**Strategic Management**

**NMIMS Centre for Distance and Online Education (NCDOE)**

**Internal Assignment Applicable for June 2025 Examination**

**Q1. Panniker Foods is a 100-year spices company based in Kottayam, Kerala. The company has been owned & managed by the Panniker family since its inception by its founder Cherayi Panniker – who had started the company after his retirement as the royal chef to the Maharaja of Kerala. From modest beginnings, the company has grown organically to a turnover of Rs.300Cr. Traditionally, the company has been run as a family business, with each generation of the Panniker family automatically joining it – as have all the employees and their families.**

**Aju Panniker, the great-grandson of the founder has completed his B.Tech in Food Technology in Kerala and as well, his MBA from the Marshall School of Business at USC in Los Angeles, California. Thereafter, he has worked for 10years at Heinz Ketchup in the USA. With the current family management growing older, Aju has now returned to head the company as its MD & CEO. Aju is now keen to apply Strategic Management principles to make the company competitive and relevant to the 21st century. Explain how Strategic Management can lead to a Competitive Advantage.**

**Answer:**

**Introduction:**

Panniker Foods, a Kottayam-based century-old family enterprise, has achieved long-term success because of its long-established legacy and conventional methodology. Started as a modest business by Cherayi Panniker, who was the royal chef to the Maharaja of Kerala, the company has organically developed into a leading player in the spice market with a turnover of Rs.300Cr. But as the firm passes into the new generation with Aju Panniker at the helm, it has the challenge of upgrading its operations to remain competitive in a rapidly changing market.

Aju Panniker's return to head the company is a new beginning. With a B.Tech in Food Technology and an MBA from Marshall School of Business, Los Angeles, he comes with rich global experience from his 10-year stint at Heinz Ketchup in the USA. This history provides Aju with the capacity to use contemporary Strategic Management principles in operating the company, enabling it to overcome the demands of the 21st century. Strategic Management is imperative in determining the direction of a firm, which enables it to capitalize on its strengths, discover new opportunities, and react positively to competition. This strategy will enable Panniker Foods to be competitive, making it relevant in the evolving business world.

**Concepts and Application:**

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**Q2. GREAT Engineering is a 60-year-old Machine Tool firm based in Pasadena, California. The company has been founded, owned & managed by the Trent Family**

**– in fact, the company’s name is an acronym for the Founders, the brothers GRaham, Edward and Albert Trent. The founders were in fact living the “American Dream” - From modest beginnings, the company has grown organically from a small Contract Machine Shop producing Auto & Aerospace components to a Manufacturer of CNC Vertical Milling Machines with a turnover of $400M. Traditionally, the company has been run as a family business, with the next generation of the Trent family automatically joining it – as have all the employees and their families.**

**With the current family management growing older, and in order to stay competitive, the Trent family has agreed for GREAT Engineering to be acquired by Milligan & Daniels – the world’s Largest Machine Tool firm. Dean Trent, the eldest grandson of Graham has completed his BS in Engineering and as well, his MBA from UCLA, California, is currently the company’s SVP of Operations. Milligan & Daniels is now keen to apply Strategic Management principles to ensure that GREAT Engineering stays competitive and relevant. Dean has been asked to head the company’s adoption of Strategic Management methods. Discuss the phases of Strategic Management principles and how they contribute to the long-term success of a firm.**

**Answer:**

**Introduction:**

GREAT Engineering, which is a 60-year-old family-owned business, has developed from a small contract machine shop to a large producer of CNC Vertical Milling Machines with a turnover of $400M. Established by the Trent brothers – Graham, Edward, and Albert – the name of the company is an acronym for the founders' dream and the "American Dream." GREAT Engineering has had a family-oriented management setup over the years, with every generation of the Trent family carrying on the company.

But with the existing family management aging and the necessity for modernization in order to remain competitive, GREAT Engineering has accepted an offer to be taken over by Milligan & Daniels, the world's largest machine tool company. Strategic management in this evolving business environment has become necessary. Dean Trent, the oldest grandson of Graham, has the responsibility to guide the company through this transformation by embracing contemporary Strategic Management principles to make GREAT Engineering continue to thrive. Strategic Management is concerned with making long-term decisions that define the future direction of the company and enable it to adjust to evolving market conditions, making the company relevant and competitive. This involves understanding the position of the company today, formulating concise objectives, and determining the actions that will drive growth and profitability.

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**Q3 (A) Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak famously started Apple in a garage and began to develop their unique business strategy. The two men had a rough breakdown of business responsibilities: Jobs handled business and creativity, while Wozniak engineered their creations. The problem? Both Jobs and Wozniak were young men without any real business experience, and they needed expert guidance if they were going to get their company off the ground. So, they built a board and brought business experts to help get the fledging tech company going.**

**And that they did. Apple began to churn out revolutionary computer products, led by the genius of Jobs and Wozniak. Jobs, however, wanted to be CEO. The board pushed back because they felt that Jobs pushed people too hard, rubbed people the wrong way, and burned bridges left and right. He was building an incredible business but making everyone around him unhappy. As a result, Apple’s board believed he wasn’t ready for the CEO role because they felt that he was following Mintzberg’s Entrepreneurial Mode of Strategy.**

**Describe Mintzberg’s Entrepreneurial Mode of Strategy. What are its Pros & Cons.**

**Answer:**

**Introduction:**

The story of Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak's journey with Apple is one of ingenuity and tenacity. The two young entrepreneurs created ground-breaking computer products from modest beginnings in a garage. Their inexperience in business, however, presented difficulties, and although Jobs' inventiveness and vision propelled the company ahead, his management style caused conflicts with the board. Mintzberg's Entrepreneurial Mode of Strategy, which stresses the importance of an individual's vision in determining a company's course, frequently at the expense of more cooperative or structured management approaches, can be used to understand this situation.

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**Q3(B) In 1983, Jobs recruited the CEO of PepsiCo, John Sculley, to be Apple’s CEO. The Board heartily endorsed Sculley’s appointment as they’d seen his work at PepsiCo and felt that he embodied Mintzberg’s Planning Mode of Strategy.**

**Describe Mintzberg’s Planning Mode of Strategy. What are its Pros & Cons.**

**Answer:**

**Introduction:**

Steve Jobs took a risk in 1983 when he appointed John Sculley, who was the CEO of PepsiCo at the time, to head Apple. Jobs famously asked Sculley, "Come with me and change the world, or do you want to spend the rest of your life selling sugar water?" Sculley exemplified a more methodical, professional style of leadership, whereas Jobs was motivated by intuition and vision. Since Mintzberg's Planning Mode of Strategy emphasizes systematic analysis, forecasting, and formalized procedures, the Apple board welcomed Sculley's appointment.

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