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Competitive Intelligence and Competitiveness of Quoted Mobile Telecommunication Firms in Nigeria

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Abstract: *This study investigated the effect of competitive intelligence on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine the effect of customer intelligence, marketing intelligence, technological intelligence, strategic intelligence, product intelligence and competitor intelligence on competitiveness (market share and sales growth) of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria. A cross sectional design was adopted for the study with a sample size of 387 generated scientifically using Yamene (1967) formula. The study used a questionnaire to collect data, and simple random sampling was used to select participants, with an overall average reliability index of 0.925 and a validity index suitable at 0.791. Descriptive statistics (frequency counts, percentage ratings, mean scores, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (correlations and regression analysis) were used to analyze the data that was gathered. Regressions were used to test the study's hypotheses at a 5% significance level and a 95% confidence level. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS, Version 26) was used for this purpose. The results showed that the competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication companies in Nigeria was positively and significantly impacted by competitive intelligence dimensions. In terms of the competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria, customer intelligence has a t-value of 7.450, marketing intelligence has a t-value of 4.423, technological intelligence has a t-value of 2.650, strategic intelligence has a t-value of 7.150, competitor intelligence has a t-value of 3.535, and competitor intelligence has a t-value of 2.999. According to the study's findings, competitive intelligence significantly and favorably affects how competitively strong quoted mobile telecommunications companies are in Nigeria. The study made several recommendations, one of which was for management of quoted mobile telecommunication companies to consistently invest in customer intelligence as a means of enabling competitive edge through the provision of cutting-edge products that can offer customers value and gratifying benefits that surpass those of rivals. In order to gain an edge over competitors in the market, this will allow these businesses to be more creative, proactive, and sensitive to the shifting values, tastes, and preferences of both current and potential customers.*

Keywords: *Competitive intelligence, competitiveness, mobile telecommunication, market share, sales growth*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Globally, businesses in the 21st century operate in a dynamic and competitive business environment that presents a variety of challenges, such as those related to meeting rising market expectations and demands, globalization, technological advancements, and increased competition, among other factors. As a result, these businesses are forced to look for and implement strategies that will help them deal with the environment of dynamic business challenges. Competitive intelligence (CPI) is seen as a novel strategy for obtaining an advantage in response to these and other difficulties (Nasri, 2011). As the level of competition in the ever-changing business environment has increased, competitive intelligence has grown in importance as one of the most important strategies for gaining an advantage (Nwankwere *et al.,* 2017). According to Lee and Karpova (2018), competitive intelligence plays a crucial role in determining competitiveness in the global business environment. This was stated in the USA. According to Salguero *et al.* (2019), businesses in a highly competitive business environment require strong competitive intelligence to learn about their operating environment. This was stated in Switzerland. Organizations are becoming more and more competitive in today's turbulent business environment, and in order to gain a competitive edge, businesses must consider strategies other than maximizing profits. This improves customer satisfaction, which raises an organization's sales, profits, and market share and increases its competitiveness in the marketplace (Marakova *et al.,* 2021). Waithaka (2022), in Kenya hypothesized that competitive intelligence increases competitiveness, acts as a safeguard against perceived threats and changes, and is a means of identifying new business opportunities and trends in the industry.

Competitive intelligence, according to Mirkhan et al. (2017), is a proactive business practice that involves identifying obstacles and gathering, compiling, analyzing, and disseminating information about goods, clients, rivals, markets, and other functional areas of an organization, including the business environment, in order to support managerial and strategic choices for the businesses. It is one of the most potent business instruments of the twenty-first century, supporting decision-makers in a market that is becoming more and more competitive. It can be used both offensively and defensively. It helps businesses anticipate the actions of rivals, clients, and other participants in the business environment. Its purpose is to alert users before something bad happens (Tahmasebifard et al., 2018). According to Parmis et al. (2022), According to Tahmasebifard et al. (2018) and Deschamps and Nayak (1995) as referenced in Zaidan et al. (2022), this study benchmarked customer intelligence, marketing intelligence, technological intelligence, strategic intelligence, product intelligence, and competitor intelligence as dimensions of competitive intelligence. The rationale behind the benchmarking of these dimensions stems from their relative specificity and adequate abstraction level, which enable their application to a wide range of companies in diverse industries. Competitive intelligence is thought to be a helpful and encouraging tool for enhancing strategic choices in several specific business domains that lead to intense competition. This study sees it as a proactive business practice that involves identifying challenges, gathering, analyzing, and disseminating information about products, customers, competitors, and markets among other functional areas of business in order to support strategic decisions that ensure an advantage over competitors in an industry.

Competitiveness is evidently a decisive factor for survival in the business world and requires setting priorities, which can be defined as a set of options of varying importance that a firm needs to have to compete in the market over a determined time frame (Santos *et al.,* 1999) as cited in (Obuba and Omoankhanlen, 2022). According to the changing global socioeconomic backdrop, the concept of competitiveness has changed over time (Gonçalves *et al.,* 2019). A company's competitive edge is a result of the industry's businesses' competition with one another (Farhikhteh *et al.,* 2020). The goal of competition is to attain economic superiority (Tambade *et al.,* 2019). According to Khan et al. (2019), an organization is competitive if it can outperform its competitors. This is their definition of organizational competitiveness. Competitiveness is often used as a comparison indicator between two or more businesses operating in the same industrial base, according to Rengkung et al. (2017). This suggests a likely relationship between competitiveness and the current competitive advantage. According to Hussain et al. (2015), a company's competitiveness is primarily determined by its innovation, cost, flexibility, process, delivery, and quality. Research has demonstrated that, in addition to innovation and complexity, competitiveness plays a significant role in determining the organizational efficiency levels of OECD member nations (Salas-Velasco, 2019). The ability of a company to produce a good or service more effectively than its rivals in a given industry, as demonstrated by market share and sales growth, is referred to in this study as competitiveness.

Numerous studies conducted globally, such as those conducted in Turkey by Ali (2016), Sweden by Ahmadi and Sundstrom (2017), Berlin by Boekelder (2018), Germany by Zwerenz (2020), China by Bao (2020), Asia by Obonyo and Kilika (2020), and Iran by Tahmasebifard et al. (2018), have demonstrated the importance of competitive intelligence as a means of obtaining a competitive advantage and as a tool that both promotes and enhances competitiveness. According to research by Rachmi and Poernamawati (2020) in Indonesia, food companies that use competitive intelligence can gain from rivalry, resolve internal issues, and take on other business challenges by utilizing the information they gather in their short- and long-term plans. This allows the companies to outperform their competitors and take the lead in the market (Tahmasebifard et al., 2018). Some mobile tecommunication firms in Africa gained an advantage over their competitors by implementing creative ideas into their operations, while others struggled to survive due to a lack of creativity in their operations in the face of a changing business environment. Technological advancements, shifting consumer preferences, and other factors make it harder for businesses in this sector to compete. Moreover, very few scholarly studies have been conducted on food and beverage manufacturing, and even fewer have looked at the topic empirically within the continent. Waithika (2016), in Kenya, Nenzhelele (2016), in South Africa, Ndegwa and Muathe (2018), and Gebeyehu (2019), in Ethiopia, for example, have demonstrated that competitive intelligence helps businesses to obtain an advantage over competitors by employing the appropriate strategies. Muane (2019), documents Africa's poor performance in the global competitiveness rankings in a study on competitive intelligence as a game-changer for Africa's competitiveness in the global economy conducted in South Africa. Competitive intelligence has a positive effect on competitiveness, as Somiah et al. (2020) confirmed. The use of competitive intelligence has become increasingly important back home in Nigeria in particular, due to the market's intense competition brought on by, among other things, globalization, sophisticated consumer behavior, technological advancements, and strict laws

(Nwankwere et al., 2017). Businesses are now searching for a competitive edge as a necessity rather than a choice in order to survive and win over their clients' loyalty as a result of the evolution and changes in the business environment. Previous research of a similar nature, such as Rezaie et al. (2011) and Ezenwa et al. (2018), confirmed the importance of competitive intelligence as a tool for strategic planning, gaining an advantage, and ultimately improving organizational performance.

Due to economic deregulation and liberalization, mobile telecommunication was introduced in Nigeria in 2001. Since then, the Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM) has employed many Nigerians in various capacities, including distributors, retailers, sellers of recharge cards, and repairers of GSM phones (Nsikan et al., 2015). The competitive intelligence activities that support the growth of the Nigerian economy are greatly aided by the mobile telecommunications sector. The level of competition in Nigeria's mobile telecommunications sector has increased as firms (including MTN, Globacom, Airtel, and 9mobile) fight for market share and profitability. As a result, listed mobile telecom companies have device strategies for survival and sustainability in addition to outwitting rivals. Therefore, the goal of the current study is to ascertain how quoted mobile telecommunications companies in Nigeria use competitive intelligence tactics to improve their industry competitiveness in terms of market share and sales growth.

The mobile telecommunication companies mentioned above play a major role in the GDP, employment, and revenue generation of Nigeria, serving as the backbone and engine of the country's development among other things. The quoted mobile telecommunication companies' competitiveness appears to be a problem, as many of them are forced out of the market as a result of their incapacity to endure the severe, fierce, and intensifying competition in the sector, among other reasons. In light of this, is it feasible for the aforementioned food and beverage companies to outperform their rivals in the market by utilizing competitive intelligence techniques to create superior, inventive products that outperform those of their rivals? However, it is noted that even though these quoted telecommunication companies are using competitive intelligence tactics to boost their industry competitiveness, such as competitor, technological, marketing, customer, and strategic intelligence, some of the quoted mobile telecommunication companies are benefiting from these tactics, while others are still having trouble staying competitive, particularly when it comes to market share and sales growth. This study aims to determine whether and to what extent competitive intelligence affects the competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria. Despite this, prior research on the impact of competitive intelligence on a firm's competitiveness has been carried out in both developed and developing nations outside of Nigeria, such as South Africa (Maune, 2019); China (Bao, 2020); and Indonesia (Rachmi and Poernamawati, 2020). A gap exists in the knowledge of competitive intelligence and the competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria as a result of studies done outside the country, focusing on organizational performance indicators rather than the competitiveness of quoted foods and beverage manufacturing firms, such as those conducted by Ezenwi et al. (2016), Ezenwa et al. (2018), Oladimeji and Eze (2019), and Muritala and Ajetunmobi (2019). In light of this, it is imperative that an empirical investigation be conducted in order to close the knowledge gap

regarding the relationship between competitive intelligence and the competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunications companies in Nigeria.

The broad objective of the study is to examine the effect of competitive intelligence on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria. The sub-objectives of the study were to;

i. ascertain the effect of customer intelligence on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria
ii. investigate the effect of marketing intelligence on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication Firms in Nigeria
iii. determine the effect of technological intelligence on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria
iv. find out the effect of strategic intelligence on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication Firms in Nigeria
v. examine the effect of product intelligence on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria
vi. assess the effect of competitor intelligence on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication Firms in Nigeria

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section covers the theoretical framework, the conceptual framework as well as the empirical studies.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical frameworks which form the basis for this study is located within the Competitive Intelligence Theory by Porter

2.1.1 Competitive Intelligence Theory (CIT)

According to this theory, a company's ability to gather and share competitive intelligence determines both its performance and ability to survive. Businesses must collect the data required to learn, comprehend, and build relationships that allow them to assess the facts currently known within the company and customize and direct actions toward a desired outcome. Marko (2009) highlighted the streamlining of information collection, analysis, and sharing that enables decision-makers at all organizational levels to quickly assess, access, comprehend, analyze, cooperate, innovate, and socially network in order to improve an enterprise's performance. In terms of the application of competitive intelligence and initiative to measure, manage, and improve the performance and survival of enterprises, Marko's (2009) work has given this study more validity. By extension, this consideration has made it easier for businesses to get the data and information they need to make sound, well-thought-out decisions. In a similar vein, Koseoglu et al. (2011) also

used this theory to support data about Turkish company performance. Despite the fact that employees' activities are carried out based on both tactical and strategic viewpoints, the study found that the application of competitive intelligence does not significantly affect the industry or the number of employees. Additionally, Gaspareniene et al. (2013) discovered that the theory is helpful in assessing how competitive intelligence is applied in a company; they discovered that the primary factors influencing the application of competitive intelligence are the availability of funds and competitors' classified information.

2.2 Conceptual Review

This discusses the concepts of competitive intelligence and competitiveness with their respective dimensions and measures.

2.2.1 Competitive Intelligence

When it was described how banker Sir Henry Furnese boosted profits by anticipating and acting upon knowledge about his business environment before their rivals in Holland, France, and Germany, the concept of competitive intelligence first surfaced in commercial organizations (Richard, 1865). The concept was codified by the community of competitive intelligence specialists, but the business was revitalized to integrate operational and information context (Dishman et al., 2003, Hanmaikyur et al., 2023). In order to analyze information into market insights that will assist managers in making decisions, competitive intelligence collects information on rivals, the government, suppliers, customers, partners, professional groups, and other sources of socioeconomic data and intelligence (Calof et al., 2017). Competitive intelligence involves knowing and understanding what is happening outside of your company in order to be as competitive as possible. It is the ongoing process of monitoring a company's industry or market to identify current and future competitors, their current and announced activities, how their actions will affect the firm, and how to respond (Obi et al., 2021). According to Parmis et al. (2022), competitive intelligence is regarded as a useful and supportive tool for improving strategic decisions in a number of particular areas of businesses that result in fierce competition. According to this study, competitive intelligence is a proactive business practice that involves identifying obstacles, gathering, analyzing, and disseminating information about markets, competitors, customers, and other functional areas of business in order to support strategic decisions that ensure a competitive advantage over rivals in a given industry.

2.2.2 Dimensions of Competitive Intelligence

The dimensions of competitive intelligence adopted in this study are;

i. Customer Intelligence (CUI): Customer intelligence is the process by which an organization gathers both quantitative and qualitative data about its customers in order to ensure that it has the best and most accurate access to them while also defining their relationship with them as the organization intended (Aspara et al. 2011). Information about target markets and customers is gathered and interpreted as part of customer intelligence. It is the process of analyzing data from various marketing channels to assess the effectiveness of campaigns and their customer

resonance. In addition to qualitative techniques like focus groups and customer surveys, quantitative techniques that center on data, statistics, and analytics are also used in its execution. Customer intelligence is the process of gathering, analyzing, and applying quantitative and qualitative data about the customer and its surroundings that is relevant to the company's (desired) relationship with the customer, according to Elbashir et al. (2008), as cited in Tareq (2019).

ii. Marketing Intelligence (MKI): According to Tahmasebifard (2018), marketing intelligence is a methodical approach to obtaining data in order to spot important trends or business opportunities that can aid in an organization's expansion and comprehension of the characteristics of the market needed to gain a competitive edge. Through astute marketing strategies, marketing intelligence obtains information about customer needs, improving the efficacy of business enterprises (Aghazadeh, 2015). According to Al-Yasiri and Al-Shamri (2019), marketing intelligence is a collection of practices and tools that managers use to gather pertinent daily data and developments in the marketing environment. This information helps the organization understand its competitors, their actions, and their business strategies. Businesses must use marketing intelligence—the ability to understand, analyze, and assess data from both internal and external environments related to the organization's customers, competitors, and markets—into their tactical and strategic decision-making processes if they hope to improve them.

iii. Technological Intelligence (TGI): As a tool for developing fixed systems of knowledge management toward modern technologies, technological intelligence (TGI) is a system that takes into account the financial status of both new and existing technologies as well as upcoming technical gaps (Ezenwa et al., 2018). Technological intelligence can be defined as business-sensitive information regarding the advancements in external sciences and technologies that have the potential to impact a company's competitive standing. According to Norling et al. (2000) as cited in (Asikhia et al., 2019), adopting technology intelligence is nothing more than informal technology monitoring. It is also a structured process that involves four major steps: first, planning, organizing, and conducting competitive intelligence efforts; second, gathering intelligent information; third, data analysis; and, finally, disseminating results for practical uses.

v. Strategic Intelligence (STI): According to Nofal and Yusof (2013), strategic intelligence is a comprehensive system that aids in decision-making through observation and analysis of the organizational operating environment. Additionally, partnerships, strategic information, strategic resources, and strategic consulting are its primary areas of focus. Knosch (2015) claims that strategic intelligence helps an organization make important decisions that are knowledge-based and simultaneously concerned with the organization's and the world's conditions in the future. It also encourages an organization to look to the future, no matter how far or near. Strategic intelligence is the ability to form an image of the environment in which a business operates remotely by analyzing the information and data available on that environment (Alnoukari and Hanano, 2017). STI is crucial as a tool for managers to conduct a series of proactive actions to get to the

iv. Product Intelligence (PDI): Ziuznys (2022) defines product intelligence as the process of gathering, analyzing, and using data regarding customer behavior with a product. The process

primarily involves analyzing customer data in order to improve product development and user satisfaction. Through the analytical combination of review text and star ratings, Product Intelligence is a consumer-centric approach that provides critical knowledge about products features that drive overall product satisfaction. Since product intelligence fosters customer loyalty, it is essential. A number of prestigious organizations and businesses have also realized the importance of intelligent products in the near future, and they have established specialized labs to carry out research on the incorporation of IT into new consumer goods and people's living spaces (Olowe et al., 2022).

vi. Competitor Intelligence (CMI): Competitive intelligence encompasses the evaluation of alterations in rival strategies, rival organization, novel substitute products, and recent entrants into the market, along with their tactics and offerings throughout time. Competitor intelligence is centered on analyzing competitive behavior and face-to-face competition between rival organizations, where each tries to prevail by projecting their rivals' strategies, reacting appropriately, and using intricate methods (Tahmasebifard et al., 2018). The core of competitive intelligence is competitor analysis, which aids businesses in assessing their rivals' advantages and disadvantages, forecasting their tactics, and assessing their new products, particularly in terms of development, costs, and prices (Moss, 2014).

2.2.3 Concept of Competitiveness

The idea of competitiveness has evolved over time in response to the shifting global socioeconomic landscape (Gonçalves et al., 2019). The rivalry between companies in an industry determines a company's competitive edge (Farhikhteh et al., 2020). Achieving economic superiority is the aim of competition (Tambade et al., 2019). According to Khan et al. (2019), an organization is competitive if it can outperform its competitors. This is their definition of organizational competitiveness. Competitiveness is often used as a comparison indicator between two or more businesses operating in the same industrial base, according to Rengkung et al. (2017). This suggests a likely relationship between competitiveness and the current competitive advantage. According to Hussain et al. (2015), a company's competitiveness is primarily determined by its innovation, cost, flexibility, process, delivery, and quality. Research has demonstrated that, in addition to innovation and complexity, competitiveness plays a significant role in determining the organizational efficiency levels of OECD member nations (Salas-Velasco, 2019).

2.2.4 Measures of Competitiveness

i. Market share (MKS): One important measure of market competitiveness, or how well a company is performing in comparison to its rivals, is market share. Market shares below a particular threshold may render a company unviable. Similar to this, market share trends for specific products within a company's product line are thought to be early warning signs of potential issues or opportunities down the road (Farris et al., 2010). Companies support climate change policies in order to impose costs on domestic competitors, motivated by market share competition (Kennard, 2020). Various authors in the field of business management have provided different definitions for market share, one of the growth metrics. Market share, as defined by

Robson (quoted in Akande, 2012), is the portion of a market (defined in terms of revenue or units) that is accounted for by a particular company.

ii. Sales growth: The amount a business makes from sales in comparison to a prior comparable period of time in which the later sales surpass the earlier is referred to as sales growth. Usually, a percentage is provided (McKelvie & Wiklund, 2010). Growth in sales is thought to be beneficial for a business's survival and profitability. It is a crucial performance indicator Wang (2005). Business managers' perceptions are significantly influenced by sales growth targets. Grant (2008) contends that in order for businesses to successfully meet their financial targets, they need to employ a wide range of goals, such as sales growth. Promotion, internal motivation, keeping talented staff, and the potential for investments in new technology and equipment for the production process are all factors that affect the growth of sales.

2.3 Review of Related Empirical Studies

Osita *et al.* (2020), tested the impact of competitive intelligence on the performance of MFBs in Nigeria. A survey was used as the study's research design. 28 MFBs' 112 employees comprised the study's population. The main instrument for gathering data was a questionnaire, and reliability was evaluated using Cronbach Alpha, which yielded a reliability statistic of.899. At the 5% level of significance, descriptive statistics (mean) and inferential statistics (regression analysis) were employed for data analysis and the hypothesis test. The outcome demonstrated a statistically significant relationship (r =.863; R-Square =.746; F = 284, p-value ≤ 0.05) between strategic intelligence and the effectiveness of MFBs in Nigeria. As a result, it was found that monitoring the ever-changing business environment is essential to staying current in the field of business.

Yousefi *et al.* (2020), ascertained the variables influencing competitive intelligence in entrepreneurial food sector enterprises in Tehran province. In a quantitative stage, 248 managers of start-up companies in the Tehran province's food sector made up the target population. A basic random sampling procedure was used to select samples, and 150 people made up the sample size, as indicated in Krejcie and Morgan's table. The results showed that some factors influencing competitive intelligence include technological intelligence, social intelligence, institutional intelligence, competitor intelligence, market intelligence, and strategic intelligence. Additionally, structural equation analysis and the accounted standard coefficient show that market intelligence (0.499) has a positive and significant influence on competitive intelligence.

Mohammed and Shaker (2021), verified the effect of competitive intelligence on the success of projects in Jordanian contracting companies in Jordan. The study's findings showed that the competitive intelligence dimensions are at high levels, the quality, time, and customer loyalty dimensions of project success are at high levels, and the cost dimension is at a medium level. The findings showed that competitive intelligence—both marketing and technological—has a major impact on project success for Jordanian contracting firms. The impact of competitive intelligence on project success in Jordanian contracting firms was confirmed by this study.

Al-Waely *et al.* (2021), assesses competitive intelligence dimensions as a tool for closing the gaps in Business Environment Gaps: An Empirical Study on the Travel Agencies in Jordan. The

study population was 102 top and middle management from 12 Jordanian companies, who were part of an intended survey sample. The results demonstrated that the business environment and its variables—environmental disturbance, resource scarcity, and critical factors—were impacted by competitive intelligence and its variables—technological intelligence, competitor intelligence, and strategic intelligence, at a significant level ($p \leq 0.05$). The competitive intelligence dimensions are evaluated in this study as a means of bridging the gaps in Jordan's tourism industry.

Abdullah and Anwar (2021), investigated the role of competitive intelligence in making strategic marketing decisions at small and medium businesses in Kurdistan region of Iraq. However, the researchers used competitive intelligence embeddedness as a mediator to measure competitive intelligence's role on strategic marketing decisions, allowing the study to examine the indirect role of competitive intelligence. The Sobel test and hierarchical multiple regression were used by the researchers to examine how competitive intelligence is used by small and medium-sized enterprises in the Kurdistan region of Iraq to inform their strategic marketing decisions. The findings demonstrated that the competitive intelligence dimensions—market, competitor, customer, partner, and technical—may be used to quantify the direct and indirect effects of competitive intelligence embeddedness on strategic marketing choices made by small and medium-sized enterprises.

Waithaka (2022), sought to determine the effect of strategic inputs of competitive intelligence on competitive advantage among commercial banks in Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to determine the effect of market place opportunities, competitor threats, competitive risks, identifying and hedging against key vulnerabilities and verifying core assumptions on competitive advantage among commercial banks in Kenya. A descriptive and explanatory research design was used in this study and primary data was collected at the head office of each bank which are all found in Nairobi City. Primary data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire. Data was analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Analysis was done with the assistance of SPSS computer packages. The results of the regression analysis found the coefficient of determination is R2= 0.847; indicating that 84.7% variation in competitive advantage among commercial banks in Kenya is explained by the strategic inputs of competitive intelligence. The Analysis of the Variance (ANOVA) value of F calculated was 27.602; this shows that the overall regression model was significant. The study established that all the five variables: marketplace opportunities, competitor threats, competitive risks, key vulnerabilities and core assumptions; the strategic inputs of competitive intelligence have a significant effect on the competitive advantage among commercial banks in Kenya.

Hanmaikyur *et al.* (2023), investigated the effect of competitive intelligence and competitiveness of quoted foods and beverages manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine the effect of customer intelligence, marketing intelligence, competitor intelligence and, product intelligence and competitiveness (innovativeness, operational efficiency) of quoted foods and beverages manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The study used a cross-sectional design with a target population of 7,884 personnel. Yamen's (1967) formula was used to generate a scientific sample size of 383. The study used a questionnaire to collect data, and simple random sampling

was used to select participants, with an overall average reliability index of 0.925 and a validity index suitable at 0.791. Descriptive statistics (frequency counts, percentage ratings, mean scores, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (correlations and regression analysis) were used to analyze the data that was gathered. With the use of the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS, Version 26), hypotheses were tested using regressions at a 95% confidence level and a 5% level of significance. The competitiveness of the mentioned food and beverage manufacturing companies in Nigeria was found to be positively and significantly impacted by customer intelligence (39.8%), marketing intelligence (36.8%), competitor intelligence (27.8%), and product intelligence (18.8%). According to the study's findings, quoted Nigerian food and beverage manufacturing companies' competitiveness is positively and significantly impacted by competitive intelligence. The study made several recommendations, one of which was that since consumers are seen as kings, achieving customer satisfaction should be the primary goal of all companies that manufacture foods and beverages. As the sustainability of any business depends on the patronage and loyalty of both current and potential customers, quoted food and beverage manufacturing firms are expected to profitably and satisfactorily serve their customers and other stakeholders by being proactive and responsive to the changing values, technology, tastes, and preferences. This will give them an advantage over their industry rivals.

Ogonor and Onuoha (2023), ascertained the relationship between competitive intelligence and resilience of the food and beverage firms in Rivers State. One hundred and twenty-seven (127) managers of various food and beverage companies were included in the survey-based study. It was a census-based study. The developed hypotheses were analyzed and tested using the Spearman Rank Order. The findings indicate that there is a noteworthy and affirmative association between the competitive intelligence dimensions, which include technological and market intelligence, and the resilience measures, which include adaptability and career resilience. In conclusion, the resilience of Rivers State's food and beverage companies is correlated with competitive intelligence. The report suggests enhancing the firm's resilience with the use of technology and market intelligence.

3.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research employed a survey approach. This is a result of its capacity to gather diverse opinions from a broad spectrum of people. The directors of human resources of the examined companies provided the 15,486 employees that made up the managerial cadre and operational staff of Nigerian mobile telecommunications companies. Purposive and convenient sampling was used to determine which of the four (4) Nigerian mobile telecommunications companies were preferred. In order to select respondents from various units (departments) who are qualified to offer information on the study's topics, the research used a purposive sampling technique. On the other hand, a basic random sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 387 participants for the study using Yamene's formula, and an email-administered questionnaire was used to collect primary data. Closed-ended questions were used in the study to represent competitive intelligence and competitiveness metrics. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient result showed that all the constructs—customer intelligence (0.708), technological intelligence (802), product intelligence (0.822), strategic intelligence (808), marketing intelligence (0.886), competitor intelligence (0.780), and competitiveness (0.729)—were consistent. The pre-test was

used to assess the validity and reliability of the instrument. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used to compile, code, and analyze the data (SPSS version 26). The mean, standard deviation, and multiple linear regression are examples of data analysis techniques. The model is presented thus:

$Y=\alpha + \beta1X1 + \beta2X2 + \beta3X3+ \beta4X4 + \beta5X5 + \beta6X6+ \mathcal{E}$

Where;

Y = competitiveness

a = is regression intercept

β1- β6 is regression coefficients

X1= Customer intelligence

X2 = Marketing intelligence

X3 = Technological intelligence

X4 = Strategic intelligence

X5 = Product intelligence

X6 = Competitor intelligence

$\mathcal{E}$ = the error term which is assumed to be normally distributed with mean zero and constant variance.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Means and standard deviation were used to present respondents' agreement with the responses collected on research variables.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Customer Intelligence	387	3.59	.605
Marketing Intelligence	387	3.67	.583
Technological Intelligence	387	3.26	.762
Strategic Intelligence	387	4.13	.948
Product Intelligence	387	4.03	.840
Competitor Intelligence	387	4.10	.887
Competiveness	387	4.11	.845

Source: Computation from SPSS Output, 2023

Table 1 presents the data gathered from the participants regarding the dependent variable (competitiveness) and the predictor variables, which include customer, marketing, technological, strategic, product, and competitor intelligence. The competitiveness of the listed mobile telecommunications companies in Nigeria appears to have changed significantly, as indicated by the values for competitiveness (M=4.11; SD=0.845). While marketing intelligence has a mean value of 3.67 (SD=0.583), explaining that marketing intelligence significantly affects the competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria, customer intelligence has a mean value of 3.59 (SD=0.605), indicating that there is high agreement. The technological intelligence score (M=3.26; SD=0.726) and the strategic intelligence score (M=4.13; SD=0.948) indicate a noteworthy shift in the competitive standing of the listed mobile telecommunication companies in Nigeria. The values of M=4.03; SD=0.840 and M=4.10; SD=0.887, respectively, for

competitor and product intelligence finally explain the notable shift in the competitiveness of listed mobile telecommunications companies in Nigeria.

Table 2: Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin Watson
1	.984[a]	.768	.762	.820	1.728

a. Predictors: (Constant), Customer intelligence, Marketing intelligence, technological intelligence, strategic intelligence, competitor intelligence, product intelligence
b. Dependent Variable: Competitiveness

Source: Researcher's Computation from SPSS Output, 2023.

Table 2's outcome demonstrates that there is a significant positive relationship between the explanatory and response variables, with a regression coefficient of R =.984. R2 = 0.768 is the coefficient of determination. The aforementioned indicates that variations in competitive intelligence and its constituent variables, namely customer, marketing, technological, strategic, product, and competitor intelligence, accounted for 76.8% of the variance in competitiveness. That is to say, only 23.2% of the variation in competitiveness could be attributed to variables that were left out of the model. The findings suggest that aspects of competitive intelligence are important predictors of competitiveness. The correlation coefficient, R =.984, indicates a statistically significant and robust relationship between the response variable (competitiveness) and the predictor factors, including customer, marketing, technological, strategic, competitor, and product intelligence. Competitive intelligence plays a significant role in explaining the variations in competitiveness, as evidenced by the standard error of estimate of.820. Therefore, it was determined that elements of competitive intelligence are helpful indicators of competitiveness. There is never a situation where the Durban Watson statistic is not between 0 and 4. When DW = 2, it means that autocorrelation is absent. Positive autocorrelation is indicated by a value less than 2, and negative serial correlation is indicated by a value greater than 2. The Durbin-Watson statistic was also used to assess whether auto-correlation existed. The Durbin-Watson statistic for this model was calculated to be 1.728, which was a reasonable 2. This suggested that the auto-correlation was absent.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	127.608	6	21.268	55.385	.000
Residual	145.338	378	.384		
Total	272.946	384			

a. Dependent Variable: Competitiveness
b. Predictors: (Constant), Customer intelligence, Marketing intelligence, Competitor intelligence, Product intelligence

Source: Researcher's Computation from SPSS Output, 2023.

The findings of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) are shown in Table 3. To determine whether a statistical model could be fitted to the data set from which the sample data were taken, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed. An F statistic of 55.385, which was significant at the 95% confidence level (p-value = 0.000 <0.05), is indicated by the ANOVA results. This shows that the model has a substantial impact on forecasting the competitiveness of listed mobile telecom companies in Nigeria. The model as a whole was statistically significant, according to the results. Furthermore, it appears from the valid regression results that competitiveness is well-predicted by the explanatory variable. Thus, the analysis demonstrates that the model had a good fit.

Table 4. Regression Coefficients

Unstandardized Coefficient			**Standardized Coefficient**		
	B	**Standard Error**	**Beta**	***t***	**Sig.**
(constant)	.688	.199		3.462	.001
Customer intelligence	.398	.053	.396	7.450	.046
Marketing intelligence	.368	.038	.179	4.423	.000
Technological intelligence	.379	.046	.378	7.150	.040
Strategic intelligence	.182	.047	.193	2.650	.000
Product intelligence	.188	.044	.199	2.999	.000
Competitor intelligence	.278	.050	.187	3.535	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Competitiveness

Source: Researcher's Computation from SPSS Output, 2023.

Table 4's regression coefficients revealed that customer intelligence has a significant and positive impact on competitiveness (β = 0.396, p = 0.046). A unit increase in customer intelligence would result in a 0.398 unit increase in competitiveness, according to the customer intelligence coefficient (0.398). Because the associated P-Value (0.000) is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the effect is statistically significant. A computed t-statistic of 7.450, which is higher than the crucial t-statistic of 1.96, provided evidence in favor of this. Additionally, the outcome showed that marketing intelligence had a significant and positive impact on competitiveness (β=0.179, p=0.000). According to the marketing intelligence coefficient (0.368), competitiveness would rise by 0.368 units for every unit more marketing intelligence implemented. The effect is statistically significant because the associated P-Value (0.000) is less than 0.05 level of significance. This was supported by a calculated t-statistic of 4.423 which is larger than the critical t-statistic of 1.96. According to the technological intelligence coefficient (0.379), competitiveness would rise by 0.379 units for every unit more technological intelligence applied. Because the associated P-Value (0.040) is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the effect is statistically significant. A computed t-statistic of 7.150, which is higher than the crucial t-statistic of 1.96, provided evidence in favor of this. Once more, the strategic intelligence coefficient (0.182) suggests that a 0.182 unit increase in competitiveness would result from a unit increase in the application of strategic intelligence. Because the associated P-Value (0.000) is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the effect is statistically significant. A computed t-statistic of 2.650, which is higher than the crucial t-statistic of 1.96, provided evidence in favor of this. Competitor intelligence was also found to have a favourable and significant impact on competitiveness (β=0.187, p=0.000). A unit increase in competitor intelligence would result in a 0.278 unit increase

in competitiveness, according to the competitor intelligence coefficient (0.278). Because the associated P-Value (0.000) is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the effect is statistically significant. A computed t-statistic of 3.535, which is higher than the crucial t-statistic of 1.96, provided evidence in favor of this. Furthermore, the results indicated that competitiveness was significantly and favourably affected by product intelligence (β =0.199, p =0.000). According to the product intelligence coefficient (0.188), competitiveness would rise by 0.188 units for every unit more that product intelligence was implemented. Because the associated P-Value (0.000) is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the effect is statistically significant. A computed t-statistic of 2.999, which is higher than the crucial t-statistic of 1.96, provided evidence in favor of this.

4.3 Hypotheses Testing and Discussion of Findings

To test the effect of customer intelligence on competitiveness, Table 5 findings reveal that the standardized beta coefficient for customer intelligence is 0.396, a 7.450 *t*- statistic with a 0.046 corresponding value. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 and *t*-statistic is greater than 2 at significance level of 0.05 competitiveness is significantly affected by customer intelligence. The null hypothesis is rejected by the study and concludes that customer intelligence has a positive and significant effect on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria. The first hypothesis's result is consistent with that of Uzoma et al. (2021), whose research showed that customer intelligence significantly improves cost reduction and the notable growth of SMEs in Nigeria. This hypothesis was tested and found to be consistent with a study conducted by Dam et al. (2022) on the search for customer intelligence to generate value in marketing. The study emphasized the importance of applying customer intelligence and provided relevant marketing decisions to optimize value creation. The present study is conducted in conjunction with Al-Hashem's (2022) research, which demonstrated a noteworthy positive correlation between customer intelligence and customer experience, as well as a positive relationship between customer experience and customer retention.

To test the effect of marketing intelligence on competitiveness, Table 5 findings show that the standardized beta coefficient for marketing intelligence is 0.179, a 4.423 *t*- statistic with a 0.000 corresponding value. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 and *t* statistic is greater than 2 at significance level of 0.05 competitiveness is significantly affected by marketing intelligence. The null hypothesis is rejected by the study and concludes that marketing intelligence has a positive and significant effect on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria. The result of hypothesis two is tandem with Ahmadi (2017), in Sweden who concluded that firms that understand market needs, usually implement strategies that enhance their strategic performance. The results of the second hypothesis test align with those of Ladipo et al. (2017), who demonstrated that marketing intelligence significantly and favorably impacted the corporate competitive advantage of Nigerian deposit money banks. The study concluded that the bank had increased profits, strengthened its competitive position, expanded its branch network across the country, and outperformed its rivals in the market by utilizing marketing intelligence as sensitive information. This hypothesis's outcome is consistent with that of Boekelder (2018), who discovered that marketing intelligence gives decision-makers and marketers insights into their marketing campaigns, making it easier for them to identify the most desirable prospects.

To test the effect of technological intelligence on competitiveness, Table 5 findings show that the standardized beta coefficient for technological intelligence is 0.199, a 2.999 *t* statistic with a 0.046 corresponding value. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 and t statistic is greater than 2 at significance level of 0.05 competitiveness is significantly affected by technological intelligence. The null hypothesis is rejected by the study and concludes that technological intelligence has a positive and significant effect on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria. The conclusion of hypothesis three is consistent with the findings of Ali et al. (2016), who showed that proactive information-seeking regarding potential scientific and technological advancements in Turkey is made possible by the application of technical intelligence approaches. The outcome of the third hypothesis test supported Amini's (2017) conclusions, which state that technology intelligence significantly and favorably affects Iranian pharmaceutical companies' ability to compete. Tahmasebifard (2018) provided support for the third hypothesis test, demonstrating that technological intelligence used in competitive intelligence has a positive effect on market performance in Iran. Finally, the outcome supported the research by Agbeche and Moni (2022), which concluded that technological intelligence has a deliberate impact on the organizational effectiveness of foods and beverages in South-South, Nigeria, and that an effective organization is one that is highly intelligent in applying its technological intelligence.

To test the effect of strategic intelligence on competitiveness, Table 5 findings reveal that the standardized beta coefficient for strategic intelligence is 0.396, a 7.450 *t* statistic with a 0.000 corresponding value. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 and *t* statistic is greater than 2 at significance level of 0.05 competitiveness is significantly affected by strategic intelligence. The null hypothesis is rejected by the study and concludes that strategic intelligence has a positive and significant effect on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria. The outcome of the fourth hypothesis test is consistent with a study conducted by Ndubuisi-oklo et al. (2017) that examined the influence of strategic intelligence on corporate success in Nigeria. The results demonstrated a significant positive relationship between business success and strategic intelligence. This demonstrates how companies with strong strategic intelligence prosper. The results of the fourth hypothesis test are consistent with those of Osita et al. (2020), who found a statistically significant relationship between strategic intelligence and MFB performance in Nigeria. Finally, the outcome of hypothesis three agrees with Khalid and Shaker's (2020) findings, which confirmed that strategic intelligence had a significant influence on competitive advantage in Jordanian mining and extraction companies.

To test the effect of product intelligence on competitiveness, Table 5 findings show that the standardized beta coefficient for product intelligence is 0.199, a 2.999 *t*-statistic with a 0.000 corresponding value. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 and *t* statistic is greater than 2 at significance level of 0.05 competitiveness is significantly affected by product intelligence. The null hypothesis is rejected by the study and concludes that product intelligence has a positive and significant effect on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria. The outcome of the fourth hypothesis test is consistent with a study conducted by Ndubuisi-oklo et al. (2017) that examined the influence of strategic intelligence on corporate success in Nigeria. The results demonstrated a significant positive relationship between business success and strategic intelligence. This demonstrates how companies with strong strategic intelligence

prosper. The results of the fourth hypothesis test are consistent with those of Osita et al. (2020), who found a statistically significant relationship between strategic intelligence and MFB performance in Nigeria. Finally, the outcome of hypothesis three agrees with Khalid and Shaker's (2020) findings, which confirmed that strategic intelligence had a significant influence on competitive advantage in Jordanian mining and extraction companies.

To test the effect of competitor intelligence on competitiveness, Table 5 findings indicate that the standardized beta coefficient for competitor intelligence is 0.187, a 3.535 *t*-statistic with a 0.000 corresponding value. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 and *t* statistic is greater than 2 at significance level of 0.05 competitiveness is significantly affected by competitor intelligence. The null hypothesis is rejected by the study and concludes that competitor intelligence has a positive and significant effect on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria. The sixth hypothesis's result differs from that of Markovich et al. (2019), whose research indicated that associations with data providers and web competitive intelligence foundations had a positive impact on competitive intelligence embeddedness. Competitor intelligence embeddedness had a mediated impact on performance through client satisfaction; it had no direct effect on the performance of the organization. The sixth hypothesis's result, which concluded that competitor orientation influences entrepreneurship innovation, is consistent with that of Jummai and Abuga (2021). The study made several recommendations, one of which was that business managers and owners should use a more effective strategy to outcompete their rivals. The conclusion of hypothesis six aligns with the findings of Agbeche et al. (2021), whose research showed that organizational effectiveness is significantly impacted by competitor intelligence of South-South Nigerian food and beverage manufacturing companies.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study concluded to the literature that competitive intelligence has a positive and significant effect on competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria. This is due to the fact that competitive intelligence has been recognized as a crucial veritable tool that helps businesses predict changes in the business environment accurately, outperform competitors in the marketplace with superior products, and monitor competitors' activities to enhance their firms' market share and sales growth by seeing opportunities and threats before they materialize and giving them an advantage over competitors in the sector. The study gave participants an overview of the fundamental concepts and elements of competitive intelligence strategies, such as customer, marketing, technological, strategic, product and competitor intelligence. These elements are crucial business practices that have a proactive impact on the competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunications companies in Nigeria. As a result, this study comes to the conclusion that competitive intelligence has the potential to improve competitiveness in quoted mobile telecommunication firms in terms of market share and sales growth. Therefore, the competitiveness of quoted mobile telecommunication companies in Nigeria is positively and significantly increased by competitive intelligence.

5.2 Recommendations

Arising from findings and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made:

i. To enhance competitiveness, management of quoted mobile telecommunication companies should consistently invest in customer intelligence through the provision of cutting-edge products that outperform rivals in terms of value and gratifying benefits for customers. In order to gain an advantage over competitors in the market, this will allow these businesses to be more creative, proactive, and sensitive to the shifting values, tastes, and preferences of both current and potential customers.

ii. Management of quoted mobile telecommunication companies should leverage the value of marketing intelligence and commit sufficient resources to broaden their market reach in the face of intense and intensifying competition by developing superior marketing strategies through information gathering and analysis in the marketing environment. In order to obtain an advantage over competitors in the industry, this will enable these businesses to better target their marketing campaigns and react to changes in the business environment more quickly than their competitors.

iii. In order to support technology-based strategies and research and development, which are essential for innovation in firms, quoted mobile telecommunications companies should embrace technological intelligence. This is because technological intelligence enables a firm to respond to threats as well as identify and exploit opportunities resulting from technological development and scientific changes. This is due to the fact that technological intelligence boosts competitiveness in terms of new product development and automation, which enhances the provision of goods and services.

iv. In order to comprehend the tactics, advantages, and disadvantages of their competitors, management of quoted mobile telecommunication companies should implement competitor intelligence. This is because it provides pertinent and timely information about the threats faced by these companies. As a result, these businesses will be better equipped to seize opportunities and outperform competitors in the market by developing strategies that are superior to theirs.

v. In order to give upper management information on the competitive, economic, legal, and political environments in which an organization and its rivals operate both now and in the future, managers of these quoted mobile telecommunications companies should think about increasing the current level of strategic intelligence activities from its current relatively moderate level and beginning to implement more sophisticated techniques and tools for analysis. This could help firms make strategic decisions by enabling them to predict changes in the business environment accurately before they become evident.

vi. Finally, to be more competitive, management of quoted mobile telecommunication firms should be crafting strategies that will offer innovative and superior products by leveraging on useful information gathered in the business environment resulting to product development, modifications and improvement for both their existing and new products. This will help these firms to enhance their competitiveness by being efficient in their operations and offering innovative products in the market that will have an edge over and above rivals in the industry.

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