

Empirical Study on Foreign Telecommunication Companies Competitive Strategies in Mali: Case of Orange Mali

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ABSTRACT: *Orange is one of the world's leading telecommunications operators having a presence in more than 32 countries including 23 in Africa. As such, Orange group has well founded technological and human capacity to deliver efficient services in any of its subsidiaries.*

Orange Mali, a subsidiary of Orange group in Mali, is the dominant player in the country's telecom industry and has been able to maintain the lead since its entry in the year 2003. The purpose of this study was to mainly evaluate the competitive strategies employed by Orange Mali in enhancing and maintaining the lead in the Malian telecom industry. Thus, after a brief literature review and introduction of the company, several analyses have been conducted in purpose to have genuine results. From the different analyses, findings were that Orange Mali in purpose to reach its objective of leadership in the Malian telecommunication industry, has adopted some crucial competitive strategies as: cost leadership, differentiation and outsourcing strategies whose guide the firm in enhancing its enterprise commercial strategies, its costumer's relation management and finally to innovative technological products. More, those strategies have particularly consolidated its market share in the Mali telecom industry by being able to provide technological solutions to major issues faced by its clients what, has highly contributed to Orange Mali performance and position on the Malian's telecommunication market.

Key words: *Orange Mali, Focus, Differentiation, Cost Leadership, Outsourcing*

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research background and literature review

The highly competitive environments in which organizations operate determine how they conduct their operations. More, the increased competition due to globalization and improved technology has necessitated organizations to experience challenges in gaining competitive advantage. The management of all types of organizations responds by organizing their approaches on both operational and human capacities. In the current highly competitive environment, business and other forms of organizations need to act in a fast manner in order to secure both their financial and market positions. Thus, firms are always in search of mechanisms and ways that will help them attain a sustainable competitive advantage. Therefore, they need to enhance their internal distinguished strengths with an aim of providing more added customer value, strong differentiation and extendibility; simply put, focus more on their core competences (PIEPER, 1996).

Successful business strategies are usually grounded on sustainable competitive advantage. A firm is said to possess competitive advantage whenever it has an edge over its rivals in attracting customers and defending against competitive forces (Maunganidze, Ncube, & Sibanda, 2013). It therefore involves identifying sources of competition in a dynamic business environment followed by developing strategies that match organizational capabilities to the changes in the environment. Thus, competitive strategy, consists of all those moves and approaches whether offensive or defensive that a firm has and is taking to attract buyers, withstand competitive pressure and improve its market position.

The primary objective of strategy is to understand why organizations perform differently and how performance can either be directed or enhanced. Firm performance is therefore defined as an organization's results when evaluated against its intended goals and objectives and can be measure by combining both financial and non-financial measures. Firms can have a single strategy or multiple strategies to boost their performance and these strategies are likely to exist at three levels; the corporate level, business unit level and functional level business strategies (Eniola & Entebang, 2015); (Murage, 2016). Porter (1980), indicates that a firm's strategy consists of the competitive moves and business approaches that are employed to grow the business and achieve the targeted levels of organizational performance. It is the creation of a unique and valuable position, involving a different set of activities which culminate in establishing a "fit" among a company's activity.

Telecommunications are one of the most important and most competitive industrial sectors of the future.

Digital technologies are being innovated at an unprecedented rate. These advances and robust technological upgrades are influencing consumer behavior and the way businesses operate in the global sphere. Hence, an increasing number of businesses today rely on coherent digital strategies to retain existing customers and entice new clients. Several businesses and telecommunication firms have launched digital business initiatives, which is likely to stoke digital transformation in the coming years. Furthermore, CEOs of the most prominent organizations are making concerted efforts to integrate latest digital initiatives with their businesses and generate revenue from digital experiences (Murage, 2016); even on the African continent.

In fact, nowadays, Africa presents great opportunities in the telecom sector. The liberalization of the sector, the extension of services by multinational conglomerates and the active competition currently in place in the sector have all contributed to the telecom revolution on the continent. Many African governments have developed their telecommunication infrastructure by privatizing their former state-owned enterprises (Arasa & Gathinji, 2014). More, the landscape of the African Telecommunication industry has changed dramatically in the last two decades. During this period, both local and foreign nationals have gained mergers or acquisitions. The liberalized economic environment had led to the influx of the operators. More, the demands and needs of the environment are constantly evolving and management is about adjusting the company according to the needs and demands of the environment. Those exert pressure on firms to be proactive and to formulate successful strategies that facilitate proactive response to anticipated and actual changes in the competitive environment (Kyengo, 2016) had motivated most telecommunication companies (national as foreign) to adopt they competitive strategy to the African market in this process of globalization. Thus, a literature review of empirical and literature researchers to ascertain the competitive strategies adopted, if any by telecommunication company (national as foreign) and their possible effectiveness brought out that most telecommunication companies (national as foreign) based their competitive strategy on the cost strategy. In fact, some researches on the African telecommunication industry's competitive strategies presented cost strategy as the best and mostly used by the latter. For instance, NJOROGE PAUL THAIRU (Thairu, 2015) in his study to find the competitive strategies that Telkom Kenya (Orange) is adopting to gain competitive advantage and increase its profits in the long run, came to conclude that the cost leadership is the most effective of all strategies. Keeping the same standpoint, others studies went deeper and came out with not only the cost leadership as the most effective competitive strategy on the African market but find out too, that its combination with differentiation and market focus strategies had been a good competitive tool for some telecommunication companies to overcome their competitors. For instance, Mosomi, S. N., & Deya, J., (*IMPACT OF COMPETITIVE STRATEGY ON THE PERFORMANCE OF TELECOMMUNICATION FIRMS IN KENYA* Mosomi, S. N., & Deya, J., n.d.) in his study on the relationship between various competitive strategies and performance of telecommunication firms in Kenya, showed the extent and nature of the relationship of cost leadership strategies and performance, differentiation strategies and performance and process focus strategy and performance. The conceptual framework for the study was derived from existing literature. The framework was differed from previous studies because it sought to determine the relationship between innovation strategies that relate to cost leadership, differentiation and market focus on the performance telecommunication firms. In conclusion, the study revealed that telecommunication firms compete fiercely on cost leadership, differentiation and market focus. It's also found that combination has been an added value of competition to Safaricom over its competitors. Jama Abdi Mohamed and DR. LUCY GICHINGA (Muia, 2017), throughout they empirical study on the Effects of Competitive Strategies on Organizational Performance of Telecommunications Companies in Mogadishu, using the stepwise multiple regressions indicated method, came to conclude that the cost leadership strategy and differentiation strategy had more effects on improving organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Mogadishu Somalia thus, provided suitable environment for developing organizational performance in different levels of the telecommunication companies in Somalia.

From others studies, findings showed that cost strategy was the best; but automatically combine with others when the market tendency (the demanding environment and its economical capacity to afford telecommunication needs) changes. For example, KAMAU W. ANNE (Kamau, 2015) , in its research to determine the competitive strategies adopted to drive performance by firms in the telecommunication industry in Kenya concluded that the cost strategy was visible in the organizations and sometimes have to combine the differentiating strategy with the cost strategy because of the more decreasing prices in the Kenyan market. In the same optic, Jackson Kyengo et al, (Kyengo, 2016), from the regression analysis concluded, telecommunication companies in Kenya had adopted various cost leadership strategy options in response to changes in the market to a great extent. On the other hand, researches also withstand improvement on performance in investment in the area of infrastructure, human capital, technology, sales and marketing activities and essential resources as competitive strategy used in telecommunication industry in Africa. For instance, Samuel Akwasi Danso (Danso, 2014), in evaluating the strategies adopted by mobile telecommunication operators on the Ghanaian market to gain competitive advantage in the industry, came to conclude that the provision of customer service center, sustained advertising campaign, training and retraining of staff to improve on their competence and skills level,

were the competitive strategies being implemented by the Operator. Concerning Malian telecommunication industry's competitive strategies, most literature focused on the industry development history (Keita, n.d.) rather than its competitive strategy.

Africa has been the fastest-growing mobile market in the world during the past five years. As result, the telecom sector in Africa has opened up new vistas of business opportunities to foreign companies of the era. That opportunity had given chance to telecommunication firms and especially to foreign company which, not only gain a new market but have succeed also to be its leader. For example, in Mali, Orange Mali (Orange group subsidiary) is the leading player in the telecom industry with an average of 11.3 million subscribers making it the leading service provider commanding about 60 % of the Mali telecom industry.

1.2 Research study aim and objective

Previous studies in the telecom industry indicate that operators may engage in various competitive strategies in order to achieve a competitive advantage over their rivals in the industry. Such strategies include those implemented in physical infrastructure, technology, market research, innovation, and manpower development (Mbat, 2015). Past studies done in Mali have focused on other aspects of the telecommunication industry but, none so far has evaluated the competitive advantages used by Orange Mali in positioning itself as a market leader in the telecom industry in Mali.

This study attempts to contribute to the debate on foreign telecommunication's comparative advantages strategies in Africa through orange Mali's competitive strategies empirical study case. Thus, an empirical study of Orange Mali's competitive strategies will lead the current study.

1.3 Research content

To achieve his goal (evaluated the competitive advantages used by Orange Mali in positioning itself as a market leader in the telecom industry in Mali), the present study, firstly, will provide an in-depth introduction on the research background and on Orange Mali company. Then several empirical analyses will be conducted in purpose to have genuine results on the mainly used competitive strategies by Orange Mali in its leadership on the Malian telecommunication market. Finally, conclusion and limitation on the study will respectively end the present study.

II. AN OVERVIEW ON ORANGE MALI COMPANY

Orange Mali SA is a telecommunications company that offers mobile, fixed line, and Internet services through wholesalers, semi-wholesalers, and retailers in Mali. The company is based in Bamako, Mali. It was founded as Ikatel in 2003 and changed its name to Orange Mali SA in November 2006. Orange Mali SA operates as a subsidiary of Sonatel SA.

IKATEL-Ltd was created in 2002 by the will of the Government of Mali, in order to liberalize the telecommunications sector in Mali. It became the owner of the license to operate the telecommunications networks and services acquired by France Telecom in August 2002 following an international call for tenders. From its creation to today, the global telecommunications operator with a proactive policy has reached unprecedented performance in the telecommunications sector in Mali. Since the launch of its activities, the Company is committed to providing affordable telephone services accessible to all Malian by multiplying sales promotions. IKATEL. Ltd was the first company to offer the cost of acquisition of the chip at 2USD with free credit; affordable for almost all Malians. It gives to more than four million Malians access to many innovative products and services.

In November 30th 2006, Ikatel SA changed its name to Orange Mali through a process of absorption of Ikatel into Orange network. To be more competitive than the former (Ikatel S.A) and attract more users by satisfying their needs. For instance, users had ample benefits with just an orange chip, including the ability to communicate with a wide range of people in many countries around the world throughout a better roaming service. Indeed, roaming services at Orange are one of the most successful. Moreover, Orange had allowed the users to keep the same number of contacts and stay reachable on the same chip with a preferential rate.

With a range of innovative products and services, Orange Mali is today the market leader in the field of Telecommunications in Mali. This accessibility is accompanied by some of the most competitive communication rates in Africa. Regarding unlimited broadband internet access, the cost of access has been significantly slashed; it is now possible from 17.80 usd per month across Mali. The Company, have always been in view of a constant development and for that has recently invested on the optical fiber, which has permitted to double the capacity of Mali on the support, with a second outlet on transatlantic submarine cable being available for both operators on the Malian market.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, SAMPLE AND DATA

3.1 Methodology

In the current study, the phenomenon to be studied is the competitive strategies used by Orange Mali Ltd and the impact on its performance.

Primary and secondary data was used in the current study. Primary data was collected from the respondents through a survey questionnaire based on Porter literature on his approaches on firm's competitive strategy. The data obtained using the survey questionnaire is qualitative and had been converted in Likert scale data for an empirical analysis. Thus, for genuine empirical analysis based on the Likert scale data, the current research had firstly proceeded to a reliability test to establish reliability of data collection instrument and the data veracity concerning Orange Mali competitive strategies. The test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha methodology. Then, the first stage of the empirical research has been conducted by applying CAM Matrix analysis to the retain main strategies, to study their attractiveness score in purpose to appreciate their preference by orange Mali in its competitiveness. Following that, for better appreciation of Orange Mali competitive strategies, an empirical analysis has been conducted based on the correlation between the different orange Mali's competitive strategies and its position on Mali's telecommunication market using Spearman's correlation. This latter was based on Likert scale data obtained from a survey questionnaire design for the purpose.

3.2 Sample

The current study, to achieve its goal and to avoid bias in the results, has focus on a population more accurate to Orange Mali managerial politics and the different preferred strategies applied in its competitiveness to conquer Mali's telecommunication market. Thus, the target respondents were a population of 12 seniors' staff (two per department), from different department involved in strategy formulation and implementation at Orange Mali headquarters. The study population was composed of: the managing department heads, the commercial department heads, strategies planification department heads and the heads others departments specifically the human resources department, the production and the marketing departments. The considered educational level was \geq master degree with a year of experience ≥ 6 .

Table 3.1: Respondents Profiles

		Results	Frequency	Percentage
Respondents		Respondents	12	100
		Non-Respondents	0	0
		Total	12	100
			Frequency	Percentage
Educational level		PhD	3	25
		Masters	9	75
		Bachelors	0	0
		Diploma	0	0
		Total	12	100
			Frequency	Percentage
Years of experience		Less than 3yr	0	0
		3-5 years	0	0
		6-10 years	8	66.67
		>10 years	4	33.33
		Total	12	100
			Frequency	Percentage
Gender		Male	8	66.67
		Female	4	33.33
		Total	12	100

3.3 Data Collection

Since strategy is set at the management level, the study sought to understand the different strategies utilized by Orange Mali by interviewing a managerial team through an emailed questionnaire set in two parts. The questionnaire was channeled via the Human Resources Office for further distribution to the specific target respondents. Divided in two sections, the first section was mailing addressing orange Mali's competitive strategies while the second sector was addressing the main's competitive strategies' factors attractiveness score on one hand and on the another the link between the main strategies found and Orange Mali performance.

3.3.1 Qualitative Data

Table 3.2: competitive strategies data

	Cost leadership strategy	Broad differentiation strategy	Outsourcing service	Low-cost strategy	strategic alliance
Managing Director	✓	✓	✓	×	✓
Commercial Direction	✓	✓	✓	×	×
Human resources Department	✓	✓	✓	×	✓
Production and Marketing Department	✓	✓	✓	×	×
Strategies and Planification Department	✓	✓	✓	×	×
Department of Finance	✓	✓	✓	×	✓

The table is a summarise of the respondent’s responses concerning orange Mali’s competitive strategies. It shows that the concerned population by the questionnaire, concerning the competitive strategies used by orange Mali, point out: Cost leadership strategy, Broad differentiation strategy and Outsourcing service as the principal competitive strategies used by orange Mali followed by strategic alliance meanwhile low cost is mostly not used by the former in its competitiveness on Mali’s market. For better empirical analysis, the combination of the three main strategies have been convert to 3 as Likert scale data.

3.3.2 Likert scale data

3.3.2.1 Cronbach Alpha Test ‘s Likert Scale data

In order to achieve this goal, a questionnaire was first submitted to determine the strategies used by Orange Mali. The answer was cost leadership, differentiation and outsourcing strategies which corresponded to the number 3. Then, for more confirmation, we decided to submit summary tables of the different factors related to the competitive strategies selected in order to calculate their attractiveness score. The calculation of the result obtained allowed us to retain the following numbering for the attractiveness score:

- 1= Low attractiveness score (0-2)
- 2= Medium attractiveness score (2-3)
- 3= Good attractiveness score (3-4)
- 4= Excellent attractiveness score (4-5)

Table 3.3: Cronbach Alpha Test Likert Scale Data

Participants	Strategies used	Cost leadership attractiveness score	Differentiation attractiveness score	Outsourcing attractiveness score
1	3	3	3	3
2	3	3	3	3
3	3	3	3	2
4	3	3	3	2
5	3	2	2	2
6	3	2	2	2
7	3	3	3	3
8	3	3	3	3
9	3	3	3	3
10	3	3	3	3
11	3	3	2	2
12	3	3	2	2

In the table below, we notice the presence of the 12 selected participants, namely 1; 2 for the managing directors, 3; 4 for the commercial department, 5;6 the human resources department, 7;8 for the production and marketing department,9;10 the strategy and planification department and finally 11;12 for the finance department. The number 3 for strategies used represent the three retained main competitive strategies (cost leadership, differentiation and outsourcing). The different number under each strategy’s column are the attractiveness score attributed to each strategy by the different participants.

3.3.2.2 Spearman test’s Likert scale data

In order to establish a correlation between the performance of Orange Mali and the competitive strategy used, a questionnaire concerning the performance of Orange Mali company in relation with its used competitive strategies have been established. Thus, for better appreciation of the correlation, two questions have been part of the survey. The first one was concerning Orange Mali performance evaluation on the Malian’s communications market. The possible answers to this question were: 1- Poor; 2- Good; 3- Excellent. The second question was concerning the correlation of the different previously recognized strategies with the performance of Orange Mali. The possible answers were: 1 = No relation; 2= Poor relation; 3= Average relation; 4= Strong relation; 5= Excellent relation. The results are presented in the table below;

Table 3.4: Correlation Likert Scale

Participants	Performance	Cost Leadership Strategy	Differentiation Strategy	Outsourcing Strategy	Three strategies used together
1	5	4	4	4	5
2	5	4	4	4	5
3	5	4	4	4	5
4	5	4	4	4	5
5	3	3	3	3	4
6	2	3	1	3	3
7	4	4	4	4	5
8	3	4	4	2	5
9	5	4	4	4	3
10	4	3	4	3	5
11	2	3	1	2	4
12	3	4	4	1	3

IV. EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Cronbach ‘s alpha test result: Data reliability test

To establish reliability of data collection for the competitive strategies and their attractiveness score on one hand and one another for orange Mali’s performance and competitive strategies relationship, the answers from the questionnaire administrated to the respondents were converted into Likert type scale data (previous chapter) and analysis based on Cronbach’s Alpha methodology. According to the former, reliability of the data collection instrument is proved when, Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients on all the variables is equal or greater than 0.7.

Table 4.1: Cronbach’s Alpha Results

	Cronbach’s Alpha	No of items
To identify the competitive strategies adopted by orange Mali and their attractiveness score	0.815	3
To examine the correlation between orange Mali’s competitive strategies and its performance in the mobile telecommunication industry in Mali	0.722	4

According to table 4.1, the results indicated that Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients on all the variables were greater than 0.7. Hence, an acceptable reliability of the data collection instrument. Thus, from the results obtained, our study can be based on the collected data from the survey questionnaire.

4.2 Orange Mali’s competitive strategies study based on Competitive Advantage Matrix (CAM) analysis

CAM is a strategic management tool that is derived from the generic strategies model. In the present study, the matrix is comprised of three alternative competitive strategies, which are: Cost leadership, Differentiation strategy and Outsourcing Service strategy. This analysis will result in sum total attractiveness score of those strategies. According to the literature, the competitive strategy with the biggest attractiveness score is the most preferred (Mokaya, Wakhungu, & Gikunda, 2016). In the actual study case, it’s will be the one that Orange Mali ought to enhance in order to continue being the market leader.

The input factors for this matrix have been obtained from the interview and survey process and indicating the responses from Orange Mali’s line managers. The interviewees were given survey questions in which they were made to assign weights and attractiveness scores (ratings) for the listed factors based on the chosen strategies.

The attractiveness scores were numerical values obtained by multiplying assigned factors’ weight and ratings. It indicates the relative attractiveness of each strategy in a given set of alternatives. Thus, the interviewees were expected to rate how well the company is performing in relation to the respective competitive advantage factors. The rating is given on a scale of 1 to 4, 1 being least performance and 4 being the top performance. The interviewees were then made to assign weights to the listed factors. Weight was assigned to each factor to indicate the relative importance of the factor for the success of the firm while pursuing cost leadership, differentiation and outsourcing service strategies. The sum of all weights assigned should sum up to 1.00. The assigned weights and ratings are then multiplied to give a product of weighted attractive scores. The weighted attractive scores of each factor are then summed up to give a number which is a Sum total attractiveness score. The analysis has been applied to the retained competitive strategies.

Table 4.2 Cost leadership strategy

Factors	Weight	Rating	Weighted average score
Bigger market share	0.3	4	1.2
Efficiency in network coverage	0.3	3.5	1.05
Roaming services	0.2	4	0.8
Access to large capital base	0.07	4	0.28
Regional networks	0.1	3.5	0.35
Cost control	0.1	3.1	0.31
Sum Total Attractiveness score			3.99

In applying CAM matrix to the cost leadership strategy, result from table 4.2 showed a sum total attractiveness score of 3.99. Based on the result and CAM matrix theory, cost leadership shown itself as one of the prioritized competitive strategy used by Orange Mali. That can be justify by the current position of Orange Mali on the Malian telecommunication industry as telecommunication with the lowest call rate charges in the industry both while either making a call within or without the network.

Table 4.3: Outsourcing service matrix

Factors	Weight	Rating	Weighted average score
Cost savings	0.3	4	1.2
Activities sustainability advantage	0.3	3.5	1.05
Development of main capabilities	0.2	4	0.8
Efficiency in development of new products	0.07	4	0.28
Market profits	0.1	3.5	0.35
Sum Total Attractiveness score			3.68

The Table 4.3 is showing results of CAM matrix applied to outsourcing service strategy. The weighted score for the outsourcing service matrix is 3.68. Moreover, each factor individual score is as shown in the table with cost savings, activity sustainability and development of main capabilities as factors having the highest score. From the show results, and based on cam matrix principles, outsourcing service can be considered as one of the competitive strategies used by orange Mali.

Table 4.4: Broad differentiation matrix

Factors	Weight	Rating	Weighted average score
Brand Image	0.15	3.7	0.555
Customized data/ voice packages	0.13	4	0.52
Value added products/ services	0.2	3	0.6
Improved client relations	0.17	3.5	0.595
Marketing/Advertisements	0.01	4	0.04
Wide network coverage	0.1	4	0.4
Capital inflows	0.11	4	0.44
Prepaid/Postpaid services	0.03	3.5	0.105
Physical infrastructure improvement	0.1	4	0.4
Sum Total Attractiveness score			3.65

Table 4.4 is showing results of the CAM matrix applied to broad differentiation strategy. The weighted score for the differentiation matrix is 3.65. By analysing the different factors selected for the matrix; we can see that most of them had a high rating score between 3-4. Each factor individual score is as shown in the table 4.3. From the result, it may be possible that Orange Mali studies the buyers' needs and behavior and then incorporates buyer-desired attributes into its products or service offering to them what may have clearly be set and different from its main competitor. That can be justified by the fact that Orange Mali's customers have become strongly attached to the differentiated attributes such as the data services and voice packages depending on the specific market segment. For instance, some buyers are strongly attracted to the differentiating features and bond with the company and its product.

4.3 Orange Mali's competitive strategies study based on the correlation analysis

The study sought to find the relationship between the retained competitive strategies and orange Mali performance in the mobile telecommunications industry in Mali in purpose to find out the firm competitive strategies on Mali telecommunication market. Based on the questionnaire, further inquiry was made to establish the extent of a correlation between the previous strategies and firm performance. A likert type scale data was proposed; where for orange Mali performance on the concerned telecommunication market bad performance, good performance and excellent performance were respectively represented by 1, 2, 3 and no relation, low relation, medium relation, strong relation and excellent relation between orange Mali used competitive strategies and its performance were respectively represented by 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The hypothesis is that each of the previous chosen competitive strategies should contribute to enhance orange Mali position on the market. For a better result, the ordinary and numerical aspect of the Likert scale data have been considered. Thus, to analyse the correlation between orange Mali position on the market and its competitive strategies, Spearman correlation have been used with a null hypothesis (H_0 = no correlation between Orange Mali's performance and the different strategies) and alternative hypothesis (H_1 = existence of correlation between Orange Mali's performance and the different strategies)

Table 4.5 Sperman correlation analysis

	Performance	Cost leadership strategy	Differentiation strategy	Outsourcing strategy
Coefficient de corrélation	1,000	,671*	,748**	,850**
Performance Sig. (bilatéral)	.	,017	,005	,000
N	12	12	12	12

*. At the 0.05 (bilateral) level, the correlation is quite large.

The correlation analysis was conducted at 90 percent confidence interval. The Table 4.5 is a summarise of the result of the correlation of each strategy correlated with orange Mali’s performance. The correlation results indicate that cost leadership strategy is positively correlated to orange Mali’s performance with a correlation coefficient of 0.679. Concerning the differentiation strategy, a strongly and positively correlation to orange Mali’s performance is noticed with a coefficient of 0.748. Finally, outsourcing strategy as the previous strategies, also presented a strongly and positively correlation to orange Mali’s performance is noticed with a coefficient of 0.850. Moreover, the P value (sig) of the three analysis, are ≤ 0.05 thus, the null hypothesis is rejected to the alternative hypothesis which recognised the existence of a correlation between the strategies and orange Mali’s performance in the telecommunication industry in Mali.

V. CONCLUSION

The current study provides a detailed analysis on the possible competitive strategies that may use a telecommunications firm especially a foreign telecommunications firm abroad to be the leader. The case study was based on Orange Mali case. In purpose to obtain genuine results, a literature and empirical research methodologies have been used with primary (mainly obtained from a questionnaire) and secondary information’s (data emanating from annual reports and other published information originating from the company). Content Analysis and Likert scale analysis methodologies used to decipher the relevance of the information so obtained in order to fit into the main objective of identifying the main competitive strategies used by Orange Mali to attain its current status in Mali’s telecommunication industry revealed low-cost leadership, broad differentiation and outsourcing services strategies as the main competitive strategies used by Orange Mali followed by strategic alliance and partnership.

In fact, Orange Mali has taken a blend of activities and integrated them with the aim of becoming the most preferred telecommunications service provider firm in Mali as in the West African region. In purpose to reach that objective, the firm on one hand applies cost leadership strategies aimed at lowering the cost of its services relative to its competitors in the Malian Telecom industry while on the second hand integrates several differentiation strategies that provide services and products into the Malian telecom industry that, to the consumers, form a core part of their daily lives. Moreover, for better focus on its objective, the firm has adopted an outsourcing service strategy complete with strategic partnership.

Thus, to reach its purpose and according its various competitive strategies, Orange Mali review its company commercial strategies to. For do so, it enhances competence in all its departments through investment in innovative structures of the business enterprise, distinctiveness of technology and adopted a strategic choice perspective based on a competitive strategy integration processes composed of; technology and infrastructure, the company’s preparedness for change compared with other companies within the telecommunication industry and a better customs relation service development. On that, its greatest contributor was its human resource, physical infrastructure, and the distribution network and broad capital base support from the parent headquarters in France.

Taken as a whole, the results of the current study depict a firm that has a strong marketing strategy platform that easily outshines the competitors, making it a dominant player in Mali’s telecom industry. Thus, in summary, it’s prudent to conclude that in purpose to reach its purpose, Orange Mali adopted several competitive strategies among which the most used are the cost leadership, broad differentiation and outsourcing service strategies completed with different strategic alliance. Those strategies have help Orange Mali to be a leadership on the Malian telecommunications industry and also enhanced its commercial strategies which result in an innovation on technological products solutions to major issues faced by its clients.

Summarizing, the current research has given a positive answer to the different hypothesis formed in the purpose of the research since it has showed that there is a relationship between Orange Mali used competitive strategies and its position and performance on Mali communication market.

VI. Limitations and perspectives

Despite the literature and empirical methodologies used to be able to have the present results, it's important to denote that the present study presents some limitations. Thus, the following challenges were encountered in the course of preparing this research thesis;

- The high secrecy that is common in the private entities had impacted in accessing the information used in the current study. The validity of the data used is only as good as the honesty of the respondents. Non-disclosures may have thus affected the interpretation of the received information.
- There was little information available in the public domain regarding performance of public companies, thus this limited the information obtained.

In these regards, several areas of concern therefore remain unaddressed and therefore may form crucial leads in informing future researches in this area. It is therefore recommended that future research can address gaps that proved challenging in the current research. These areas include consumers' perspectives on the services delivered by the company, the exact perceptions and the overall contribution of Orange Mali in the economy.

A future study could similarly focus on the government policies influence on the performance of telecommunication firms in Mali in order to bring to the fore challenges and opportunities that there may be in enhancing the sector for new entrants, prospective and established stakeholders in the Malian telecommunication industry.

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