
Management Strategies and Business Competitiveness in Mambila Beverages Limited, Taraba State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between management strategies and business competitiveness of Mambila beverages in Taraba State, Nigeria. Management strategies are measured in terms of long-term goal planning, resource allocation, technological innovation, and market analysis as independent variables. This study adopts the resource-based view as its theoretical framework. This study used a descriptive research design. The population comprised 143 individuals, and based on the census sampling technique, the population size was used as the sample size. Structured questionnaires and interviews were used for data collection. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics, specifically Pearson's correlation. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.0 was utilized. The study found a significant positive relationship between long-term goal planning ($r=0.620$, $p=0.016$), resource allocation ($r=0.794$, $p=0.031$), technological innovation ($r=0.572$, $p=0.003$), market analysis ($r=0.535$, $p=0.000$), and business competitiveness. These findings provide a practical framework for the Mambila beverage limited and other businesses to increase their resources allocation by strategically assigning more resources to the key areas of the business to increase their competitive position in the market. The study focused only on current management strategies without extensively exploring the long-term impact ultimately impacting on the findings.

Keywords: Lon-term goal Planning, Resources Allocation, Technological Innovation, Customer Satisfaction, and Operational Efficiency

1. Introduction

Businesses, particularly in the beverage industry, face constant challenges such as fluctuating consumer preferences, market volatility, technological advancements, and resource constraints. Consequently, companies are compelled to adopt well-formulated management strategies that enable them to respond proactively to these external pressures while improving internal efficiencies and customer satisfaction. Mambila Beverages Limited, located in Taraba State, is a key player in Nigeria's beverage industry. The company faces competitive challenges through both market share losses and operational inefficiencies. In terms of market share, the company experienced a significant decline by seeing a drop of 8-10% (Statista, 2023). Operational inefficiencies, such as higher production costs due to outdated processes, could lead to spending 15% more per unit than competitors, reducing profitability and limiting reinvestment in innovation (Statista, 2023). These factors together weaken Mambila's ability to compete effectively in the market.

A company's ability to meet customer expectations, maximize operational efficiency, and achieve sustainable growth hinges on how well it manages its internal processes and market interactions (Jones, D. T. 2003). This study focuses on how specific management strategies

(Strategic Planning, Resource Allocation, Innovation Management, and Market Analysis) influence a company's competitiveness, particularly in terms of Customer Satisfaction and Operational Efficiency.

These dimensions of management practices are under scrutiny because they are critical for driving business success and maintaining competitiveness. This is why this study to some extent seeks to determine how these dimensions effectively aligns with Mambila's long-term goals through strategic planning and optimizes its use of resources. Its innovation management is examined for its ability to adapt to changing consumer demands, while market analysis is focused on how well the company understands market trends and uses this knowledge to inform strategic decisions for competitiveness. More so, this study justify that these measures of management strategies were chosen as dimensions to ensures that the company has clear goals and a roadmap to navigate market challenges, aligning resources and efforts toward long-term objectives. This is crucial for a company like Mambila Beverages, operating in a competitive industry, as it needs to anticipate changes and opportunities in the market. Resource allocation is essential for maximizing the use of Mambila's unique assets, such as its natural resources and workforce. Effective allocation ensures that these resources are used efficiently to maintain high product quality and operational efficiency, which directly impacts competitiveness. Innovation management allows the company to develop new products and improve existing processes, keeping up with consumer trends and staying ahead of competitors (Chesbrough, H. 2003). For Mambila Beverages, innovation is important in maintaining its edge, particularly in niche markets like organic and health-conscious products. Market analysis provides insights into customer preferences and competitive forces, enabling the company to adapt its strategies to meet market demands. Understanding market trends helps Mambila identify growth opportunities and align its offerings with consumer needs.

Customer satisfaction and operational efficiency were chosen as measures of business competitiveness for Mambila Beverages Limited because they directly influence market performance and organizational sustainability (Oliver, R.C. 1980) as cited by (Sani, I., & Febrian, W. D. 2023). Customer satisfaction is key for fostering brand loyalty and driving sales, while operational efficiency helps optimize resource use, reduce costs, and maintain competitive pricing. These factors are essential for Mambila, given its reliance on unique natural resources and the need to stand out in a competitive beverage market.

In line with this, previous research has often focused on financial performance and market expansion, neglecting a deeper exploration of how operational efficiency affects competitiveness, particularly in rural industries. Additionally, the role of customer satisfaction, especially in relation to growing consumer preferences for sustainable and locally-sourced products, has been underexplored. The focus on these two measures provides a more comprehensive understanding of competitiveness in Mambila's unique context. Mambila Beverages Limited, located in Taraba State, Nigeria, can be effectively linked to the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory by focusing on how its internal resources contribute to its competitive advantage. RBV emphasizes that a company's resources and capabilities are the key to achieving sustained competitiveness. For Mambila Beverages, its unique access to natural resources, such as the high-quality tea and coffee grown in the Mambila Plateau, forms a critical aspect of this advantage. The geographical and climatic conditions of the region provide the company with rare and valuable resources, positioning its products as distinct in the market.

Mambila Beverages Limited is a prominent player in the Nigerian beverage industry, known for its production of high-quality tea products, including the popular Highland Tea. However, similar to many Nigerian companies, it must continuously adapt its management strategies to maintain competitiveness in a rapidly evolving market (Adeleke et al., 2008). The extent to which a company's management strategies influence its business competitiveness is yet to be

comprehensively examined, particularly in industries such as beverages, where product differentiation and process improvements are essential. Literature suggests a gap in lack of strategic focus (Adeleke, Ogundele, & Oyenuga, 2008). This underscores the importance of strategic planning, innovation, and resource allocation for sustaining business performance. Therefore, this study focuses on management strategies that optimize business competitiveness and facilitate customer satisfaction and operational efficiency.

The generic objective is to empirically examine the relationship between management strategies and business competitiveness of Mambila beverages limited in Taraba State, Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

In the conceptual framework below, the diagram suggests that effective management strategies (through Strategic planning, resource allocation, innovation management, and market analysis) shape the processes and strategies that enhance a business's competitiveness by improving customer satisfaction and operational efficiency.

2.1 Concept of Management Strategies

Effective management strategies are essential for achieving organizational goals and ensuring long-term success. Peter Drucker (1954) widely regarded as the father of modern management, views management strategy as a systematic approach to aligning the organization's resources to fulfill its mission and goals. Richard Rumelt (2011) went further to define a good and a bad strategy in his book "Good Strategy/Bad Strategy", he argues that strategy is about focus and coherent action, not just setting ambitious goals or mission statements without a clear plan to achieve them.

Alfred Chandler (1962) in his influential book "Strategy and Structure" posited that "the determination of the basic long-term goals and objectives of an enterprise, and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals is called management strategy". The erudite scholar links strategy to organizational structure, arguing that changes in an organization's strategy often require changes in its structure to ensure effectiveness.

2.2 Dimensions of Management Strategies

2.2.1 Strategic Planning

Henry Mintzberg (1994) in his book "The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning" argues that strategy is not a one-size-fits-all concept but can emerge from a process of planning or through organizational learning. Neville Isdell & David Beasley (2011) posited that Coca-Cola, under former CEO Neville Isdell, focused on a strategic planning to expand globally and adapt to local markets. This involved standardizing their brand identity while tailoring products and marketing to meet local tastes and preferences. The strategic plan emphasized product diversification, which included introducing water, juices, teas, and energy drinks. Additionally, the introduction of product variants beyond soft drinks diversified revenue streams, making Coca-Cola less dependent on soda sales. For Mambila Beverage Limited, the focus is on how long-term goal planning affects its business competitiveness. Henry Mintzberg as cited by Chesbrough, H. (2003) opined that the logic of strategic planning hinge on how long-term goals of the company aids it to stay globally competitiveness and economically viable. Therefore, the study seek to establish the relationship on how long-term goal planning that aligns with vision and mission statement of Mambila affects it competitive abilities.

2.2.2 Resources Allocation

Resource allocation is a critical component of management strategy, involving the distribution of an organization's assets such as financial, human, and material resources across various projects, departments, or initiatives. For Mambila Beverage Limited, this study seeks to establish how the optimum distribution of these resources could affect the operational

efficiency in terms of gaining more market shares and customer satisfaction. Effective resource allocation ensures that the most critical areas of the business receive the necessary resources to meet strategic goals, while less important areas receive fewer resources. It plays a fundamental role in strategic planning and execution by aligning resources with organizational objectives. Organizations often operate with limited resources, making optimal allocation essential. The challenge lies in maximizing returns or achieving strategic objectives with available resources. In this context, Kaplan and Norton (1996) developed the Balanced Scorecard approach, which helps organizations align their resources with long-term goals and performance metrics. Effective allocation of human resources involves placing the right talent in key roles, ensuring that the workforce is aligned with strategic objectives.

2.2.3 Technological Innovation

Technological Innovation as a management strategy involves systematically fostering, directing, and implementing digital innovation within an organization. It integrates processes and tools to drive the development of new products, services, processes, or business models that improve efficiency, create value, and secure competitive advantage. How Mambila Beverage Limited leverage on its technological opportunities or models to respond to customer's changing demands.

At the core of innovation management is the generation of new ideas. According to Peter Drucker (1985), innovation is the specific instrument of entrepreneurship that involves creating new wealth or capabilities. He argues that idea generation should focus on identifying opportunities within market changes or technological advancements.

Henry Chesbrough (2003) introduced the concept of open innovation, which emphasizes that firms should not rely solely on internal ideas but should incorporate external insights and collaboration. Innovation inherently involves uncertainty. Successful innovation management involves developing a portfolio of projects that balances high-risk, high-reward initiatives with safer, incremental innovations.

2.2.4 Market Analysis

Market analysis as a management strategy involves systematically assessing the dynamics of a market to understand its structure, size, competition, customer needs, and trends. It helps organizations make informed decisions regarding entry, expansion, marketing, and product development. The essence of market analysis is to understand the market trend on the company and that of its competitors. An empirical study conducted by Ayodele and Ogunsanya (2022) revealed that beverage companies that engage in continuous market analysis and product innovation enjoy higher market shares. A core aspect of market analysis is estimating the market's size and growth potential. This involves evaluating total sales in the market, forecasting future growth, and understanding the trends driving that growth. Philip Kotler (1997) emphasizes that market sizing helps businesses understand their revenue potential and assess whether the market is worth entering or expanding.

Michael Porter (1985) highlighted the importance of analyzing competitive forces through his Five Forces Framework, which includes the intensity of competition, threat of new entrants, threat of substitutes, bargaining power of suppliers, and bargaining power of buyers.

Albert Humphrey (1960) developed the SWOT framework to help organizations match their strengths with market opportunities while addressing weaknesses and mitigating external threats.

2.3 Concept of Business Competitiveness

Business competitiveness refers to a company's ability to maintain and enhance its market position by offering products or services that are perceived as superior to those of its rivals. Competitiveness is achieved by optimizing a range of factors, including cost efficiency, product quality, innovation, customer service, and strategic use of technology. This research

focuses on only two key measures of business competitiveness of the Mambila beverages limited; customer satisfaction and operational efficiency.

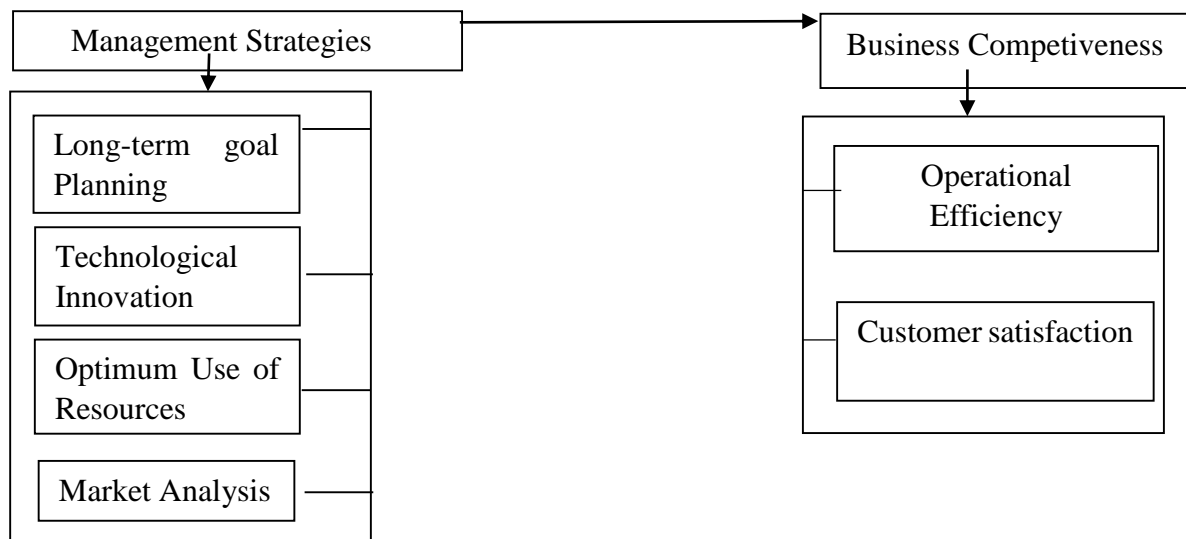
2.3.1 Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction refers to the degree to which a company’s products or services meet or exceed customer expectations. It is a critical measure of a business's ability to fulfill customer needs and directly influences customer loyalty, repeat business, and positive word-of-mouth referrals. Customer satisfaction is also seen as "a person's feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product’s perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectations’ (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Customer satisfaction is influenced by the gap between what customers expect and what they experience. When perceptions of a product or service match or surpass expectations, customers are likely to be satisfied (Oliver 1980). Conversely, dissatisfaction occurs if expectations are not met.

2.3.2 Operational Efficiency

Operational efficiency refers to an organization’s ability to deliver products or services to its customers in a cost-effective manner without compromising quality. This involves optimizing processes, reducing waste, and effectively managing resources to maximize productivity and minimize costs. Operational efficiency is achieved when an organization minimizes waste and redundancies, optimizes supply chains, improves inventory management, and enhances production processes (Womack, J. P., & Jones, D. T. 2003).

Figure 1.1 Conceptual frameworks of management strategies and business competitiveness



Source: Desk Researcher (2024)

2.4 Theoretical framework

The Resource-Based View (RBV) was primarily developed by Jay Barney in his seminal 1991 paper titled "Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage" and adopted for this study. RBV is a strategic management theory that emphasizes the internal resources and capabilities of a firm as the primary determinants of competitive advantage and performance. The fundamental premise of the RBV posits that firms attain and maintain a competitive edge by leveraging unique and valuable resources that are challenging for competitors to imitate or substitute. RBV postulates that firms possess heterogeneous resources and capabilities. This heterogeneity enables certain firms to outperform other firms.

As highlighted from the background to the study, Mambila Beverages Limited is linked to the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory by focusing on how its internal resources contribute

to its competitive advantage. RBV emphasizes that a company's resources and capabilities are the key to achieving sustained competitiveness. For Mambila Beverages, its unique access to natural resources, such as the high-quality tea and coffee grown in the Mambila Plateau, forms a critical aspect of this advantage. The geographical and climatic conditions of the region provide the company with rare and valuable resources, positioning its products as distinct in the market.

Furthermore, this study posits that resources are not perfectly mobile across firms. Some resources are firm specific and cannot be readily transferred or replicated. The theory proposes that resources can generate value for a firm by enhancing its capacity to achieve superior performance and competitive advantage.

2.5 Empirical Review

The empirical review is presented in the table below.

Authors	Focus/Variables	Key Findings	Management strategies discussed	Implication of findings
Stewart, G. L., & Brown, K. G. (2019)	Business growth through effective resource management	Found that efficient resource allocation is essential for the company's growth	Resource allocation, capacity building	This entails that Mambila Beverage Limited if strategically allocate more resources like finance, material and human resources to key functional departments will maximize their output.
Steiner, G. A. (2010)	Business planning as a cardinal factor for achieving competitiveness.	Identified a strong link between planning and business performance.	Functional plans that align with vision and mission	The findings suggest that effective planning whether material, financial or operational must aligns with company's corporate vision and mission, and hence Mambila Beverage must incorporate their mission and vision statement in line with their operational planning.
Sani, I., & Febrian, W. D. (2023)	Market analysis and customer satisfaction	Demonstrated that effective market analysis leads to better customer experience	Porter's fives competitive forces	By this findings, companies must strategically, evaluate their internal capabilities and weaknesses, and at the same time, their external opportunities and threats so as to satisfy their customers optimally without losing their market shares.
Guyo, J. A. (2014).	Technological adoption and operational efficiency	Highlighted that the adoption of modern technologies is vital for operational efficiency	Adoption of IT systems, process automation and innovation management	The findings suggest that digitized operations would help companies to stay globally competitive while they continue to innovate and rebrand their business operational model and marketing models by using digital technologies and internet of Things based technologies.
Chang, S. C., & Wang, C. F. (2007).	Product diversification and market expansion	Emphasized that product diversification leads to wider market expansion	Product diversification, customer feedback	Greater market share and customer retention

The literature on management strategies offers a wealth of knowledge applicable across various business contexts, but it often falls short in providing the necessary contextualization for Mambila Beverages Limited, a thorough understanding of local market dynamics, cultural factors, and regulatory landscapes is crucial for the effective application of management strategies.

In the Nigerian context, businesses operate within a unique set of challenges, including economic fluctuations, infrastructural deficits, and varying consumer preferences influenced by regional cultures. Current research tends to emphasize frameworks and theories that may not account for these localized factors, limiting their applicability to companies like Mambila Beverages (Stewart, G. L., & Brown, K. G. (2019). To enhance the relevance of the research for Mambila Beverages Limited, future studies should incorporate a localized focus that reflects the realities of operating in Nigeria

3. Research Methodology

A descriptive research design was employed to gather detailed insights into the management practices at Mambila Beverages Limited. This design is suitable because it allows for the collection of both quantitative data (to measure specific business outcomes) and qualitative data (to understand the nuances of management strategies). The combination of both methods ensures a richer and more complete analysis.

The target population for this study is 143 consists of management staff, employees, and customers of Mambila Beverages Limited. Census sampling technique will be used where data is collected from every member of the population under study, rather than selecting a subset or sample.

Two key data collection instruments was employed. A structured questionnaire was employed to collect quantitative data from employees and customers regarding their perception of management strategies and business competitiveness. The questionnaire include Likert-scale questions to measure key variables. Semi-structured interviews are also used to gather qualitative data from management staff.

Data from the questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and mean scores. Inferential statistics, specifically Pearson correlation analysis was also used to examine the relationship between management strategies and business competitiveness with aid of SPSS v 27.0

3.1 Ethical Considerations

This paper observed ethical principles by ensuring informed consent is obtained from all participants, guaranteeing confidentiality and anonymity, and avoiding any form of coercion in participation ensuring that participation is voluntary.

4. Presentation and Discussion of Findings

Out of the 143-questionnaire distributed to collect data 135 were returned and used for the analysis. The result for the data analysis is for descriptive statistics is presented below show mean and standard deviation.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Business Competitiveness	3.7474	.31047	135
Long-term goal Planning	3.5793	.43591	135
Resources Allocation	3.2074	.40915	135
Technological Innovation	3.7719	.40383	135
Market Analysis	3.5911	.46028	135

Source: Field work (2024)

The statistical measures shown in Table 1 include the average values and the measures of variability of the variables under consideration. The average score of the Corporate Competitiveness Index was 3. The company's competitiveness was assessed to have a mean score of 3.7474 (SD = 0.31047), suggesting that the respondents had a favorable view of the company's competitiveness. Management techniques and technological innovation earned the highest average score of 3.7719 (SD = 0.40383), indicating a significant degree of interest in innovation inside the firm. Furthermore, the average scores for the long-term goal planning and

market analysis sub-indices were also quite high, at 3.5793 (SD = 0.43591) and 3. Therefore, the variables are arranged in the following order: Overhead costs amount to 3.5911 (SD = 0.46028), suggesting their substantial impact on the company's operations. Nevertheless, the average resource allocation was the lowest (M = 3.2074, SD = 0.40915), suggesting a potential need for enhancing resource allocation practices within the organization.

4.1 Test of hypotheses

H0₁: There is no significant positive relationship between long-term goal planning and business competitiveness of Mambila Beverages Limited.

Table 2: Correlation

		Business Competitiveness	Long-term goal Planning
Business Competitiveness	Pearson Correlation	1	.620
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.016
	N	135	135
Strategic Planning	Pearson Correlation	.620	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.016	
	N	135	135

Source: SPSS V27, 2024

From the data shown in table 2, it is evident that long-term planning is positively correlated with firm’s competitiveness, with a coefficient of 0.620 and a statistically significant relationship at the 0.016 level. Since the p-value is below the preset alpha threshold of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H0₁) is rejected therefore. The positive correlation indicates a clear and direct link between strategic planning and the business competitive advantage of the firm. This aligns with Steiner, G. A. (2010) who identified a strong link between planning and business performance. Strategic planning enhanced innovation and competitive advantage in a rapidly changing corporate landscape.

H0₂: There is no significant positive relationship between optimum use of resources and business competitiveness of Mambila Beverages Limited.

Table 3: Correlation

		Business Competitiveness	Optimum use of Resources
Business Competitiveness	Pearson Correlation	1	.794
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.031
	N	135	135
Optimum use of Resources	Pearson Correlation	.794	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.031	
	N	135	135

Source: SPSS V27, 2024

The regression analysis shown in table 3 demonstrates a strong and statistically significant relationship between resource allocation and firm competitiveness, with a high coefficient (r = 0.794, p = 0.031). With a p-value below 0.05, the null hypothesis (H0₂) is rejected, indicating data that support the claim of a positive correlation between optimum use of resource and firm competitiveness. The recorded correlation value of 0.794 indicates that resource management significantly contributes to the improvement of the competitive advantage of the firm. This is in line with Stewart, G. L., & Brown, K. G. (2019) who found that effective allocation of resources guarantees sufficient funding for departments and projects, therefore enhancing operational efficiency and business competitiveness.

H0₃: There is no significant positive relationship between technological innovation and business competitiveness of Mambila Beverages Limited.

Table 4: Correlation

		Business Competitiveness	Technological Innovation
Business Competitiveness	Pearson Correlation	1	.572
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	135	135
Technological Innovation	Pearson Correlation	.572	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	135	135

Source: SPSS V27, 2024

Table 4 demonstrates a strong positive association between technological innovation and firm competitiveness, with a correlation coefficient of 0.572 at a significance level of 0.003. The p-value is below the significance level of 0.05 hence we reject the null hypothesis (H03). This finding substantiates the notion that the management of technological innovation has a high and robust correlation with the business competitiveness of Mambila Beverages Limited. The presence of a positive indication indicates that the company's emphasis on innovation and the implementation of novel ideas enhances its effectiveness in market operations. The assertion is substantiated by research that suggests innovation is a crucial determinant of competitiveness, particularly in sectors characterized by volatility. This finding is in line with Guyo, J. A. (2014) who asserted that the adoption of modern technologies is vital for operational efficiency.

H04: There is no significant positive relationship between market analysis and business competitiveness of Mambila Beverages Limited.

Table 5: Correlation

		Business Competitiveness	Market Analysis
Business Competitiveness	Pearson Correlation	1	.435
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	135	135
Market Analysis	Pearson Correlation	.535	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	135	135

Source: SPSS V27, 2024

The results shown in table 5 demonstrate that market analysis is moderately and positively correlated with firm competitiveness ($r = 0.535$, $p < 0.000$). Given that the p-value is below the significance threshold of 0.05, we may reject the null hypothesis (H04) and accept the research hypothesis (H05). These findings demonstrate the crucial significance of market analysis in the competitive landscape of the firm. Market research is an essential element in the operation of a company as it enables the firm to ascertain the demands of the consumers and the market trends in order to effectively compete with rival business as posited by Sani, I., & Febrian, W. D. (2023). The aforementioned results validate the significance of market information in the decision-making process of an organization.

5. Conclusion

The study on the management strategies and business competitiveness of Mambila Beverages Limited highlights the importance of strategic management in ensuring the long-term viability and success of companies in the beverage industry. Mambila Beverages Limited has employed various strategies such as innovation, efficient resource allocation, and market positioning to enhance its competitive edge.

6. Recommendations

Mambila Beverages Limited should invest more in product innovation to diversify its offerings and meet evolving customer preferences. Implementing modern information systems and embracing digital marketing strategies will improve operational efficiency and customer

engagement. Continuous investment in employee training and development will improve productivity and innovation.

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