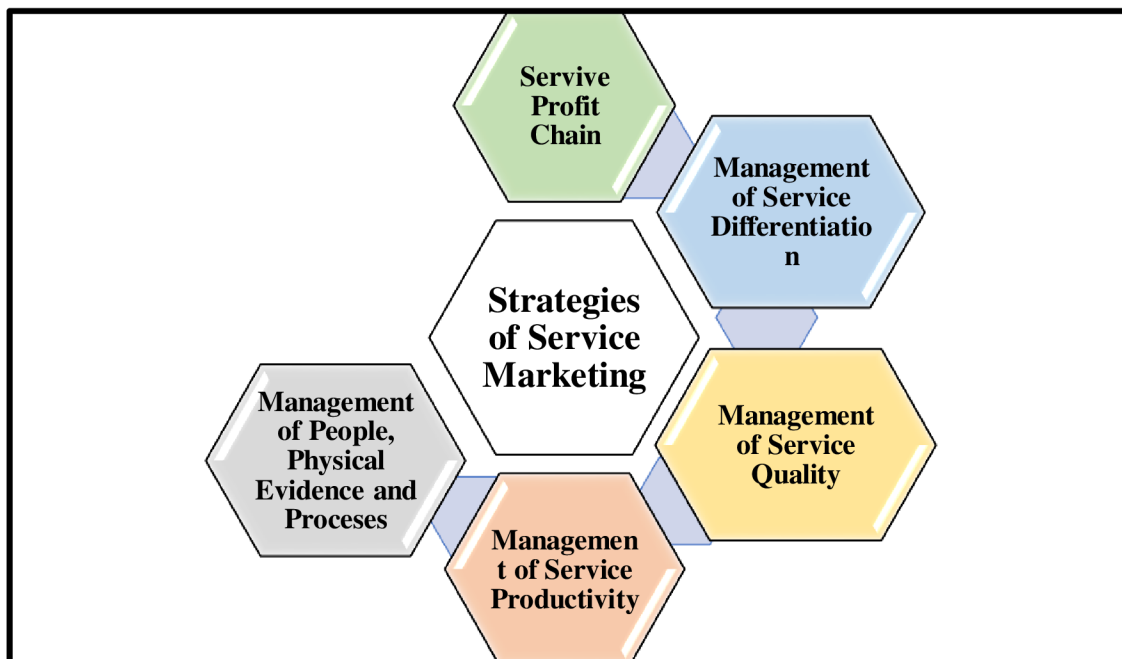
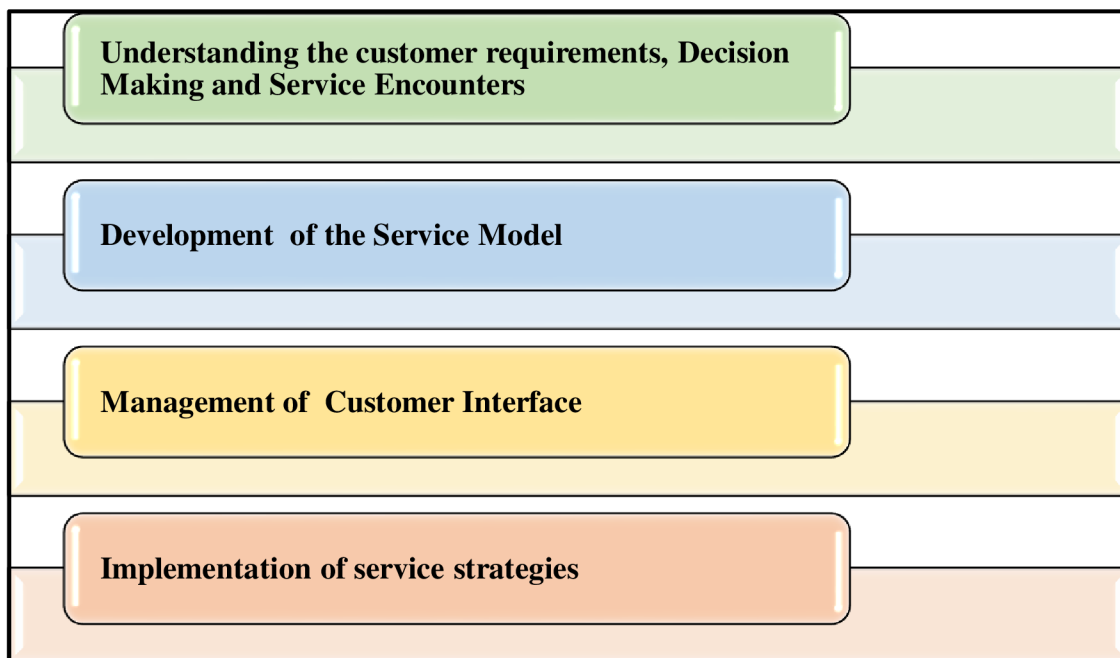


Figure 2.1: Strategies of Service Marketing

(Source: Created by learner)

Customers do not want to be limited to business hours to get support, whether it is ordering groceries online, scheduling a car service, or planning a doctor's appointment. Customers may go elsewhere if a business fails to offer fast responses or convenient online booking and ordering options. As per the views of Hutt and Speh, (2021) the objective of customer service automation is to handle customer requests with little interaction from humans. Consumers generally expect assistance from automated customer support services when a human representative is unavailable to take their call (whether it be before, during, or after business hours).



**Figure 2.2: Framework of Service Marketing**

(Source: Created by learner)

In today's customer service landscape, chatbots, self-service websites, and programmed email replies are prevalent which are well adopted by the companies as a part of service marketing. Paying with a debit or credit card has been more popular since the pandemic, and this trend shows no indication of decreasing. As underpinned by Rangaswamy *et al.*, (2020) customers would like not to be bothered with carrying cash or physically presenting their credit or debit card when making purchases. It is preferable to have quick points of contact like a phone or card, in the outlet

stores of business. Although contactless and cashless payment methods have been around for a while, the global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly increased their popularity.

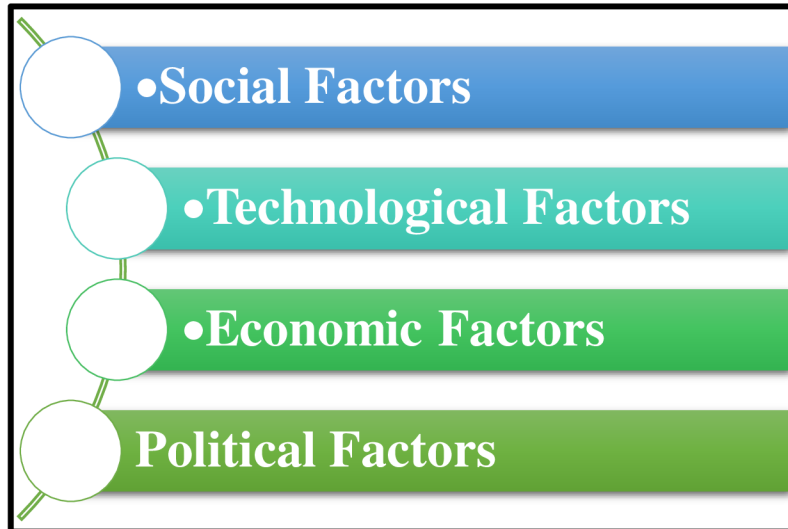
## **2.2 Analysis of the external environment**

### **2.2.1 STEP analysis**

One strategic tool that companies employ to better understand their external environment is known as STEP analysis. Modern internal decisions can be better organized with the use of the data provided by this analytical report. Even more importantly, it helps decision-makers focus on the top four elements that will shape company choices, consumer behaviour, and other critical company processes. As per the notions of Kongar and Adebayo, (2021) any level of detail in the STEP analysis is acceptable, as long as the results are useful for making decisions both now and in the years to come. Since this data might change rapidly during uncertain conditions, it is important to do this analysis on a regular basis. As opined by Kotler *et al.*, (2021) business analysts are not the only individuals who employ STEP analysis, in the scope of marketing for a company. Anyone with authority over company decisions can undertake the analysis independently and hence managers, regional executives, and even the chief executive officer are all part of this. The STEP Analysis very much focus on the formulation of the fowling factors which are

- Social Factors
- Technological Factors
- Economic Factors
- Political Factors





**Figure 2.3: Factors of STEP Analysis**

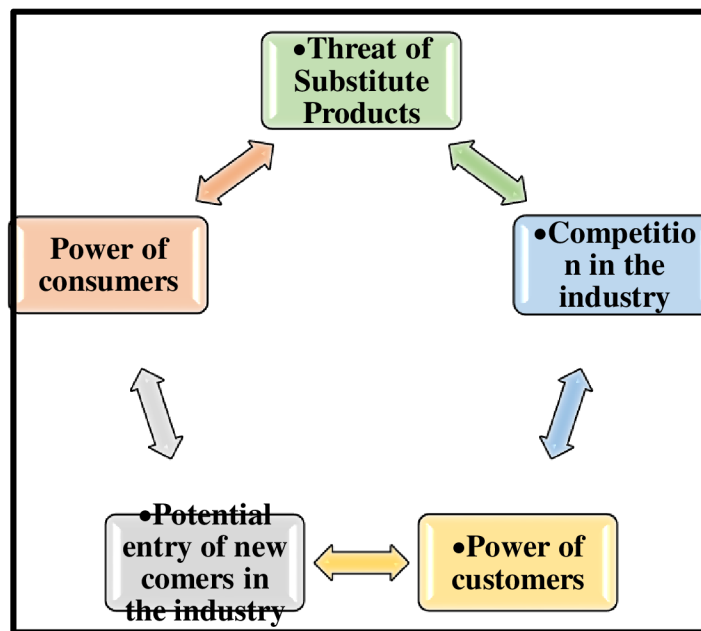
(Source: Created by learner)

### **2.2.2 Porter's Five Competitive Forces Analysis**

The five competitive factors that impact any business can be better comprehended by applying Porter's Five factors model, as a part of the marketing strategy, which also helps to identify the advantages and disadvantages of a specific sector. In order to figure out how to approach a market, many companies apply the Five Forces study. As underpinned by Varadarajan, (2020) one may use Porter's model to improve the organization's future profitability while comprehending the degree of rivalry in any field of business. This is the reason why this model is very much effective to be implemented in any section of the finance and accounts of the business. The Five Forces approach was developed by Michael E. Porter, from Harvard Business School. The five factors or forces which are evaluated with the help of this model are

- Threat of Substitute Products
- Competition in the industry
- Power of customers
- Potential entry of new comers in the industry
- Power of consumers

Many businesses and analysts utilize the Five Forces concept to examine the competitive landscape and business tactics of different companies. All markets and industries are influenced by the five factors defined by Porter, however with significant exceptions. A common way to assess the attractiveness, economic viability, and degree of rivalry in a market or sector is to apply the Five Forces analysis, as a part of the Marketing Plan. As stated by Melović *et al.*, (2020) a disadvantage of the Five Forces model is that it considers the past, hence its results are only useful for the near future. This problem is made more worse by the fact that globalization is a factor, in marketing and business development. The requirement to examine a single firm using the five forces framework, rather than a whole sector, is another major downside for this model. Another issue is that the framework classifies all companies into one industry category, even though some of these companies operate in more than one.



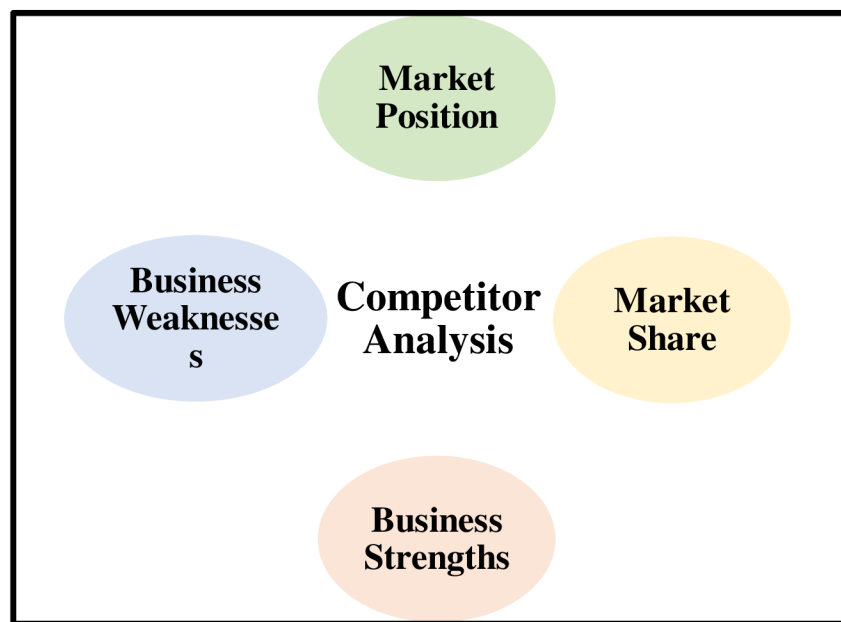
**Figure 2.4: Porter's Five Competitive Forces**

(Source: Created by learner)

### 2.2.3 Competitor Analysis

It is crucial to observe the decisions and behaviours of rival businesses, so that a company can develop in the contemporary market. Managers are unable to acquire information about their industry or their competitors without competitive knowledge. Without it, they are unable to

identify their weaknesses or assess how strategic decisions will affect them. Modern business is characterized by an unavoidable presence of competition in the specific industry. As stated by Olson *et al.*, (2021) a business is not immune to industry competition due to the reason that the tactics employed by rivals have an impact on how businesses of all sizes develop their own long-term objectives. For businesses with a focus on making a profit, healthy competition is an ongoing reality in the industry. Assessing into the competition can help them find out where the business is weak and where the opportunities and threats are in the marketplace.

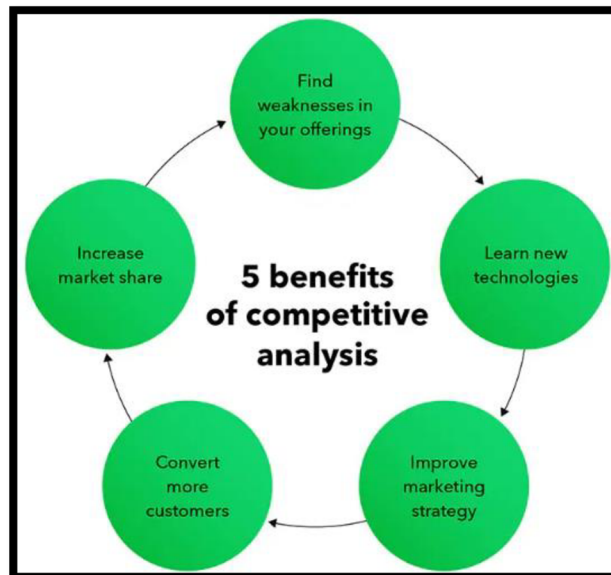


**Figure 2.5: Factors affecting competitor analysis**

(Source: Created by learner)

The tactics used by rival companies should be carefully considered by managers as they craft their own plans for the future. A company's strategy is shaped by competitor analysis, which in turn influences the actions and reactions of enterprises within it. The company benchmarks its performance against that of its rivals by conducting a competition study. As opined by Saura, (2021) a thorough comprehension of the competitive dynamics present in the marketplace of any particular firm is the ultimate goal of any competitive study. In doing so, it will comprehend the marketing process and the dynamics of competition, as well as the industry in which the business operates and its competitive standing inside it. Management can share and assess their assumptions about the company's strengths, market standing, and rivals through the study.

It also helps in the selection of practical methods that might reinforce the company's position in the market and consequently, strategy design for marketing approaches depends on competitive analysis. The purpose of a strategic analysis is to examine the internal and external factors affecting a company. When developing a plan of action, the company must take into account current market and industry trends as well as its own competitive advantages, limitations, assets, and position in the market. As per the views of Saura, (2021) the focus of competitive analysis is on the factors outside of an organization that can affect its performance, signifying the external environment. A managerial technique utilized in strategic management for evaluating the merits and demerits of existing and prospective rivals is the competitor analysis.



**Figure 2.6: Benefits of competitor analysis**

(Source: Created by learner)

Businesses can use it to find opportunities and threats from both attacking as well as defensive strategic perspective. Supporting efficient and successful strategy development, execution, evaluation, and adaptation, competitor profiling consolidates all vital components of competitor analysis into one framework. As stated by Ritter and Pedersen, (2020) the focus of competitive analysis is on the factors outside of an organization that can affect its performance, signifying the external environment. A managerial technique utilized in strategic management for evaluating the merits and demerits of existing and prospective rivals is the competitor analysis.

Businesses can use it to find opportunities and threats from both attacking as well as defensive strategic perspective. Supporting efficient and successful strategy development, execution, evaluation, and adaptation, competitor profiling consolidates all vital components of competitor analysis into one framework. As opined by Kerdpitak, (2022) the reality is that many businesses rely on unofficial perceptions, hypotheses, and emotional intelligence acquired through information regarding competitors. Thus, many businesses face the risk of harmful competitive blind spots as a consequence of insufficient competition analysis during conventional environmental assessment.

## **2.3 Analysis of the internal environment**

### **2.3.1 Analysis of resources and competencies**

#### **2.3.1.1 Resources**

The organization's operations and activities make use of specific resources, in the realm of marketing where organizations have the ability to generate these resources. Organizations are unable to collaborate these kinds of resources and hence they might have been sourced from outside sources through the markets for resource commodities. As underpinned by Grewal and Levy, (2022) they are classified as external resources and these resources can be addressed by the organization. Another way to classify resources is as either specific or general. A company's unique resources are those that it uses for very specific purposes but which are crucial to its ability to provide its customers with value. As stated by Verhoef and Bijmolt, (2019) in terms of value creation, non-specific resources are insignificant since they lack specificity in business development. There are two main types of resources which can be categorized as tangible and intangible. Tangible resources represent the actual possessions that a company has where all of the resources, including physical and human, fall into this category. Intangible resources consist of a company's good name, its expertise in technology, and its capacity for innovation. Typical instances of intellectual resources are the company's copyrights and patents, which they apply in the market.

#### **2.3.1.2 Competencies**

There are some characteristics that every business needs to succeed in today's competitive business environment. These characteristics make up the organization's competencies, which help them to

gain a competitive advantage in the market. A company needs competencies if it wants to stay in business. On the other hand, Grewal *et al.*, (2020) opined that, competencies are useless on their own for any kind of business. These competencies allow the company to gain a competitive advantage over its competitors. For instance, for a company whose focus is on IT Development, the ability to code programs and create tools is essential for that business to remain competitive in the software sector. These two skills must work together to provide the company an edge in the contemporary market.

### **2.3.1.3 Distinctive Capabilities**

Distinctive capabilities are the valuable assets that a company has which are vital to its ability to compete in the contemporary market. Distinct capabilities are those that a company has because of some quality that other businesses lack. It needs to be sustainable and appropriate in along with possessing a unique quality. As per the notions off Sivarajah *et al.*, (2020) when a unique skill can keep working for a long time, it can be said that the business is sustainable. It becomes appropriate when the company that possesses the unique capability can primarily capitalize on the same. Corporate development, credibility, and entrepreneurship are the primary sources from which a company might obtain its distinctive capabilities. In order to promote all three of these aspects of the company, the connections between the business and its stakeholders are very much fundamental.

### 2.3.2 Analysis of key processes



**Figure 2.7: Key processes in marketing**

(Source: Created by learner)

#### 2.3.2.1 Marketing Analysis

The initiation of every marketing procedure requires the beginning of a comprehensive marketing analysis. This entails a comprehensive examination of the business's portfolio. This is the process of conducting a thorough evaluation of one's own offers by carefully considering their merits and drawbacks. As stated by Omar *et al.*, (2020) a comprehensive analysis is conducted to evaluate the issue with other entities within the market, as well as its direct competitors. This is the stage where one examines the prospective future and assesses the possibilities for future sales. The insights acquired serve as the foundation for the development and formulation of the medium and long-term objectives of the organization, which function as a strategic framework.

#### 2.3.2.2 Marketing Objectives

The marketing objectives are derived from the predetermined objectives of the organization. For example, this can be dependency on the formulation of several factors such as sales growth, client count, or market share.

### **2.3.2.3 Marketing Strategy**

The formulation of the marketing strategy should be established upon the predetermined marketing objectives. As underpinned by Wang, (2021) the marketing strategy's duration might vary depending on the industry, with options for both short-term and long-term approaches. It is important to consistently explore the competitive landscape in order to promptly detect any modifications and subsequently adjust the strategy correspondingly.

### **2.3.3.4 Marketing Mix**

It is important for the company's management to implement the theoretical marketing process into practical application, as part of this entire process. This includes the identification and utilization of appropriate marketing tools. As per the views of Wang, (2021) these technologies have the potential to be utilized in various ways, such as for the purpose of establishing pricing structures, facilitating communication, or enhancing sales strategies. Collectively, these elements form the marketing mix, which is utilized in order to achieve the set objectives.

### **2.3.3.5 Marketing Monitoring**

The continuous monitoring of operational performance is necessary for the organization to ensure the successful execution of scheduled activities. As stated by Grewal and Levy, (2022) in the absence of this control point, the ability to assess both benefits and problems, as well as identify errors in the strategy and then address them, becomes impossible for the company. This is the reason why while formulating the strategy, it may become important to reimplement Market Analysis, at least partially.

## **2.4 Marketing mix of services**

### **2.4.1 Product**

Product refers to the goods and services that are offered by the organisations to the relevant customers which can be considered as physical, tangible or service-oriented intangible products (Sudari *et al.*, 2019). Products or services are considered a major component of the organisations based on which they improve their ability to manage the business operations and that requires the design, quality, feature and packaging measurements to improve the overall standards. Moreover,



the products also have a proper impact on the marketing process that can have an impact on the promotional approaches to ensure a proper engagement of the customers.

#### **2.4.2 Price**

Price is another major component of the organisational marketing process as it determines the standards of the organisation to manage the business operations with a proper engagement of the customers. In the opinion of, Helmold (2022), there are different pricing strategies that include value-based pricing, cost-plus pricing, competitive pricing, dynamic pricing, and high-low pricing. In that case, value-based pricing is considered as a process to develop the price of the products considering the value of that product and observing the values that a customer can pay. On the other hand, cost-plus pricing is about the process of observing the production cost and ensuring a proper margin of profit to decide the pricing for the customers.

However, Abid (2022), argues that competitive pricing helps in developing a proper advantage in the competition, thus, it helps the organisations to improve the ability to deal with the competitiveness in the market that helps in engaging a large number of customers. On the other hand, dynamic pricing refers to the process of developing the prices that define the dynamism of the product, which improves the brand value of the organisation. Similarly, high-low pricing refers to the process of offering higher prices while different discounts are added to reduce the prices to attract customers to be interested in the products or services.

#### **2.4.3 Distribution (place)**

Place is one of the most essential parts of business organisations, as it helps an organisation to improve its competitive advantages through the convenience of managing supply chains and being engaged with the customers (Haseeb *et al.*, 2019). For example, retail organisations need to find a crowded place which can help them to improve their promotional approaches, and it can help the organisations to reach a large number of people. On the other hand, for a factory and production-based firms, the place of operations must be convenient based on the connections with different places to bring the supplies and deliver the products.

#### **2.4.4 Marketing communication (promotion)**

Marketing communication or promotion can be defined as the process of promoting the brands utilising different channels which will have an impact on the marketing process for sharing

information with a large number of people and gaining their interest. In the modern era, the promotion is mostly performed with the channels like social media, digital platforms, email, websites, SEO (Search Engine Optimisation), PPC (Pay-Per-Click) and other methods (Björnfot and Dehlin, 2023). Moreover, the use of omnichannel marketing is also effective in improving the overall approaches of the process, as the use of TV channels, business events and word of mouth is also used for the improvement of promotional pooches that improve customer engagement properly.

#### **2.4.5 People (people)**

People refer to the employees, customers and other stakeholders that improve the ability of the organisations to manage the business operation with a proper focus on major operations (Erhardt *et al.*, 2019). The engagement of the stakeholders is highly valuable for the improvement of business approaches as the collaborative support of all the connected individuals can help the organisations improve the overall standards. Moreover, the capability of the employees, suppliers and other people improve the ability of the organisations to manage the business standards with an integrated platform to ensure a better outcome.

#### **2.4.6 Material environment (physical evidence)**

Material Environment or Physical Evidence is considered a major part of the organisational recognition process as a unique logo, symbol or service helps the organisations to distinguish among others to improve the overall standards of the operations (Othman *et al.*, 2020). In that case, every organisation focuses on improving the overall standards of the operations, and the products with unique packaging and attractive looks that are effective to improve the level of recognition to ensure a better outcome. Thus, it is considered a major part of the organisational management process to ensure a proper way of promotion to make a huge impact on the business operations.

#### **2.4.7 Processes (processes)**

The process refers to the process of delivering the products or services to the customers, which improves the streamlined process to make a huge impact on managing the business operations (Mehmood, 2021). It refers to the concept of customer satisfaction, as providing effective services to the people can have an influence on their mindset to be instructed on the organisational services based on the standardised methods. Therefore, the development of standardised and optimised

services can have an impact on the customer engagement process to make a huge positive impact on the overall business approaches.

## **2.5 Quantified EFE analysis, IFE**

### **2.5.1 SWOT analysis**

SWOT analysis is a major part of the organisational assessment process which improves the ability of the organisations to observe the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to develop business strategies that can help in improving agility to manage the business approaches.

#### **2.5.1.1 Strengths**

Strengths refer to the organisation's capabilities and core competencies that make them highly effective in improving the overall functionalities to manage the business operations to lead towards the proper competitive advantage (Yusuf *et al.*, 2022). In that case, the strengths including the financial capabilities, supply chain, employees and expanded business networks can be considered as a major strength for an organisation to manage its operations.

#### **2.5.1.2 Weaknesses**

There are multiple weaknesses that are considered as major drawbacks for the organisations for having less success in the business operations (Rizki *et al.*, 2021). In that case, the major factors that require improvements for the achievement of desired goals are to make an impact on the organisation's competitive advantages. Hence, it is a critical part of observation that should be observed to improve the overall standards of business operations gaining necessary advantages.

#### **2.5.1.3 Opportunities**

Opportunities refers to the major scope of an organisation that helps them to develop their capability to ensure proper competitive advantage to improve the values to deal with the competitive markets (Benzaghta *et al.*, 2021). In that case, the major trends that can provide an organisation with a proper advantage should be assessed to develop actionable strategies to achieve the relevant goals. For example, an organisation which can follow sustainable development trends to improve business opportunities can be considered the opportunity for relevant firms to ensure a proper competitive advantage.

#### **2.5.1.4 Threats**

Threats are considered notable factors that can negatively affect business operations, as without proper consideration of such problems, no organisations will be able to improve their business operations (Komari *et al.*, 2020). In that case, an organisation should consider problems like supply chain issues, employee-related problems, financial problems and problems with the marketing operations. Thus, an organisation should focus on improving its ability to manage the threats that will have an impact on the business operations to lead towards the betterment of overall functions and standards.

## **2.5.2 EFE Matrix**

External Factor Evaluation (EFE) Matrix is a strategic analysis tool that helps in observing the firm's external environment that should be assessed properly to improve the strengths and weaknesses to make a positive impact on the business functions (Primawati *et al.*, 2019). EFE Matrix is formed of 4 different parts which are Key External factors, Weights, Ratings and Weighted Score, thus observing all these areas will have an impact on the organisation's ability to manage the process.

### **2.5.2.1 Key External Factors**

Key External factors are considered the critical success factors which have an impact on the organisation's ability to measure success and failure criteria (Leliga *et al.*, 2019). Hence, all these factors should be assessed properly to find their relevance with the organisational business approaches to improve the functionality and competitive advantages to manage the business operations.

### **2.5.2.2 Weights**

All the factors that are identified should be weighted with a rating from 0.0 to 1.0, according to the importance of each and every factor that is associated with the relevant industry. Hence, the ratings can describe all the factors based on their importance which helps the organisations to improve their ability for improving the business operations.

### **2.5.2.3 Ratings**

Ratings are another scoring system that defines a company's current strategy to deal with critical success factors, however, it also defines the ability to manage the opportunities and threats. This

rating system is formed of 4 to 1, in which 4 means superior response to the threats, 3 means above average, 2 is average response and 1 is poor response. Thus, all these ratings must be aligned with the observed factors to find the proper values that should be considered to improve the business strategies.

#### **2.5.2.4 Weighted Score**

It refers to the values that are obtained from the multiplication of the weights with rating, which defines the overall effectiveness of the organisations in managing the threats and opportunities. In that case, the overall scores can help the relevant firms improve their ability to manage all the critical success factors to make a positive impact on the organisation's ability to achieve the relevant goals.

#### **2.5.3 IFE Matrices**

Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) refers to the strategic analysis tools that help an organisation assess the internal factors that have an alignment with the organisation's internal environment to improve the overall values (Sudiarto *et al.*, 2021). It is a similar framework as the EFE Matrix, although, in this case, the internal environment is assessed to find out the credibility of all the factors to have an impact on their ability to develop necessary competitive advantage. Therefore, there are four different elements that should be considered including Critical success factors, Weights, Rating and Weighted score.

##### **2.5.3.1 Critical Success Factors**

Critical success factors are considered the major internal factors, which have an impact on the organisation's internal environment (Ben-Abdallah *et al.*, 2022). Hence, all these factors should be assessed properly to observe the organisation's ability to manage overall functionalities and operational capabilities to improve its competitive advantage.

##### **2.5.3.2 Weights**

All the critical internal factors should be weighed with a rating from 0.0 to 1.0, according to the importance of each and every factor that should be assessed to improve overall operational capability. However, the ratings can illustrate the factors based on their importance regarding the organisation's business approaches in the relevant markets.

### **2.5.3.3 Ratings**

Ratings are a system that explains a company's current strategy to deal with the opportunities and threats, which are associated with the relevant success factors. This rating system is developed from 4 to 1, in which 4 is the superior response to the threats, 3 refers to above average, 2 is the average response and 1 indicates poor response. Thus, all these ratings must be considered properly to improve the capability of the organisations to deal with relevant threats.

### **2.5.3.4 Weighted Score**

It is obtained by multiplication of the weights with rating, which defines the overall effectiveness of the organisations in managing the threats and opportunities. In that case, these scores can help the relevant firms to improve the organisational ability to deal with the criticalities to make a huge impact on their competitive advantage.

### **2.5.4 Results**

In that case, the results refer to all the assessments that have been made with the strategic analysis tools like SWOT analysis, EFE Matrix and IFE Matrix, to illustrate the details based on the organisational capabilities. In the form of result, it is important to explore the details that have been obtained based on the strategic tools and represent a diverse range of facts and details related to the organisational environment as well as their strengths and weaknesses which can become a major part of the business strategies in future.

## **2.6 Creating a marketing strategy**

### **2.6.1 The process of creating a marketing strategy**

The development of a marketing strategy is entirely dependent upon the organisation's capability and the assessment of the relevant markets including the competitors, customers and stakeholders to gain necessary insights that can become a significant part of the relevant strategic actions. In that case, different stages have been undertaken in order to develop a marketing strategy and those are,

#### **2.6.1.1 Setting the marketing goals.**

Marketing is an integral part of the organisation's business strategy that should be developed with a proper assessment of the business goals and the scope of increasing profitability and growth opportunities (Bhattacharya *et al.*, 2022). For an organisation, it is always important to set foreign marketing goals in order to develop the relevant strategies that will help them achieve the desired standards in marketing and attract a large number of people towards their products and services. For example, if an organisation is looking forward to launching a new product, then the marketing goal should be to commercialise the products to an existing and new market with regard to the preferences and choices of the relevant people to make a huge impact on profit and growth.

#### **2.6.1.2 Assessment of the internal and external environment**

It is important for an organisation to focus on observing their internal and external environment which can have a huge impact on their marketing strategies and outcomes. In contrast to this argument, it is always important to observe the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities associated with the organisation to manage its strategic actions in the local and global market (Kabeyi, 2019). Apart from that, external factors like political influences, economic impacts, social trends, technological trends, legal barriers and environmental concerns should also be assessed with regard to the business organisation in order to improve their progress in the local and global market.

#### **2.6.1.3 Conducting marketing research.**

Market research is an integral part of business operations as it helps an organisation to observe the marketing trends in the local and global market which can help them to develop effective strategies that can improve their operability alongside the competitive advantages (Malhotra, 2020). In that case, an organisation should focus on observing the key trends regarding their customers, competitors and supply chain which will help the organisation to develop essential strategies that can create significant scope for achieving the desired goals.

#### **2.6.1.4 Data analysis**

The data obtained from the market research should be evaluated utilising different tools that can provide a proper forecast of the demands and consumer trends which can play a crucial role in improving the organisation's strategic actions to influence the people in order to be interested in their products or services (Lies, 2019). For example, in the post-COVID era, it is important for

organisations to observe the change in behaviour and perception of customers regarding different products or services which can play a crucial role in improving the organisational strategy in order to attract them to purchase their product or use their services.

#### **2.6.1.5 Identification of the targeted consumers**

Segmentation and targeting are two critical parts of the marketing strategy which help an organisation to segment people into different categories according to their behaviour, demographic information and purchase information which helps them to target the independent people more accurately (Levit and Cismaru, 2020). In that case, having a group of targeted people can help organisations to apply customised marketing techniques based on their preferences which can have a huge impact on their mindset to consider the organisation in case of their diversified needs.

#### **2.6.1.6 Implementation and monitoring**

Marketing strategies that have been applied in relevant markets should be monitored appropriately in order to identify the major gaps that should be fulfilled with proper contingency planning as it can create a significant competitive advantage for the organisations.

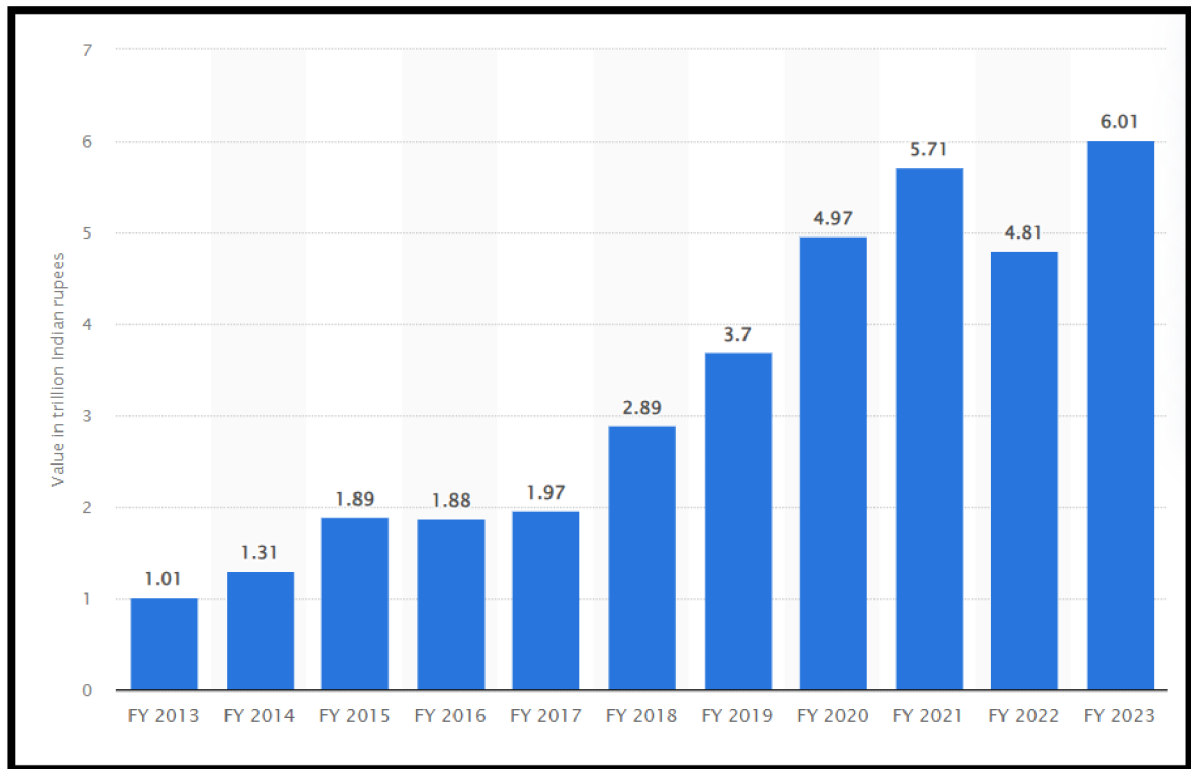
### **3. Practical part**

#### **3.1 Characteristics of the business entity**

##### **3.1.1 Business object and services offered**

Hindustan Unilever is one of the most prominent business groups when it come to the retail markets of not only Indi but in other nations as well (Hindustan Unilever, 2023). The company is recognising as one of the British-owned Indian consumer goods companies which is headquartered in Mumbai, India but operate over the retail market of more than 190 countries. The company has mainly capitalised the Indian retail market and it has established a subsidiary in Nepal, this is the reason why the business has proved to develop a customer base of 3.4 billion of people all over the world (Hindustan Unilever, 2023).





**Figure 3.1: Development of market capitalisation of Hindustan Unilever over the last 10 years**

(Source: Extracted from Statista, 2023)

In 2023, the company even got ranked among the Most Valuable Business (MVB) in India and even projected a turnover of €60.1 billion in 2022, that constituted in the emerging markets (Statista, 2023). There are more than 50 sub brands under Hindustan Unilever which belong to 15 different categories like health food drinks, fabric solution, desserts and food items, home and hygiene, tea-coffee-ice cream, life essentials, oral care, skin care and more (Statista, 2023). The company has managed to project a market capitalisation value of €52.6 billion in 2023, due to its formulated principles of marketing (Statista, 2023). The following principles are very much adhered by the management of Hindustan Unilever in the scope of marketing, distribution, promotion and advertisement

- Each and every marketing and Point of Sales Communication from Hindustan Unilever are truthful and do not mislead the customers

- The company always communicate with the potential customers how the brand along with the product line fit in the healthy lifestyle.
- Food product advertising, including both visual and auditory elements, must truthfully portray all advertised material attributes and not deceive consumers in any way.
- All dietary supplement and health benefit claims made in advertising and POS communications need to be founded in solid scientific principles.
- Promotion and POS Systems Advertisements should not encourage or normalize unhealthy eating habits, and serving sizes should be reasonable given the context and the people seeing the content.
- Regarding Advertising and POS while depicting food in media, it is important to do so within the framework of a healthy, well-rounded diet.
- Promotion and POS Systems communications should promote balanced meals and active lives rather than discourage them.
- It is misleading to market food items as meal replacements if that is not their intended use.

Based on the above marketing principles, the management of Hindustan Unilever has managed to develop its business internationally and gather customers as per their requirements and trends in the market (Hindustan Unilever, 2023).

### **3.1.2 Mission, vision and objectives of the business entity**

The mission and vision statement of an organisation acts as a directive indicator to provide an overview about the proposed events that would be obtained as a result of the business practises (Dobrinić and Fabacm, 2021). Hindustan Unilever, being one of the leading retail organisations in the market of India, focuses on contributing towards sustainable development in the business environment within the nation. As per the current declarations made by the higher executives of the company, the following mission and vision statements have been provided as an indicator towards their sustainable development approaches.

As per the mission statement, the vision of Hindustan Unilever is subjugated into a list of steps they have undertaken as a part of their achievement towards the Hindustan Unilever sustainable living plan goals.

- The launch of lifebuoy hand washing behaviour change as an initiative towards adopting good hand washing behaviour has enable the company to reach over 68 million people as a part of their engagement activities (hul-performance-highlights.hul.co.in, 2023).
- The launch of the Mixed Toilet Academy in the year 2014 has enabled Hindustan Unilever to gain a unique market-based entrepreneur model which contributed towards the initiative undertaken by India's government regarding Swachh Bharat Mission (hul-performance-highlights.hul.co.in, 2023).
- Another achievement that has been acquired by Hindustan Unilever through their sustainable development activities is the launch of Pureit water purifier which provided 89,000,000 Litre of safe drinking water throughout the nation (hul-performance-highlights.hul.co.in, 2023).

In accordance with these sustainable development policies Hindustan Unilever has also contributed towards the reduction of the environment pollutants with the help of several small scale changes as a part of their internal business strategy.

- The reduction of carbon dioxide emissions have reached 59% as Hindustan Unilever has started to share renewable energy within their operational sites with an increase of 43% usage (hul-performance-highlights.hul.co.in, 2023).
- In order to maintain the Zero Nonhazardous Waste to landfill Hindustan Unilever have focused on recycling their waste in an environmental friendly way which helps them to maintain this claimable status.
- The tomatoes and tea that are sold by Hindustan Unilever as a part of their business in India has sourced sustainably making it organic in nature (hul-performance-highlights.hul.co.in, 2023).

## **3.2 Analysis of the external environment**

### **3.2.1 STEP analysis**

#### **3.2.1.1 Social Factors**

The diversity of the customer base of the Indian market have created several opportunities for companies all over the world to market their products and have a high tendency of sales. Hindustan Unilever facilitates this benefit as a part of their social engagement activities and allows the company to become one of the preferred brands in the market (hul.co.in, 2023). Additionally, the sustainable initiatives that have been undertaken by Hindustan Unilever also enables them with an opportunity to become a renowned brand in the market along with having several supports from government as well as non-government agencies. Moreover, the population of India is nearly 1.43 billion, and the yearly growth rate is nearly 0.81%, however, population of India is equivalent to 17.76% of the total world's populations (worldometers.info, 2023). Hence, the growing population of India is considered as a major driver for the having a notable growth in the sales figures for HUL, and the organisation need to consider the major trends such as the increased popularity of the digital platforms and innovative technologies. Thus, utilising such trends will have an impact on the HUL's business performance to make a notable impact on overall standards of operations and providing appropriate values to the customers.

### **3.2.1.2 Technological Factors**

Adopting technological advancements in business processes has become a current trend in the Indian market environment. As explained by Dixit *et al.*, (2021), this has been witnessed from several examples where companies have engaged digitalisation as a process of expanding their business from a local to an international level. Several innovation opportunities have also enabled companies to improve the production and manufacturing activities that are carried out as a part of their business development. Similarly, Hindustan Unilever has been observed to use advanced method of recording and managing data using big data analytics so that analysing customer needs and requirements can be done effectively. With the help of this management, they can address customer satisfaction criterion through their products and services. However, in India, digital transactions have gained a notable popularity, which have influenced almost every people, specifically, the GenZ (timesofindia.indiatimes.com, 2023). Moreover, technologies like UPI (Unified Payment Interface), IoT, AI, RFID, Cloud computing and similar ones have become a major part of the business operations, thus, it should be the major focus of HUL to improve their business operations.

### **3.2.1.3 Economic Factors**

The variation of the inflation and GDP rate of India in the last few years have created impact on the revenue growth and business consistency of several organisations operating in that market (mospi.gov.in, 2023). Moreover, due to this fluctuation in the economic conditions Hindustan Unilever has faced several issues in maintaining the pricing of their products due to which it went through massive changes creating a pressure over consumers. Therefore, the reason behind this rise in pricing is that the fluctuation of the inflation rate has created a major change in the production cost of the raw materials used by Hindustan Unilever. Presently, the inflation rate of India is nearly 4.87%, which can have an impact on the profitability of the organisations operating in the respective markets (mospi.gov.in, 2023). In that case, HUL is one of the most established organisations in India, thus they may face difficulties in their business operations due to the growing inflation rate in India.

### 3.2.1.4 Political Factors

The Indian business environment is highly diverse which makes it an opportunity for companies to develop collaborative strategies enabling them to grow and develop simultaneously. Similarly in the case of Hindustan Unilever the company has been observed to merge with Tata oil Mills company and let me which helps them to introduce new service and product lines as a part of their business expansion (groww.in, 2023). Apart from that, there are many laws related to the business operations in India, as the organisations should follow the major regulations including The Companies Act, 2013, The Competition Act 2002, The Limited Liability Partnership Act 2008, The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Act 2016 and The Costs & Works Accountants Act 1959 (mca.gov.in, 2023). In order to manage the business operations, HUL will have to follow all these rules alongside the sustainable principles to improve their business operations.

### 3.2.2 Porter's analysis of five competitive forces

<b><i>Competitive Rivalry</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Fast-moving Consumer Goods industry in the Indian market has always been competitive as it comprises of several companies operating within this segment.</li> <li>• Hindustan Unilever, in this context, is exposed to threatening competition which creates barriers for them to grow and develop by maintaining a strong competitive edge (hul.co.in, 2023).</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having a strong brand image among the range of products and services offered by the company Hindustan Unilever has been able to Maintain customer preferences of their products as the offer high-quality raw material within their production processes</li> </ul>
<b><i>Threat to substitution</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customers from any industrial domain are observed to have a common tendency of substituting companies if they fail to meet their satisfaction criterion (Zhou <i>et al.</i>, 2022).</li> <li>• In this context, Hindustan Unilever has been observed to face several issues specially while introducing new products as a part of their growth and development strategy.</li> <li>• This is because the acceptance of new products in the Indian market is high but on the other hand is also competitive especially when companies like Hindustan Unilever offers essential items that are unnecessary need on daily life.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Threat to new entrants</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several new businesses that have developed in the last few decades statistically provides indication about the massive increase in the number of companies under the Fast-moving Consumer Goods industry (Chakabva <i>et al.</i>, 2020).</li> <li>• This indicates that there are several barriers that would be encountered by the companies in order to hold a strong brand image in the market.</li> <li>• Similarly in the case of Hindustan Unilever the company focuses on consistently introducing innovation to improve their products and services so that they remain strong in the competition.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Bargaining power of suppliers</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having a large number of suppliers due to the huge extension of products and services that are offered by Hindustan Unilever it has been observed that the company possesses a strong supply chain management.</li> <li>• With the help of this infrastructural framework, the company has been able to maintain good relationship with the suppliers due to</li> </ul>

	<p>which they receive high-quality of raw materials for their production purposes (Naghshineh and Carvalho, 2022). This in turn helps them to meet the consumers' needs effectively and maintain competitive agility in the market</p>
<p><b><i>Bargaining power of customers</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every customer expects to be offered with products and services with higher quality but at lower prices making it affordable purchase for any group of customers (Lina, 2022).</li> <li>• Focusing on this aspect the bargaining power of customers or comparatively higher in the Fast-moving Consumer Goods industry compared to any other industrial sector.</li> <li>• In the Indian market, the price and quality of a product where is direct proportionally which indicates the increase in the quality of the product would eventually give an increase in the pricing.</li> <li>• Hindustan Unilever strives to maintain high quality of the products and services with just a small quantity of increase in the price.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.1: Porter’s Five Forces Analysis**

(Source: Self Developed)

**3.2.3 Competitor analysis**

Operating business in a competitive market environment is often challenging as it creates barriers for an organisation to grow and develop by engaging customers towards their products and services. As explained by Sima *et al.*, (2020), this type of competition is often witnessed in the fast moving consumer goods industry where companies tend to offer customers with a wide range of products and services that addresses their regular needs and requirements. Hindustan Unilever has been identified as such an organisation that operates in the market of India and with higher potential of engaging customers towards their products and services. However, due to the presence of strong competitors such as Nestlé, Dabur and ITC, the company has been observed to face issues in sustaining a competitive position in the market (businessstoday.in, 2023). The reason is that all these competitors offers almost the same products to that of the ones which are marketed by Hindustan Unilever. In order to maintain competitive edge in this kind of market environment Hindustan Unilever has been observed to apply product differentiation strategy. With the help of

this strategic measure, the company has been able to maintain a unique selling point of their products so that customers would easily be able to differentiate their products with other alternatives that are available in the market (Mohd Satar *et al.*, 2019). In this way, the company has been able to address the needs and requirements of the customers uniquely and has been able to initiate growth and development in the fast moving consumer goods industry of India.

### **3.2.4 Defining the target group**

#### **3.2.4.1 Segmentation**

Identifying potential customers for a particular business area is highly difficult especially when the customer base is extensive (Kalam and Kalam, 2020). In the case of Hindustan Unilever, the Indian market comprises of a wide variety of customers and their needs and requirements which creates difficulty for the company to identify the potential buyers of their products. Since the products offered by them are of different categories and age-based demographic is observed to be a strategic choice for segmenting the customer base.

#### **3.2.4.2 Targeting**

The age-based demographic segmentation that has been utilised by Hindustan Unilever has allowed them to identify the type of customers and the suitability of the product they market in India. Additionally, the household appliances that are sold by the company are often categorised in terms of their usage in particular families (theushop.in, 2023). Therefore, Packaged food products offered by the company are categorised in terms of its consumable preference which is differentiated by age demographic including sugar free products specialised for old people.

#### **3.2.4.3 Positioning**

The company positions themselves as one of the most popular brands in the market of India that offers wide range of products addressing the needs and requirements of the consumers. With the help of an online platform the company has been able to demonstrate their existence in the market by offering new products and engaging them through a public domain. Therefore, by using the social media platform as a way of positioning their business including brick and mortar stores the company has been able to offer their products to the consumers through shopping malls and other market places (theushop.in, 2023).



### **3.2.5 Evaluation of the external environment analysis**

Analysing the external environment to which an organisation is exposed to provides an indication about the macro factors that affect their business growth and development. As per Letunovska *et al.*, (2023), these macro factors comprises of the external entities where the presence of suppliers investors political bodies governing authorities and other groups have a significant impact on the company's business. Since Hindustan Unilever operates in the market of India, they are required to follow several legislative guidelines and cope up with the challenges that are associated with the economic conditions of the nation. Taking into account the customer's perspective the company has been observed to be customer centric which enables them to focus on the changes they bring about within their products and services to meet their satisfaction criterion (Kreuzer *et al.*, 2020). In this way, the company has been able to utilise the external environment to maintain a competitive edge in the market.

### **3.3 Analysis of the internal environment**

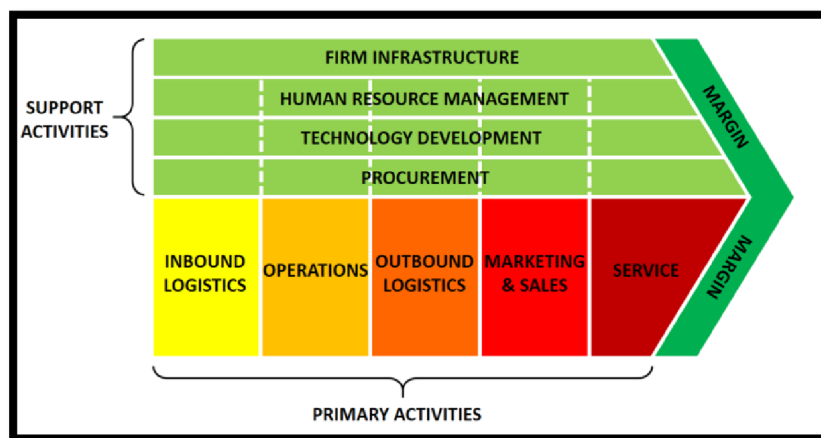
#### **3.3.1 Analysis of resources and competencies**

Executing the business of Hindustan Unilever required proper analysis of the various resources they possess along with the competencies they please forward as a part of their mission and vision statements. In accordance with the current declarations that has been made by the company in the Indian market, it has been observed that, a total of 50% of the global workforce or trained with high skilled training and development which enabled the company to achieve higher productivity (unilever.com, 2023). One of the major considerations that Hindustan Unilever has been observed to focus on is the productivity generated by their employees. The quality of the productivity that is generated from each individual determines the entire performance of the company both in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. Since the company is exposed to a heavy competitive industrial domain, it is necessary for them to underpin the various approaches the utilised as a part of their internal development practises. For instance, Hindustan Unilever has claimed to utilise evolving technologies with the help of which they contribute towards a better working environment for the employees. In order to reskill or up skill the employs future fit technologies are introduced which helps the company to proactively develop a plan and a framework so that employee well-being and leadership behaviours can be monitored and assessed effectively.

Evidence from different sources shows that employees are provided with personalised learning materials with the help of which the learning environment of Hindustan Unilever is enhanced. According to statistics, over 2.4 million training assignments were conducted by Hindustan Unilever throughout their global business in the year 2022 (indiacsr.in, 2023). Using these evidence, it would be stated that the company has been able to introduce motivation so that a volatile economy context can be present it to the employs with respect to the training offered to them. An approximate of \$644 has been estimated to be spent by the company for each employee for their learning purposes. This would help the company to enhance their productivity and performance on an extensive level specially when exposed to a highly competitive market domain.

### 3.3.2 Analysis of key processes

Every organisation is observed to follow a particular structure and functional unit that allows them to identify the operations they execute for each departmental segregation (Leite *et al.*, 2020). Similarly Hindustan Unilever also follows the value chain to the help of which did distinguish their primary and secondary activities while assessing their profit margins.



**Figure 3.3: Value Chain**

(Source: Influenced from Leite *et al.*, 2020)

Primary Activities				
Inbound Logistics	Operations	Outbound Logistics	Marketing and Sales	Service

Hindustan Unilever acquires its supplies from different import and exporters which enables them to execute their production processes as per current market needs	The execution of supply chain management operations including logistic distribution and transportation helps the company to manage their product sales effectively	Since Hindustan Unilever operates in the global market segment some of the products are also exported to other regions where they execute their international business practises	The company uses social media marketing with the help of which they are able to promote and advertise their products to the customers which helps in increasing their sales	The company possesses a strong customer support service which enables them to provide after sales service to the customers with the help of which they enhance their reputation in the market.
<b>Secondary Activities</b>				
<b><i>Firm Infrastructure</i></b>	Hindustan Unilever operates its business through the help of a centralised database management system which allows them to access all departmental information using one single unit so that proper corporate governance can be followed throughout the workplace			
<b><i>Human Resource Management</i></b>	Periodic training is provided to the employees of Hindustan Unilever has it helps the staff is to become well skilled and adaptable to any situation where changes were introduced as a part of their business operations			
<b><i>Technology Development</i></b>	Since Hindustan Unilever has an active technical department it allows them to introduce modern technologies within their operations so that they can cope up with the current competitive market environment in the fast moving consumer goods industry			
<b><i>Procurement</i></b>	Any new intervention when introduced as a part of the business of Hindustan Unilever they tend to execute it with the help of a project management plan so that every activity is documented from initiation to closure			

### **Table 3.2: Evaluation of Value Chain**

(Source: Self Developed)

#### **3.3.3 Evaluation of the internal environment analysis**

The internal environmental analysis of an organisation provides an indication about how the company has been able to grow and develop by overcoming the issues that lie within their workplaces. For instance, if any company has been observed to encounter issues regarding performance of the employees, they would need to assess their internal environment and make relevant changes to their employee engagement practises. On the other hand, Hildebrand and Bergner (2021) elaborated that, if any type of changes that are occurred as a part of their business, it is the responsibility of the higher executives to change their decision-making patterns so as to align the objectives of the company with that of their financial revenue. Similarly, in the case of Hindustan Unilever, the internal environmental analysis has provided an indication about how the company would need to make relevant changes to their marketing activities so as to become more competitive in the Indian Fast-moving Consumer Goods industry.

According to the evidences, the supply chain management practises has been disrupted after the COVID-19 pandemic and thereafter needs to be properly assessed in accordance with the new norms followed by the government. As explained by Dhinakaran and Kesavan (2020), these norms are direct associated with the changes in the taxation policies as well as in import export activities that the company utilise his to execute their business in the market. With proper alignment with the legislative guidelines, it is expected that the company would be able to reduce the expenditure as well as the production cost so that offering their products at affordable price in the market can help them to achieve customer growth extensively.

#### **3.4 Analysis of the firm's internal marketing environment**

##### **3.4.1 Product**

Being a company operating under the Fast-moving Consumer Goods segment of India, it has been observed that Hindustan Unilever offers a wide range of products to the customers. These products are generally associated with electronic appliances, bathroom accessories, kitchen accessories and other goods which are almost required by people on a regular basis (.hul.co.in, 2023). The consideration of this product and service range has enabled Hindustan Unilever to become one of

the most competitive companies operating in the industrial domain. Since there exist a lot of companies that offer similar products in the market of India both from local as well as from internal perspectives, Hindustan Unilever has been observed to experience a lot of competitive threats. In order to overcome such threats, the company has focused on implementing suitable strategies by increasing the quality and features of their products. This is because, Ittaqullah *et al.*, (2020) observed that, customers often possess a tendency to prefer products which are sold with distinctive features and at higher quality. This creates a Unique Selling Point for Hindustan Unilever making them one of the most preferred brands in the market of India.

### **3.4.2 Price**

Pricing of a product often varies depending upon the total cost required for its production process. In the case of Hindustan Unilever, since the company operates with a wide range of Fast-moving Consumer Goods, there exists a high tendency where the company need to manage cost of their products from a ground level to a premium level. Each of the products that are offered by the company in the market are offered at a price range that includes all types of customer segments. As opined by Cunningham and De Meyer-Heydenrych (2021), this indicates that the company focuses on affordability constraint so that every group of customers would be able to purchase their products without having issues in affording it. On the other hand, the quality of the products launched by Hindustan Unilever in the market of India or High making them one of the most reliable brands operating in within the nation. The pricing of a product that is offered by Hindustan Unilever often changes due to several external factors affecting its production one of which includes the cost of raw materials and other economic conditions of the nations including inflation and GDP rate.

### **3.4.3 Distribution**

Unlike other industrial domains the Fast-moving Consumer Goods segment is observed to be highly influential in terms of product distribution and logistics activities. This is because, Rokhmawati (2021) illustrated that, the import and export activities that are carried out by an organisation requires investing extra cost which increases the total price at which a product is sold in the market. By having a wide network of distribution, Hindustan Unilever has been able to market their products to extensive level throughout the nation without investing much of a cost. The reason is that, Hindustan Unilever possesses their own logistics segment with the help of

which the transportation activities from warehouses to retailers are done through their own cost. However, Zhong and Moon (2020) underpinned that, this particular cost is considered under the production cost of a product which also plays a major role in pricing. The commitments that are placed by Hindustan Unilever while introducing a new product in the market heavily depends upon the efficiency of the distribution network so that it reaches the customers in preferred time duration so that a competitive edge can be maintained.

#### **3.4.4 Marketing communication**

Since Hindustan Unilever is one of the oldest organisations operating in the market of India, they have access to almost all types of marketing channels that were witnessed in the nation. In other words, in early days Hindustan Unilever has been observed to utilise radio and television broadcasting as a method of advertising their products and services to the customers. However, as time passed by the company has developed their own online platform through the help of which they reach their customers at different location is respective of their operating areas. With the help of this digitalisation process, the company has been able to utilise social media as one of the most cost-effective methods of advertising their products and services to the customers. This is because, Kushwaha *et al.*, (2020) explained that, social media comprises of a channel where public domain can be utilised as a platform for advertising products and services so that its promotions help in increasing the sales of the products offered by the company. In addition to this people are often observed to be engaged in social media platforms which thereafter creates an upper hand for the company in engaging them without communicating with them separately.

#### **3.4.5 People**

The success and failure of the business of Hindustan Unilever in India often depends upon the preferences they gain from their customers. As per the views by Budur and Poturak (2021), this preference often depends upon the satisfaction level that the company has been able to achieve through their products when offered in the market. Since Hindustan Unilever has a wide range of products that they offer in the Indian market, they have a high tendency to meet their success goals by analysing the particular type of products that are under high demand. For instance, the company has been able to achieve higher revenue while selling essential goods rather than electronic appliances. This indicates that the preferences of essential goods by the customers from Hindustan Unilever is higher compared to that of the electric appliances they offer in the market (hul-

performance-highlights.hul.co.in, 2023). Focusing on these changes of preferences of the people, Hindustan Unilever can eventually update their strategy in such a way that other areas where competitive edge need to be achieved can be addressed effectively.

### **3.4.6 Processes**

The processes that are executed by Hindustan Unilever as a part of their business are detailed within their value chain. This is because, in the value chain, the company has a list of their activities in two major categories one which includes the primary activities they execute as a part of their external business environment. On the other hand, Kano *et al.*, (2020) stated that, the other indicates secondary activities which they perform from their internal perspective. With a proper balance in these two primary and secondary activities the company has been able to serve the customers with products and services that are in high demand. In order to manage such an extensive area of business, the company segregates every department in such a way that it allows them to monitor and audit each operational segment separately. This in turn helps the company to identify any issues that lie within their business and thereafter rectify them immediately making them one of the most preferred brands in the market.

### **3.4.7 Material environment**

Operating a business under the Fast-moving Consumer Goods industry is highly challenging as it requires companies to keep a strict note about the quality they offer within their products. This is because, Schiele (2020) mentioned that, quality constraint enhances the credibility of a product to be preferred by customers irrespective of the industrial domain within which a company operates. Similarly, since Fast-moving Consumer Goods were sold on the basis of regular usage for customers, every brand needs to be concerned about the quality they offer. This quality constraint would help the companies to maintain their consumers base and help in retaining them for long-term. Hindustan Unilever acquires high-quality products by acquiring raw materials from suppliers by establishing proper relationship with them. With higher quality products, the brand has been able to gain a reputation where reliability is the major aspect of retaining customers.

## **3.5 Quantified EFE analysis, IFE**

### **3.5.1 SWOT analysis**

#### **3.5.1.1 Strengths**

Brand visibility of Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) is considered one of the significant trends of the organisation that has provided them with a required competitive advantage to capture a large share of the Indian market (Narayanan and Das, 2022). In that case, the organisation has captured nearly 75% of the Indian market and 9/10 Indians use one or more products of HUL (hul.co.in, 2023). HUL has been operating in India as a market leader which is another reinforcement for their brand to operate among the 1.4 billion people. In that case, the organisation has been operating with more than 19 brands in India which exceeds a turnover of more than ₹1000 crore per annum (hul.co.in, 2023). Apart from that, huge financial support for HUL also helps them to become a highly reinforced brand in India that focuses on dominating the entire FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods) market. For example, the annual turnover for HUL in fiscal year 2022-2023 is nearly ₹58154 crore which has ensured nearly 16% YoY growth (hul.co.in, 2023).

Apart from that the organisation is considered one of the most trusted brands in India Hence it has been utilised as one of its strengths to manage its operational activities in relevant markets (Goyal, 2022). For instance, the organisation has been titled as one of the best organisations for women in 2022 and 2023 which makes it more recognised among the Indian population as a trust state and recognised brand (hul.co.in, 2023).

### **3.5.1.2 Weakness**

Increased competition among consumer goods organisations in the Indian market has been a significant weakness for many organisations in order to operate with the necessary competitive advantage (Rosário and Raimundo, 2021). In that case, the presence of other consumer goods brands including Britannia Industries Limited, ITC, Dabur India Limited, Procter & Gamble and Godrej Consumer Product Limited can create significant difficulties for HUL to operate with the required competitive advantage (Sathish and Nagarathinam, 2021). Despite growth in the Indian market HUL needs to consider the change of perception of people regarding the brand which can create significant difficulties for them to operate in India and manage their business portfolio (Kahupi *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, it is important for HUL to focus on developing more innovative products with diversified options that can attract a large number of Indian people to rely on the relevant brand.

### **3.5.1.3 Opportunities**



Expansion of the business market has always been a major opportunity for HUL to operate in India and it also provided the required reinforcement to manage the business operations with the necessary competitive edge (Mishra and Amin, 2020). In that case, the organisation is currently focused on improving its product range for healthcare products specifically hair care in which they are expecting to launch new options. Innovation has always been a significant reinforcement for HUL in order to improve their brand visibility as well as their capability to attract people with a diversified option of different FMCG products. For example, HUL has more than 5000 employees in their energy department in order to develop new innovative ideas for different products or businesses that can offer them the required advantage (hul.co.in, 2023).

### 3.5.1.4 Threats

An increase in the rate of competition has always been a significant concern for HUL while operating in India as the presence of other consumer goods brands can become a significant barrier for them to improve their business presence. Alongside this, the competition regarding the price of different products also has been creating significant obstacles for them to capture a large share of the markets, as there are other brands which have been offering similar products with more affordable ranges that are most likely to attract a large number of Indian populations (Kahupi *et al.*, 2021).

### 3.5.2 EFE analysis

	<i>External factors</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Overall score</i>
<b><i>Strengths</i></b>	Innovative technologies and enhanced digital platforms	0.5	3	1.5	<b>3.3</b>
	Sustainable business performance in India	0.3	2	0.6	
	Economic stability	0.4	3	1.2	
<b><i>Weaknesses</i></b>	Slow volume growth	0.1	2	0.2	<b>1.7</b>
	Price competition	0.3	2	0.6	
	High inflation in the market	0.3	3	0.9	

**Table 3.3: EFE Matrix**

According to the above analysis, the major strengths of HUL are innovative technologies and enhanced digital platforms, sustainable business operations and economic stability, based on which the organisation has been operating efficiency in India. In that case, use of innovative technologies are the major strengths of HUL which have helped them to improve their ability as a consumer goods related organisation. Moreover, the weaknesses like slow volume growth, price competition and high inflation rate in India have been the major concerns of HUL to operate in India. Based on this, competition is the major barriers, as there are many consumer goods organisations operating in India, thus, HUL will have to improve their business operations to dominate the market.

### 3.5.3 IFE analysis

	<i>Internal factors</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Overall score</i>
<i>Strengths</i>	Growing market share	0.3	2	0.6	<b>3.2</b>
	Financial strength	0.5	4	2	
	Expanded business network	0.3	2	0.6	
<i>Weaknesses</i>	High competition in India	0.3	2	0.6	<b>2.6</b>
	Changing the perception of people	0.4	3	1.2	
	Inappropriate macroeconomic environment	0.4	2	0.8	

**Table 3.4: IFE Matrix**

Based on the assessments of internal factors of HUL, it has been observed that growing market share, financial strengths and expanded business network are the major strengths which have been helping the organisation to manage the operations in India. On the other hand, high competition, changing perception of people and macroeconomic environment are the major drawbacks that have affected the performance of HUL in India. In that case, the growing financial strengths of HUL has been helping them to manage their operations in India with different investments, whereas the growing competition and change of customer's behaviour are also the major concerns for operating in the relevant markets.

### **3.5.4 Results**

According to the observation of the EFE framework it has been observed that the HUL have different strengths and weaknesses in their external environments while operating in India. For example, the development of innovative product ranges has been a significant strength for the organisation in order to operate in India whereas the economic stability of the organisation also has been contributing towards their enhanced growth. For example, a significant innovation regarding their products has contributed nearly ₹10,000 crores to their revenue in FY 2023 which has been a significant reinforcement for them (hul.co.in, 2023). Apart from that the growing inflation also has been a significant concern for the organisations in India as it is currently 4.87% therefore it can have a huge impact on the profitability (hul.co.in, 2023). Besides this, the growing popularity of other consumer goods brands and new entrants such as Adani and Reliance can be considered extremely challenging for HUL to manage their competitive environment.

Apart from that the growing market share also has been a significant strength of HUL which tends to contribute towards their growth in the Indian market. In that case, the digital platforms developed by HUL have supported their growth in India, As the application developed by HUL known as Shikhar used by nearly 1.2 billion retailers in India (hul.co.in, 2023). Moreover, the growing popularity of HUL can also be considered as a part of their business expansion in India which tends to provide the necessary competitive advantage to operate in the relevant markets. For example, they are currently working with nearly 1300 suppliers across India, and the units that have been manufactured are nearly 65 billion which can describe their ability to operate in the Indian market (hul.co.in, 2023).

## **4. Results of the research and proposal of the marketing strategy**

### **4.1 Evaluation of the research results**

The marketing approach of Hindustan Unilever is very much dependent on the business model of the company that follows strategic plan of action, based on the knowledge base of the shoppers, signifying brand advancements. With an assembly line of 306 processing plants, the business of Hindustan Unilever can focus on the productivity line as well as the eco-creation (hul.co.in, 2023). These aspects can be well projected in the marketing dimensions of the company. As opined by Fernandes and Shailashree, (2022) by partnering with a global Ultra Logistic control organization, Hindustan Unilever is making further developments to enhance customer service, save costs, and cut down on CO2 emissions.

The management of Hindustan Unilever very much follows the following core principles which support the whole company to serve as the fundamental of business marketing. The company relies its Business Integrity which should be adhered by both the management and the employee base in the company (hul.co.in, 2023). The company very much prioritizes the aspects of customer and employee wellbeing on the lines of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. As per the views of Rathaur and Shukla, (2022) the marketing principles adopted by the management of Hindustan Unilever is very much targeted for developing the living standards of both the customers and the employees.

Improve people's health, confidence and wellbeing	Contribute to a fairer, more socially inclusive world		
Health and wellbeing	Equity, diversity and inclusion	Raise living standards	Future of work
<p>Take action through our brands to improve health and wellbeing and advance equity and inclusion</p> <p>We will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender equity</li> <li>• Body confidence and self-esteem</li> <li>• Mental wellbeing</li> <li>• Hand hygiene</li> <li>• Sanitation</li> <li>• Oral health</li> <li>• Skin health and healing</li> </ul>	<p>Achieve an equitable and inclusive culture by eliminating any bias and discrimination in our practices and policies</p> <p>Accelerate diverse representation at all levels of leadership</p> <p>5% of our workforce to be made up of people with disabilities by 2025</p> <p>Spend ₹2,000 crores annually with diverse businesses by 2025</p> <p>Increase representation of diverse groups in our advertising</p>	<p>Ensure that everyone who directly provides goods and services to HUL will earn at least a living wage or income by 2030</p> <p>Help 2 million small and medium-sized enterprises grow their business by 2025</p>	<p>Help equip 1.5 million young people with essential skills by 2030</p> <p>Pioneer new employment models and provide access to flexible working practices to our employees by 2030</p> <p>Reskill or upskill our employees with future-fit skills by 2025</p>
			

**Figure 4.1: Core Fundamentals of Business followed by Hindustan Unilever**

(Source: Extracted from hul.co.in, 2023)

Regardless of the channel or stage of the dynamic cycle, effective advanced advertising has a fundamental effect on purchasing decisions for the customers in the Indian retail sector. As stated by Yadav and Yadav, (2019) in order to succeed in the commercial center, Hindustan Unilever collaborates closely with retailers where they make sure that all of their brands are easily accessible and displayed correctly across all platforms, from traditional marketplaces to online business. The procurement program of Hindustan Unilever, which costs €34 billion every year, includes cultivating raw materials, among which 51% are obtained in a reasonable manner (hul.co.in, 2023). In order to maintain its lead, Hindustan Unilever incorporates knowledge into patterns while simultaneously being able to predict them.

The Value Creation established by the management of Hindustan Unilever also influences the operations of marketing implemented in the company. The company exercises on talented and purpose-oriented people who very much invest their skills and time in the offices of the company.

All the operations in the scope of Unilever are carried out in the most agile ways where the company is supported by 1300 key suppliers (hul.co.in, 2023). The R&D department of Hindustan Unilever are so efficient that they effectively track the changing consumer sentiments with the help of the People Data Centre, where social listening is well integrated with conventional consumer research. As per the views of Patjoshi and Nandini, (2019) the marketing and the R&D team of Hindustan Unilever integrates these collected insights and other kinds of marketing ideas with the help of the specialists so that they can develop more products and sub-brands.



**Figure 4.2: Value Creation Model of Hindustan Unilever**

(Source: Extracted from hul.co.in, 2023)

Collaborating with partners throughout its flexible supply chain, Unilever aims to improve products and packaging while also collaborating with governments, NGOs, and other partners to achieve socially and economically advantageous improvements. As per the notions of PRAKASH *et al.*, (2023) Unilever's Personal Care, Foodstuffs Household Care, and Refreshment divisions each have their own assortment of brands that aim to bring about consistent, meaningful,

beneficial, and conscientious growth supported by advertisements and research. Among Hindustan Unilever's 13 brands with sales of €1 billion or more, the major proportion is constituted by Sustainable Living products that provide substantial social or environmental benefits (hul.co.in, 2023). A brand is any combination of words, phrases, logos, images, or designs used to identify and distinguish the goods and services of a particular vendor or group of vendors from other businesses.

The business of Hindustan Unilever acts as one of the largest advertisers and promoters in the whole country of India on the basis of its expenditure on the lines of media and advertisements. As abridged by Goyal, (2022) the R&D and marketing team of Hindustan Unilever develops lots of tailored digital content with the help of which the brand can easily connect with the targeted customer base. This helps the company to connect easily with the targeted customers, driving them to choose the brand. The company extensively performs its marketing approaches which is why 9 out of 10 households in India use more than one sub brands of Hindustan Unilever (hul.co.in, 2023). The business operates with 9 million outlets supported by more than 3500 distributors who use 30% of digitised demand captures (hul.co.in, 2023).



**Figure 4.3: Integration of business operations with SDGs in Hindustan Unilever**

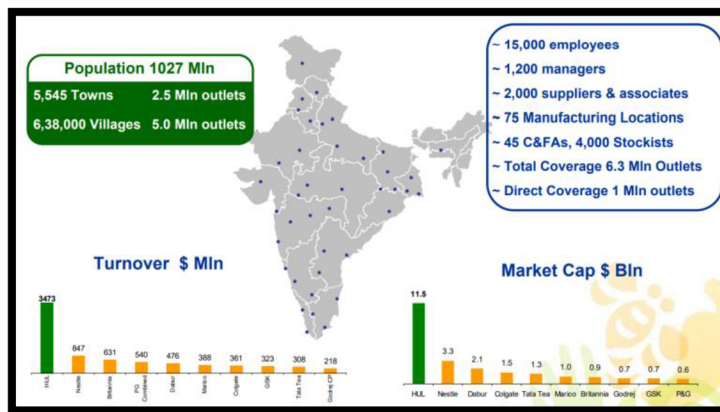
(Source: Extracted from hul.co.in, 2023)

Hindustan Unilever is known globally since it adheres to a strict standard on the use of its logo and other pictures as well as designs. While each of Hindustan Unilever's brands uses its own unique marking system, the company's logo, strategy, philosophy, and message are consistent across all of them. Digital ad ratings, customer psychology, streaming services, broadcast listeners, and other methods can all be used to substantially to assess how effective commercials are for the brand. As stated by JAIN, (2019) depending on their unique selling points and promotional offers, the sub brands under Hindustan Unilever cater to different demographics. The product category that the brand plans to promote determines the price of the products. Almost every specialized tool that advertising has at their disposal is used by Hindustan Unilever. Unilever products can be found in over 190 countries. While each of Unilever's brands has its own unique marketing approach, they all share the same Hindustan Unilever logo, strategy, belief system, and message (hul.co.in,



2023). There are 25 icons in the design that represent the 400 different brands owned by Hindustan Unilever. (hul.co.in, 2023)

With a vast network of retailers and distributors in which Hindustan Unilever employs more than 165,000 people globally. Depending on their age, income level, and the products or services they require, Hindustan Unilever's customers can be divided into several categories where Hindustan Unilever caters to a wide age range of customers. The demographics of the individual and household segment range from middle class to upper class, and their ages range from 14 years to 50 years (hul.co.in, 2023). The target customers for the food product line includes children with an appetite for healthy, delicious food and an interest in developing their palates. Hindustan Unilever includes the cost of the outcomes in product pricing because such results are an integral part of production, packaging, marketing, distribution and many more. As per the views of Sivakumar, (2021) Hindustan Unilever uses a variety of communication channels and is always looking into new ones. however, most of their customers still purchase their products in physical stores, supermarkets, online marketplaces, and the like. To stay ahead of the competition, Hindustan Unilever really works to improve its commercial areas.

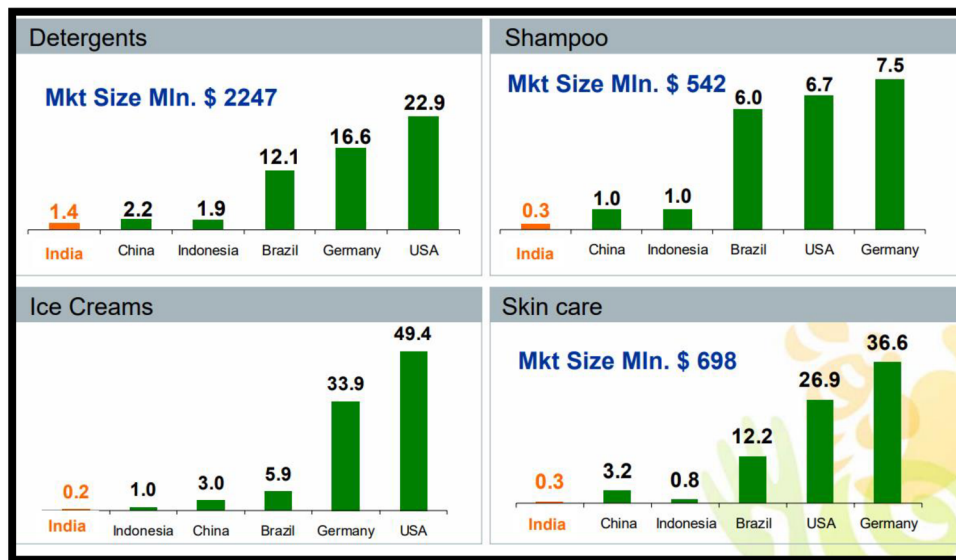


**Figure 4.4: Business Overview of Hindustan Unilever with respect to the market**

(Source: Extracted from hul.co.in, 2023)

The marketing campaigns performed by Hindustan Unilever incorporate the company's values of social responsibility and environmental preservation. As opined by Goute *et al.*, (2021) they bring attention to projects that aim to empower communities, promote fair trade, and lessen the impact on the environment. By showing its commitment to a brighter future, Unilever's Sustainable Living

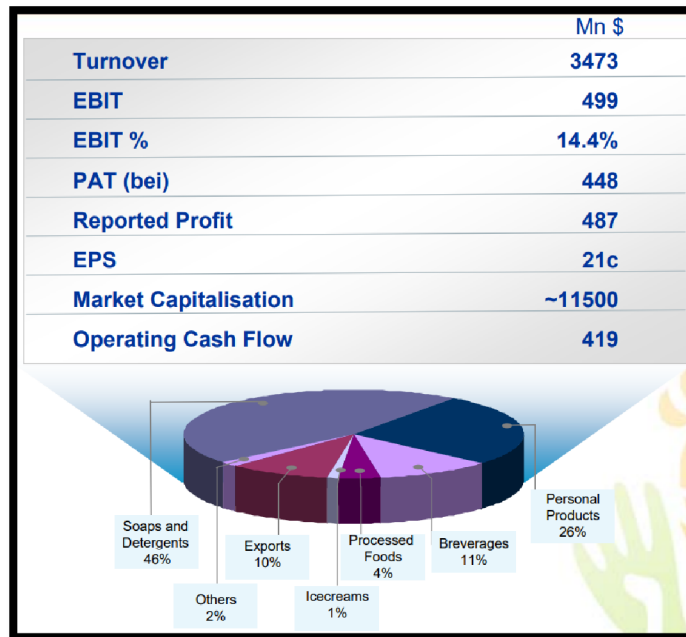
Plan campaign claimed over eco-conscious customers and improved the company's credibility. Hindustan Unilever takes the help of influencers to connect with their target audiences and reinforce their brand messages (hul.co.in, 2023). In order to develop deeper relationships with its customers, Unilever uses personalization in the scope of its marketing and promotional activities.



**Figure 4.5: Market Consumption of Unilever product in various nations**

(Source: Extracted from hul.co.in, 2023)

Unilever has become fully involved in the digital world and actively engages with consumers through social media channels. Their online presence has been reinforced by engaging content, interactive initiatives, and partnerships with influencers, on every social media platform like Facebook, X and Instagram. As stated by Jain and Sharma, (2019) by associating its brand with a critical global issue, Unilever demonstrated its dedication to social impact and fostered favourable perceptions of the brand. Targeted marketing strategies are driven by customer data and analytics, according to Unilever (hul.co.in, 2023). They improve consumer experiences as well as maximize sales by optimizing product placement, pricing, as well as promotional activities based on information obtained from consumer behaviour and preferences.



**Figure 4.6: Market Capitalisation of Unilever product**

(Source: Extracted from hul.co.in, 2023)

When it comes to advertising, Unilever knows how important it is to be culturally relevant. In order to keep up with changing customer needs, Unilever encourages a culture of innovation and this is the reason why new technology and fashion are included into their marketing methods. The ability to engage consumers, build deep emotional relationships, and enhance brand success is showcased by Unilever's effective marketing methods. Using these techniques, Unilever successfully conveys brand values, meets consumer expectations, and stays ahead of the competition (hul.co.in, 2023). For businesses that want to make an impact in the global market, Unilever's dedication to customer insight, social responsibility, and successful advertising campaigns is very much inspiring in the scope of the business.

## **4.2 Marketing strategy and marketing mix proposal**

### **4.2.1 Product**

Product is a major element of the business operations, as it helps in improving the brand recognition level, whereas, the products are the major drivers to engage the customers with the organisations (Krizanova *et al.*, 2019). HUL is one of the most recognised consumer goods

organisations in India, the popularity of the organisation has been observed due to the diversified options of products, which tend to influence all types of people (KUMAR, 2023). The organisations have an attractive portfolio regarding the product range, as they have been operating in categories like Beauty and personal care, Home care and Foods and refreshments, as there is a wide range of options included in all three divisions (hul.co.in, 2023). For example, beauty & personal care includes Skin Cleansing, Hair care, Skin care and colour cosmetics, Oral care, Deodorants and male toiletries, and Health & wellbeing, which includes different popular brands in India.



**Figure 4.7: Beauty and Personal care products of HUL**

(Source: hul.co.in, 2023)

However, home care includes Fabric Care, Household Care and Water purifier, whereas, food & refreshment includes beverages, health food drinks, ice cream and different food items. With all these product ranges, the organisation has become an integral part of the daily life of many Indians, the quality of their products has built a huge trust among the people to choose the brand over others (hul.co.in, 2023).



**Figure 4.8: Food and Refreshment products of HUL**

(Source: hul.co.in, 2023)

Based on this, HUL is also looking forward to aligning its product strategy with the sustainable development goals, in which the organisation is focused on increasing the number of products sold to deliver positive nutrition to all the people in India by 2025 (hul.co.in, 2023). However, they will also ensure that salt intake will be less in India, as they are intending to restrict the limit by no more than 5gm per day, with positive changes in 85% of the products. With these changes, the organisation has built a notable brand value in India alongside their competitors for operating with a huge market share (hul.co.in, 2023).

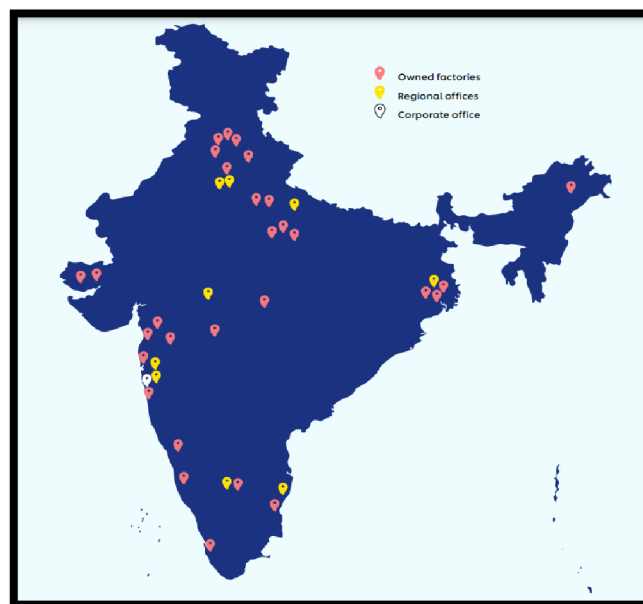
#### 4.2.2 Price

Pricing ranges of different products have a huge role to play in India for an organisation to improve its recognition level and capture a large percentage of the market by gaining the trust of the customers (Arunachalam *et al.*, 2020). In the opinion of, Goyal (2022), the mixed pricing strategy of HUL has helped them to improve their brand values and market share in India and it also has supported their approach to gain the trust of a large number of the population. For example, the competitive and cost-plus pricing strategies are observed mostly based on the products of HUL, due to which products like Lux and Lifebuoy have been highly popular with 1/3 of the market share in India, for its affordable prices as compared to others (economictimes.indiatimes.com,

2023). However, the growing inflation rate in India has been a major part of the change in the pricing strategy of HUL, as the organisation has increased the price of different products in the post-COVID era. However, the organisation has become a market leader with more than 16 FMCG products, which contain nearly 85% of the market share and has developed a proper price-benefit pyramid that helped nearly 9 million retail stores to improve their capability (hul.co.in, 2023).

#### 4.2.3 Distribution

Place is an important part of business operations, as it can influence the business efficiency of consumer goods-related organisations to manage their supplies and distribution with the required accuracy (Cortés-Murcia *et al.*, 2022). HUL is one of the largest consumer goods organisations in India, which has been operating in all places with its connected supply chain to reach each and every customer. In that case, HUL has 1 corporate office in Mumbai, 29 Owned factories and 32 depots in different states of India, which improves their distribution and supply network to improve the business presence (hul.co.in, 2023). Moreover, they are working with nearly 3500 distributors who help them to reach every part of India to manage their ability to improve business operations with proper stability and accuracy (hul.co.in, 2023). Hence, such a distributed network helps the organisation to improve its marketing operations to manage the supply and delivery of products to different retail stores in India, which has a huge positive impact on its growth as a consumer goods brand.



### **Figure 4.9: Business hubs of HUL in India**

(Source: hul.co.in, 2023)

#### **4.2.4 Marketing communication**

Promotion is a critical part of HUL's business strategies to manage their business premises in India, as the organisation uses various techniques to influence customers to rely on their brands (Fernandes and Shailashree, 2022). In that case, HUL relies on conventional approaches such as TV advertisements and marketing events however, they also have improved their presence in the digital platforms, which have been a critical part of transformation for them. For example, the digital application developed by HUL, known as Shikhar, has been highly successful at engaging retailers, which improves their presence in the B2B market to improve business standards (hul.co.in, 2023). Moreover, HUL is also focused on improving the participation of women in their growth as a major brand in India with Ahilya Initiative, which improves the opportunities for women to join their trade salesforce (hul.co.in, 2023). However, the use of tailored digital content also has been a major part of their marketing process to influence the customers to choose their brand over others. Apart from that, HULL also has been utilising digital influencers to improve their presence in the business market, as they have spent more than 25% of their allocated budget on media, which has helped them to grow more effectively (hul.co.in, 2023).

#### **4.2.5 People**

People including the employees, suppliers, investors, distributors and managers are the major part of an organisation to manage its operations across the expanded business network to make notable progress (PRAKASH *et al.*, 2023). In that case, HUL has been operating all over India with 21000 employees and they have been titled as the #1 Employer of Choice Across Industries (hul.co.in, 2023). Moreover, they also have been managing diversity and inclusiveness in their workforces, as the gender balance is nearly 40% and it makes them one of the most trusted places for work in India (hul.co.in, 2023). Additionally, there are a total of 11 members of the board of directors of HUL working under the leadership of Rohit Jawa to manage their operations in India. Similar to this, they are also connected to more than 3500 distributors, thus, it also improves their business networks to be highly integrated and efficient at meeting the organisational goals (hul.co.in, 2023). With all these supports, HUL has become a major business platform in India, and the reinforcement from the human resources has ensured a proper successful platform for them.

#### 4.2.6 Processes

Processes refer to the integrated business management system that helps an organisation improve its ability to manage business operations with a required competitive advantage to achieve the organisational goals (Bitkowska, 2020). In that case, HUL has been working with more than 1300 suppliers which helps the organisation to manage the critical services like sourcing of raw materials for the development of respective products. Hence, the organisation has been operating based on an agile supply chain network which is connected by 29 owned factories, 50+ manufacturing partners and 32 distribution centres that have helped them to achieve a production unit of more than 65 billion in a year (hul.co.in, 2023). In that case, they are also focused on improving the quality of their products and the accuracy of services for the people, which is bound with the key principles known as Superior Availability, Superior Values, Superior Quality and Superior Care. Based on this, they also have been improving their presence in the sustainable business management process with the contribution towards the achievement of relevant goals. For example, they are looking forward to developing 100% recyclable and reusable plastics within 2025 and they are also focused on developing a deforestation-free supply chain for their business operations all over India (hul.co.in, 2023).



**Figure 4.10: Major drivers of business services for HUL**

(Source: hul.co.in, 2023)



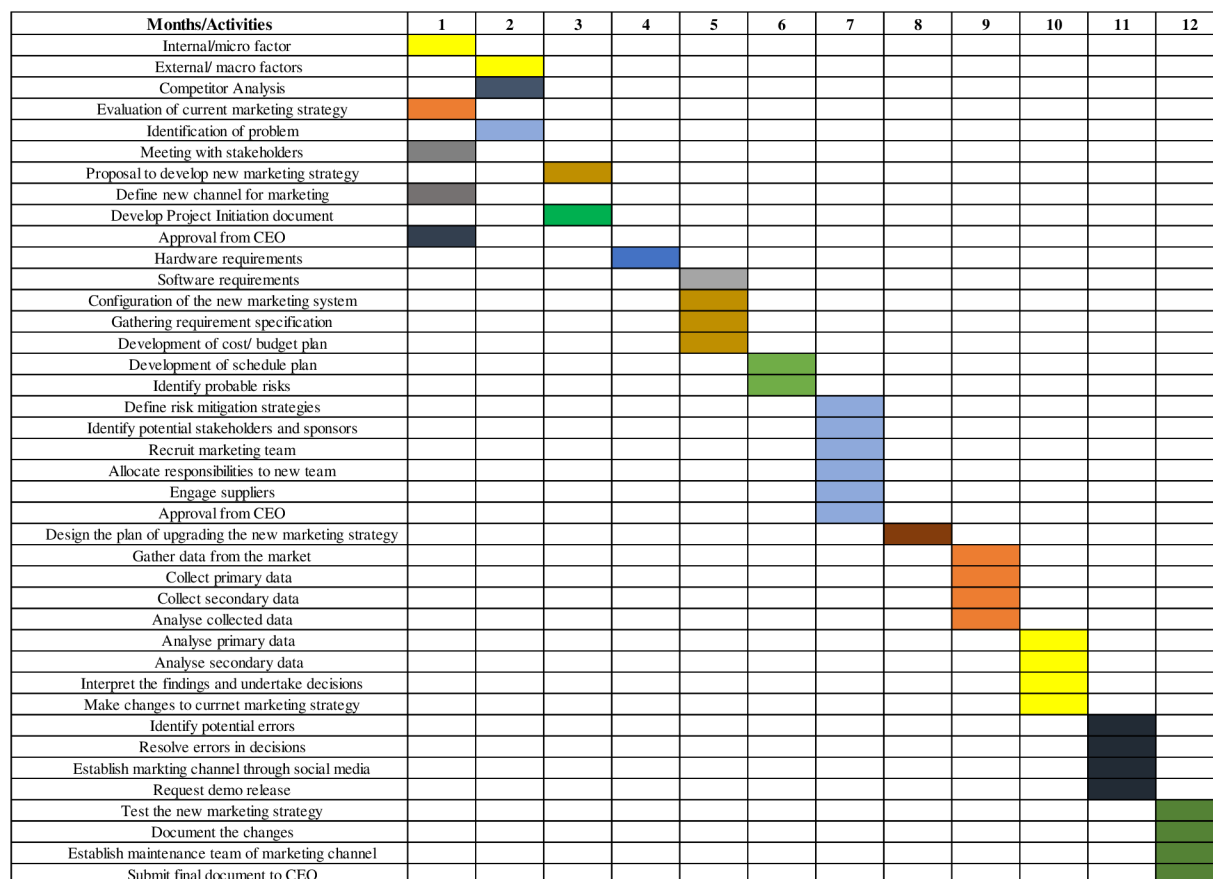
#### **4.2.7 Material environment**

Physical appearance has been a major part of the recognition process for HUL, as the organisation has developed a proper influence based on its unique appearance in the Indian markets (Narayanan and Das, 2022). In that case, the organisation is entirely focused on improving its presence by improving its appearance by designing the Corporate Logo to improve the trust for its brands and protecting the intellectual property rights in India to ensure a proper impact on its business sales. In that case, Unilever-owned Trademarks such as “Guideline Daily Amount”, a trust seal for the Darjeeling tea logo for tea and a recyclable logo have been the major examples of their ability to develop a unique perspective for the people to recognise their brand (hul.co.in, 2023). Based on this, they also have been providing QR codes in all their products, which can help people to gain insights on the relevant products by scanning with the digital platforms, thus, it also has been a major part of their success in India to satisfy the customers.

#### **4.3 Schedule and Budget**

##### **4.3.1 Schedule**

The schedule plan that has been developed in favour of Hindustan Unilever provides an overview about the various activities that the company would need to undertake in order to implement a suitable marketing plan as a part of the strategy intervention. Each of the activities has been enlisted in terms of a sub category of parent activities to identify a proper progression in a sequential way. The execution of the activities would take place either in a linear way or a simultaneous way depending upon its critical nature. In order to represent this in the form of a visualised entity the utilisation of a Gantt chart has been facilitated. This Gantt chart indicates a series of timeline which specifies a duration towards which an activity would execute its span from its initiation to its termination.



**Figure 4.11: Gantt Chart**

(Source: Self Developed)

### 4.3.2 Budget

Months/Activities	Currency value in Czech											
	Months											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Evaluation of current marketing strategy	1300.0	1404.0	1516.3	1637.6	1768.6	1910.1	2062.9	2228.0	2406.2	2598.7	2806.6	3031.1
Proposal to develop new	870	939.6	1014.8	1095.9	1183.6	1278.3	1380.6	1491.0	1610.3	1739.1	1878.3	2028.5

marketing strategy													
Define new channel for marketing	1650	1782.0	1924.6	2078.5	2244.8	2424.4	2618.3	2827.8	3054.0	3298.4	3562.2	3847.2	
Configuration of the new marketing system	1800	1944.0	2099.5	2267.5	2448.9	2644.8	2856.4	3084.9	3331.7	3598.2	3886.1	4197.0	
Allocate responsibilities to new team	500	540.0	583.2	629.9	680.2	734.7	793.4	856.9	925.5	999.5	1079.5	1165.8	
Design the plan of upgrading the new marketing strategy	2050	2214.0	2391.1	2582.4	2789.0	3012.1	3253.1	3513.3	3794.4	4098.0	4425.8	4779.9	
Make changes to current marketing strategy	1540	1663.2	1796.3	1940.0	2095.2	2262.8	2443.8	2639.3	2850.4	3078.5	3324.7	3590.7	
Establish marketing channel through social media	1260	1360.8	1469.7	1587.2	1714.2	1851.4	1999.5	2159.4	2332.2	2518.7	2720.2	2937.9	
Test the new marketing strategy	1180	1274.4	1376.4	1486.5	1605.4	1733.8	1872.5	2022.3	2184.1	2358.8	2547.5	2751.3	
Establish maintenance team of	750	810.0	874.8	944.8	1020.4	1102.0	1190.2	1285.4	1388.2	1499.3	1619.2	1748.7	

marketing channel												
<b>Total</b>	<b>2200</b>	<b>24950</b>	<b>2200</b>	<b>20450</b>	<b>2200</b>	<b>2450</b>	<b>1950</b>	<b>2200</b>	<b>7200</b>	<b>8950</b>	<b>13450</b>	<b>20450</b>

**Table 4.1: Budget Plan for Hindustan Unilever**

(Source: Self Developed)

## 5. Conclusion

Deriving conclusions from the above analysis it could be stated that organisations must develop a strategic marketing technique that would enable them to execute advertisements and promotional activities by focusing on the current needs and requirements of the consumers in the market. As this kind of practises is witnessed in market segments that has a competitive nature Hindustan Unilever has been presented as the subjective organisation. The reason is that Hindustan Unilever is observed to operate in the fast moving consumer segment of India that has a highly competitive nature. With wide range of competitors present in the market the company consistently tries to innovate their products and services so that it becomes capable of satisfying the needs and requirements of the consumers. In order to communicate this update of their products and service innovation strategies the company uses several communication channels with the help of which interaction with the consumers or performed.

Depending upon the changes that has occurred in the last few years in the Indian market the adoption to digitalised environment has enabled the company to re-innovate their marketing strategies from its basic nature. For instance using television broadcasting and other activities similar to that of traditional methods of marketing has been replaced with social media. This type of findings that has been present in the study showcases that Hindustan Unilever has a attentive marketing team that is capable of collecting current data from the market and implement the changes within their internal business processes.

According to the results that has been obtained from the internal and external environmental analysis of the Indian market segment it has been observed that there are several factors which affect the growth and development of Hindustan Unilever. One of such factors has been highlighted to be the changes in the inflation and GDP rate of the country. In the last few years the changes have been high due to which pricing of the products have been fluctuating drastically.

The cause of this fluctuation has been further demonstrated in terms of the production cost that has been raised due to change in taxation policies of import and export activities executed by Hindustan Unilever. It is expected that the decision making activities that would be carried out by the company in the future needs to be aligned with the changes they would implement as a part of their marketing strategy. This in turn would help the company to engage more customers to purchase products and services from their domain with an upper hand to their differentiation strategy.

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