

Strategic Intelligence and Organizational Performance in the Telecommunication Sector of Bayelsa State

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Abstract

This study examined the empirical relationship between strategic intelligence and organizational performance in Telecommunication sector of Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Cross-sectional survey design was adopted to ascertain the opinion of one hundred and seventy-six employees of telecommunication firms which are the study. Questionnaire was adopted as the main instrument for data collection. Bivariate analysis was conducted inferentially using Spearman Rank Correlational Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The analytical result revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between strategic intelligence and organizational performance. It was therefore concluded that strategic intelligence is a requisite for organizational performance. The study recommends that of firms in Bayelsa State should emphasize on taking cognizance if the needed strategies to meet customer's expectation and offer more benefits to customer.

Keywords: Strategic Intelligence, Organizational Performance, Foresight, System Thinking, Creativity

Introduction

In business, the concept of strategy has been around for many years, and a lot of research and writing has been done to explore its subtleties. A strategy is a coherent collection of choices about where and how to compete that are made in response to both internal and external challenges and opportunities. In order to maintain a high level of performance, companies need to develop competitive strategies that work. But sustained success necessitates constant strategy innovation and adaptation due to the dynamic nature of the global and corporate environments (Wells, 2012). Senior managers and decision-makers find it more difficult to keep up with, understand, and react to changes in the environment due to the rapid rate of change. Globalization, rising consumer

demands, and technology breakthroughs have created a dynamic environment where timely and relevant strategic information is critical. Strategic intelligence is a systematic, continuous process of obtaining, evaluating, and sharing information that is essential for well-informed long-term decision-making. Organizations must sail decisively toward success (Djekic, 2014). It is crucial to establish strategic intelligence as a fundamental notion in businesses.

According to Wells (2012), businesses with a low strategic intelligence quotient are seen as strategically blind; those with a moderate score are able to compete; and those with a high score are thought to be the most skilled. They actively shape the competitive environment to their benefit, not just responding to it.

The efficacy of an organization in following its planned objectives is defined by its organizational performance. The achievement of these objectives depends on the skillful use of resources, both material and human (Richard, et al., 2008). According to the authors, there are four basic areas of organizational performance that may be distinguished: shareholder returns, non-financial performance, product/market performance, and financial performance. Measuring the organization's profitability, return on assets, return on investment, and other comparable indicators over a given time period is known as financial performance. Metrics like sales, turnover, and market share are key components of product and market performance. Returns to shareholders are a gauge of the advantages enjoyed by those who provide the company money. Non-financial success includes things like market share growth, employee performance and happiness, customer service and satisfaction, and the caliber, consistency, and innovation of products.

Workers are critical to an organization's success because they add a great deal to the accomplishments that have been observed over time (Collis & Montgomery, 2015). Therefore, it is reasonable to state that employee efforts are the key to organizational performance and success. In order to maintain a winning trajectory and meet goals, organizations must continually prioritize their workers by inspiring them, giving them training, and figuring out the best ways for them to contribute to gaining a competitive edge (Brewster et al., 2013). Strategic intelligence, which is made possible by combining internal and external insights from business intelligence, competitive intelligence, and knowledge management, can be utilized by organizations to help them optimize their strategic objectives and vision (Marchand & Hykes). However, a primary concern for managers is the existence of organizational blind spots—areas where management overlooks or fails to comprehend vital information, potentially leading the organization into various pitfalls (Büchel, 2010).

These include misjudging the boundaries of the sector, failing to see new competitors, losing contact with clients, concentrating too much on the obvious advantages of rivals, and letting corporate taboos or a lack of vision limit their viewpoint. Any of these errors can prevent businesses from taking advantage of opportunities and force them to become inflexible. Leaders can overcome these blind spots by regularly participating in strategic intelligence initiatives (Büchel, 2010).

Problem Statement

There has been a noticeable upsurge in study on organizational performance in the last few years. Managers in the public and private sectors are realizing more and more that a strong system for bringing in and managing human resources within the company, innovative products and services,

successful PR campaigns, and homegrown goods and services are frequently sources of competitive advantage. However, rather than proactively anticipating and planning for them, a lot of firms discover that their main focus is on reacting to unforeseen developments and challenges.

Organizations may spend a lot of time and energy attempting to catch up with issues when they are taken off guard. Their energy is depleted by this reactionary strategy, making it difficult for them to anticipate and plan for future setbacks. As a result, a lot of firms discover that they are caught in a never-ending circle of reactive behavior. As a result, it is critical to design strategies that are especially suited to meet the goals of the company in order to guarantee both the maintenance of market share and overall business performance, which is defined by higher profits at lower costs (Mgbemena, et al., 2022).

The ways that telecom operators gather and analyze data are informed by strategic intelligence in response to the changing nature of business. This strategic intelligence helps to provide direction and guidance for evaluating telecom policies, carrying out analysis, and figuring out the future course of the company. By combining internal and external data, it entails setting priorities, goals, and direction on a larger scale in order to have a thorough grasp of business competitiveness and pinpoint the organization's place in the competitive market. Businesses may assess customer demand and find appropriate products and services through this approach, which helps to maintain the stability and long-term viability of the enterprise (Kori, Muathe & Maina, 2021).

Despite its significance for organizational growth, strategic intelligence has received minimal attention in strategy discourse over the years. This lack of attention can be attributed to the predominant focus on enhancing organizational performance, particularly in the telecommunication sector, through customer satisfaction. However, little to no emphasis has been placed on the mechanisms of strategic intelligence for improving performance. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relationship between strategic intelligence and organizational performance in the telecommunication sector of Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Objectives

This paper carried out to examine the relationship between strategic intelligence and organizational performance in Telecommunication sector of Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study is designed:

1. To examine the relationship between foresight and organizational performance.
2. To determine the relationship between systems thinking and organizational performance.
3. To examine the relationship between creativity and organizational performance.

Hypotheses

The research study is predicated on the following hypotheses:

H₀₁: Foresight does not have significant relationship with organizational performance.

H₀₂: Systems thinking does not have significant relationship with organizational performance.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between creativity and organizational performance.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Strategic Intelligence

With the advent of globalization and the establishment of strategic intelligence teams by major corporations to respond to demands from the worldwide community, strategic intelligence became more and more prominent at the beginning of the twenty-first century (Dowell, 2009). During this period, strategic intelligence centers were established with the goal of collecting executive director insights globally, and the position of strategic intelligence director emerged in many corporations. By hiring experts to collect and evaluate data necessary for making decisions on important issues like alliances, acquisitions, and product development, businesses today continue to improve their strategic intelligence (Xu, 2007).

According to Alhamadi (2020), strategic intelligence is the process of gathering, evaluating, and interpreting important strategic data that is closely related to big business strategy planning and decision-making. It contributes to administrative advancement and competitive advantage. According to Levine, Bernard, and Nagel (2017), it involves using social awareness to obtain a competitive advantage and predict rival behavior and tactics. According to Duczynski & Knight (2017), it is management that is concerned with both present and future products, enabling well-informed planning to modify organizational strategies as necessary.

A paradigm shift in management thought is represented by strategic intelligence, whereby businesses work to accomplish their objectives and manage uncertainty by gathering relevant data for future prediction, promoting innovation, and adjusting to changing conditions. Organizations strive to stay competitive by implementing tactical and strategic adjustments, with the goal of achieving profitability and ongoing enhancement in all areas of production and service (Al-Jubouri, 2018). With the help of strategic information, businesses may successfully navigate an uncertain future and establish a solid market position in a competitive industry. This strategy encourages organizational agility, which enables them to continue being flexible in these kinds of situations. According to Raynor (2015), using strategic information may provide a business a clear, competitive emphasis in all areas.

Organizations need strategic intelligence to improve and maintain their performance in the knowledge-driven world we live in (Haag, Cummings & Philips, 2017). A key component of corporate operations is the information collecting and human judgment process that turns it into actionable intelligence. Organizations may acquire a competitive edge and promote continuous innovation by using adaptable techniques in knowledge development and intelligence acquisition. This approach guarantees the organization's long-term existence and profitability. Organizations need to give strategic intelligence orientations top priority if they want to achieve high performance. According to Laudon and Laudon (2017), this idea promotes organizational flexibility through aspects including knowledge management, manufacturing processes, outsourcing, competitiveness, and sustainability. These aspects are further supported by strategies. Strategic intelligence, according to Kuosa (2011), is the gathering, evaluating, and sharing of environmental information relevant to an organization's strategy. This covers a wide range of topics, including laws, money matters, taxes, political and economic aspects, and human resources. Strategic intelligence is essentially the evaluation and analysis of an organization's social, political, and economic actions. Strategic vision, human and social resources, as well as political and economic concerns inside businesses, are all taken into account when evaluating strategic

intelligence (Gabber, 2007). In the end, an organization's strategic planning system and decision-making procedures are closely linked to strategic intelligence.

Foresight

According to Järvenpää, Kunttu, and Mäntyneva (2020), foresight is a set of procedures, approaches, instruments, and strategies intended to actively investigate, mold, and control the future in order to support strategic intelligence. According to Crews (2020), foresight is the ability to predict future developments and make the necessary preparations. This entails figuring out what the main forces behind change are, speculating about possible futures, and evaluating how these changes will affect particular situations or projects (Colli et al., 2019). Foresight allows practitioners to investigate realistic possibilities based on current trends, developing signals of change, and possible paths rather than forecasting a single future event..

Organizations and people can gain favorable market positions in the future by using foresight strategies (Rohrbeck & Kum, 2018). It acts as a means of obtaining an edge over competitors and guaranteeing top placement in the job market. Foresight uses a wide range of techniques, from expert-driven or participatory ways to innovative and evidence-based approaches (Lawrence et al., 2020).

Systems Thinking

Understanding how things work depends on interpreting these complex relationships and interactions within and between systems. At its core, systems thinking is a way of thinking that views systems and their constituent parts as profoundly interconnected and interdependent (Adam & de Savigny, 2012). It goes beyond simple occurrences to identify behavioral patterns and the underlying systemic relationships that underlie these patterns and related occurrences (Adam & de Savigny, 2012). Systems thinking recognizes that open systems are complex adaptive entities that are dynamic, resistant to change, non-linear, and that there are instances where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (Clark, Leischow, & Trochim, 2007).

There is still debate on the precise definition and constituents of systems thinking, even if scholars from a variety of fields agree on its importance (Arnold & Wade, 2015). Furthermore, there is no single, agreed-upon definition of systems thinking; instead, many definitions highlight distinct aspects of the concept. Some describe it as a process of combining different points of view, while others place more emphasis on realizing how the many parts of the system interact with one another.

According to Cabrera et al. (2020), systems thinking is a cognitive process or emergent characteristic that results from thinking through differences, structuring systems, expressing linkages, and embracing many viewpoints, all of which combine to form a mental model that closely resembles reality. Despite these differing viewpoints, a few recurring themes show themselves. First, systems thinking is inherently cognitive, requiring cognitive skills for comprehension. Second, it entails grasping the entirety of a situation rather than focusing solely on its parts. Third, it involves understanding the connections and interdependencies among various elements.

Creativity

Creativity is a multidimensional idea formed by a multitude of interrelated forces. It includes organizational and team dynamics in addition to individual genius. Human contact is a complicated process that is closely tied to creativity. It provides a basis for success in modern society by combining logical and illogical thought processes to break through preconceived notions and realize ideas. According to Goldstein (2016), innovation is fueled by creativity, which is also essential for social, professional, entrepreneurship, and personal growth.

In recent years, organizational creativity has attracted a lot of attention. According to research by Gu et al. (2017), organizational creativity acts as a link between creative behavior displayed by all employees and leadership. Organizations and economies place a high priority on innovation because they understand its economic relevance. Stakeholder creativity is widely acknowledged as essential for organizational operations and as the primary source of innovation. Consequently, active participation, inspiration, and the generation of new ideas and services are encouraged from all stakeholders within an organization.

Organizational Performance

Five primary criteria are typically used to assess the effectiveness of an organization: financial success, operational performance, employee and customer happiness, and learning and growth (Tonga, 2007). Metrics including return on investment, market share growth, profitability, sales volume, cash flow, and profit improvement can all be included in an evaluation of financial performance (Yeung et al., 2006). Productivity, quality performance, punctuality, waste reduction, and production efficiency are often taken into account when evaluating operational performance (Fuentes & Montes, 2006). Productivity, growth, and morale are indicators of employee satisfaction (Rahman, 2006).

The performance of an organization is largely dependent on its capacity to adjust to outside changes. According to Tannenbaum and Schmidt (2009), performance in the literature is defined as the degree to which an organization meets its goals while taking into account its resources and capacities as a social system. Organizations frequently strive for continuous improvement, and it's important to highlight that team member performance directly affects the success of the organization as a whole. Economic efficiency, matching customer expectations with the least amount of resources, and encouraging staff happiness by attending to their personal needs via effective leadership are the three main components of success, according to Horga (2012).

Theoretical Framework (Strategic Fit Theory)

Fit is a term that comes from the field of organization theory. It describes how well an organization aligns with its internal context, which is usually represented by its strategy, and its external environment, which is defined by structures, product lifecycles, and market position (Haglund, Rudberg & Sezer, 2022). Although strategy literature frequently emphasizes the importance of strategic fit, it frequently ignores the influence of culture on this alignment. Examining internal and exterior cultural processes that are separate from the larger cultural context is necessary to comprehend cultural intervention.

Cultural paradigms are patterns of beliefs and actions that add to the complexity of corporate culture. These paradigms shape organizational dynamics by creating consistent patterns of presumptions about human nature and behavior (Waheeda, Iftikharb, Azhar, 2021).

Strategic fit reflects the extent to which an organization's resources and capabilities align with external opportunities. This alignment is achieved through strategy, highlighting the importance of having the necessary resources and capabilities to support strategic execution. Strategic fit serves as a valuable tool for assessing an organization's strategic position and evaluating opportunities such as mergers, acquisitions, and divestitures (Okebaram & Onuoha, 2018).

Empirical Review

The purpose of Bakr's (2018) study, "The Impact of Strategic Intelligence on Organizational Creativity: An Applied Study on the University of Najran," was to look at how strategic intelligence may support creative thinking inside an organization. The study used an analytical descriptive methodology and a researcher-developed questionnaire to gather data from 91 faculty members who were chosen by simple random selection. All aspects of strategic intelligence—foresight, structured thinking, motivation, cooperation, and strategic vision—significantly impact organizational creativity, according to an analysis of the data using descriptive statistical methods. A significant degree of application of strategic intelligence across all of its aspects was also found by the study. Enhancing faculty members' responsibilities and involvement in university affairs was one of the recommendations made in order to maximize their scientific talents for the institution's gain.

"Strategic Intelligence of Senior Management and Its Reflection in Enhancing Group Cohesion," a research by Abdel (2017), sought to investigate the link between the strategic intelligence of senior management and how it affected group cohesiveness in the General Company for Iraqi Railways. A questionnaire that completed validity and reliability testing was used as a data collecting method in the study, using a simple random sample of 29 participants. The findings showed a strong statistical relationship between group cohesiveness and strategic intelligence, with a high degree of application of strategic intelligence inside the organization. The research suggested that in order to improve group cohesiveness, the organization should pinpoint important areas where strategic intelligence may be applied.

The purpose of Lemon's (2018) paper, "Using Strategic Intelligence to Sustain Innovation," is to distinguish between supply and demand strategies for strategic intelligence through a theoretical analysis. The study comes to the conclusion that senior management support is essential for creating an inventive atmosphere, and that the implementation of strategic intelligence strategies inside corporate organizations has a direct impact on creativity. Given its important and successful role in fostering innovation, recommendations include the adoption of the notion of strategic intelligence across all dimensions inside businesses. Promoting creativity is seen to be beneficial for achieving competitive advantages and organizational excellence.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a cross-sectional survey design to investigate multiple telecom firms within the industry. The study population consisted of top managers, CEOs, and department heads from five telecommunications companies selected based on their performance and longevity in operations in Yenagoa Metropolis. The total employee population of these five companies was

196. Data collection was conducted using a questionnaire as the primary instrument. Strategic intelligence was measured using three variables: foresight, systems thinking, and creativity, which were then used to assess organizational performance. Perceptual measures were utilized to evaluate employee productive behavior due to the reluctance of firm owners to disclose operational activities. Previous research has shown self-reported measures to be reliable for gathering company performance data. The data were analyzed using inferential statistics, specifically the Spearman Rank-order Correlation Coefficient (Rs), to establish relationships between the variables. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was employed for data analysis.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Foresight and Organizational Performance

		Correlations		
			Foresight	Organizational performance
Spearman's rho	Foresight	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.633**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	178	178
	Organizational performance	Correlation Coefficient	.633**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	178	178

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

Based on the result provided in the table, which indicates a Spearman Rank-order Correlation Coefficient (rho) of 0.633, it suggests a positive relationship between foresight and organizational performance. Furthermore, the significance level (p) is reported to be 0.00, which is less than the critical value of 0.01. As a result, the null hypothesis, which likely stated no relationship between foresight and organizational performance, is rejected. This indicates a statistically significant relationship between foresight and organizational performance, affirming that foresight plays a significant role in influencing organizational performance.

Systems Thinking and Organizational Performance

		Correlations		
			Systems thinking	Organizational performance
Spearman's rho	Systems thinking	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.741**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	178	178

Organizational performance	Correlation Coefficient	.741**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	178	178

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

Based on the provided result in the table, where the Spearman Rank-order Correlation Coefficient (rho) is reported as 0.741, it indicates a positive relationship between systems thinking and organizational performance. Additionally, the significance level (p) is recorded as 0.00, which is less than the critical value of 0.01. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which likely stated no relationship between systems thinking and organizational performance, is rejected. This implies that there is indeed a statistically significant relationship between systems thinking and organizational performance, highlighting the importance of systems thinking in influencing organizational performance.

Creativity and Organizational Performance

		Correlations	
		creativity	Organizational performance
Spearman's rho	creativity	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.516**
		N	.000
		N	178
Organizational performance		Correlation Coefficient	.516**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
		N	.000
		N	178

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

Based on the provided result in the table, where the Spearman Rank-order Correlation Coefficient (rho) is reported as 0.516, it suggests a positive relationship between creativity and organizational performance. Moreover, the significance level (p) is indicated as 0.00, which is less than the critical value of 0.01. Consequently, the null hypothesis, which likely posited no relationship between creativity and organizational performance, is rejected. This indicates a statistically significant relationship between creativity and organizational performance, underscoring the importance of creativity in influencing organizational performance.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to investigate the empirical relationship between strategic intelligence and organizational performance, focusing on three key research questions reflecting different dimensions of strategic intelligence. Through data collection and analysis, the study revealed a positive and significant relationship between strategic intelligence and organizational

performance. As a result, it was concluded that strategic intelligence is essential for achieving organizational performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendation were made based on the findings:

The study suggests that firms in Bayelsa State should prioritize understanding and implementing strategies aimed at meeting customer expectations and providing additional benefits to customers. Managers and supporting organizations are advised not to solely concentrate on either technological intelligence or process innovation. Instead, they should adopt a combined and synergetic approach to leverage these capabilities effectively and maximize firm performance benefits.

Firms are encouraged to enhance their innovation efforts by utilizing advanced telecommunication expertise in the development of new products. This approach is expected to improve customer satisfaction and enhance the quality of service delivery.

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