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MARKET INTELLIGENCE AND CUSTOMER ACQUISITION OF TELECOMMUNICATION FORMS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to analyze market intelligence and customer acquisition in Telecommunication Firms in Rivers State. A Correlative study design was used. The methodology adopted was Correlative study design to collect both primary and secondary data was used, a structured questionnaire with open and close-ended questions were used to gather information. The population of the study consists of four telecommunication firms operating in Port Harcourt. The sampling technique used was the census sampling techniques to select 24 managers' four telecommunication firms in Rivers State. Secondary and Primary data was utilized in this study. Secondary data was obtained from reviewing text books, publications. Primary data was gathered with the aid of questionnaires. A total of 24 copies questionnaire were distributed with 17 being answered correctly and fully. Data was analyzed using percentage, tables and Spearman Rank Order Correlation techniques and with Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to test the nine hypotheses. The findings revealed market Intelligence has positive relationship between Organizational Performance in Telecommunication Firms in Rivers State. It was therefore recommended that Telecommunication firms in Rivers State should emphasize on building a positive Strategic Intelligence to meet customer's expectation and offer more benefits to customer. Managers and supporting organizations should not only focus exclusively on either technological intelligence or process innovation, but should give due emphasis on the combined and synergetic approach to get the maximum firm performances benefits from these capabilities.

Keywords: Market Intelligence, Customer Acquisition, Organization, Performance

INTRODUCTION

In today's environment, where competition is very high amongst various businesses regardless of demographical boundaries, it becomes a challenge for the businesses to get and then maintain a distinguished position in the industry. Nowadays, the creation of value in organizations based on the creation of knowledge has become a factor of increased interest. It is because of the need of facing different changes that have been created in the environment, especially at the technology level. Business environment and technology are changed rapidly. Therefore, key decision makers in an organization must make decisions promptly in order to cope with the fast moving situation even though there are not adequate amount of information support, Richard, Devinney, Johnson, & Yip, 2008.

Technology is a major determinant for innovation and success in organisations and governments. Intelligence is the set of activities used to find, acquire, analyze and evaluate information in order to help you prepare for decision-making and guide your choices. Technology intelligence thus become important since it helps supplement the missing fact and support the key decision makers, Gerdsri, (2012). Technology Intelligences is an important tool for businesses. It enables companies to communicate effectively with customers and deliver

high standards of customer service. Technology Intelligences is a key element in allowing employees to collaborate easily from wherever they are located, remote or local, *Veugelers, Mark; Bury, Jo; Viaene, Stijn (2010)*. Mobile Technology Intelligence gives companies the opportunity to introduce more flexible working by allowing employees to work efficiently from home or other, more remote locations.
The Internet has contributed to the growth of data sources for technology intelligence and this is very important for the advancement of technology intelligence, *Veugelers, Mark; Bury, Jo; Viaene, Stijn (2010)*. Technology intelligence is one of the latest management tools that enable companies to be successful in today's rapidly changing technological environment. Technology intelligence gives organizations the ability to be aware of technology threats and opportunities. It is important for companies and businesses to be able to identify emerging technologies in form of opportunities and threats and how this can affect their business. Technology intelligence is not new but is more important now that organizations and societies are being disrupted by the shift to an information and networking-based economy, *Bergeron, Pierrette; Hiller, Christine (2005)*. Also known as Competitive Intelligence, there are different stages of the evolution process, *Chaudhuri, Surajit; Dayal, Umeshwar; Narasayya & Vivek (2011).*

Organizational performance describes how efficient the organization is in its quest to achieve the goals that have been set. How well an organization deploys its resources, human and material, determines how well set goals are accomplished (Richard, Devinney, Johnson, & Yip, 2008). They state that organizational performance consists of four major areas: financial performance, product/market performance, shareholder returns and non-financial performance. Financial performance relates to the measurement of profits, return on assets, return on investment, etc. that an organization has achieved over a time period. Product/Market performance relates to sales, turnover, market share, etc. Shareholder returns measure the benefits accruable to providers of financial capital to the organization. Non-financial performance refers to the measure of employee satisfaction and performance, customer service and satisfaction, quality/consistency of products and market share/growth/innovations.
It is interesting to note that in the Nigeria Technology Intelligence sector no empirical study has been conducted to show the relationship between Technology Intelligence and Organizational Performance in telecommunication firms in Rivers State. In order to close this research gap in the literature, this study sought to identify and empirically analyze the factors that influence Organizational Performance in telecommunication firms in Rivers State. This study aims to evaluate the effects of Technology Intelligence on Organizational Performance in the context of Technology Intelligence firms in Port Harcourt.

Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses of this study were stated as follows:

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between Market Intelligence and Innovativeness in telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between Market Intelligence and Customer Acquisitioning telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between Market Intelligence and Service Delivery in telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

Market intelligence

Market Intelligence is the information relevant to a company's markets, gathered and analyzed specifically for the purpose of accurate and confident decision-making in determining market opportunity, market penetration strategy, and market development metrics, Iyamu & Nemutanzhela, (2011). In simple terms, market intelligence is information that is gathered for the purpose of making business decisions. Marketing intelligence is everyday information about development in the marketing environment that helps managers prepare and adjust marketing plans, Mahjabin, Nader, Niloufar & Said (2017). The marketing intelligence system determines the intelligence needed, collect it by searching the environment and delivers it to marketing manager who need it. Marketing intelligence comes from many sources much intelligence is from the company's personnel executives, engineers and scientist, purchasing agents and the sales force, McGonagle, and Vella, C.M. (2002). Marketing intelligence as Igbaekemen(2014) explained is everyday information about development in the marketing environment that helps managers prepare and adjust marketing plans. The marketing intelligence system determines the intelligence needed and collecting same by searching the environment and deliver to the marketing manager who needs it. Marketing intelligence comes from diverse sources such as: the company's personnel executives, engineers and scientist, purchasing agents and the sales force. But, company people are often busy and fail to pass on important function. The Company must sell its people on their importance as intelligence gathers, to spot new development and urge them to report intelligence back to the organization. Sometimes, in wide networking companies, the intelligence information is usually contracted to external agents or suppliers and at the extreme level 'hidden hackers' to break and capture for the company all relevant information from their competitors for their effective utilization. However, marketing intelligence as an organizational strategy can perfectly work for a company as well against the company. Therefore Maltz and Kohli (2006) defined marketing intelligence as a set of procedures designed to obtain information and data about changes in the marketing environment to implement an organisation's marketing activities successfully. It is a system that collects the intelligence, organizations must act fast and take every necessary step towards protecting themselves from the snooping of competitors needed for creative segmentation and significant moves in the marketing environment (Tahmasebifard, 2018). Lee (2015) described as a dynamic process of intelligence gathering for supporting the market stance and values an organisation upholds concerning the overall business environment, thereby allowing managers to make effective decisions. According to Wright and Calof (2016), marketing intelligence is a strategic tool for competitive advantage that provides business executives with updates about the markets they currently serve and will potentially serve. Also, marketing intelligence thus relates to the current and potential market position and covers such interests and key stakeholders like customers, competitors, and markets regulators. Therefore, marketing intelligence refers to the provision of support for companies with targeted information that gives it a better understanding of what is happening in the market or competitive environment (Al-weshah, 2017).

Concept of Organisational Performance

Performance is defined as the extent of accomplishment of tasks associated to work. Lumpkin and Dess (2006) displayed that organizations can achieve higher performance, when workers become successful in accomplishing their objectives related to job. Because employee job objectives basically determine firm performance (Hanif and Gul, 2016). Likewise, Kropp (2004) has given perspective that numerous researchers used the term performance to assess put in and output competence. Organizational Performance is basically the ability of the organization to achieve its targets by proficiently utilizing its resources. Various Scholars have recommended various performance evaluation tools. According to Hanif and Irshad (2018), Balance Scorecard is the best instrument to measure the performance of the organization and to enhance the strategies or methodologies of the business. Performance measurement systems must be utilized to remain aware of the performance; and to control the dubious occasions by enhancing its corporate procedures. Organizational performance can be defined as the degree to which an organization is able to meet its own needs and the needs of its stakeholders in order to survive (Griffin, 2003). Carton (2004) suggested that organizational performance is the voluntary association of productive assets that lead to the achievement of shared purpose. Another definition of organizational performance refers to it as "the ability to acquire and process properly human, financial, and physical resources to achieve the goals of the organization" (Ramezan et al, 2013).

Market Intelligence and Organizational Performance

In today's dynamic working business environment, organizations that depend on poor information to settle on key deals sales performance decisions, risk being rendered clumsy by the opposition. As organizations develop more idealistic about open doors for development, the weight is on for deals staff to meet ever-higher income targets (Richard, 2009). Organizations are confronted with different environmental changes. These changes take place so fast that, if organizations do not prepare themselves, their survival will be in danger. Marketing intelligence is to prevent the astonishments and the employees' inability against environmental changes and to reduce and minimize the company's exposure to danger (Johns & Van Doren, 2010). A new apparatus which helps the organizations to reach a suitable place in today's environment is the use of marketing intelligence. The concept of intelligence is marketing information that is considered as an ongoing effort to increase the competitive ability of the strategic programming processes. Marketing intelligence is the systematic collection and analysis of publicly available information about consumers, competitors, and developments in the marketplace (Kotler & Armstrong, 2013). Market intelligence alludes to the way procuring and dissecting data with a specific end goal to comprehend the market both existing and potential clients in order to decide the present and future needs and inclinations, states of mind and conduct of the market; and to evaluate changes in the business environment that may influence the size and nature of the market later on (Kohli and Jaworski, 2010). It is an industry-focused insight that is created on constant (dynamic) parts of aggressive occasions occurring among the 4Ps of the marketing blend (evaluating, place, advancement, and item) in the item or administration commercial center keeping in mind the end goal to better comprehend the engaging quality of the market. It helps in Market and client introduction to advance outer focus, recognizable proof of new open doors in order to distinguish new patterns in the business sectors and contenders.

Marketing intelligence as Igbaekemen (2014) explained is everyday information about development in the marketing environment that helps managers prepare and adjust marketing plans. The marketing intelligence system determines the intelligence needed and collecting same by searching the environment and deliver to the marketing manager who needs it. Marketing intelligence comes from diverse sources such as: the company's personnel executives, engineers and scientist, purchasing agents and the sales force. But, company people are often busy and fail to pass on important function. The Company must sell its people on their importance as intelligence gathers, to spot new development and urge them to report intelligence back to the organization. According to Igbaekemen (2014) Market Intelligence has a strong positive effect on Organizational Performance. Research of Kotler & Armstrong, 2013 showed a significant and positive relationship between Market Intelligence and Organizational Performance.

Diffusion of Innovation theory

The diffusion of innovations theory was propounded by Everett Rogers, and it explains how, why, and at what rate new ideas and technology spread. The core assumptions of the theory are that diffusion research, canters on the conditions which increase or decrease the likelihood that a new idea, product, or practice will be adopted by members of a given culture and diffusion is the "process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over a period of time among the members of a social system". The theory considers a number of attributes associated with technological innovations and which are believed to influence the rate of adoption of the innovations. This theory is applicable to the study because innovations generated through research and development would need to be integrated with other business process to create a competitive advantage for the business in the market. Diffusion of innovation theory explains the importance of technology intelligence in the process of identifying and exploiting scientific and technological opportunities, exerting a significant influence on the ability to innovate and is viewed as a major source of competitive advantage.

Research Design
The research design is survey method.

Population of the Study
Population of a study represents the total groups of items which a researcher desire to study and about which he plans to generalize his findings (Baridam, 2001). The target population of the study was made up of four telecommunication firms operating in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. They include MTN nig, 9Mobile, Airtel and Globalcom.

Sample Size Determination
Since the population of the study comprises of four telecommunication firms operating in Port Harcourt. However six senior managers of General Manager, Advertising Manager and marketing managers and three Supervisors were drawn from each of this firms of the sample frame. Therefore the sample Size be 6 x 4=24

Sample Distribution

Name of company	Manager
MTN	6
AIRTEL	6
9 mobile	6
Globacom	6
TOTAL	24

Methods of Data Analysis
The responses gathered from the questionnaire were collected and scored for analysis using frequency counts and then analyzed with the mean to answer the research questions. While hypothesis test were Spearman Ranking Order Correlation were used for the hypotheses testing. The formula for the test statistics is given as:

$$r = 1 - \frac{6 \Sigma d^2}{(n^3 - n)}$$

where,
Where ∑d = sum of the squared differences in the ranking of the n = number of subject being ranked.

Relationship between Market Intelligence and the measures of Organizational Performance

Table 1Correlation for Market Intelligence and the measures of Organizational Performance

			Market Intelligence	Innovativeness	Customer Acquisition	Service Delivery
Spearman's rho	Market Intelligence	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.777**	.798**	.688**

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
	N	17	17	17	17
Innovativeness	Correlation Coefficient	.777**	1.000	.865**	.985**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
	N	17	17	17	17
Customer Acquisition	Correlation Coefficient	.798**	.865**	1.000	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.
	N	17	17	17	17
Service Delivery	Correlation Coefficient	.898**	.865**	1.000	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.
	N	17	17	17	17

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Research Data 2021, (SPSS output version 21.0)

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between Market Intelligence and Innovativeness of telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt.

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient shows that there is a positive relationship between Market Intelligence and Innovativeness. The *correlation coefficient* 0.777 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is statistically significant at p 0.000<0.00. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate accepted. Thus, there is a significant relationship between Technology Forecasting and Innovativeness of telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between Market Intelligence and Customer Acquisition of telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt.

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient shows that there is a positive relationship between Market Intelligence and Customer Acquisition. The *correlation coefficient* 0.798 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is statistically significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate accepted. Thus, there is a significant relationship between Market Intelligence and Customer Acquisition of telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between Market Intelligence and Service Delivery of telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt.

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient shows that there is a positive relationship between Market Intelligence and *Service Delivery*. The *correlation coefficient* 0.898 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is statistically significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate accepted. Thus, there is a significant relationship between Market Intelligence and *Service Delivery* ***of*** telecommunication firms in Port Harcourt.

The study concluded that since highly satisfied customers are expected to make future purchases and recommend the source to other customers, high levels of customer satisfaction are likely to lead to Organizational Performance. The study also concluded that there exist very high levels of Organizational Performance of Telecommunication firms in Rivers State..

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that companies must focus on those attributes of Market Intelligence which consumers' use to judge the Market Intelligence worthiness of the services offered.

1. The study further recommends that of Telecommunication firms in Rivers State should emphasize on building a positive Strategic Intelligence to meet customer's expectation and offer more benefits to customer.
2. Telecommunication firms need to be more innovative in the use of refined telecommunication know-how in new product development.
4. Firms should endeavor to focus on identify their customers expressed needs that guide them in developing products and services.

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