Comparative Analysis of Competitive Intelligence Frameworks in Profit and Non-Profit Information Organizations

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***Abstract*—This study focused on the comparison between competitive intelligence frameworks for profit information organizations and non-profit information organizations. Competitive intelligence is based on the rising importance of decision-making within the information environment that is derived from intelligence. Using a systematic literature review, the qualitative study adopted a thematic and comparative analysis to review literature from 2023 to 2026 on relevant themes. Findings from the research showed that profit and non-profit information organizations use main competitive intelligence practices such as planning, data collection, data analysis, data sharing, and feedback from the use of data. However, profit driven information organizations exhibit highly structured competitive intelligence practices, and they adopt and use technologies more. Libraries, archives, and other information organizations which are non-profit in nature use competitive intelligence practices that are easily adaptable to prevailing situations, and are less rigid, as they mainly focus on how to deliver information to users, and how to satisfy users. Information organizations that are profit minded use technologies like artificial intelligence, and big data to improve on their innovative drives, empower them to be more competitive, and to make the maximum profit possible. Non-profit information organizations are often challenged with low funding, inadequate infrastructure, and low technical know-how. Findings also showed that the capacity of organizations and their ability to integrate technology into their operations influence how effective their competitive intelligence frameworks would be. The study recommends that the competitive intelligence frameworks of information organizations should be hybrid, a mix between profit and service orientations, which are scalable, and can integrate technologies in meeting their users' information needs.**

***Index Terms*—Competitive intelligence, Data analytics, Information organizations, Intelligence frameworks, Organizational performance, Strategic decision-making**

I. INTRODUCTION

There is a global competitiveness in the information environment, which is on the increase. Organizations that are into the business of rendering information, whether it is for profit or not, need to adapt into surviving in a competitive environment. This ability to adapt and survive in a competitive environment is known as competitive intelligence. Competitive intelligence helps information organizations to make intelligent decisions that place them at a competitive advantage over their competitors. It involves monitoring environmental changes, forecasting on the likely moves and activities of competitors, and making decisions that are intelligent and help the organization to survive. Competitive intelligence is a process that is systematic, and involves strategic planning, which leads to the collection of available data, analysis of collected data, sharing of analyzed data, which support strategic decision and improves the performance of organizations (Ju, 2024). This shows that there is a growing importance placed on competitive intelligence frameworks when trying to move past information ecosystems that are complex and dynamic.

The proliferation of big data and artificial intelligence have significantly changed the structure of competitive intelligence frameworks and how these frameworks are been applied to information organizations; and these are leading to the persistent digitization of the information environments. Modern competitive information frameworks are able to integrate advanced

analytics, real-time data monitoring, machine learning, which improves that capacity to predict and forecast the market; hence, organizations are shifting from the traditional ways that reacts to market changes into modernized ways that are proactive in forecasting the market before the changes occur (Bisson et al., 2025; Hair & Sabol, 2024; Calof & Cekuls, 2023). This ability to be proactive fosters organizational agility and resilience.

Competitive intelligence is a tool used for improving the effectiveness and competitive abilities of organizations. Competitive intelligence is crucial for ensuring that information organization's strategies are in line with environmental dynamics of information ecosystems, and these help to improve the delivery of desired services as well as improve the efficiency of such information organization (Maluleka & Chummun, 2023). In developing economies, especially from the global south, information organizations are demonstrating that effective and efficient intelligence systems are more innovative, and are able to respond better to the demands of the market (Isichei et al., 2023).

Statement of the Problem

Rapid advancement in technologies is a major feature of modern information landscapes. This has resulted in increased complexity of data; giving competitive advantage to organizations that are able to adapt to the technological advancement. Competitive intelligence is an essential tool that aids informed decision-making and differentiates information organizations that are spearheading innovations in their particular industry from those who are lagging behind (Madureira et al., 2023), be they profit or non-profit information organizations.

The sophistication of competitive intelligence has been improved by the advances recorded in digital technologies. Nonetheless, many organizations in the global south are still unable to cope with the technological requirements, arising from shortage of funds, low technical know-how, and weakened policy frameworks, which all contribute to impede strategic planning processes of information organizations; also, some profit and non-profit information organizations apply and utilize wrong competitive intelligence frameworks for their organizational types (Mashua et al., 2025). That is, using a competitive intelligence framework that is a mismatch to the type of organization.

This shows that there is a misunderstanding of competitive intelligence in a comparative perspective, as they apply to profit and non-profit information organizations. This gap is an obvious limitation to information industry stakeholders, causing impedance on their ability to design and implement appropriate competitive intelligence systems that are capable of enhancing organizational performance, improving service delivery, and positioning an information organization to be able to respond strategically to market forecasts. There is an urgent need to address this problem, and to consciously make efforts to improve on the development of competitive intelligence frameworks that are suitable for specific information organizational types.

Research Objectives

The study aims to investigate the comparative analysis of competitive intelligence frameworks of profit and non-profit information organizations.

The study specifically seeks to:

1. examine the structure and components of competitive intelligence frameworks adopted in profit and non-profit information organizations;
2. analyse the processes and tools employed in the implementation of competitive intelligence frameworks across the two organizational types;
3. compare the objectives and strategic applications of competitive intelligence in profit-oriented and non-profit information organizations;
4. evaluate the effectiveness of competitive intelligence frameworks in enhancing organizational performance, service delivery, and decision-making;
5. identify the challenges affecting the adoption and implementation of competitive intelligence frameworks in both profit and non-profit information organizations;

Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the key structures and components of competitive intelligence frameworks in profit and non-profit information organizations?

2. What processes and tools are used in implementing competitive intelligence frameworks across these organizations?
3. How do the objectives and strategic applications of competitive intelligence differ between profit and non-profit information organizations?
4. How effective are competitive intelligence frameworks in enhancing organizational performance, service delivery, and decision-making?
5. What challenges hinder the adoption and implementation of competitive intelligence frameworks in profit and non-profit information organizations?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Competitive intelligence is the strategic function that aids information organizations in gathering, analysing, and utilising information about their internal and external environments for informed decision-making. Scholars see competitive intelligence as an acceptable way of changing raw data into actionable intelligence that can support planning and decision-making, and eventually position an organization for competitive advantage (Ju, 2024; Calof & Cekuls, 2023). While traditional information management practices are reactive intelligence models, competitive intelligence emphasizes forward-looking analysis, which helps information organizations to predict the future based on prevailing trends, thus identifying real opportunities and avoiding potential pitfalls in dynamic information environment.

Information organizations like libraries, archives, and knowledge centres have assumed a unique competitive intelligence dimension. These organizations combine information production, dissemination, and utilisation, which make intelligence both a resource and an outcome. Maluleka and Chummun (2023) see competitive intelligence in contexts as extending beyond competitors who monitor organizations, to include analysis of user behaviours, trends in technological advancement, policy development, and stakeholders' expectations. This thus expands the scope and reflects the new role of information organizations as knowledge hubs in a digital and data-driven society. For Madureira et al. (2023), traditional competitive intelligence frameworks re often organized around a cyclical model that comprises of planning, data collection, analysis, dissemination, and feedback. These align competitive intelligence activities with organizational strategy, the integration of digital tools, and the development of analytical competencies.

Competitive intelligence frameworks are applied in varying degrees among profit and non-profit information organizations. This is because of the variations in their objectives, resource availability, and performance metrics. Isichei et al (2023) noted that profit-oriented organizations typically deploy competitive intelligence frameworks to achieve competitive advantage, increase market share, and maximize profit. Thus, these competitive intelligence activities are often focused on the analysis of competitors, intelligence of the customer, and the trends in the market. For Maluleka and Chummun (2023), public and academic libraries which are information organizations that are service oriented rather than profit-oriented give preference to delivering quality information services, sharing knowledge, and involving in community engagement. To this end, non-profit information organizations usually adopt competitive intelligence frameworks that focus on carrying out needs assessment, innovative service delivery, and analysis of policy. But all these are constrained because of shortage of funds, lack of technical know-how, and inadequate technologies.

Competitive intelligence frameworks have been influenced by rapid advancements in digital technologies, artificial intelligence and big data analytic being some of such digital technologies. And these technologies are able to help organizations in processing quantum amount of data, generating high precision insights, with great speed (Bisson et al., 2025; Hair & Sabol, 2024). Other technologies that contribute to the popularity of competitive intelligence are social media and other online platforms, that through their analytic capabilities, are able to help information organizations to closely follow on trends are forecast the future, giving them a competitive advantage over organizations that do not leverage these technologies (Ju, 2024). All of these have aided in the expansion of the scope of competitive intelligence frameworks from the traditional ones that are reactive to market signals, to the proactive ones that predict and forecast market signals.

Despite the potentials of competitive intelligence, it faces several limitations, especially in the global south, and more so, with non-profit organizations. Maluleka and Chummun (2023) noted that organizational leaders are not aware and do not understand the concepts of competitive intelligence; and this make it difficult for such leaders and their staff to properly implement competitive intelligence frameworks in their organizations. This will, as a consequence, result in inadequate support for competitive intelligence initiative, as people scarcely support what they do not understand. And this will ultimately result in poor integration of competitive intelligence framework into strategic organizational processes. As reported by Mashau et al. (2025), there is a limited supply of personnel that have mastery of data analytics, information management, and strategic intelligence. These, and the compounded technological constraints of acquisition and technical know-how, also pose significant barriers and limit access to effectiveness and efficiency of competitive intelligence activities (Isichei et al., 2023).

III. METHODOLOGY

Using systematic literature review, the qualitative study adopted a thematic and comparative analysis to review literature from 2023 to 2026 on competitive intelligence frameworks for both profit and non-profit information organizations. The adopted research design is appropriate for this study as it provides information on the type of study conducted and attempts to provide a synthesis of the available scholarly works.

To conduct the systematic literature review, consultations were made on Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar databases. The search adopted the use of keywords like “competitive intelligence”, “competitive intelligence framework”, “profit information organizations”, and “non-profit information organizations”. Criteria for inclusion were that the resource was either a conceptual study or an empirical study, published within the temporal framework of 2023 to 2026, with an obvious relationship to competitive intelligence frameworks. Following a rigorous screening of the search results against these criteria, a final dataset of 9 core peer-reviewed publications was selected as the analytical sample for this study.

The qualitative data extracted from these 9 selected studies were thematically analyzed by identifying recurring patterns, dimensions, and concepts in competitive intelligence frameworks. A comparative analysis framework was then adopted to synthesize the findings from these papers, differentiating between profit and non-profit information organizations by pointing out their structural and operational similarities and dissimilarities.

The study also ensured that the sources analyzed were cross-contextually balanced, as sources were integrated to reflect the Nigerian perspectives, the African perspective, and global views on competitive intelligence frameworks. Flowing from the analysis, is the proposal of a context specific competitive intelligence that provides unique perspectives to organizations with specialization in information delivery.

Presentation of Results and Discussion of Findings

Structure and Components of Competitive Intelligence Frameworks:

Findings from the systematic analysis revealed that for profit and non-profit information organizations, there is an adoption of a multi-staged competitive intelligence framework. The constitutions of these multi-staged competitive intelligence frameworks are planning, collection of data, analysis of collected data, sharing of analysed data, and getting feedback on shared data. There is a difference between the structure of profit and non-profit competitive intelligence frameworks for information organizations.

Profit oriented information organizations adopted a more sophisticated, formalized, and technologically savvy structures that allowed for scalability within the competitive intelligence frameworks. These competitive intelligence frameworks included advanced technological tools with high precision. Examples of such tools are artificial intelligence, and data analytics.

Service oriented information organizations, that are non-profit in their services, adopted less sophisticated, less adaptive, and less formalized competitive intelligence frameworks, and these integrations permeated all the functions of such organizations whether they had direct link with core information management functions or not. Competitive intelligence frameworks for non-profit information organizations focused on how to satisfy the

information needs of their users, carry out service evaluation, and feasibility study, rather than focusing on having any competitive advantage over other information organizations.

These findings are in agreement with Madureira et al. (2023) when they reported that competitive intelligence frameworks for profit-oriented organizations are more developed and mature than their non-profit counterparts, as these profit-oriented organizations have more resources at their disposal, and are able to strategically stet their priorities.

Processes and Tools for Competitive Intelligence Implementation:

Findings from the systematic analysis revealed that the processes and tools used for competitive intelligence greatly differ for profit and non-profit information organizations.

Analytics that are predictive and can forecast into the future following market trends, data collection systems that are automated, and software that are intelligent in market surveillance and real-time analysis are the major tools adopted by profit-oriented information organizations to support their decision-making. These tools are effective and increase the efficiency of profit-oriented information organizations. Thus, these organizations are able to make proactive strategic responses to the information ecosystems.

Surveys, user feedbacks, manual systems and other basic and simple tools that are either traditional or semi-automated are the main tools adopted by non-profit information organizations. These information organizations are mostly handicapped by shortage of financial resources, leading to the inability to acquire required technologies and the inability to hire personnel with the required technical know-how to manage such technologies, where they already exist.

These findings show that there is a great disparity that is reflective of the digital divide that exists between profit and non-profit information organizations; and these disparities are mainly a result of resources limitations in the non-profit information organizations.

Objectives and Strategic Applications of Competitive Intelligence:

Findings from the systematic analysis revealed that the objectives of competitive intelligence vary essentially between information organizations that are profit oriented and those that are service oriented. The information organizations that are profit oriented basically have their competitive intelligence mainly driven by forces which include revenue growth, market competitiveness, and customer needs. Here, intelligence outputs are directly linked to strategic decision-making, performance optimization, and profit optimization. For non-profit organizations, on the other hand, they utilize competitive intelligence for enhancement of service delivery, user satisfaction, and community engagement. Here, intelligence is applied to improve access to information resources, improve user satisfaction, and improve institutional relevance.

Effectiveness of Competitive Intelligence Frameworks

The findings showed that competitive intelligence frameworks are generally more effective in profit-oriented organizations; this is because they are fully integrated into strategic processes thus enhancing operational efficiency. These profit-oriented organizations are more responsive to environmental changes and have greater capacities for innovation.

For non-profit information organizations, they benefit from competitive intelligence practices but these benefits show moderate effectiveness because of the fragmentation in the implementation of competitive intelligence frameworks, and a limited integration of competitive intelligence framework into decision-making structure. However, basic competitive intelligence practices still significantly enhance service quality and user engagement when appropriately applied and utilized (Isichei et al., 2023).

Challenges in Competitive Intelligence Adoption and Implementation:

The implementation of competitive intelligence comes with several setbacks. These challenges were identified across profit and non-profit information organizations alike. They included lack of skilled personnel on competitive intelligence practices, data management challenge, and limited awareness of competitive intelligence practices. Non-profit information organizations have additional challenges like dearth of policy support, dearth of funding, and poor technological infrastructure.

These findings corroborate existing literature that highlighted structural and contextual barriers to the adoption of competitive intelligence in developing

economies (Zhou et al., 2026; Madureira et al., 2023); and the absence of a tailored framework further exacerbate these challenges, thus leading to reduced utilization of intelligence systems.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study was a comparative analysis of competitive intelligence frameworks in profit and non-profit information organizations, with the intent of comprehending their different structures, their processes, strategic applications, their effectiveness, and the challenges that impede implementation. The study adopted a systematic literature review and thematic synthesis to establish that competitive intelligence frameworks are universally designed based on the main processes which include planning, data gathering, data analysis, data sharing, and feedback. However, the study revealed that there is a major difference in the level that profit and non-profit information organizations implement competitive intelligence, integrate competitive intelligence, and in the level of sophistication of the integrated competitive intelligence.

The study also revealed that there are more advanced and technologically sophisticated competitive intelligence frameworks that are operative within profit-oriented information organizations. These competitive intelligence frameworks for profit-oriented information organizations are used for forecasting and predicting market competitiveness, and explore areas of competitive advantage in order for profit maximization. To achieve these, there is a need for a robust digital technology, and experts who have the technical know-how to manage these technologies.

Libraries, archives, information centres, and other non-profit information organizations are less formalized in their approach to competitive intelligence frameworks; they are more receptive and adaptable to context-specific situations around their information ecosystems. Their primary focal points are in improving service delivery, which will consequently improve user satisfaction. But achieving these are usually hindered by limited funding sources and alternatives, shortage of technological infrastructure, and shortage of skilled manpower that are experts in competitive intelligence practices.

The study also showed that profit and non-profit information organizations both recognize the importance of competitive intelligence in decision-making process, and in improving organizational performance, despite the striking disparity between both organizational types. That is not to say that the effectiveness of these competitive intelligence frameworks is similar, as the effectiveness is largely determined by the degree of integration of competitive intelligence practices into strategic processes, availability of resources, and institutional readiness. The importance of context-sensitive frameworks remains germane, and the absence thereof creates a critical gap, more so, within non-profit information organizations, in developing economies like Nigeria and other African countries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

Development of Context-Sensitive competitive intelligence Frameworks

Information organizations that are not profit-oriented should adopt or develop adaptable competitive intelligence frameworks that portray their service-oriented mandates alongside incorporating scalability in their technology adoption, which are suitable for their resource capabilities.

Building the Capacity of Staff through Training Programs

Profit oriented and service-oriented information organizations alike need to set aside funds for the training of their staff, as the professional development of these staff are paramount should these organizations want to remain effective and efficient in their core objectives. These training programmes will help them develop new skills as well as improve on their old skills.

Infrastructural and Technological Advancement

Profit oriented and service-oriented information organizations alike, whether those in the global north or those in the global south, need to continually work on improving on their technologies and other infrastructure. Technologies like artificial intelligence and data analytics are examples of some useful technologies that need constant upgrading for effective functioning, in order to retain the competitive intelligence those information organizations.

Systematic Infusion of Competitive Intelligence into the Decision-Making Processes of Organizations

In order to maximize the direct impact of the outputs of competitive intelligence on information organizations, these organizations need to systematically make competitive intelligence core part of their decision-making processes.

Policy and Institutional Support

Regulatory bodies from the government, as well as institutional leadership should provide policies and funding support to encourage and enable the adoption and sustainability of competitive intelligence practices in information organizations that are service-oriented rather than profit-oriented

Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing

Information organizations should establish and sustain partnership and networks for the successful sharing of competitive intelligence practices, tools, and recent innovations across sectors and regions, in order to reduce knowledge gap and enhance innovation.

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