EXPLORING IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES OF COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE IN THE NAMIBIAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY: A CASE OF TELECOM NAMIBIA

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study was to explore the implementation strategies of Competitive Intelligence of Telecom Namibia. Respondents were drawn from the TN business headquarters in Windhoek, Khomas Region, who are mainly in different levels of management. The study used the qualitative design and semi-structured interviews were used to collect primary data. Using Key Intelligence Topics (KITs), the study was able to explore the implementation strategies as a framework for CI implementation in TN. The study found that TN does not make proactive investment decisions in terms of global expansion and technological competitiveness or global alliances as telecommunication operators. Furthermore, the study revealed that TN does not have a formalised CI collection process, and the organisation is faced by challenges such as the lack of employee training and education, lack of management support for CI activities in the company, and ineffective CI policies and procedures of CI processes. The study also found that the main factor that influences CI is when there is an opportunity for threats. Data revealed that TN applies KITs to make new market and pricing decisions. The study further established that TN only implements CI strategies when the new market is risky than the company must research the existing products and their prices. The study recommends TN to establish a CI unit that will be funded and nurtured. The study also suggests that management provides enough support for CI activities.

LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

BI	Business Intelligence
BU	Business Unit
EBIDTA	Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortisation
CI	Competitive Intelligence
CRAN	Communication Regulatory Authority of Namibia
ICT	Information Communication Technology
KM	Knowledge Management
MTC	Mobile Telecommunications Limited
MI	Market Intelligence
SDM	Strategic Decision-Making
SMT	Strategic Management Tool
TN	Telecom Namibia

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my 85-year old, God-fearing mother for her love and a strong belief in education. The thesis is also dedicated to my daughter, Peney, for understanding my divided attention when I was pursuing my MBA.

DECLARATIONS

I, Ester Tweuhanga Shimwafeni, hereby declare that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher education.

Signature..... Date..23/09/2019

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Degerstedt (2016) defines Competitive Intelligence (CI) as a systematic process where an organisation, division, unit, or person gathers, analyses and transforms information into actionable intelligence. In the case of this study, CI refers to the systematic process where the telecommunications industry collects and analyses information regarding Business Intelligence (BI) about competitors (O'Brien, & Kok, 2006). BI enables organisations to sustain a competitive position in the market by being promptly responsive to changes in competitors' strategies, customer preferences and technological advancements (Shih, Liu & Hsu, 2010). It is for these reasons that many organisations employ CI services to guide decision-making (Bartes, 2014) by initiating Business Intelligence (Taleghani, Red & Rahmati, 2012). By exploring TN's CI implementation strategies, the study was able to establish the strategies that TN employs to respond to changes in competitors' strategies, customer preferences and technological advancements.

Even though there are other telecommunications operators who have gained the market share, the sector is mainly dominated by Telecom Namibia (TN) and Mobile Telecommunications Limited (MTC) (Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN), 2017). Telecom Namibia was established under section 2(1) (b) of the Posts and Telecommunications Establishment Act, 1992, and it is "Namibia's only integrated ICT service provider, as well as the leading broadband and backbone infrastructure service provider in the country" (TN Annual Report, 2017, p. 5). It is,

therefore, safe to assert that there are only two national telecommunications operators in Namibia, which are "majority or entirely owned by the state" (CRAN, 2017). Organisations strive for success and consistency in their progress; hence, the need to enhance competitiveness has grown rapidly, which has led business entities to seek solutions to remain competitive in the constantly changing environments (Bank & Korea, 2005). However, to be successfully competitive, there are fundamental factors that all organisations require. These factors include engineering processes, embracing information technology advancements, training, development, and the retention of people (Bose, 2008).

Nenzhelele and Pellisier (2014) emphasise that technology and globalisation in the business environment have become turbulent; thus, to survive in the tempestuous environment, businesses ought to strive for a competitive advantage over their rivals. That is why businesses of different sizes have resorted to practising Competitive Intelligence (CI), as it is widely recognised that CI provides various enterprises with competitive advantages. These advantages are undoubtedly applicable to TN, considering the forceful growing competition in the ICT industry in Namibia. This study sought to explore TN's CI implementation strategies, and to assess how effective the strategies are, in order to determine whether the strategies provide the organisation with competitive advantages.

To add to the advantages of CI, Bank and Korea (2005) affirm that CI is one of the solutions that many organisations and governments employed in recent years to improve competitiveness by making better use of information through the management and the application of information. For instance, governments employ

intelligence models such as the National Intelligence Topics (NIT) to identify national-level intelligence requirements (Bank & Korea, 2005). It is, therefore, important that organisations base their CI implementation strategies on standard models to enable them to make optimal use of CI and Business Intelligence (BI).

Muller (2007) advise enterprises to ensure there is appropriate awareness of CI and attitude in favour of intelligence and information sharing; otherwise, it would be difficult to develop CI in the organisation (Muller, 2007). By examining the factors that affect CI implementation strategies in TN, the study was able to establish whether there is appropriate awareness of and attitude toward CI in TN because CI plays a significant role strategic management and decision making of any organisation (Deng & Luo, 2010).

1.2 Statement of the problem

Even though there are other telecommunications operators who have gained the market share, the sector is mainly dominated by Telecom Namibia (TN) and Mobile Telecommunications Limited (MTC) (CRAN, 2017). Telecom Namibia was established under section 2(1) (b) of the Posts and Telecommunications Establishment Act, 1992, and it is "Namibia's only integrated ICT service provider, as well as the leading broadband and backbone infrastructure service provider in the country" (TN Annual Report, 2017, p. 5). Given that TN took over Cell One, which was a potential competitor for TN and MTC, it is safe to assert that there are only two national telecommunications operators in Namibia that are "majority or entirely owned by the state" (CRAN, 2017, p. 5), and which must mainly compete with each other in quality, price and market share.

According to CRAN (2017), there is a concern of insufficient competition, higher consumer prices, and lower quality of service due to the higher market concentration, even though smaller licensees have increased their share in assets and revenues. MTC is a dominant mobile telephony, whereas TN dominates fixed-lines and national data connectivity. Consequently, smaller licensees only compete with TN on the retail level and not wholesale, because these licensees mainly resell TN's infrastructure (CRAN, 2017). This lack of competition proves that TN and MTC dominate the Namibian telecommunications industry; however, it is worth noting that MTC generated more than half of the sector revenues (53.3%) with 40.5% of the assets (CRAN, 2017). Thus, MTC is much more efficient, and in terms of required infrastructure for service delivery, the company requires fewer assets. However, given the services that TN provides, the company requires more assets because of landlines and wired data connectivity (CRAN, 2017).

MTC evidently has more competitive advantages than TN because between 2009 - 2016, the company has been consistently experiencing an increase in revenues, yielding phenomenal EBITDA margins of 50% - 56.2% (CRAN, 2017). TN, on the other hand, has been experiencing a net loss between 2014 – 2016, which, according to CRAN's (2017) review, raised serious concerns. CRAN (2017) further elaborates that "TN's foreign failed investments and takeover of Leo have left its domestic operations vulnerable, limiting its capacity to invest and innovate" (CRAN, 2017, p. 10). This vulnerability and limit in capacity formed the basis of this study, which is: to explore the CI implementation strategies.

It is evident from the fact that TN failed to "pose serious competition to MTC in 2016" that TN's CI strategies are worth exploring (CRAN, 2017, p. 10). Why did TN fail to pose serious competition to its main competitor, MTC? This study sought to assess the effectiveness of TN's CI implementation strategies.

There is seemingly a need to consistently react to competition; hence, TN is forced to initiate strategies for competition in the ICT industry and the Namibian market at large (TN Annual Report, 2017). In addition to the need to pace up with the competitive market, there are other factors that influence CI implementation strategies in TN. One of the focal points of this study was to examine the factors that influence the implementation of CI in TN.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were to:

1.3.1 explore TN's CI implementation strategies;

1.3.2 assess the effectiveness of TN's CI implementation strategies;

1.3.3 examine the factors that affect CI implementation strategies in TN;

1.3.4 investigate the challenges faced by TN when implementing CI;

1.3.5 evaluate the strengths of TN's CI implementation strategies.

1.4 Significance of the study

This study is significant because it contributes to the body of knowledge in the field of marketing, particularly in the subject of Competitive Intelligence and Business Intelligence to scholars in the related fields. Furthermore, the study will be helpful to telecommunication companies within and outside Namibia to assess the effectiveness

of their CI implementation strategies, thereby improving CI and BI. Moreover, the study will shed light on companies in the telecommunications industry regarding the competition in the industry. Finally, the study will apprise TN regarding its CI strategies as a starting point and on how to assess its strategic plans.

1.5 Limitation of the study

Given that there have been limited studies in Namibia on CI or BI, particularly in the telecommunications industry, the study mostly relied on foreign literature for review, as well as Annual Reports by the company under study, which might have been biased and affected the literature review. However, this review was contextualised to the Namibian context, for the data to fit the context of the study – TN and Namibia. Furthermore, the study employed the qualitative research design for an in-depth analysis of the case of TN, so due to the required small sample, the data cannot be generalised to other telecommunications companies in Namibia or elsewhere in the world.

1.6 Delimitation of the study

The study was limited to Telecom Namibia (TN), focusing on TN employees in Executive and management positions only, thereby limiting the generalisability of the results. This choice of sample size was advantageous because it enabled the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of CI in the case organisation, TN. Moreover, the study only focused on employees from the headquarters/main branch of TN in Windhoek, Khomas Region, because this is where most strategic decisions are made, and the issue of CI understudy affects Telecom at large – not the regional branches individually. There was, therefore, no need to study CI at TN's various branches.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the study by providing a background and the statement of the problem, which allowed for an overview of the organisation and problem under study. In addition, the chapter outlined the objectives, enabling for a detailed focus of the study. The chapter also provided the significance of the study, explaining the various contributions of the study. Finally, the chapter discussed the limitations and delimitations of the study. The following chapter, Chapter Two, reviews the literature that was consulted and acknowledged in the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature about Competitive Intelligence (CI) and Market Intelligence (MI). The chapter elaborates on variables of the study and themes that were developed from the objectives of the study, such as processes of CI, advantages of CI, CI functions needs, challenges of CI, and CI structures. Literature review enabled the researcher to understand the subject in detail, and to adopt an appropriate research approach for data collection, presentation and analysis. By reviewing the subject in detail, the researcher was able to practically achieve the objectives of the study, which were to especially explore TN's CI implementation strategies, and to assess their effectiveness. Finally, the chapter discussed the theoretical framework that was helpful in explaining and understanding the subject of Competitive Intelligence strategies.

2.2 Market Intelligence and Competitive Intelligence

Market Intelligence (MI) refers to the information or data that is from the market it operates in or wants to operate in to determine market segmentation, market penetration, market opportunity and existing market metrics (Igbaekemen, 2014). Competitive Intelligence (CI), on the other hand, has been widely recognised as a tool that provides a competitive advantage, and it helps in making quality decisions (Maune, 2014). Moraes, Toledo and Garber (2015) further explained that Market Intelligence is a vital aspect to understand the state of the market, helping to collect competitor intelligence, which in turn aids towards becoming profitable. From

definitions of CI and MI, it appears that Market Intelligence is an inherent concept to Competitive Intelligence regarding the strategy of being guided in the market. Before deliberating further on Competitive Intelligence, it is worth elaborating on Market Intelligence and its role in business separately.

Wady (2017) explains that Market Intelligence concerns itself with questions such as whether the information relevant to a company's market - trends, competitor and customer (existing, lost and targeted) monitoring, gathered and analysed specifically for the purpose of accurate and confident decision-making in determining strategy in areas such as market opportunity, market penetration strategy, and market development. Wady (2017) further elaborates that:

> Market intelligence includes the process of gathering data from the company's external environment like online sources - news websites, company websites, secondary data sources, social media, RSS feeds, etc., whereas the Business Intelligence process, primarily is based on internal recorded events – such as sales, shipments, and purchases. The purpose of incorporating Market Information or intelligence into the Business Intelligence process is to provide decision-makers with a more "complete picture" of ongoing corporate performance in a set of given market conditions (p. 6).

The rapid development of information technology, hardware and software has simplified collection, accumulation and information broadcasting; however, this development is only technically efficient in business, whereas companies are more focused on information about the competition (Wright, 2013).Companies such as TN yearn to attain quality and useful information about the competition, which is only

possible when companies establish an integrated and intelligent system for collecting and analysing data about their competitors. This system is known as the intelligent system for the notification of competition or Competitive Intelligence (Fleisher & Wright, 2009). CI is a relatively new business discipline that is evolving in complexity and importance in the era of rapid business development (Heppes & du Toit, 2009). Although there are many definitions of CI in practice and scholarship, there is no single and universal definition of CI that has achieved worldwide acceptance (Gračanin et al., 2015). Most definitions that have emerged over the years involved nothing more than semantic changes in language and emphasis (Fleisher & Wright, 2009; Brody, 2008).

In addition, the definition of CI is contested by many researchers and academics, and most of these definitions are inverse (Weiss & Naylon, 2010), as they differ in the use of alternative expressions or words, emphasis, or the use of synonyms (Roitner, 2008). The various definitions, as Colakoglu (2011) states, create confusion amongst scholars, researchers, and practitioners. Colakoglu (2011) further explains that due to the lack of the agreement on the definition of CI, it has been confused with industrial espionage or spying, but CI is different from espionage because it is legal and ethical (Haliso & Aina, 2012). Thus, this study relied on definitions that are relevant to the study, in order to direct or establish and perspective for the study.

Strauss and Du Toit (2010) define CI as an ongoing systematic evaluation of the external environment for opportunities, threats, and developments that could have an impact on the enterprise and influence reactive decision-making. Anica-Popa and Cucui (2009) define CI as a process that aims to monitor the external business

environment of the organisation in order to identify relevant information for the decision-making process; while Hesford (2008) defines CI as a process that can reduce information uncertainty to an extent that decision-makers can focus on cost reduction, design and process improvements, new product introduction, and product mix choices. Fleisher (2004) explains that CI is a systematic process by which organisations ethically gather and analyse information in an actionable way about competitors and competitive environment to apply it to their decision making and planning process to improve performance.

Furthermore, Prescott (1999) describes CI as a process that involves the development of intelligence products, the flow to decision-makers on a timely basis, and the incorporation of the intelligence into the decision-making process. Furthermore, Calof and Skinner (1999) define CI as an actionable recommendation arising from a systematic process that involves planning, gathering, analysing and disseminating information about the external environment for opportunities that have the potential to affect an organisation' competitiveness.

After Pellissier and Nenzhelele (2013) note the challenges of the debated definitions of CI, they analysed approximately 50 CI definitions to establish commonality and difference, in order to propose a comprehensive and unanimously acknowledged definition. This study adopted the inclusive and universally acknowledged definition that Pellissier and Nenzhelele (2013) proposed after their analysis. The study will maintain that CI is a process or practice that produce actionable intelligence by ethically and legally collecting, processing and analysing information about the

external or competitive environment to help in decision-making, and to provide a competitive advantage to the organisation (Pellissier & Nenzhelele, 2013).

In the recent global competitive environment, only firms with CI awareness programme will survive (Capatina & van der linden; Bourret, 2012); hence, information about the competition is a critical component for tactical and strategic decision-making in every company (Gračanin et al., 2015). Evidently, organisations are required to have CI systems in place, and these are not easy to build. Gračanin et al. (2015) confirm that it is not an easy task to build information systems that support management and decision-making and which can serve as a source of competitive advantage.

Although there is an increase in CI awareness, there is still a need for organisations to continuously raise awareness (Bartes, 2014). This need is evident in the fact that there is a scarcity of literature regarding the awareness of CI. This scarcity is substantiated by Smith, Wright and Pickton (2010), who declare that there is a shortage of literature regarding the awareness of CI. This claim is further supported by Du Toit and Sewdass (2014); Fatti and Du Toit (2013), who advise South African organisations to develop a competitive culture, and to further create CI awareness amongst employees. If this need to develop a competitive culture and awareness could be applicable to Namibian organisations, then the telecommunications industry is not an exception.

To add to the issue of awareness, Nasri (2012) and Barnea (2014) affirm that raising CI awareness among employees is a major challenge, admitting that without a culture of awareness, it becomes difficult to develop actionable CI. Employees who are

unaware of CI tend to give away information cheaply to competitors or to be misinformed by competitors who are aware of CI (Singh & Vij, 2012). Thus, awareness alone does not suffice in an organisation, but the intelligence of what to do with the information about CI matters. The main question lies in how companies can create awareness to ensure that employees do not give away information or be misinformed. These strategies to create awareness of CI are discussed in the sections below.

2.3 Awareness of Competitive Intelligence

Smith, Wright and Pickton (2010) identify subsequent ways and means that can raise awareness in organisations, such as conferences, education and training, trade shows, social networks, seminars, speeches, friends and families, business associates, blogs, workshops, and breakfast meetings. CI awareness is a critical success factor for CI in an organisation (Nasri & Zaria, 2013); therefore, it is worth discussing how companies can create awareness to ensure that it successfully operates. Du Toit and Sewdass (2014) acclaim that there must be an appropriate organisational awareness of CI and competitiveness for it to operate successfully. If it is important for organisations to create a conducive environment for CI, then the environment requires continuous staff training to emphasise on the significance of CI (Wright, 2013). Du Toit and Sewdass (2014) thus urge that it is important to remember that without proper original research awareness and attitude in favour of CI and information sharing, CI development and operations will be impossible.

Muller (2007) suggests that for organisations to make optimal use of CI efforts, there should be appropriate enterprise awareness of CI. Without this awareness and attitude

that favour both intelligence and information sharing, it is difficult to develop intelligence within an organisation (Du Toit & Sewdass, 2014). The growth of CI depends on the creation of awareness of its benefits and a change in the way that enterprises deal with and view information (Muller, 2007). In terms of awareness, companies should address knowledge, understanding and perceptions. However, Smith et al. (2010) argue that the forerunner investigation of CI awareness and attitudes in SMEs remains a gap in the literature. This gap could reflect the lack of information in businesses in general.

Smith et al. (2010) outline the various ways to create awareness of CI, namely: through the cooperation between media advocacy groups, workshops, training enterprises, academic courses, and full support of, and participation in, CI activities by the government. The study summarises these strategies of awareness creation as follows: conference and seminars, education and training, and collaborating entities.

2.4 The process of Competitive Intelligence

Intelligence is a process of several activities, steps or ideas that should follow on from one another without overlooking any of the steps of actions (Kanaher, as cited in Maune, 2014). The process consists of phases that are linked to each other (Nasri, 2011), and the output of each phase is the input to the next phase (Bartes, 2012). This means that the processes, phases or activities are equally important due to the apparent co-dependency. For instance, the overall output of the CI process is an input to the decision-making process (Wright et al. 2009), which means that decision making is determined by or relies on the output of the CI process.

According to Du Toit and Muller (2004), if there is a lack of an appropriate intelligence process and structure, it is difficult to develop intelligence in the organisation. Bose (2008) asserts that without a basis, the deployment of CI will continue to be challenging to any organisation. Given the fact that little attention has been given by previous researchers as to how CI is directed, it is important to ground the structure in CI (not market research) activities conducted by analysts in the field (Bose, 2008). It is for this reason that the theoretical basis that guided the development of CI in organisations was the CI processor cycle.

Nasri (2011) supports the notion that without evident support by top management regarding the deployment of Competitive Intelligence in the organisation, the process will be futile. Given the confusion in the field of CI on how the CI process should be structured, some agreement within the CI field on this matter should be reached (Nzehlele, 2013). Some scholars outline many phases in the CI process, while others minimise or merge these phases, whereas others name the same phases differently, thereby adding to the confusion in the field of CI (Herring, 1999).

The key activities that occurred in the literature review of CI processes are: planning and direction, collection, analysis and reporting, and dissemination (Gilad, as cited in Saayman et al., 2005). In corporate practice, Competitive Intelligence frequently takes the form of a cycle. Herring (1999) outlines the five processes: planning and direction, collection, information processing and storage, analysis and reporting, and dissemination (p. 7). The process is depicted in Figure 2.1 below.

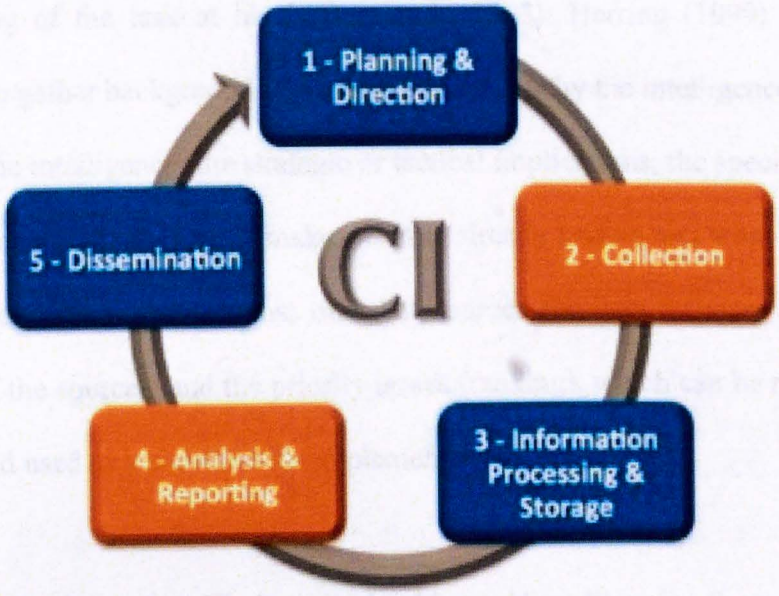

Figure 2.1: The Competitive Intelligence Cycle.

2.4.1 Planning and direction

The first component entails the planning and direction of the CI process, which is critical because it is the point of departure for any CI task. In this stage, the major function is to identify and disseminate key intelligence topics. Botha and Boon (2008) explain that this stage is where planning and giving direction to further intelligence activities take place to fulfil the intelligence needs of decision-makers. Given that CI is a strategic tool, and planning and direction are necessary for strategic planning, this stage is crucial because it determines the success of the CI unit. It is important that managers take time to carefully plan and anticipate possible challenges that may be a risk to the unit.

This is seemingly also a stage that requires research and information gathering because direction needs to be guided by certain existing information. In this phase, it is important for intelligence users and intelligence professionals to have a clear

understanding of the task at hand (Bernhardt, 1993). Herring (1999) encourages enterprises to gather background information such as: why the intelligence is needed; who needs the intelligence; the strategic or tactical implications; the specific decision that the policymaker is trying to make; what is already known and what needs to be gathered; the current assumptions; on what sources the data is based on and the reliability of the sources; and the priority issues (ranking), which can be rephrased as questions and used as a checklist for implementation.

Herring (1999) advises that CI planners should consider addressing the questions as a checklist of what needs to be in place, so that they can ensure successful development and operation of CI. Bernhardt (1993) elaborates that these questions will help the organisation to be proactive in their planning, to anticipate situations and to create possible solutions. More importantly, this stage will enable the organisation to organise suitable staff members for CI operations (Herring, 1999).

2.4.2 Collection

The second component covers the collection of the CI process, whose main activity is to collect corporate intelligence and report. Muller (2006) clarifies that the collection component of the CI process involves the gathering of all information required for interpretation to turn it into intelligence, as well as the steps in the collection process. This stage requires that the CI team filters and interprets data collected in the first stage of the CI process (Muller, 2006).

This stage is not complicated, as it can be available in open sources and by making use of human intelligence (Botha & Boon, 2008). Thus, if the enterprise has a strong

research team, it will be able to collect secondary and primary data regarding the operations of the CI unit. Evidently, this stage depends on the first stage where a strong research team is needed. Botha and Boon (2008) explain that this team is also helpful in interpreting relevant data to turn it into opportunities.

2.4.3 Processing and storage of information

The third component of the CI process encompasses information processing: organisation, systematisation, implementation and maintenance of a mechanism for capturing and storing information (Botha & Boon, 2008). Once information is collected, it will be processed and stored in the relevant information systems of the organisation. If information was stored and processed in the first two stages, then planning and direction, as well as the collection stages would be ineffectual; there would be no point to plan and collect information that will not be processed and stored (Muller, 2006).

2.4.4 Analysing and reporting

This fourth component of the CI process aims to make corporate intelligence both actionable and understandable. Botha and Boon (2008) emphasise that the step of analysing the collected information is to ascertain the implications for the decision-maker. The analysis phase transforms information into intelligence by answering the 'so what?' question (Herring, 1999). In this stage, the CI team contemplates on the way forward regarding the information collected, processed and stored in the other stages (Muller, 2006). The team makes sense of the data and then reports it to the relevant departments that are involved in the CI process.

2.4.5 Dissemination

This fifth and final component of the CI process is concerned about knowledge sharing with other users. This phase leads to the identification of new intelligence needs by users of intelligence and decision-makers, and the intelligence cycle or process is activated again (Botha & Boon, 2008). In this stage, information is distributed to everyone who will use it, especially those who are involved in decision making.

According to Nasri (2012), planning and direction is the most important phase in the CI process. An effective CI process does not try to collect all information, but it rather focusses on issues that are critically important to decision-makers. Nasri (2012) further reiterates that this phase provides the necessary direction to the CI efforts to ensure that the operation focuses on the collection and analysis of key data that is relevant to specific intelligence requirement.

Most scholars outline several stages in the CI process, whilst others identify fewer stages (Nasri 2011). Researchers such as du Toit and Muller (2004), Venter and Tustin (2009), Nasri (2011) and Bartes (2012) caution that without a proper process and structure, it is difficult to develop CI. Thus, there is a need for a common understanding of the CI process by understanding the steps involved in the CI process. Saayman et al. (2008) outline six steps of the CI process, which are depicted in Figure 2.2 below.

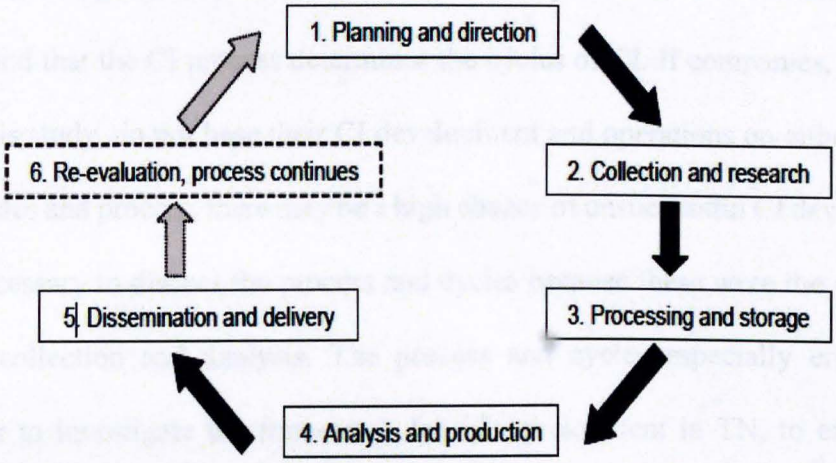

Figure 2.2: Competitive Intelligence cycle (Odendaal, 2004).

In addition, Botha and Boon (2008) identify seven steps of the CI processor cycle as shown in Figure 2.3.

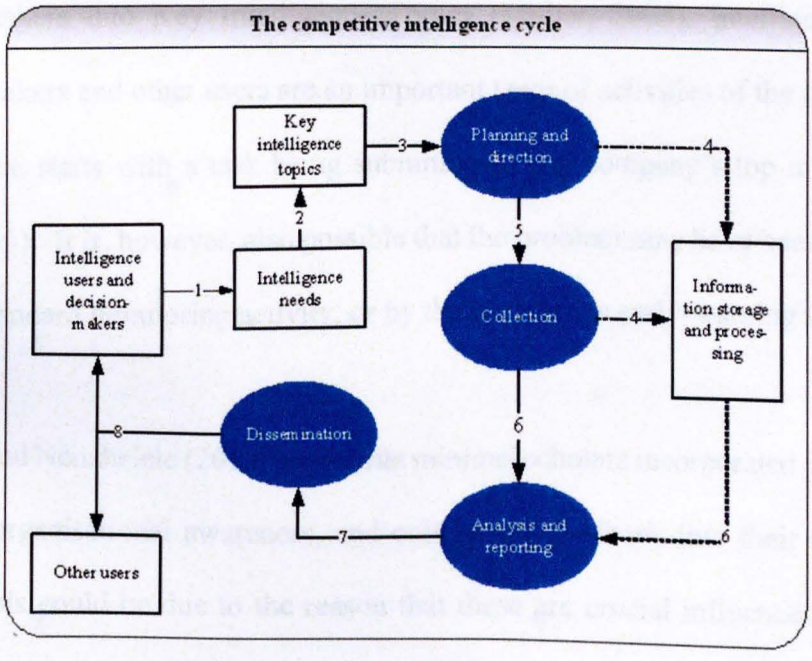

Figure 2.3: The Competitive Intelligence Cycle (Botha & Boom, 2008).

It is evident in figures 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 that the CI cycles are not different from one another, and that the CI process determines the cycles of CI. If companies, TN in the case of this study, do not base their CI development and operations on either three or all the cycles and process, there may be a high chance of unsuccessful CI development. It was necessary to discuss the process and cycles because these were the guidelines for data collection and analysis. The process and cycles especially enabled the researcher to investigate the framework for CI development in TN, to explore the implementation strategies, and to assess the effectiveness of these implementation strategies. Thus, the process and cycles were useful in achieving the objectives of the study.

Intelligence needs and determining Key Intelligence Topics entail discovering the intelligence needs of decision-makers and narrowing down the intelligence needs of decision-makers into Key Intelligence Topics (Muller, 2006). Intelligence users, decision-makers and other users are an important team of activities of the intelligence cycle, which starts with a task being submitted by the company's top management (Nasri, 2011). It is, however, also possible that the problem may have been identified during a standard monitoring activity, or by the company's early-warning system.

Pellissier and Nenzhelele (2012) reveal that minimal scholars incorporated process and structure, organisational awareness, and culture and feedback into their CI process models. This could be due to the reason that these are crucial influences on the CI process, which is evidence that the CI process will expand as per the needs of the decision-makers and the CI users in organisations (Nasri, 2011).

Bartes (2013) sums up that feedback is the concluding part of the basic intelligence cycle of competitive intelligence, and it should be conducted throughout the CI process, and not only at the end of the process. Decision-makers or CI users will either request additional information to the report or they will submit a new task to the Competitive Intelligence unit.

2.5 Advantages of Competitive Intelligence

Anica-Popa and Gucui (2009) summarise the following CI benefits, namely: enhancing organisation's competitiveness, predicting business environment's evolutions, competitors' actions and customers' requirements, and providing improved support for a strategic decision-making process (Anica-Popa & Gucui, 2009). According to Anica-Popa and Gucui (2009, p. 15), the benefits are: it increases analytical skills for managers and the ability to anticipate moves of the other actors from organisation's business environment; enables sharing ideas and knowledge inside the organisation in order to develop new ideas or knowledge, or to integrate the existing into organisation; it helps to discover new potential competitors or customers and supports the starting of new businesses; helps in identifying and analysing new technologies, products and processes that influence organisation's activities and behaviour; identifying and analysing political or legislative standards or regulations that influence organisation's activities and behaviour; and identifying and analysing situations from competitors, customers and suppliers (Anica-Popa & Gucui, 2009).

Du Toit and Sewdass (2014) further acknowledge the following advantages of CI: increased quality of the information received; accelerated decision making; improved systematic understanding of information collection and analysis; improved

effectiveness, increased awareness; improved dissemination of information; improved threat and opportunity identification; and time and cost-saving. Furthermore, Johns and Van Doren (2010) discuss the benefits of CI, namely: differentiation, cohesive marketing communication plans, and pre-selling an idea to the target audience.

2.5.1 Differentiation

During poor economic times, effective CI can be the differentiating factor in the market place (Johns & Van Doren, 2010). When an enterprise is accurately able to assess the competition by gathering competitive information, it is in a better position to build differentiation for the enterprise. It is possible that an enterprise in the competitive set is the low-cost provider and the other enterprise has a superior process for providing the service.

An organisation can, therefore, use this information to accurately assess questions such as: what does the competition provide, and how can the enterprise set itself apart from the competition? Once the business has this information, it can better organise an action plan to enable it to gain a competitive advantage by having a distinct point of differentiation (Johns & Van Doren, 2010).

2.5.2 Cohesive marketing communication plans

Some enterprises scramble to put out counter-response to strictly anecdotal information about a competitor. This approach can result in an enterprise being very unfocused, confusing marketing messages for the customer (Johns & Van Doren, 2010). This makes it difficult for the customer to understand exactly who the enterprise is and what it does because the enterprise has diluted its brand image and identity.

Customers can also become unsure about the enterprise's focus and ability to complete a job (Johns & Van Doren, 2010).

Johns and Van Doren (2010) explain that although customers understand that it is impossible for an enterprise to be fulfilling to everyone, the marketing of a services enterprise has a cumulative effect over time. An enterprise must decide if the feedback it gives contains a clear and consistent message or a hodgepodge of information that has no clear meaning to the customer. What the enterprise knows about the competition will provide information that is required to build a consistent and cohesive marketing message. As the competition changes, the service enterprise should be able to make appropriate changes to its message, based on the needs of the marketplace (Johns & Van Doren, 2010).

2.5.3 Pre-selling an idea to the target audience

According to Wright (2013), competitive strategies and tactics enable a service enterprise to pre-sell to the target audience and to know how and why they should be in business instead of the competition. Mugo, Wanjau, and Ayondo (2012) assert that companies with a robust system are better likely to research and apply Market Intelligence to build credibility with customers. This credibility is demonstrated in the ability to answer questions intelligently, reflecting to customers that the enterprise will provide significant value that is above and beyond the signed service agreement (Mugo, Wanjau, & Ayondo, 2012). It is undoubtedly that businesses apply tactics and strategies to reach out to potential customers. These competitive strategies and tactics enable a service enterprise to pre-sell to the target audience (Wright, 2013). Given that TN is also a service business, it is not an exception that Market and Competitive

Intelligence is advantageous in marketing and sales. Broadly stating, Market Intelligence (MI) enables organisations to determine the four Ps of the marketing mix, namely: pricing place, promotion and product (Mugo, Wanjau, & Ayondo, 2012).

2.6 CI function needs

According to Bose (2008), the value of the CI program can be measured by one of the following factors: accuracy, objectivity, usability, relevance, readiness, and timeliness (p. 3). Accuracy refers to evaluating all sources and data to assess technical error or misperception; whereas usability is the facilitation of ready comprehension and immediate application (Bose, 2008). In addition, relevance is applicable to a decision maker's requirements; and readiness is responsive to existing and contingent intelligence requirements of decision-makers for all levels of the organisation (Bose, 2008). Finally, timeliness is delivered while the content is still actionable under the decision maker's circumstances.

According to Bose (2008), a proper intelligence process and structure allows organisations to effectively and successfully develop CI. Hence, for intelligence to benefit the organisation, managers should meet the following needs, which are divided into five categories, namely: access to decision-making; visibility; links to other parts of the enterprise; funding; and nurturing (du Toit & Muller, 2004, p. 10). Each of these categories will be discussed in the following sections below.

2.6.1 Access to decision-making

The CI unit includes the top management, the staff of the CI unit and line managers in certain functional departments of the organisation (du Toit & Muller, 2004). The fact

that the CI unit consists of various staff members means that the activities of these groups ought to be coordinated to avoid faulty decisions that might be caused by inaccurate or inadequate information. The emphasis on accuracy reflects that it is an essential aspect of CI. Information about competitors alone does not suffice; hence, organisations should have accurate information regarding competitors at large and products specifically. This accurate information is also not enough to ensure the successful development of CI in the organisation.

It is for this reason that du Toit and Muller (2004) confirm that information should be accessible to decision-makers, or those who are involved in the decision-making process. However, it can be daunting for intelligence managers to involve especially senior managers in discussions about intelligent needs (Herring, 1999). Thus, organisations should ensure that top management, the staff of the CI unit and line managers in certain functional departments of the organisation have access to accurate information and that they are involved in the decision-making.

The other way around, organisations should ensure that top management, staff in the CI unit and line managers (who have access to decision making) have access to accurate information (du Toit & Sewdass, 2014). In addition, CI units should include all staff, who have access to accurate information, in the decision-making process because access to decision making and accurate information are important factors in the successful development of CI (Herring, 1999).

Du Toit and Muller (2004) further urge organisations to ensure that there is no loophole for bureaucracy when locating intelligence functions, especially caused by managers'

negative attitudes; members of the CI unit at any hierarchy should be equally respected and their information on CI should be valued. This is because a member in the lower level of the hierarchy may have better access to information about a competitor and its products than top managers. It is possible that ordinary staff and those who are at the bottom level of the hierarchy socialise with staff members of rivalry organisations, who may expose certain information about their products at social gatherings. This information might be more accurate than any formal data that is publicly available, as most companies only publicise selective information with the caution of competitors (Du Toit & Sewdass, 2014).

2.6.2 Visibility

It is important that organisations, through CI units, decide on the level of visibility of their units, and whether the unit should also include outsiders (Du Toit & Muller, 2004). Outsiders may include customers, stakeholders and researchers who directly and indirectly provide information to an organisation (Competitive Intelligence unit). It is up to the organisation or unit to confirm informal information through sources such as market statistics, financial and annual reports or information from other media sources. Given that Intelligence units are legal, unlike industrial espionage, Du Toit and Muller (2004) advises companies to make their Competitive Intelligence units' visible components of their organisation. This advice means that organisations should not treat their CI units privately; they should make it clear that they have a unit that deals with competition and market analysis (Du Toit, 2013).

2.6.3 Links to other parts of the enterprise

Another important CI need function that Du Toit and Muller (2004) suggest is that the organisation of the unit should have strong links to other units and departments of the organisation that might have better access to information that can be transformed into intelligence, and which the CI unit might not be able to access. This link suggests that the functions of the CI unit should communicate and interact with other corporate components in the organisation (Du Toit & Muller, 2004). These statements confirm that no unit or department is an island; hence, unity and communication is essential for successful CI development and operation.

2.6.4 Funding

Organisations should ensure that the CI unit is well funded because it makes the CI unit more attractive to the rest of the organisation if it is funded from an overhead budget (Du Toit & Muller, 2004). Organisations should, therefore, ensure that the CI unit restrains from using chargebacks to develop the market for all services. It is also possible to, at a later stage, have an interdepartmental fee structure (Du Toit & Muller, 2004).

2.6.5 Nurturing

CI is usually a small unit in size that it can often be overlooked and neglected. Du Toit and Muller (2004) dispute against organisations that fail to support the CI unit properly. Therefore, organisations should ensure that they support the CI unit in terms of staff, technology and any required support. For the CI unit to function, it needs trained staff who have background knowledge of information systems (Du Toit & Muller, 2004), technology should be up-to-date, and continuous support should be

provided. Support and nurturing will ensure the efficient and effective development of the CI unit.

2.6.6 Top management support

According to Bose (2008), it is management's responsibility to develop and promote CI within their organisations. It would, therefore, be impossible for the CI unit to successfully carry out its functions without the support of especially top management, because it has the responsibility to make important decisions about operations of the organisation, and it has the power to make decisions that may negatively or positively affect the organisation (Du Toit & Muller, 2004).

However, the role is only significant if management understands that CI is a strategic business tool that should be applied in various business activities, such as formulating new strategies and making difficult business decisions like the decision to enter a new market (Du Toit & Muller, 2004). In addition, Bose (2008) affirms that managers do not sometimes know what to do with CI information, especially when the data is presented qualitatively with well-reasoned, anticipatory judgements regarding strategies and intentions of competitors.

It is, thus, evident that CI data should be actionable and trustworthy because the success of CI operations depends on the support that the unit receives from top management; without it, the CI development and operations will not be successful (Du Toit & Muller, 2004). It is safe to conclude that this function need sums up the other function needs because, for the CI to be visible, linked to other parts of the enterprise

and nurtured, as well as to have access to decision making and to receive funding, there should be support from top management.

2.7 Challenges of Competitive Intelligence

While CI offers an enterprise various benefits, it also faces some challenges such as lack of training, lack of resources, and the inability to provide compelling evidence (Hesford, 2008). From the function needs of CI, it seems that the unit requires so much effort and strategic planning and management for successful development and operations. This required effort could mean that the CI unit is fragile and if enterprises are not cautious, the plan can be futile. The concern remains whether managers are aware of the possible challenges that can hinder the successful development or operation of CI.

These challenges may also be guidelines to ensure that the CI unit does not fail. Muller (as cited in Nzhelele, 2012, p. 12) highlights the following challenges in CI: environment and awareness factors; financial constraints; lack of management participation and visibility; personnel issues; lack of return on investment value; inability to identify critical information needs; lack of effectiveness and timely gathering of relevant information; and lack of training and education in CI. These can perhaps be turned around to function as guidelines of ensuring that CI does not fail.

Additionally, the previously discussed CI function needs can be turned around as weaknesses. If the functions are required for CI to function, one can safely allude that the deprivation of these functions will translate that they will operate as weaknesses. In an elaborated sense, CI functions are access to decision-making, visibility, links to

other parts of industry, funding, support from management, and nurturing (du Toit and Muller, 2004). This explanation can then translate that the possible challenges can be: no access to decision making, unit is not visible to other parts of the industry, insufficient funding, no support from management, and lack of nurturing. These challenges are possible factors that affect the CI unit or the successful implementation of strategies.

2.8 Competitive Intelligence structures

Muller (2009) identifies three basic structures for the intelligence function in an organisation. These structures are the centralised function, the decentralised function, and the mixture function. Each of these structures has different functions and responsibilities, but they all serve the main purpose in CI. Having structures enables companies to determine accountability when CI operations deviate from the strategic plan. Each of these structures is discussed in the sections below.

2.8.1 Centralised function

This function reports to a single corporate entity, where actions such as the collection, interpretation, analysis and communication of CI are assigned to specialised intra-enterprise intelligence or competitor analysis units in order to exploit the synergy created by centralisation (Muller, 2009). Centralised units typically report to a senior corporate officer who is responsible for providing the necessary guidance and assistance for the intelligent process in terms of budgets, personnel and other resources (Muller, 2009). The advantages of centralised units include the ease with which data can be assembled and shared since all divisions transmit their information to a single organising unit.

2.8.2 Decentralised function

This function typically incorporates multiple intelligence units that serve several organisation components (Muller, 2009). These units typically include the distribution of CI professionals throughout the enterprise, where they mainly serve tactical intelligence requirements and seldom provide intelligence to senior management. Any centralised CI unit has the responsibility of coordinating intelligence activities among other intelligence units. The division's intelligence priorities and information are rarely shared with other business units. This is often not an economical model because there is duplication of effort. Furthermore, the model does not support the development of a coordinated and informed view about opportunities and threats (Muller, 2009).

2.8.3 Mixture function

The mixture function combines the features of the centralised and decentralised functions, whereby actions such as the collection, interpretation, analysis and communication of CI are assigned to specialised intra-enterprise intelligence or competitor analysis units in order to exploit the synergy created by centralisation (Muller, 2009). However, the division's intelligence priorities and information are rarely shared with other business units.

2.9 Ethics of Competitive Intelligence

While organisations may collect information about their competitors, digging through competitor's wastebaskets, phone tapping and obtaining documents illegally are unethical practices (Garret, 2011). Sexton (2007) maintains that organisations must consider ethics when collecting information from their competitors. They should consider the methods they use to acquire the information, the privacy, confidentiality

of the information concerned, and the consequences for public interest as a result of the use of the information.

According to Sexton (2007), it is generally accepted that methods of questionable intelligence-gathering fall into three categories: (1) methods involving deceit or some form of misrepresentation; (2) methods involving attempts to influence the judgment of those entrusted with confidential information, particularly offering inducements to reveal information; and (3) methods involving covert surveillance. This means that the methods are questionable tools of CI data collection.

2.10 Theoretical framework

This study used the Key Intelligence Topics (KITs) model to explore TN's CI implementation strategies, using the following categories: Strategic KITs, Early Warning KITs, and Key Player KITs. In addition, the study employed Herring's (1999) Competitive Intelligence Cycle to assess the effectiveness of TN's CI implementation strategies. Finally, the study employed the SWOT analysis to investigate the challenges faced by TN when implementing CI, and to evaluate the strengths of the strategies. Each of the theoretical frameworks is discussed in the following sections below.

2.10.1 Key Intelligent Topics (KITs)

Key Intelligence Topics are necessary to identify CI in an organisation, especially in a world of increased globalisation. The first step of the KITs is to gather information for strategic planning, possible mergers and acquisitions, new market decisions, and pricing decisions (Weiss, 2017). The model was used to investigate how TN gathers Competitive Intelligence information to define their KITs. For instance, some

organisations have Strategy Departments that gather information through surveys, trade publications, analyst reports and database searches, whereas strategic departments of other companies are within the Marketing Department, which uses public information in magazines and newspaper to define KITs (Weiss, 2017).

KITs information is categorised to enable proper analysis and presentation to management. The common KIT classifications are Strategic KITs, Early Warning KITs, and Key Player KITs (Weiss, 2017). Strategic KITs contribute to key decisions that are related to strategic formulations and implementation for the company. These KITs are useful to determine actions such as: investment decisions, global expansion, technological competitiveness, global alliances and/or acquisitions (Reinmoeller & Ansari, 2015).

Early Warning KITs are used to identify forthcoming threats and opportunities for the company in the market, such as new entrant threats, government regulations, untapped market, and any shifts in bargaining power (Weiss, 2017). Finally, Key Player KITs are derived from market rivalries, new entrants, and substitute products (Reinmoeller & Ansari, 2015). However, it is also possible to use this category of KITs to deal with none threatening aspects of CI, such as new suppliers or contractors who have recently entered the market.

2.10.2 Competitive Intelligence Cycle

The other theoretical framework that this study was centred on was Competitive Intelligent Cycle to assess the effectiveness of TN's CI implementation strategies. Effectiveness was measured in terms of how the planning and direction of the Competitive Intelligence are done, how information is collected, how information is processed and stored, how the analysis and reporting take place, and finally how

information is disseminated (Bose, 2008). These phases are linked to one another (Nasri, 2011) because they cannot operate separately.

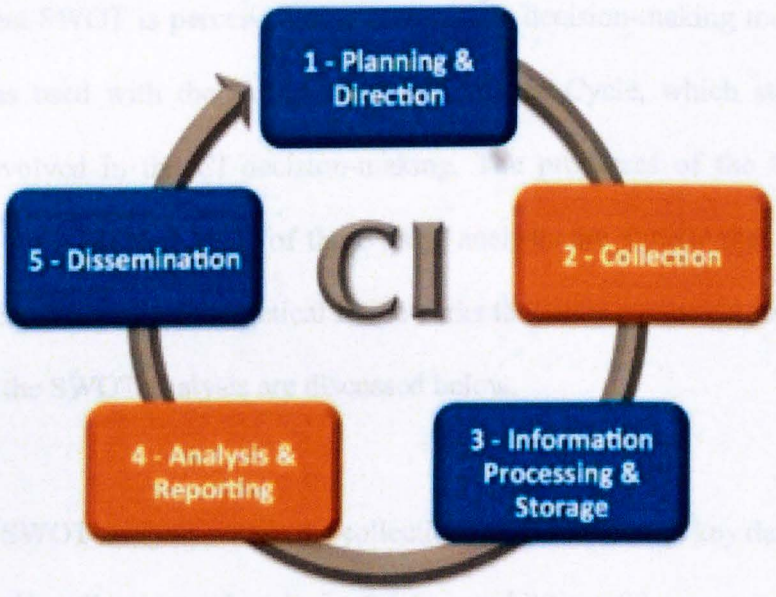

Figure 2.1: The Competitive Intelligence Cycle

2.10.3 SWOT Analysis

The study also employed the SWOT analysis to examine the organisation's CI development framework's strengths and weaknesses, opportunities for growth and improvement, and the threats that the external environment presents to its survival (Gretzky, 2010). CI is an internal matter; hence, SWOT was an appropriate technique because it measures internal matters within an organisation. The technique is also an aspect of strategic planning, which is the core of this study in terms of marketing strategy, which brings the organisation into balance with the external environment and to maintain that balance over time (Gretzky, 2010). If SWOT is used to accomplish this balance by evaluating (new) programs and services in order to maximise organisational performance (Gretzky, 2010), the tool was also suitable to assess the

effectiveness of the CI implementation strategies in CI and to investigate the challenges faced by TN when implementing CI.

To ensure that SWOT is perceived as a preliminary decision-making tool (Gretzky, 2010), it was used with the Competitive Intelligence Cycle, which stipulates the processes involved in the CI decision-making. The processes of the Competitive Intelligence Cycle and the steps of the SWOT analysis are similar that they are an impeccable combination of theoretical frameworks that were congruent for this study. The steps of the SWOT analysis are discussed below.

Step 1 of the SWOT analysis entails the collection and evaluation of key data (Gretzky, 2010). After the collection and analysis of data, capabilities of the organisation or unit are assessed. This step is like the collection process of the Competitive Intelligence Cycle. This step, as a requisite phase, was used to assess whether the collection of CI information in TN is effective, in order to determine the effectiveness of the CI implementation strategies at large.

In Step 2 of the SWOT analysis, the organisation collects and sorts out information into four categories, namely: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Gretzky, 2010). Strengths and weaknesses generally branch from factors within the organisation, whereas opportunities and threats arise from external factors (Gretzky, 2010). This step was useful in examining the factors that affect CI implementation strategies.

Step 3 involves the development of a SWOT matrix for each business alternative under consideration (Gretzky, 2010). In the case of this study, this step formed a basis to analyse the development of the CI SWOT matrix in TN as part of exploring the implementation strategies.

Finally, Step 4 incorporates the SWOT analysis into the decision-making process to determine which business alternative best meets the organisation's overall strategic plan (Gretzky, 2010). This step enabled to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of TN's implementation strategies.

2.11 Conclusion

This chapter presented the overview of the existing literature pertaining to the objectives of the study by discussing topics in the subject of Competitive Intelligence such as: awareness of CI, the processes that are involved in the development of CI, the advantages of CI, the challenges that organisations experience in the CI development and operations, structures, and functions. Despite the minimal local literature in the area of Competitive Intelligence, most of the information was relatable and applicable to the Namibian context, and especially to TN as the focus of this study. Finally, the chapter discussed the theoretical frameworks of the study by explicitly discussing how components were used to collect data. Chapter 3 presents the methodology of the study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3. 1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design, method and approach for the study. The chapter also presents the population, sample and sampling procedure, data collection instruments (tools), the data collection procedure, and how the collected data were analysed. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the ethical considerations to explain how ethical issues and ethical dilemmas were addressed during the data collection.

3.2 Research design

Mouton (2005) describes a research design as a plan of how the researcher intends to conduct the study; whereas, Tustin, Ligthelm, Martins and Van Wyk (2005) define a research design as a plan to be followed to realise the research objectives or hypotheses of a study. From the definitions above, a research design is essential for research because "it facilitates the smooth sailing of the various research operations" (Kothari, 2004). Thus, it was necessary to represent the master plan that specify the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing the required information in this study.

The scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic (Dhawan, 2010) that was used for this study was the case study design, which was appropriate because it is flexible, appropriate and efficient (Kothari, 2004). The design was also suitable because it is congruent to the approach of this study, the qualitative research approach. The qualitative research approach was apposite to this study because it minimised bias and maximised the reliability of the data collected and analysed (Kothari, 2004).

It was important to minimise bias to avoid the assumption that the organisation does not handle the development and operation of CI, and to ensure that information regarding CI operations and the framework were reliable, as it would form the basis of future strategic plans in the organisation. In addition, given that research encloses finding out about something new (Rugg & Petre, 2007), making assumptions and proving unreliable data would make this study futile. Finally, a case study was suitable for this study because it allowed an in-depth study about TN's CI implementation strategies, whereby the findings of the study could not be generalised to other telecommunication corporations in Namibia or other unrelated target populations of the study.

3.3 Population

The population of a study refers to all the people and establishments whose opinion, behaviour, preferences and attitude will yield information for answering the research questions (Tustin et al., 2005). The population of this study was, therefore, all managers of Telecom Namibia's Head Office in Windhoek. Cooper and Schindler (2006) refer to the target population as an entire group of items in which the researcher has an interest. Thus, executives and senior managers were the target population that the researcher had an interest in, and who were able to answer questions regarding CI development and operations.

Despite the fact that those who are not managers and supervisors – but as ordinary staff – would also be knowledgeable about CI, managers are the ones who plan and approve decisions regarding the CI; they are the ones whom staff members report to

regarding CI operations, and they document any information about the developments and implementation.

Even though there are regional managers and supervisors at other TN branches across the country, the researcher was convinced that most strategic decisions are made at the main branch, and then decentralised to other regions across for operations. Moreover, competition does not individually affect regions but TN as an organisation. It was therefore not necessary to include regional branch managers.

3.4 Sample

Given that this study was qualitative in nature, the researcher had to use a different criterion to select participants in order to purposively achieve sample quality. Black (2010) defines purposive sampling as a non-probability sampling method, used when selected elements for the sample, is chosen by the judgment of the researcher. The researcher was assertive that a representative sample could be obtained by using sound judgment, advantageously saving time and money during that data collection process. It is for this reason that the sample was purposively selected.

Purposive sampling makes it possible to effectively select participants who will help the researcher to understand the research problem or research question (Creswell, 2009). This study employed the purposive sampling method, which involved a conscious selection of a certain population group to include in the study (Creswell, 2009).

A sample was selected from the total population of 15 employees in management positions for an accurate representation. A total of 10 participants were purposively sampled for the study. To accurately represent gender, 5 male and 5 female participants were selected for the study.

3.5 Research instruments

This study used a semi-structured interview, using an interview guide to collect primary data, which was structured with the aid of literature and research objectives, as well as the theoretical frameworks. Furthermore, literature in the form of journal articles by other scholars was also reviewed to collect primary and secondary data. This data also enabled the researcher to make sense of primary data. These sources included reviews from the Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia, newspapers, Annual Reports and TN's website, which were also useful in supporting the statement of the problem and the background of the study.

Since the data collection instrument was a personal interview, the researcher as the interviewer was required to generally ask questions in face-to-face contact with the participant (interviewee). However, as Kothari (2004) elucidates, the interviewee was free to ask questions, especially for clarity or repetition. As this was a personal investigation, meaning the researcher as the interviewer collected information personally from the participants (Kothari, 2004), the researcher was on the spot and met the participants. Semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher to freely incorporate open-ended and closed-ended questions because probing was allowed.

3.6 Data collection procedure

Primary data were mainly collected from the semi-structured interviews with employees in management positions at Telecom Namibia Head Office, Windhoek in the Khomas Region. Given that this study was a recollection of data, the researcher briefed the Head of Communications and Public Relations about the fact that data needed to be re-collected through interviews, emphasising on the urgency to re-submit the thesis. After the Head of Communications and Public Relations explained that there was no need to re-send a permission letter, the researcher was able to immediately arrange for the interview sessions – with the assurance of participant availability to avoid delays. The researcher later communicated (telephonically) to the participants about their various availability slots in order to schedule for the interview accordingly.

After the interview schedules were set up, the researcher reviewed previous data collection instruments to re-use themes that were still relevant for the interview guide. Initially, the researcher used questionnaires for data collection. The questionnaire was helpful in that it enabled the researcher to derive the questions for the semi-structured interview. In addition, interview questions were derived from the objectives of the study. These objectives were also helpful to direct the data analysis and interpretation. Moreover, data were collected from secondary sources such as annual reports and reviews that were identified during the literature review.

The interviews lasted for a week, whereby two of the ten participants were interviewed per day. The interviews were conducted at Telecom Namibia, Head Office in Windhoek; the researcher was allocated the boardroom for a maximum three hours, which were fortunately not fully utilised, as each of the interview sessions lasted for a

maximum 30 minutes. Interviewing two participants per day, allowed the researcher to reflect on each of the sessions to identify gaps in the responses of the interviewed participants and probe in the following sessions with other participants.

The interview sessions were recorded using the phone voice recorder, and they were saved according to the numerical coding of the participants. This numerical coding means that the participants were numbered from Participant 1-10, which is how they were referred to in the data presentation for the researcher to maintain anonymity for ethical reasons. This ethical consideration was clearly communicated to the participants for assurance, and they were also aware that they were being recorded during the session.

3.7 Data analysis

Data were analysed using Key Intelligence Topics (KITs) model to explore TN's CI implementation strategies, using the following categories: Strategic KITs, Early Warning KITs and Key Player KITs. In addition, the study employed Herring's (1999) Competitive Intelligence Cycle to assess the effectiveness of TN's CI implementation strategies. Finally, the study employed the SWOT analysis to investigate the challenges faced by TN when implementing CI and to evaluate the strengths of the strategies.

The data were classified according to themes that were derived from the research objectives, literature review and the theoretical framework. The themes were mainly: implementation strategies, factors that affect implementation, challenges that the organisation faces during implementation and the strengths of the implementation

strategies. Moreover, the data were analysed using primary and secondary data comparisons.

O'Reilly and Kiyimba (2015) justify re-analysing qualitative secondary data in three modalities, namely: formal data sharing from publicly available data, informal data sharing between researchers, and reuse of one's own data (p. 132). In this study, the modality that was used as the formal data sharing from publicly available data. The researcher accessed data from sources such as reviews by the Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia and TN's Annual Reports, which were subjected to as secondary analysis.

O'Reilly and Kiyimba (2015) further emphasise on the need for researchers to ensure that secondary data is well documented and eligible for sharing. The researcher ensured that the secondary data were ethical and legal for sharing – hence, assuring eligibility as advised by O'Reilly and Kiyimba (2015). Secondary data analysis was an appropriate method for this study because it is cost-effective and convenient, and it is "arguably a credible approach for generating knowledge" (O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015, p. 133). Finally, the method was suitable for the study because it allowed the researcher to view the data with some detachment, which would have been a challenge to only rely on originally collected data.

3.8 Ethical consideration

The researcher was granted permission by the postgraduate committee of the University of Namibia to conduct the study. Furthermore, the researcher obtained a permission letter from TN Head of Corporate Communications and Public Relations

(Appendix 2) to obtain information from the participants. Moreover, the researcher practised the anonymity of the participants by referring to them as Participant 1-10 throughout the study. The researcher ensured confidentiality of the data obtained; hence, data were solely used for the purpose of the study.

The data were kept safely: they were copied to the computer and deleted from the phone. The data will be destroyed after the completion of the study – when examiners have assured the satisfaction of the thesis. Finally, the participants voluntarily participated in the study, and they were free to withdraw from the interview at any stage of the session. To familiarise participants with the study, the researcher prepared a letter of informed consent (Appendix 1). Finally, the data collected were used purely for academic purposes, and the study was carried out with honesty, objectivity and carefulness.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research design, method and approach for the study, as well as the population, sample and sampling procedure, data collection instruments (tools), the data collection procedure and how the collected data were analysed. Furthermore, the chapter discussed the ethical considerations to explain how ethical issues and ethical dilemmas were addressed during the data collection. The following chapter, Chapter 4, presents the findings of the qualitative data that were obtained from interviews and secondary data analysis.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the data from the semi-structured interviews with 10 employees in management positions at Telecom Namibia who were purposively selected for the study. Given that the study was a recollection of data, requiring timeous re-submission, the researcher only included participants from the TN Windhoek branch. This population was justified by the fact that TN mainly functions as a centralised function, whereby most decisions are made in Windhoek because information about the competitors affects TN as an organisation and not individual branches. Thus, the researcher was able to collect the required data from the 10 participants in Windhoek to represent TN.

The main objective of the study was to explore the CI implementation strategies of Telecom Namibia. Furthermore, the study sought to attain the following objectives: to assess the effectiveness of TN's CI implementation strategies; to examine the factors that affect TN when implementing the CI strategies, and to investigate the challenges faced by TN when implementing CI. These objectives formed the themes for data collection and presentation of findings, namely TN's CI implementation strategies, the effectiveness of TN's CI strategies, challenges faced by TN during CI implementation, and factors that affect the CI implementation process.

4.2 TN's CI implementation strategies

4.2.1 TN's CI structures

In order to determine TN's implementation strategies, all the interviewed participants were asked about the characteristics of TN's CI structures. Muller (2009) identifies three basic structures for the intelligence function in an organisation, namely the centralised function, the decentralised function, and the mixture function. Even though each of these structures has different functions and responsibilities, they all serve the main purpose in CI. This question was necessary to establish who is accountable when CI operations deviate from the strategic plan.

Most (7) of the interviewed participants mentioned that TN's CI structure is characterised by the centralised function, whereas two (2) of the participants responded that TN's CI structure is characterised by the decentralised functions, and only one (1) of the participants responded that the structure is made up of the mixed-function. Thus, the organisation's CI structure is mainly centralised.

4.2.2 Key Intelligent Topics as a CI implementation strategy/process

The main objective of this study was to explore TN's implementation strategies and to determine the effectiveness of these strategies. Even though different organisations employ various strategies to gather information pertaining to KITs (Weiss, 2017), this study was mainly interested in how TN gathers information to develop CI according to the common KITs categories. A total of 10 participants in management positions were interviewed because they were deemed to be directly involved in the decision-making process. They were mainly asked which strategies or processes TN employs to implement Competitive Intelligence, and their responses were classified according

to the categories of Key Intelligent Topics (KITs): Strategic KITs, Early Warning KITs, and Key Player KITs (Reinmoeller & Ansari, 2015). The semi-structured interviews were the source of data collection to explore TN's CI implementation strategies, which was the main objective of this study.

4.2.2.1 Strategic KITs as a CI implementation strategy/process

The first step of the KITs is to gather information for strategic planning, possible mergers and acquisitions, new market decisions, pricing decisions, etc. (Weiss, 2017), which is, therefore, the first step of CI implementation strategy. This process contributes to key decisions that are related to strategic formulations and implementation for the company, and they are useful in determining actions such as: investment decisions, global expansion, technological competitiveness, global alliances and/or acquisitions (Reinmoeller & Ansari, 2015).

When asked about Tn's CI implementation strategies, Participant 1 responded:

"*Our Strategic Plan includes CI because we are very much aware of the competition, especially with the new establishments of companies and products, and technology is advancing fast*".

From this response, it is evident that TN's Strategic Plan is a CI implementation strategy. When probed to elaborate on how the Strategic Plan is employed as a CI implementation strategy, Participant 2 explained that the Strategic Plan enables the organisation to "*especially make investment decisions, such as expanding into other regions or tapping into a new market*".

Participant 6 responded that the organisation's CI strategy is clearly stipulated in the company's mission statement, which is *"to be Namibia's most preferred service provider of world-class standards"*. When probed to explain how the vision statement translates to a CI implementation strategy, Participant 8 responded that *"a business can only be the most preferred when it beats anyone else in the market; therefore, TN strives for a high competition to realise this vision"*.

Similarly, Participant 3 responded that *"the mission statement reflects the Telecom Namibia's CI strategy and plan, which is to provide competitive rates to customers"*.

The researcher confirmed that TN's mission is to "anticipate and understand the telecommunication/information needs and wants of our customers. We will address these needs and wants through the development of solutions, sales and support of quality electronic voice, data, image and text services at competitive rates'' (TN Annual Report, 2017, p. 4). Furthermore, TN Annual Report (2017) states that the company's vision is "to be Namibia's most preferred, high-performance information communication technology service provider of world-class standards" (p. 4).

Clearly, TN employs Strategic KITs to determine pricing decisions and decisions about new mergers. This was emphasised by Participant 4, who stated that *"the company is very CI conscious, which is why it was able to identify an opportunity to merge with Cell One*".

None (0) of the 10 participants, however, explained how the organisation does not only limit itself to the Namibian market in its CI strategy and as clearly side lined by the vision statement. It seems that the expansion is not a global expansion/acquisition but

rather a regional expansion and acquisition within Namibia. Weiss (2017) explains that awareness and consideration of global alliances is one of the strategic KITs of CI, which TN, unfortunately, does not apply in its strategies, and it can translate as a threat in other sections of the KITs that will be discussed later in this chapter.

The participants were further probed to explain how TN formally implements CI plans, and they responded as follows. According to Participant 5, "*CI is implemented at Annual General Meetings and other occasional departmental meetings, where information on market research is tabled and awareness is created. Most strategies are also discussed at board meetings by the Board of Directors when they discuss short-term and long-term goals*".

Participant 7 responded that TN's CI strategies are both determined by proactiveness and reluctance. When probed to explain how proactiveness and reluctance is practised as a CI implementation strategy, Participant 9 responded that "*merging with Cell One was one of the proofs that TN is proactiveness is TN's implementation strategies, and reluctance is proven by the fact that the organisation is sceptical about acquisition in the current state of the economy*".

Finally, Participant 10 responded that TN *"is proactive to CI implementation because it has created departments such as Corporate Communications and Public Relations, and a department for Internal Audit and Risk Management. We also use the Balance Scorecard (KPIs) through the collaboration of all units and departments*".

4.2.2.2 Early Warning KITs as a CI implementation strategy/process

Early Warning KITs are used to identify forthcoming threats and opportunities for the company in the market, such as new entrant threats, government regulations, untapped market, and any shifts in bargaining power (Weiss, 2017). In order to explore TN's CI implementation strategies, the researcher also classified the data from the semi-structured interviews according to Early Warning KITs. Regarding government regulations, the study found that the organisation's processes apply Early Warning KITs to identify new entrants as stated by Participant nine's (9) explanation on the reluctance and proactiveness of the organisation.

Regarding government regulations, Participant 10 explained that "*...we also have the Corporate Governance, Legal Services and Regulatory Affairs to maximise the long-term value of the company*". This means that TN's Early Warning KITs for CI implementation include the establishment of the above-stated department. Furthermore, the study found that early warnings are not always directly identified but sometimes through other company performance evaluations such as KPIs and Score Cards, or through the SWOT analysis. Participant 3 responded that "*even though TN is proactive, sometimes we are forced to find out what is going on the market when reflecting on performance or through the SWOT analysis or the Balance Score Card*".

When probed to explain how the company reflects on performance, Participant 7 responded that "*decline in sales or profits can be a great indicator that something is going on in the market, and the company quickly carries out formal and informal market research*".

4.2.2.3 Key Player KITs as a CI implementation strategy/process

Finally, Key Player KITs are derived from market rivalries, new entrants, and substitute products (Reinmoeller & Ansari, 2015). However, it is also possible to use this category of KITs to deal with none threatening aspects of CI, such as new suppliers or contractors who have just entered the market. Data were classified according to this theme to understand TN's CI implementation strategies. The study found that the organisation is fully aware of market rivalry even though they do not refer to them as such.

Two of the participants (Participant 3 and 5) were probed to explain whether after Cell One, as previously mentioned, there are other rivalries in the market. Participant 3 responded as follows: "*The ICT industry in general and the telecommunications industry to be specific is growing fast. For example, there is Paratus Telecom that is slowly becoming a preferred internet provider, and then there is the master competitor, MTC, that I do not even have to mention because it is on the race with us*".

Finally, Participant 5 responded that: "*TN is aware that in addition to MTC, there are other players in the market such as MTN and Paratus Telecom that can pose as threats to TN*".

4.3 Effectiveness of TN's CI implementation strategies

To assess the effectiveness of TN's CI implementation strategy, the participants were asked who foresees CI in Telecom. This information enabled the researcher to establish whether there is a formal CI unit in Telecom Namibia and whether the present

unit is effective. This information was part of determining the effectiveness of CI structures because a CI unit determines the success of the operations (Weiss, 2017). Five (5) of the 10 participants responded that the Head of the Commercial and entire marketing team are responsible for overseeing the CI functions in Telecom Namibia. Two (2) of the participants answered that the Sales Channels, such as Corporate, Wholesale and Retail Sales Channels. are responsible for overseeing the CI effectiveness due to their daily interactions with customers and other stakeholders in the market. Three (3) of the participants responded that all departments are responsible for overseeing CI functions.

This inconsistency regarding who is responsible for CI functions gave the researcher the impression that there is no single department in TN that is responsible for CI functions. This made the researcher probe the participants to directly answer as to whether there is no formal CI unit in the organisation. All the participants responded that there is no single unit for CI but "*It is the responsibility of all managers to carry out CI functions*" (Participant 4).

Furthermore, the participants were asked to explain the CI implementation stages/phases. The responses were classified according to the Competitive Intelligence Cycle as the theoretical basis that guides the development of CI (Bose, 2008). Herring, (1999) outlines the five processes: planning and direction, collection, information processing and storage, analysis and reporting, and dissemination (p. 7).

Participant 4 responded that "*the CI process starts with identifying that there is a need for market research, and that is when the planning for data collection begins to guide the relevant departments on the way forward*".

Participant 6 explained that "*a meeting or many meetings take place for management to plan and direct operations related to marketing research because even after the information is obtained, managers need to meet to discuss and strategize how to approach the situation*".

Participant 2 confidently alluded that "*Planning is a definite stage and it directs implementation or the required action*".

When probed to explain how CI data is disseminated, Participant 8 responded that "*the information is communicated to relevant parties who are affected by the situation or from whom action is required*".

The effectiveness of the phases/stages as a reflection of TN's CI structures will be discussed in the data analysis chapter. It was not possible to ask the participants to rate the effectiveness of the strategies. The data were analysed using the Weiss (2017) Competitive Intelligence Cycle to explain the importance of each of the phases. When the important phases are not implemented, it reflects the ineffectiveness of the entire CI implementation strategy.

4.4 Challenges faced by TN during CI implementation

Another objective of the study was to investigate the challenges faced by TN when implementing CI in the organisation. The participants were directly asked to state the challenges that the organisation faces when implementing CI. Their responses varied as presented below:

Participant 3, 6, and 10 responded that the main challenge faced by TN was that there is no specific department that is responsible for CI operations "*which makes it difficult for any department to just execute CI duties when they have other duties and responsibilities*," (Participant 6).

Based on the data from the semi-structured interviews, the study outlined the following challenges according to participant responses:

Participant 3: "*Lack of employee training and education about CI*" and "*lack of support for CI activities in the company*".

Participant 6: "*There is no active participation in information collection*".

Participant 1: "*Information is not disseminated across the organisation but only to certain employees in management positions*"

Participant 10: "*There is no formal CI collection process*".

Participant 2: "*The company does not collect competitive information from various sources*".

Participant 5, 7 and 4: "*There is a lack of skilled human capacity; poor resources; budget constraints*".

Participant 8: "*Poor planning; ineffective CI policies and procedures of CI processes; there is a lack of employee awareness*".

4.5 Factors that affect TN's CI implementation strategies

Another objective of the study was to examine the factors that affect TN's CI implementation strategies. The participants responded that the main factors are funding and support from top management. All the participants responded that funding and management involvement affects CI implementation.

When probed to explain how funding and support is a factor, Participant 8 explained that "*when top management supports the CI functions, it is more likely to understand the need to fund its operations*".

Participant 5 further acclaimed that "*CI requires a lot of market research and data collection formally and informally; this is expensive, so without support and funding, it will not be possible*".

4.6 Strengths of TN's CI implementation strategies

The last objective of the study was to evaluate the strengths of the CI implementation strategies. It was not possible to directly obtain this data from the participants because it would require them to rate themselves, and this data would not be objective. To further avoid being subjective, the researcher used the SWOT analysis to analyse the strategies in order to identify the strengths.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings of the data on TN's implementation strategies. The data were presented using the following themes: TN's implementation strategies, the effectiveness of the implementation strategies, challenges faced by TN during implementation, strengths of the implementation strategies and the factors that influence the implementation strategies. Chapter 5 presents the analysis of data according to the KITs, CI Cycle and the SWOT analysis.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF TN'S CI IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

5.1 Introduction

This study sought to investigate the framework for CI development in TN, explore TN's current CI implementation strategies, assess the effectiveness of the CI implementation strategies, evaluating the challenges faced by the organisation when implementing CI, and to examine the factors that influence the implementation of CI in TN. Data were analysed using the Key Intelligence Topics (KITs) model to explore TN's CI implementation strategies, using the following categories: Strategic KITs, Early Warning KITs, and Key Player KITs. In addition, the study employed Herring's (1999) Competitive Intelligence Cycle to assess the effectiveness of TN's CI implementation strategies. Finally, the study employed the SWOT analysis to investigate the challenges faced by TN when implementing CI, and to evaluate the strengths of the strategies.

The data were classified according to themes that were derived from the research objectives, literature review and the theoretical frameworks. The themes were mainly: implementation strategies, factors that affect implementation, challenges that the organisation faces during implementation, and the strengths of the implementation strategies. Moreover, the data were analysed using primary and secondary data comparisons.

5.2 TN's CI implementation strategies

The main objective of this study was to explore TN's implementation strategies to determine the effectiveness of the strategies. Even though different organisations have various ways to gather information pertaining to KITs (Weiss, 2017), this study was mainly interested in how TN gathers information to develop CI, which determined whether strategies are aligned to the Competitive Intelligence Cycle and common KIT categories. A total of 10 participants in management positions were interviewed because they were deemed to be directly involved in the decision-making process.

Using the Key Intelligence Topics, the study was able to investigate the framework for CI development in TN from the three categories of KITs: Strategic KITs, Early Warning KITs, and Key Player KITs (Reinmoeller & Ansari, 2015). The semi-structured interviews were the source of data collection to explore TN's CI implementation strategies, which was the main objective of this study.

5.2.1 Strategic KITs

The first step of the KITs is to gather information for strategic planning, possible mergers and acquisitions, new market decisions, pricing decisions, etc. (Weiss, 2017). The study found that TN does not make timeous investment decisions in terms of global expansion and technological competitiveness or global alliances like other telecommunication operators, such as Paratus andMTN. which strives to branch out to external regions. TN rather operates and has been operating as a Namibian network operator in Namibia without seemingly a plan to operate in other countries.

This poses a threat to the company because emerging network operators like MTN and Paratus might take over and overpower the TN to dominate the Namibian telecommunications industry. This threat is practical because MTN Namibia is the process of establishment. The fact that TN does not base its CI framework on the Strategic KITs category means that the enterprise will face the threat of technological competitiveness in the telecommunications industry.

Strategic KITs contribute to key decisions that relate to strategic formulations and implementation for the company, and they determine actions such as: investment decisions, global expansion, technological competitiveness, global alliances and/or acquisitions (Weiss, 2017). It is for this reason that TN faces a threat in terms of investment decisions.

5.2.2 Early Warning KITs

In terms of Early Warning KITs, the study found that TN does base its framework on forthcoming threats and opportunities, especially after the emergence of MTC and then Cell One as a mobile operator that offered Namibians a choice in the cellular communications market but also provided competition to Telecom and MTC. Cell One's occurrence was an eye-opener to TN regarding the competition in the industry.

MTC did not seem to have bothered TN much because the two were uniquely different in their operations. However, with the emergence of Cell One came to a realisation of a shift in bargaining power that TN decided to "gang up" with Cell One against MTC to operate as one.

In terms of government regulations, which are an aspect of this category of KITs, the Namibian government prohibits anti-competitive agreements and the abuse of dominant position because as a democracy, the country practises democracy in all areas.

5.2.3 Key Player KITs

The study found that TN does not base its CI framework on this category of KITs. Despite the situation of Cell One emerging into the telecommunications and posing threats as a new competition that TN had to buy the operator out, the study found that the enterprise does not base its CI framework on this category of KITs. There have been new entrants like Paratus Telecom, which is a choice of telecommunication services to Namibians, and soon enough, MTN will start operations as a market rivalry and service provider to Namibians.

5.3 Effectiveness of TN's CI implementation strategies

The second objective of this study was to assess TN's current CI implementation strategies. The data from the semi-structured interviews were analysed according to the Competitive Intelligence Cycle, which is the theoretical basis that guides the development of CI (Bose, 2008) and the theoretical framework of this study. Herring, (1999) outlines the five processes: planning and direction, collection, information processing and storage, analysis and reporting, and dissemination.

5.3.1 Planning and direction

Botha and Boon (2008) explain that this stage is where planning and giving direction to further intelligence activities take place to fulfil the intelligence needs of decision-

makers. They sought to determine whether TN's current CI implementation strategies involves the stage of planning and giving direction to further intelligence activities.

The results of the study revealed that TN does not have a formalised Competitive Intelligence collection process, which means that the intelligence activities are not proactively planned, but activities are rather planned as a solution to threats when they occur. This confirms the finding in the framework that TN does not incorporate the Early Warning KITs to identify forthcoming threats and opportunities, new competition threats, government regulations, untapped market, and shifts and bargaining power. All these aspects of the KITs of Early Warning KITs influence the Competitive Intelligence Cycle, which means that the planning and direction should take these factors into consideration.

5.3.2 Collection

Results from the semi-structured interview revealed that TN conducts various forms of market research; that TN encourages employees to provide competitive information in the collection process of the Competitive Intelligence Cycle; and that TN provides enough ways for employees to report any competitive information. In addition, the interviews revealed that TN collects information on competitors and analyses it. Moreover, the study found that TN does not collect CI information from various sources. The study also found that TN does not ensure that collected information is credible and valuable to the organisation and that this information does not address the needs of the organisation.

5.3.3 Information processing and storage

This component of the CI process encompasses information processing, organisation, systematisation, implementation and maintenance of a mechanism for capturing and storing information (Botha & Boon, 2008). The results reveal that TN makes use of the collected information.

5.3.4 Analysis and reporting

Botha and Boon (2008) emphasise that the step of analysing the collected information is to ascertain the implications for the decision-maker. Given that the analysis phase transforms information into intelligence, the study was interested to know whether TN transforms CI information to make it actionable and understandable. The findings revealed that TN makes use of the collected CI information for strategic planning, which is analysis and reporting. This finding is also confirmed by the results that TN analyses collected information on competitors.

5.3.5 Dissemination

This phase leads to the identification of new intelligence needs by users of intelligence and decision-makers, and the intelligence cycle or process is activated again (Botha & Boon, 2008). The study was interested to explore whether the information is disseminated after it has been collected, processed and stored, and then analysed for reporting. Information is mostly disseminated to top management, who are expected to communicate this information with those who are involved in the CI development and operations. However, the results from the semi-structured interviews revealed that reports on collected data regarding CI are not disseminated to the responsible divisions with implementation actions.

5.4 Challenges and strengths of TN's CI implementation strategies

In order to investigate the challenges faced by TN when implementing CI and to evaluate the strengths of the implementation strategies, the study used the SWOT analysis. By looking at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, the researcher was able to determine the strengths and challenges.

The results revealed that the collection and the information processing and storage are the strengths of the implementation strategies, whereas planning and direction, analysis and reporting, as well as reporting are the weaknesses (challenges) of the implementation strategies. These weaknesses pose a threat to the effectiveness of the implementation strategies and CI development and operations in general. The analysis and evaluation of the implementation strategies prove that TN faces many challenges that could hinder the development and operations, which could also cause a threat to the success of the organisation.

5.6 Factors that affect TN's CI implementation strategy

The study found that the main factor that affects TN's CI implementation is funding or support from management. Furthermore, the study found that TN is not proactive in its CI decisions and activities, and the weakness in the implementation strategies, especially poor planning and directing, as well as information processing and storage cause the organisation to poorly implement CI.

Finally, the study found that TN also implements CI by applying KITs to make new market decisions and pricing decisions. The study, however, found that TN only

implements CI strategies when the new market is risky that the company must research the existing products and their prices, in order to make the right decisions.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented the analysis of the findings as presented in Chapter 4, which were collected with semi-structured interviews. Data were analysed and discussed according to the themes of presentation, but especially with the models that formed the basis for data collection, namely: KITs, Competitive Intelligence Cycle and the SWOT analysis. The data were analysed and discussed opposite to the objectives of the study. The following chapter concludes the study and makes relevant recommendations.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The main aim of this study was to investigate the framework for CI development in TN. Data were analysed using the Key Intelligent Topics model, the Competitive Intelligence Cycle, and the SWOT analysis. Respondents were from TN's main business unit (Head Office) in Windhoek, Namibia. As deliberated in Chapter 1, the main aim of the study was to explore TN's CI implementation strategies. The research was qualitative by nature and a semi-structured interview was the data collection instrument.

6.2 TN's CI implementation strategies

The main objective of this study was to explore TN's implementation strategies to determine the effectiveness of the strategies. Even though different organisations have various ways to gather information pertaining to KITs (Weiss, 2017), this study was mainly interested in how TN gathers information to develop CI, which determined whether strategies are aligned to the Competitive Intelligence Cycle and common KIT categories. A total of 10 participants were interviewed in the management or supervision positions because they were deemed to be directly involved in the decision-making process.

Using the Key Intelligence Topics, the study was able to investigate the framework for CI development in TN from the three categories of KITs: Strategic KITs, Early Warning KITs, and Key Player KITs (Reinmoeller & Ansari, 2015). The semi-

structured interviews were the source of data collection to explore TN's CI implementation strategies, which was the main objective of this study.

6.2.1 Strategic KITs

The study found that TN does not make timeous investment decisions in terms of global expansion and technological competitiveness or global alliances like other telecommunication operators, such as MTN, which strives to branch out to external regions and strengthen the Wholesale sales channel. TN rather operates and has been operating as a Namibian network operator in Namibia without seemingly a plan to operate in other countries.

6.2.2 Early Warning KITs

In terms of Early Warning KITs, the study found that TN does base its framework on forthcoming threats and opportunities, especially after the emergence of MTC and then Cell One as a mobile operator that offered Namibians a choice in the cellular communications market but also provided competition to Telecom and MTC. Cell One's occurrence was an eye-opener to TN regarding the competition in the industry.

6.2.3 Key Player KITs

The study found that TN does not base its CI framework on this category of KITs. Despite the situation of Cell One emerging into the telecommunications and posing threats as a new competition that TN had to buy the operator out, the study found that the enterprise does not base its CI framework on this category of KITs.

6.3 Effectiveness of TN's CI implementation strategies

6.3.1 Planning and direction

The results of the study revealed that TN does not have a formalised competitive intelligence collection process, which means that the intelligence activities are not proactively planned, but activities are rather only planned as a solution to threats when they occur. This confirms the finding in the framework that TN does not incorporate the Early Warning KITs to identify forthcoming threats and opportunities, new competition threats, government regulations, untapped market, and shifts and bargaining power.

6.3.2 Collection

Results from the semi-structured interview revealed that TN conducts various forms of market research; that TN encourages employees to provide competitive information in the collection process of the Competitive Intelligence Cycle, and that TN provides enough ways for employees to report any competitive information. In addition, the interviews revealed that TN collects information on competitors and analyses it.

Furthermore, the study found that TN does not have a formalised CI collection process, based on the findings of the study. Moreover, the study found that TN does not collect CI information from various sources. The study also found that TN does not ensure that collected information is credible and valuable to the organisation and that this information does not address the needs of the organisation.

6.3.3 Information processing and storage

The results reveal that TN makes use of formally and informally collected information regarding CI. This information guides the company in decisions regarding new markets or products. Furthermore, the data guides the company regarding pricing and packaging.

6.3.4 Analysis and reporting

The findings revealed TN makes use of the collected CI information for strategic planning, which is analysis and reporting. This finding is also confirmed by the results that TN analyses collected information on competitors.

6.3.5 Dissemination

The study was interested to explore whether the information is disseminated after it has been collected, processed and stored, and then analysed for reporting. Information is mostly disseminated to top management, who are expected to communicate this information with those who are involved in the CI development and operations. However, the results from the semi-structured interviews revealed that reports on collected data regarding CI are not disseminated to the responsible divisions with implementation actions.

6.4 Challenges and strengths of TN's CI implementation strategies

The results revealed that the collection and the information processing and storage are the strengths of the implementation strategies, whereas planning and direction, analysis and reporting, as well as reporting are the weaknesses (challenges) of the implementation strategies. These weaknesses pose a threat to the effectiveness of the

implementation strategies and CI development and operations in general. The analysis and evaluation of the implementation strategies prove that TN faces many challenges that could hinder the development and operations, which could also cause a threat to the success of the organisation.

6.5 Factors that affect TN's CI implementation strategy

The study found that the main factor that affects TN's CI implementation is funding or support from management. Furthermore, the study found that TN is not proactive in its CI decisions and activities, and the weakness in the implementation strategies, especially poor planning and directing, as well as information processing and storage cause the organisation to poorly implement CI. Finally, the study found that TN also implements CI by applying KITs to make new market decisions and pricing decisions. The study, however, found that TN only implements CI strategies when the new market is risky that the company must research the existing products and their prices, in order to make effective decisions.

6.6 Recommendations

Based on in-depth investigations and explorations, the study makes the following recommendations to improve its CI implementation strategies:

6.6.1 TN should establish a unit specifically for CI operations.

6.6.2 Management should ensure enough financial support and involvement in CI operations.

6.6.3 Information should be disseminated to every employee in the organization.

6.6.4 Employees should be fully trained on CI functions.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter concluded the study on exploring TN's CI implementation by summarising the findings of the study. Finally, the chapter also made recommendations that TN or any organisation in the telecommunications industry can base their CI implementation strategies on, or overcome any challenges that they may face during the implementation and operations of CI.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: consent letter

23 April 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Ester T. Shimwafeni, an MBA in Management Strategy student at the Namibia Business School (NBS) of the University of Namibia. As part of the requirements, I am conducting a study, entitled **Exploring Implementation Strategies of CI in the Namibian Telecommunications Industry: A Case of Telecom Namibia**, with the aim to study the implementation strategies that TN employs to enhance Business intelligence. The study may create awareness in TN about the effectiveness of its strategies.

Participation in this study is voluntary, and all responses to this interview will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity. More importantly, the data obtained from this study will be used only for the purpose of this study. The interview session will last approximately 25-30 minutes.

Yours Sincerely,

.....

Ester Tweuhanga Shimwafeni

MBA student: Namibia Business School (UNAM)

Appendix 2: Permission letter

Corporate Communications & Public Relations Division
Head Office, 9 Lüderitz Street
PO Box 297, Windhoek, Namibia
Tel: (+264 61) **201 2484**
Fax: (+264 61) **2012074**
E-mail: oiva@telecom.na
Website: www.telecom.na

27th April 2018

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF AUTHORISATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

This letter serves as authorisation to Ms Ester T. Shimwafeni to conduct the research project entitled "Understanding the process of developing Competitive Intelligence in organizations, Case study: Telecom Namibia" at our organisation, in fulfillment of her MBA dissertation requirement to obtain the qualification.

Upon a review of the request by the student, we are glad to offer her an opportunity to conduct the study in our organisation. All interviews, filed surveys, observations around the business and the distribution of questionnaires are approved and will be duly supervised by the researcher.

If you have any concerns or require additional information, feel free to contact our Department. Thank you

Yours faithfully,

OIVA ANGULA
HEAD: CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Appendix 3: Interview guide

1. Which of the following functions characterise TN's CI structures?

a. centralised function.

b. Decentralised function.

c. Mixed function.

2. Which strategies does TN use when implementing?
3. What are the stages/phases of CI implementation in TN?
4. Who oversees CI in the organisation?
5. How does TN create awareness about CI to employees?
6. How does the company benefit from CI?
7. What challenges does the organisation face when implementing CI?
8. How do you, as management, maintain ethical correctness during CI processes?