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Addis Ababa University School of Commerce
MA Program in Business Leadership Program

Final Year Project on
**READINESS ASSESSMENT FOR
INTERNATIONALIZATION
(THE CASE OF ETHIO TELECOM)**

BY

BEKALU MAMO TILAHUN

Advisor: Bahran Asrat (Ph.D)

A Research Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of the Addis Ababa University in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Business Leadership

May 2023

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Addis Ababa University School of Commerce
Post Graduate Business Leadership Program Unit

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Declaration

I declare that this research report is my original work prepared under the guidance of my supervisor Dr. Bahran Asrat and it has not been presented for any award to any College or University, and all the sources used in this research report have been properly recognized and acknowledged as in text citation and reference list.

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This research report is presented for examination with my confirmation as a supervisor.

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Date: _____

**READINESS ASSESSMENT FOR
INTERNATIONALIZATION
(THE CASE OF ETHIO TELECOM)**

BY

BEKALU MAMO TILAHUN

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LETTER OF CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that Bekalu Mamo Tilahun carried out his study on the topic entitled “READINESS ASSESSMENT FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION (THE CASE OF ETHIO TELECOM)”. This work is original in nature and suitable for submission for the award of the Master of Arts in Business Leadership.

Dr. BAHRAN ASRAT
(The Research Advisor)

Signature

Date

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Acronyms

3G	Third Generation
4G	Fourth Generation
5G	Fifth Generation
B2B	Business to Business
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DWDM	dense wavelength division multiplexing
EFY	Ethiopian Fiscal Year
EM MNE	Emerging Market Multinational Enterprises
ETA	Ethiopian Telecommunications Authority
ETC	Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FTTH	Fiber to the home
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
IBTE	Imperial board Telecommunication of Ethiopia
IR	International Readiness
LTE	Long Term Evolution
MNE	Multinational Enterprises
MNO	Mobile Network Operators
NGN	Next Generation Network
PT&T	Post, Telegraph and Telephone
PTT	Post, Telegraph and Telephone
R&D	Research and Development
RBV	Resource-Based View
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises OR Subject Matter Experts
SOHO	Small Office Home Office
STEEP	Social, Technological, Ecological, Economic, and Political
SWOT	Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat
ZTE	Zhongxing Telecom Equipment

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Abstract

On the globalization era and business organizations operating beyond their country of origin, internationalization is becoming concern for a number of organizations. Telecom service in its nature has the potential to address international customers at ease. Ethio telecom, being the sole telecom service provider in Ethiopia for more than a century has widened its product and services beyond communication to digital finance and solutions. Taking the global trend and the available opportunities this research intends to assess the posture of the organization to operate in the international market. Specifically, the research intends to assess factors, opportunities, challenges, and readiness posture of the company. Seven dimensions were selected to reflect this objective. Qualitative and quantitative data analysis was conducted to assess the company's posture. Top and mid-level management members were considered for this research's sake. Of the existing 22 Chief officers, 595 managers and 108 directors, all the directors were considered for the questionnaire, a sample size of 235 managers and 7 Chief officers were the target group for this research's sake. Interview with Chief officers, questionnaire for the purposively sampled managers and directors and focus group discussions with target divisions specifically strategy and marketing divisions were conducted. 192 respondents completed the questionnaire and 4 chief officers participated in the survey. The results of both qualitative and quantitative assessment indicated that the company is ready on all the identified dimensions. Meanwhile, aligning its mission and strategy, also international and other country's laws are considered as factors for internationalization of the company, the company has a lot of opportunities to be exploited for its international presence. Future studies should consider integrating the opportunities with the company's strength to extract its enablers. The output of this research can be used by top management and decision makers for further consideration.

Key words: internationalization, Readiness-assessment,

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to give background information about the concerns of the research topic, specifically internationalization and internationalization readiness. Moreover, background information about the focused organization, namely Ethio telecom is also included in this chapter. Problem statement, research questions and objectives are also included in this chapter. Any research outcome should benefit the expected audiences; hence this chapter also states the significance of the research results. Definition of terms, how the research is organized, and definition of key terms is also included in it. Finally, a summary of research design and methodology adopted in the research are discussed.

1.1 Background of the study

As the competition in the globe is increasing from time to time, companies are also striving to achieve their missions and goals with their maximum effort. Competition can arise from their home country with indigenous similar or diversified service and product giving companies. This might not be limited to local competitive companies, rather companies from abroad can be also part of the challenge based on the homeland country laws and legislations. Different organizations executing their operations abroad and across borders are referred to as internationalization. Bartering, buying, selling, exporting, logistics for goods and services, financial investments, hiring workers, hiring workers internationally, and production are all included in this definition (Siriphatrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013).

To take advantage of the opportunities provided by dropping trade barriers, product standardization, technological advancements, and the expansion of global networks, businesses are being encouraged to pursue overseas markets. Understanding the formation and evolution of multinational enterprises is a topic that scholars are becoming more interested in as global corporations become more eminent (Tan, Brewer et al. 2008). Accessing international markets is a central strategy which is considered as a major support for growth, in addition to being a key driver of the nation's economy in terms of export and foreign direct investment (FDI). A corporation gains a lot of benefits from expanding its products and services into an oversea

market. It helps to spread its risks, boosts sales, save money, and improve an organization's reputation (Siriphatrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013).

In starting an international firm, analyzing one's own organizational readiness to internationalize by assessing shortcomings and strengths to understand one's competitive competency and readiness before joining the global market is considered as an important initial step. Large, small, and medium-sized businesses are now encouraged to operate internationally and engage in competition with one another because of market liberalization and digitalization. Regarding these companies' "readiness" to ensure foreign activities, carry out international activities successfully, and carry out the internationalization process successfully, there are numerous questions to be addressed (Hamidizadeh and Zargaranyazd 2014). Therefore, the potential and ability of a company to go from being a wholly domestic company to an international one is known as internationalization readiness. This may also be seen as an organization's preparation for growth in global markets, which depends on its level of knowledge regarding the target foreign market(s) and its access points. The capacity and propensity of a company to begin exporting to foreign markets can also be referred to as internationalization ready (Hamidizadeh and Zargaranyazd 2014).

Entrepreneurs should examine their own organizational components, such as resources, motivation, and requisite ability, to determine whether they are ready to successfully internationalize. Hence, to plan effectively, they must examine their goals and objectives. For instance, they must determine if the organization has enough resources in terms of number, quality, capabilities, and competency. Before moving on to the next step, it is customary to obtain any resources that are lacking. Evaluations of supporting organizations should also include their potential (Siriphatrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013).

1.2 Background of Ethio Telecom

Emperor Menelik II started building the telephone connection from Harar to the capital city, Addis Ababa, in 1894, introducing telecommunications service to Ethiopia. The interurban network thereafter hence continued to grow successfully by expanding from the capital to all other cities and regions. Long distance communication was made possible by the fact that many

significant centers in the Empire were connected by lines, with the assistants or operators located at intermediate stations were commonly serving as vocal human repeaters between the distant calling parties. Since then, the introduction of telecommunication services which started nearly two centuries, ethio telecom has passed through different structural phases as well as technologies and service types (table 1). Before 1991, the company was serving both as the authorizing as well as service providing entity. However, after 1991, the company was restructured in to two parts namely Ethiopian Telecommunications Authority (ETA) and the Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation (ETC). ETA is the governing body for the telecommunication services in Ethiopia mean while ETC is the commercial service providing sector. Then after, the Ethiopian government has decided to focus on improving telecommunications services as part of the continuation of the 2005/06-2009/10 five-year plan after concentrating its efforts on education, health, and agriculture. Ethio Telecom was established on Monday, November 29, 2010, from this ambition to support the steady growth of the nation, within the Growth Transformation Plan (GTP), with ambitious goals. Ethio telecom was working with the vision of being world class telecom service provider till the end of 2022 EFY. The company was working as a sole service provider since the liberalization of the telecom sector was decided by the government (Ethio-Telecom 2023) which opens door for international operators to join the telecom environment within the country.

However, after the liberalization era, additional telecom service providers emerge into the market in the country. In line with the competitive market in the country, with a fresh start and a fresh outlook, the company started implementing its newly developed three-year LEAD Growth Strategy on July 1, 2022, with a goal of delivering services beyond connectivity, enabling inclusive growth by delivering digital and financial services, and streamlining the daily operations of businesses and individuals.

1.3 Statement of the problem

International markets for the telecommunication industry have altered since mobile telephones were introduced in the early 1980s with the mix of technology advancement, deregulation, and competition.

The factors that provide South African investors an advantage over similar competitors from other African, American, Indian, European, and Asian nations in bids is a subject at this point.

Commonly considered factors in bid proposals include: readiness to pay a higher license fee, promise to generate employment growth in the sector, presentation of better technology transfer package, rollout targets being larger than those of competitors, price projections that are competitive, declared intention to expand the coverage of fixed or cellular phone facilities to rural and other remote areas, promoting the general interest of consumers, and experience in running telecom networks on the African continent (Taka 2001).

Accordingly, the access to foreign market through liberalization and also the exercise to internationalization has enabled the telecommunications sector in South Africa with the following output. Large foreign capital inflows, Technology transfers either from technology-based license agreements or direct investment in local businesses through capital ownership, use of latest technology results in the delivery of better services at more affordable costs. Additionally, jobs are created as a result. faster network deployment to meet universal service goals, improved technological and management abilities that have improved the operations of local businesses, markets that are incredibly underserved are taken advantage of by offshore investors, and offshore investments from South Africa bring with them superior technology, managerial talent, and cash, as well as jobs. The two primary advantages in this respect are that South Africans hold crucial positions and that earnings are returned home, generating foreign money for the nation (Taka 2001).

Results from research that included 36 countries in Europe and South America from 1995 to 2006 support both institutional and geographical influences as a factor for internationalization. The impact of these variables varies throughout time, though. During the early stages of MNO internationalization, the impact of regional experience initially grows and subsequently lessens. On the other hand, when experience increases, the impact of institutional distance on internationalization remains the same. As a result, institutional distance consistently promotes internationalization, but the impact of MNO experience on admission diminishes as internationalization progresses (Pogrebnyakov 2008). The only component of institutions for which an industry-specific metric was utilized, the hybrid approach to institutional distance produced substantial outcomes, according to the research. The quantity of prior experience in the region has a beneficial impact on MNO entrance in neighboring nations. With more experience, the MNO is more likely to penetrate neighboring countries. However, experience has an

influence with time; earlier in the internationalization process than later, the MNO is more impacted by experience (Pogrebnyakov 2008). Due to a lack of staff cooperation, internal disagreements, and heightened distrust, cultural differences in related organizations might negatively affect post-acquisition performance as part of internationalization. Other factors that are crucial to organizational innovation and effective operation in the international market include the parent company's technological skills, technological relatedness, organizational learning capacity, knowledge, experience, and absorption capacity (Dhir, Rajan et al. 2021). Some internal and external factors that allow businesses to take off include: (1) domestic government backing; (2) global competitors' readiness to share strategic resources; (3) strong top-level management drive to enter the global market; and (4) swift technical and market developments (Al-Kwafi, Frankwick et al. 2020).

There are several entry obstacles that prevent many new businesses from entering each market, even though liberalization has increased the number of mobile carriers operating in each region and it is generally agreed that these markets should be competitive. These obstacles include building a network, gaining users, and building a brand, but in the context of mobile telephony, they also involve obtaining a license. A license might be expensive to purchase. Additionally, the globalization of telecom companies, particularly mobile carriers, deviates from the norm. It doesn't take a methodical approach to building up commitment in a target nation based on collected experience (Vialle, Whalley et al. 2021). worldwide standards reveal that telecom enterprises with extensive worldwide experience have low technology and innovative skills, inexperienced management and professional knowledge, and exhibit poor governance and accountability (Chen and Athreye 2009).

Ethiopian Airlines, being an icon for the country and with good testimonial in the aviation industry experienced an international market. In order to enable efficient decision-making, direct airline operations, the airline provide efficient customer-oriented service, and swiftly grow a worldwide network, an exceptional management structure was implemented (Al-Kwafi, Frankwick et al. 2020). Ethio telecom being one of the largest telecom service providers in Africa and being in the sector for more than 187 years, operates within the country only. The company has many years of experience working with international suppliers, partners and governing bodies. Meanwhile, though the company has many opportunities to extend its scope

abroad, this is not yet the case in ethio telecom. This paved the way for research in the field with considerable components that make up internationalization readiness. Being an international operator enables the company to create more market opportunities, address the foreign currency challenges that the country faces in general, and the company faces in particular. Hence, the researcher's interest here is to assess the posture of the company to be an international organization to establish the most efficient way that ethio telecom can reach its readiness for internationalization.

1.4 Research questions

This study answers the following questions.

- What is the readiness posture of ethio telecom to be an international telecom service provider?

1.5 Research objectives

The general objective of this research project is to assess the readiness level of ethio telecom to be an international organization.

The specific objective of this research are:

To assess the factors that determine the internationalization readiness of the company

To assess the challenges and opportunities to be an international ready organization

To assess the readiness level based on the identified dimensions.

1.6 Significance of the study

The significance of this research project is to support the company to get ready by becoming an international company and getting into the international market. This will also help the company and all stakeholders to see the opportunities and challenges in the process of internationalization. Moreover, by understanding other organizations best practices, the company can adopt the internationalization by filling the identified gaps. Being an international competent organization will help not only the company but the country as well. This can be through addressing foreign currency challenges, moreover, the company can be an icon for the country to the international society. The

research can also help the company to be flexible by adopting multinational organization trend. On top this, the company will get diversified market opportunities. In addition to these, efficient resource utilization, growth opportunities and job opportunities, improved business vision, and profit opportunities can be considered as an important significance of the research output.

All levels of the management hierarchy can get important insight and decision making input from the outcomes of this research. Apart from the management hierarchy of the company, other decision makers and stakeholders can also get important information from this research to put into consideration while creating strategies to the company's further development.

This research will also offer significant theoretical and applied contributions. The model of the internationalization process and several theoretical explanations of business preparation for internationalization are analyzed. By conducting a thorough analysis of the variables that affect internationalization, this research will also add knowledge of the internationalization of MNOs. On the other hand, practical significance of this research might help national and business policymakers to enhance internationalization to increase local market size. MNOs and other local companies may utilize the outputs of this study to establish and/or compare their level of preparation for an internationalization plan with broader trends specifically in mobile telecom.

1.7 Scope of the study

The scope of this research project is to assess the readiness level of Ethio telecom with the frame of identified dimensions. Specifically, the dimensions are motivation for going international, commitment of owners, skill, knowledge and resource, international experience and training, and competitive capabilities in domestic market. Personal innovation and the change in client's preferences & needs are out of scope of this research from the adopted framework.

1.8 Limitations of the study

As a limitation to this research project was the lack of previous research conducted in the readiness level of an organization internationalization in the context of Ethiopia specifically on the telecom industry. Availability of higher management and government higher officials for the sake of the assessment was another limitation for the research.

1.9 Organization of the study

The research is organized into five chapters. The first chapter introduces the research with its background, objectives, limitations and significances of the study. The second chapter is solely dedicated to the review of related literatures to formulate the basis of the research from the theoretical background point of view. The third chapter discusses methodology for the research including the data collection framework and analysis approach to be used in the research. The fourth chapter is the analysis and discussion of the collected data using scientific approaches. Finally, the last chapter of this research summarizes, concludes the findings and recommendations by the researcher on the way forward will be presented. Important references and data instruments will be presented in the references and annex sections of the paper.

1.10 Definition of key terms

Internationalization: an organization executing its operations abroad, in general across borders (Siriphattrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013).

Internationalization Readiness: a firm's potential to transition from an entirely domestic firm into an international one (Tan, Brewer et al. 2008).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the underlying theoretical background concepts are thoroughly investigated and presented. The chapter is divided into internationalization, theories and frameworks that are developed so far for internationalization, the concept of internationalization readiness, its importance, some factors that are peculiar to internationalization, the concept of internationalization in telecom environment, and finally conceptual frameworks for this research are discussed. The chapter is designed to provide attendants to grasp deep understanding of internationalization and readiness for internationalization with the view of the theories, trends and exercises of other organizations and countries.

2.1 Internationalization

Due to globalization and the development of information technology, worldwide trade is now interconnected. This drastically lower prices of goods and services than in the what happens in the past, it is now simpler for small and medium-sized businesses to access the global market. The competitiveness in the commercial and industrial sectors is directly impacted by the quick changes in the economy, trade, society, and technology. The exercises of variety of organizations executing their operations abroad and across borders are referred as internationalization. Bartering, selling, buying, exporting, logistics of goods and services, capital investments, labor, production, and foreign capital are all involved in this practice (Siriphatrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013). An organization's strategy for serving global markets is also known as internationalization. To increase their chances of receiving the intended benefits, firms with plans to go global must also be inventive. Alongside the related privatization and liberalization processes, there has been significant and growing international participation (Taka 2001). Due to a variety of factors, including market similarities, market liberalization, government deregulation, cost or competition drives, internationalization is one of the most often used approaches. Innovation may be defined as the process through which businesses develop the new services, systems, procedures, and goods necessary for adjusting to rapidly changing markets, technology, and competitive dynamics (Al-Nimer, Ghaith et al. 2021).

Free trade pressures and various degrees of investment on a global and regional scale are ongoing and have now amplified to a significant degree; both domestic and foreign commercial transactions are impacted by them. Businesses are becoming more varied, and consumers and

rivals are not restricted to one region of the nation. As a result of this fact, several corporate organizations have been looking for ways to extend their operations, obtain raw materials and resources, learn new production methods, and discover new markets for their goods and/or services to be able to grow their enterprises abroad. Hence, internationalization is the process through which diverse companies carry out their operations beyond national boundaries.

Companies with internationalization goals must be inventive to increase their chances of reaping the intended benefits. On the other hand, it has researches found that most SMEs struggle to enter overseas markets because of a lack of funding, a lack of expertise, or both, and weak managerial abilities. Also, any company may enter the global market via one of four strategies: joint ventures, franchising, full owned subsidiaries, or exporting. No of the chosen goal or approach, the company must first critically review and assess its level of internationalization ready from all angles before moving forward (Al-Nimer, Ghaith et al. 2021). Several academics were found to be initially interested in the internationalization of the telecommunications industry as a result of the market liberalization in the second half of the 1990s. Telecom operators started a significant international expansion around two types of strategies after a wave of privatization of former monopolies and market liberalization: global strategies aimed at providing global services to multinationals; and multidomestic strategies aimed at utilizing firm-specific advantages in foreign markets (Vialle, Whalley et al. 2021).

Innovation-based internationalization is a market pattern centered on developing new goods and services that fit the plan. Innovation and globalization are two closely related strategic actions. Its connection might be explained by the fact that internationalization is only a type of innovation, and that effective internationalization requires innovation from companies with superior commercial acumen.

Previous discoveries become more conventional and less expensive as technology develops. As a result of lowering pricing, businesses must find new markets to enter, like those in developing countries. From the perspective of the buyer, technology access through contractual agreements such technology licensing agreements, as opposed to requiring foreign direct investment, becomes more and more feasible. The field of talents may be affected by similar variables. While a foreign company may add skills as part of acquiring a stake, those skills may also be sought in other ways, and a country may look into alternative options (Taka 2001).

An environment with perceived instability and ongoing changes is described as having environmental dynamism. The environmental dynamism is operationalized in accordance with three key aspects, firstly, the vulnerability to changes in international trade rules, next, shift in customer preferences and demands, and finally, the technological advancements pertaining to the primary good or service (Al-Nimer, Ghaith et al. 2021).

Fundamentally, the desire to increase market share and pursue expansion, as well as the degree of sustainability, profitability, economies of scale, supply chain, and degree of business risk, all have an impact on how well SMEs internationalize. Yet, there have been some issues with earlier theories on the internationalization of SMEs. For instance, the Uppsala Model has come under criticism from several academics in the subject, with some even suggesting that it should be updated and adjusted to fit the present context. For instance, some researchers have added the concept of the pre-internationalization stage to the Uppsala Model to fill in the gaps (Sijabat 2018). Fundamentally, the drive to develop and pursue market expansion, level of sustainability, profitability, economies of scale, supply chain, and degree of business risk are all factors that affect how well SMEs internationalize (Sijabat 2018).

On this subject, a variety of hypotheses and models have emerged, including the Uppsala model proposed by Johanson and Wiedersheim Paul. According to this concept, a firm's gradual internationalization into foreign markets results from the amount of learning the company has achieved. However, 18 years later, Johanson and Mattson created the network model, which stresses the creation of market knowledge and the progressive learning process in owned networks. This model's juxtaposition was formed by the micro (enterprise by enterprise) and macro dimensions (companies with networking) (Al-Nimer, Ghaith et al. 2021).

In some research, the entrepreneurial orientation becomes a deciding factor for SMEs to expand their enterprises internationally. Past research has supported the importance of the entrepreneurial approach for corporate performance and internationalization. For the SMEs to be successful in the entrepreneurial orientation dimension, they needed to build a strong network that would enable them to access resources that were not already available (Sijabat 2018).

Two types of obstacles that SMEs encounter while trying to expand internationally are (i) internal obstacles and (ii) external obstacles. Although external barriers refer to the domestic and international business environments where the SMEs are conducting their business operations,

internal barriers are related to the resources and capacities of the SMEs to internationalize their activities. Four specific obstacles to SMEs' for exporting activity were extracted by researchers and this is highlighted in further detail as first, the lack of cash or financial resources for export; next, lack of knowledge to analyze the overseas market; then, an inability to establish relationships with consumers abroad; and finally, constraints on managerial time, competence, and knowledge (Sijabat 2018).

Another concern that SMEs confront globally when trying to market their goods and services internationally is access to financial resources. It became one of the most important obstacles impeding SMEs' efforts to internationalize. Access to financing has been cited by researchers as a key source of challenges for SMEs in Indonesia (Sijabat 2018).

For a variety of reasons, such as growth, long-term survival, profitability, economies of scale, supply chain security, business risk diversification, etc., a company may opt to expand its operations to overseas markets. By doing this, it exposes itself to new risks and obstacles that must be understood to be avoided better or fully mitigated (foreign exchange, cultural differences, etc.). Notwithstanding the motivations and advantages connected with the company's worldwide development, the multiple difficulties entailed in such strategy shift may jeopardize not just its international initiative but also its home operations (David and Cariou 2014).

According to Taka's study (Taka 2001), the deregulation and globalization of the South African telecom sector have resulted in significant inflows of foreign money. Telecommunications is a significant industry of FDI into Africa, accounting for more than 70% of it in Nigeria and South Africa. Technology transfers either from technology-based license agreements or direct investment in local businesses through capital ownership. The use of most modern technology results in the delivery of better services at more affordable costs, creating jobs in the process, faster network deployment to meet universal service goals, improved technological and management abilities that have improved the operations of local businesses, markets that are incredibly underserved are taken advantage of by offshore investors. Offshore investments from South Africa bring with them superior technology, managerial talent, and cash, as well as job opportunities. The two primary advantages in this respect are that South Africans hold crucial positions and also earnings are returned home, generating foreign money for the nation.

Initially viewed as primarily a reactive or opportunistic approach that opens up a nearby market, entering foreign markets through an alliance or a partner's network eventually leads to a wider and more organized worldwide implantation. These global networks of SMEs also seem to depend on a single person or a very small group of people who have the ability to establish and sustain connections across borders. These networks need to be stabilized, which calls for persistence and ongoing partner bargaining (David and Cariou 2014).

Since the nature of services is people-intensive rather than based on large fixed assets, they are less capital-intensive than manufacturing companies and frequently require smaller investments when entering international markets (Laanti 2009). The expenses and perceived risk levels of most services are therefore substantially lower. Due to this, service businesses with minimal financial resources can now more easily and quickly join foreign marketplaces. Nonetheless, it should be noted that when examining network industries, and other capital-intensive and asset-based service sectors, this might not be the case.

The issue, however, is that the disparity between the assessment standards employed by export diagnostic frameworks and the realities of worldwide business has grown as a result of key changes that have an influence on it (David and Cariou 2014).

Many causal factors or primary drivers of an enterprise's decision to engage in international business have been collected and analyzed by researchers. These drivers include looking for new market opportunities, increasing business profits, learning how to develop products and services, providing after-sales services to clients abroad, locating factories near raw material sources, etc. There are other environmental elements as well, including the economic cooperation at various levels that encourages member nations to allow free trade and investment, that encourage more businesses to enter international markets (Siriphatrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013).

The decision to enter the global market is full of risks. To evaluate potentials and opportunities for developing their firms internationally, entrepreneurs must conduct extensive research. Before joining the global market, it is crucial to assess one's organizational readiness to internationalize by assessing strengths and shortcomings in order to understand one's competitive competency and preparedness (Siriphatrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013).

Rationales can alter throughout time and in different countries and regions. According to some studies, there are four key factors that contribute to the globalization in the case of higher education. This includes economic, academic, cultural and social, and political dimensions. It complements the prior viewpoint by claiming that there are new and developing justifications that cannot be simply categorized into one of the four categories that was established earlier like social/cultural, political, scholarly, and economic. As a result, it establishes a new set of justifications to be used in addition to the ones listed above. These justifications, which are broken down into national and institutional levels are more detailed and less all-inclusive (Hawawini 2011).

The telecommunications industry entered a new paradigm, which may be summed up in four terms: private, competitive, global in scope, and with interests in other industries. The industry once more looked to be at a crossroads where new commercial realities met technical change—mobile telephony and the Internet, crucial elements of business and society (Calvo 2021). MNOs were searching for methods to increase their profitability due to expensive investments in networks and licenses, as well as rising competition and falling pricing. One method was getting rid of or sharing their tower networks. The alternative was to combine with another company to have access to greater economies of scale and other size-related advantages (Vialle, Whalley et al. 2021).

Organizational culture has been highlighted by academics as a crucial indication of successful organizational transformation, and institutional leaders who want to develop and implement successful internationalization plans must be aware of their institution's organizational culture (Vialle, Whalley et al. 2021).

Leadership effectiveness will rise as a result of an increased understanding of how organizational culture affects institutional internationalization, which also gives a method for determining how ready an institution is for internationalization (Hawawini 2011). According to this review, knowing how organizational culture affects institutional internationalization would improve leadership efficiency and provide you a way to gauge how ready an institution is for internationalization. Planning, executing, and evaluating internationalization methods and goals rely heavily on one's understanding of institutional organizational culture. Yet, it is insufficient

on its own; to be sustainable, internationalization needs infrastructure, money, strong leadership backing, and policy (Hawawini 2011).

Internationalization is one of the most effective techniques for SMEs to broaden their scope and areas of activity. Businesses in commercial marketplaces survived severe changes and transformations. This required SMEs to concentrate their efforts on internationalization, which has favorably impacted the growth of the national economy and increased job possibilities in emerging and developed markets (Jarrar 2021).

Companies must develop distinctive skills that can better align their performance with their changing environment to achieve a sustained competitive advantage. These capabilities must be dynamic in nature and continuously improve (Jarrar 2021).

Internationalization significantly contributes to the success of businesses by boosting return on investment, supplying a worldwide stage for competition, improving product quality, and offering access to cutting-edge technology. By creating jobs, boosting the flow of foreign exchange, and preserving fiscal deficit by expanding the flow of foreign exchange, it also strengthens the economy (Arafat, Khan et al. 2022).

In contrast to an internationalization strategy driven by collaboration with competitors and the search for foreign resources to strengthen enterprises' competitive position, competition and the pursuit of market shares may cause businesses to choose a different justification and method of implementation (Chen and Athreye 2009).

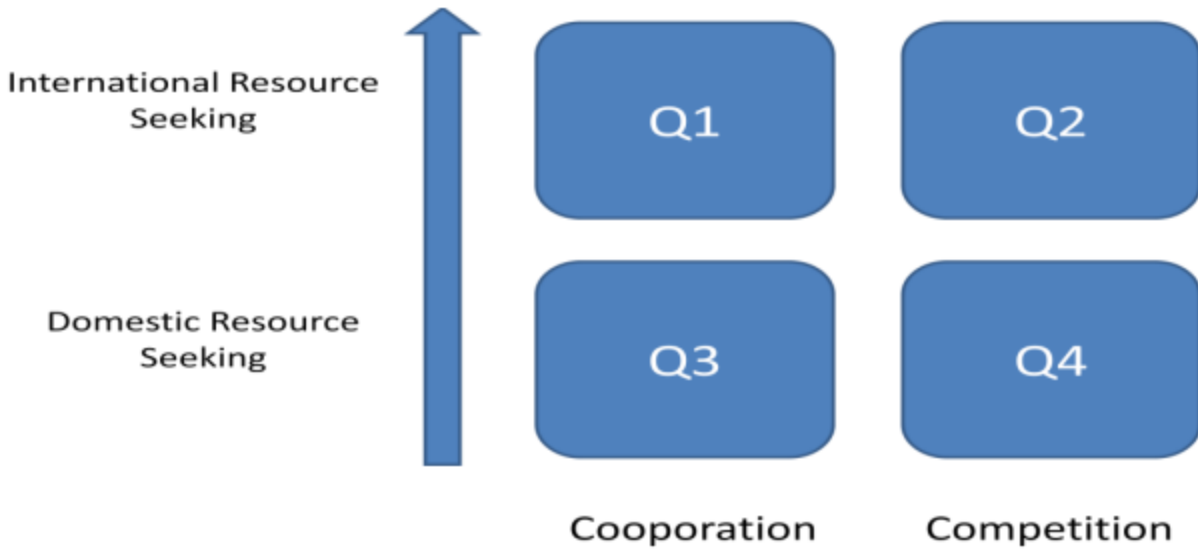


Figure 1: Rationale for internationalization (Chen and Athreye 2009).

2.2 Theories and Frameworks for Internationalization

A variety of internationalization theories have been developed. Those theories can be categorized into two groups namely static and dynamic theories. Static theories, which do not explicitly account for a temporal dimension, and dynamic theories, which include a temporal dimension. Static theories of internationalization includes the internalization theory, the eclectic paradigm, transaction cost theory and the born-global theory. This group of theories, in addition to not accounting for the temporal dimension, considers factors internal to the firm as primary drivers of its internationalization. The category of dynamic theories includes the resource-based view, the product life cycle theory and the internationalization process model. These theories explicitly include the temporal dimension, and, unlike most static theories, consider factors that are external to the firm, most prominently characteristics of the host country market (Pogrebnyakov 2008).

The Uppsala Model (the internationalization process model) and the Innovation Model are two phases theories that have been used most frequently to describe the sequential nature of the internationalization process. These theories—which have been critiqued for being either unduly deterministic or overly simplistic—describe the internationalization of corporations as a progressive learning process of growing worldwide participation. These ideas don't specifically discuss where the sequential internationalization process starts (Tan, Brewer et al. 2008). The

framework (Figure 1) is predicated on the idea that businesses internationalize by making a succession of small decisions connected by a relationship between "status aspects" and "change aspects." According to the Uppsala model, businesses internationalize gradually as a result of the interaction between knowledge acquisition and market commitment. Lack of information is viewed as a risk concern, but it may be mitigated by making small decisions and learning about international markets and operations (Tan, Brewer et al. 2008).

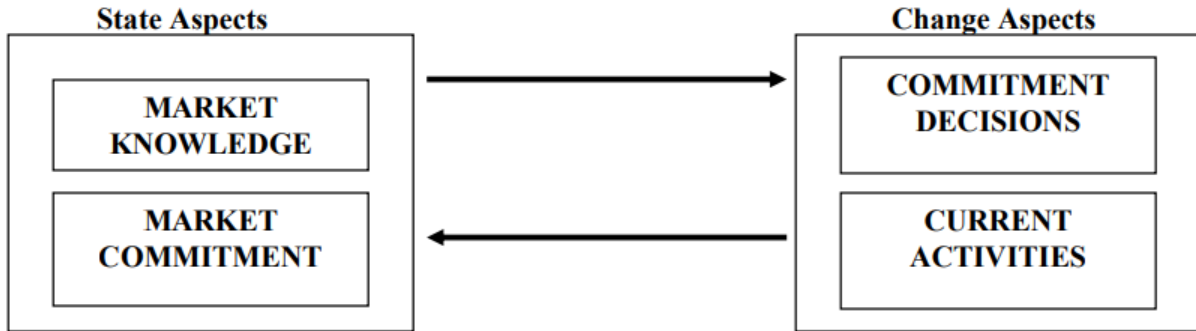


Figure 2: Uppsala Model's Theoretical Framework (Tan, Brewer et al. 2008)

Although the Uppsala Model has made a substantial contribution, the Uppsala Model does not outline the process's beginning. To understand how an internationalization perspective initially emerged inside a corporation, scholars contend that the process of international commitment has to be reversed. It is suggested to start with a pre-internationalization phase to provide the Uppsala theoretical framework a starting point. It depicts a phase that all businesses go through before they commit to their first international market. Thus, the initial transitional point from which a business initially joins the internationalization process outlined in the Uppsala theoretical framework is designated as the internationalization readiness construct (Tan, Brewer et al. 2008). The globalization of telecommunications companies, and specifically mobile carriers, deviates from the norm. The Uppsala model's established stepwise route of growing commitment in a target nation based on accumulated experience is not followed. It begins immediately with a significant financial investment, either by purchasing an existing mobile operator or by investing in a license and a network (Vialle, Whalley et al. 2021).

In this model, corporations adopt a cautious and methodical approach to reduce perceived risks due to the uncertainty brought on by their ignorance of overseas markets. As they become more adept at internationalization, firms therefore tend to internationalize first in psychically close

countries (i.e., in neighbors) before expanding the scope of their operations to psychically more distant countries. At the level of the target nation, they frequently begin with modest investment, or low-commitment forms like ordinary sales agents, and gradually expand their commitment as they develop more in-depth knowledge of this market via experience. This procedure may lead to high commitment forms like a completely owned subsidiary in the end (Vialle, Whalley et al. 2021).

Owners' dedication - Business owners need to demonstrate their dedication to actually becoming global. Entrepreneurs in SMEs must decide if they wish to expand their operations internationally. Research from the past have shown that an entrepreneur's propensity to internationalize is positively connected with their ability to tolerate risk since starting a firm abroad is more riskier than starting one at home (Siriphattrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013).

Product sizing for international markets This refers to goods that have received certification of their standards in accordance with international standards, along with indicators of key traits, applications, and other crucial details. Or otherwise, the sale of these goods in foreign markets has been officially allowed. Knowledge, expertise, and resources of the company - Entrepreneurs should be knowledgeable about and adept at conducting business with other nations. They should be knowledgeable of tax and legal agreements, as well as current and comprehensive information sources on both home and foreign markets. They should also be able to effectively manage the financial resources that sustain their global operations.

International experience and education - Business owners should have relevant experience and/or formal education in comprehensive international company management. Companies may use the information to plan training for their staff members to improve their ability to handle foreign business. Also, understanding international markets can improve prospects to expand export and encourage smart use in overseas investment. Moreover, internationalization benefits from this (Siriphattrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013).

Three significant theoretical stances are theoretically incorporated into the MNO internationalization framework (Figure 3). The framework first examines the role of prior experience in MNO internationalization by building on the firm's concept of the internationalization process. The impact of both general and industry-specific kinds of institutional distance on internationalization is then taken into consideration using concepts from

the institutional theory. Third, this research examines the function of the area in internationalization by drawing on regionalization studies. Last but not least, the framework also takes into account aspects of the host nation that have been shown in studies of mobile telephony and FDI in other industries to be key predictors of MNO entrance (Pogrebnyakov 2008).

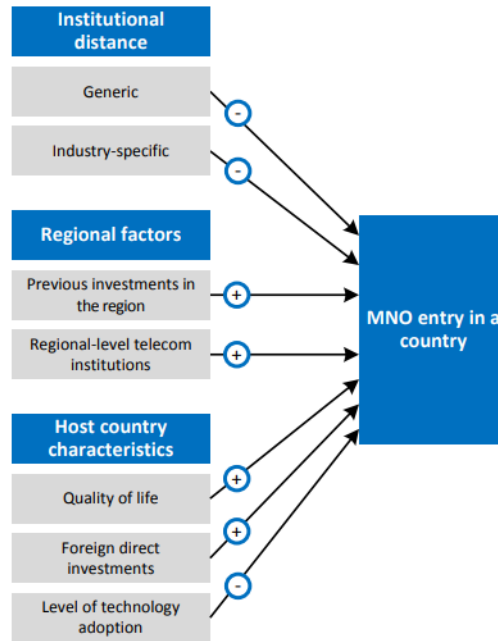


Figure 3: Original framework of internationalization of MNO (Pogrebnyakov 2008)

2.3 Internationalization readiness

International readiness is the term used to describe how internal company factors affect the degree of internationalization. Researchers identified a gap in the literature and proposed a model for the pre-internationalization phase to supplement the Uppsala theoretical framework (Tan, Brewer et al. 2008). They also introduced the idea of internationalization readiness as a point of evaluation that connects a firm's pre-internationalization phase with its initial international commitment. The potential exporter's level of commitment to engaging in an overseas business is a key success element. Due to this, it is important to comprehend the idea of internationalization preparedness since being able to assess a firm's level of preparation might decide whether or not its following international endeavor is successful (Tan, Brewer et al. 2008).

A company's potential transformation from a wholly local company into an international corporation is recognized by its internationalization readiness. According to researchers, an organization's level of knowledge about the target foreign market(s) and the methods for

accessing them may be regarded as a function of its preparation for engagement in those markets (Tan, Brewer et al. 2008).

It was recommended to assess an organization's readiness to internationalize its business along the following dimensions. Competitiveness in the home market - The ability to conduct business effectively can provide one an advantage over international rivals and help one defeat them. This refers to an organization's competitive commercial potential, or the skills that produce superior results that may be measured by market share and profitability. Profit levels are assets that help global business management become more effective. Numerous academics coincide with that key elements influencing the effectiveness of internationalization include sales, revenues, profitability, organizational growth, and success in managing overseas markets (Siriphatrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013).

The process of evaluating an organization's internationalization posture is an iterative task. Entrepreneurs should periodically assess the potential of their companies. It is possible to undertake a SWOT analysis, which involves an examination of the opportunities and threats posed by outside factors that may affect international business (Siriphatrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013).

The success of a company's worldwide initiatives is closely correlated with its level of internationalization preparation; hence this readiness is crucial. When a company adopts the structures, methods, and resources necessary to meet the demands of the global market, it is said to be in a state of being "internationally ready," which enables it to improve operations and grow from local to international markets (Kadric and Rangelova 2013).

Researchers, as well as most practitioners and international business consultants, advise evaluating a firm's readiness capabilities. Some advice is choosing a reference market where the company may do its export diagnostic. It's also noteworthy to note that from the start, professionals in the area advocated using the export diagnostic framework to highlight the firm's possibilities for distribution channels inside the chosen markets as well as to assign the firm's export appropriateness in a binary manner (Go or No Go). In reality, as part of a two-step procedure, many internationalization models address choosing the appropriate country or entry mode (David and Cariou 2014).

The necessity for developing strategies to boost an SMEs' capability and global competitiveness is highlighted by studies on their level of posture, which are thought to be of utmost importance. As a result, SMEs are urged to continually assess and improve their level of preparation to sell their goods and services internationally. The capacity of an organization to enter international markets would be improved by identifying and comprehending the elements determining their level of internationalization readiness (Sijabat 2018). Output of studies conducted in this area suggested that entrepreneurs should examine their own organizational components, including resources, motivation, and requisite ability, in order to determine whether they are ready to successfully internationalize or not. To plan this effectively, they must examine the aim and objectives that they stand for. For instance, they must determine if the organization has enough resources in terms of number, quality, capabilities, and competency. Before moving on to the next step, any resources that are waning should be acquired (Siriphatrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013).

The degree of readiness any organization should acquire prior to internationalization to assure success has been clearly described by scholars as "internationalization readiness." Meanwhile, there are risks for firms when dealing with any overseas market. Thus, the precautionary preparations to lessen, share, or transfer the risks to any other party when doing any new company in uncertain situations must be covered by the internationalization strategies (Jarrar 2021).

It is recommended to assess an organization's posture to internationalize along with the following dimensions. These are competitiveness in the home market, overseas travel as a goal, dedication of owners, product stipulation for international markets, skills, company resources, knowledge of other countries, and international training and experience (Siriphatrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013).

The pre-internationalization stage is crucial for firms that need to have some level of preparation in their native environment in terms of financial capital, human capital, and their competitive edge in goods and/or services. Also, they need to have a baseline for a critical understanding of global markets, as well as a detailed entrance strategy and market selection process. At the organizational level, executive proficiency and dedication to internationalization plans would also stimulate a desire to expand internationally. Considering innovation, competitiveness,

technological advancement, and manager's capacity to seize possibilities are considered as an internationalization readiness elements (dynamic capability) (Jarrar 2021). The link between foreign distribution, foreign marketing, foreign networks, and entrance strategy along with their effect on the internationalization readiness for Malaysian SMEs was examined by research conducted on this topic (SMEs) (Jarrar 2021).

The conclusion drawn from a study, therefore, supported the significance of dynamic capacities in terms of resources and capabilities of top managements and decision-makers' commitment to and preparedness for internationalization. The researcher also discovers that top management and decision-makers believe internal barriers have a negative impact on the internationalization readiness and commitment of Chilean organizations due to a lack of certain managerial qualities like knowledge and experience as well as a severe stock shortage. The primary hurdle to internationalization preparedness and commitment, according to senior management and decision-makers in Brazil, is from external barriers like high shipping and transportation costs (Jarrar 2021).

Whether a company is traditional or born global, for instance, the concept of internationalization readiness applies in all cases. Born global firms that internationalize quickly do not differ from traditional firms that internationalize gradually because both firm types go through a pre-internationalization phase. With born global enterprises, internationalization readiness is attained at a considerably faster speed, and their pre-internationalization period is significantly shorter in contrast (Tan, Brewer et al. 2008). This is a significant distinction that defines their early and rapid internationalization process. Going overseas does not, however, ensure success on the global stage. So, organizations must be prepared to assure their chances of success. The question of "When is a business ready to move abroad?" then emerges into picture. Researchers have suggested that internationalization readiness is the stage of readiness that all businesses should attain before going global to guarantee achieving its goal. According to the argument made in a study by Kadric et al, enterprises may significantly lower risk by achieving internationalization ready through a learning process made up of the various readiness components (Kadric and Rangelova 2013). The phrase "internationalization" often refers to either a company's perspective on international business or the actual execution of such business overseas accordingly (Kadric and Rangelova 2013).

A revised Uppsala-based pre-internationalization model serves as an illustration (Figure 3).

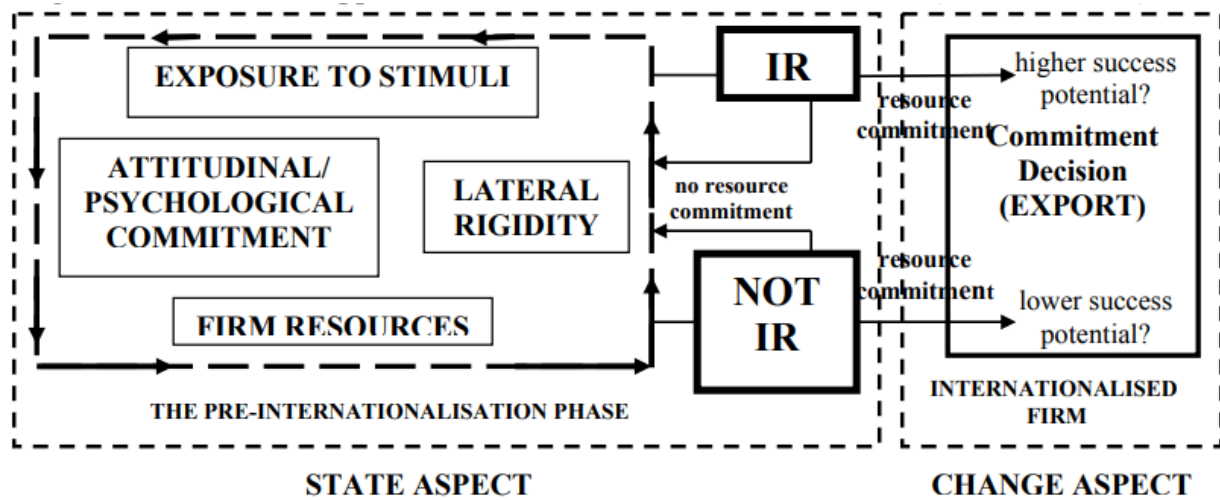


Figure 4: A reframed Uppsala-based Pre-Internationalization Model (Kadric and Rangelova 2013)

2.4 Importance of Internationalization and Internationalization Readiness

There are many benefits correlated with internationalization practices. It gives businesses the chance to expand, aids in the development of new knowledge, gives access to new resources, and aids in the achievement of long-term profitability growth. Henceforth, internationalization has emerged as the most crucial strategic choice by many organizations (Jarrar 2021).

When compared to mature MNEs from developed markets, multinational enterprises from emerging markets (EM MNEs) are frequently more competitive in terms of cost of labor and natural resources (Chen and Athreye 2009). However, the majority of these businesses lack the technological and innovative capacity, the managerial and professional experience, and the poor governance and accountability required by international standards that come with global experience (Chen and Athreye 2009).

The competitors and the competitive dynamics should be given due attention while responding to the external environments like social, technological, ecological, economic, and political (STEEP) elements. Strategy orientation would not be complete without these versatile skills. Coherent, collaborative, and creative strategies must be adopted by organizations if they want to achieve the strategic fit between their strengths and resources and the needs of their environment. Also,

they must strive to maintain a sustained competitive edge. Procedures, daily tasks, routines, and processes are essential components of dynamic capabilities when management uses creativity and initiative to change bureaucracy and habits that are out of date (Jarrar 2021). Users were searching for integrated solutions since they were no longer content with just having access to the Internet. As a result, they chose operators who could provide all the services the market was asking for, including voice, image, and Internet access, among other things. In the context of the technical development of services, competing in a market that was expanding in size and changing in terms of offers required ever higher capacity, scale, and resources. Users' interests also start to emerge in the fast accelerating connection speeds, technological ability to deliver high-quality audiovisual material, and compatibility between many components of service offers (mail, messages, voicemail, content consumption, etc.) (Calvo 2021).

In another research what drives Chinese businesses to expand abroad was assessed. With this finding, firms can utilize their current firm-specific assets thanks to FDI. When examining the internationalization efforts of MNEs from China and other emerging nations, this hypothesis doesn't hold up very well. These businesses often have little technology or ownership advantages to take advantage of, but they do have cost advantage. Research on MNEs from developing nations, especially China, has led to the assumption that ownership benefits may be found in 'capabilities' other than proprietary assets like patents, trademarks, and brands. The definition of "ownership advantage" should be expanded to incorporate the unique skills of businesses in emerging nations. Some Chinese and Indian businesses have carved out a specialization in "frugal engineering," or the capacity to produce inexpensive versions of products for mass markets (Chen and Athreye 2009).

Telecommunications is a field that has been significantly impacted by globalization and is a key technology that makes globalization possible. One of the stated purposes of privatization was to obtain foreign capital, which would bring with it expertise and cutting-edge technology. Foreign corporations have been active in selling telecommunications equipment, provision of mobile telephone services (in collaboration with local businesses), and value-added network services like data transfer (Taka 2001). This therefore makes sense given that increased openness, global competitiveness, and integration altogether can bring money, talent, and technology (Taka 2001).

Furthermore, instead of being truly global in scope, critics of globalization have noted the continued concentration of business activities within specific geographic areas (commonly known as the triad of North America, Europe, and East Asia) (Taka 2001). They also highlight the potential harm that FDI may do to the economy of the host country. These include the possible expulsion of local businesses and the repatriation of profits. These profit transfers may be significant, as seen by the very small number of businesses that account for worldwide output across numerous industries. Additionally, it is typical for multinational corporations to maintain high-value operations and the growth of productive capacities, such as research and development, in their home nations or regions, which suggests that there may not be much technology transfer (Taka 2001).

2.5 Some Factors for Internationalization

When talking about the preparation for Companies, the variables that drive internationalization focus on entrepreneurial orientation, internationalization challenges, financial constraints, knowledge gaps, and business network.

In addition to being a primary driver of exports and foreign direct investment (FDI), accessing international markets is a crucial strategy seen as a major support for growth. A corporation is expected to gain an enormous number of benefits from expanding into overseas markets. It spreads risk, boosts sales, saves money, and enhances the reputation of the firm. Numerous motivating factors and/or causes are shown by studies to be at play when businesses decide to expand internationally, including looking for new market opportunities, increasing business profits, learning how to develop products and services, providing after-sales support to customers abroad, building factories close to raw material sources, etc. (Siriphattrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013). There are other environmental elements as well that encourage more businesses to expand internationally, including the economic cooperation at various levels that encourages member nations to allow free trade and investment (Siriphattrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013).

Entrepreneurs should examine their own organizational components, including resources, motivation, and requisite ability, to determine whether they are ready to successfully internationalize. To plan effectively, they must examine the aim and objectives (Vialle, Whalley et al. 2021). For instance, they must determine if the organization has enough resources in terms of number, quality, capabilities, and competency. Prior to moving on to the next step, any

resources that are waning should be acquired (Siriphattrasophon and Saiyasopon 2013). The main paradigm in strategic management, the Resource-Based View (RBV), may be used to address internationalization problems (Vialle, Whalley et al. 2021).

FDI may also be motivated by the desire to leverage market dominance based on variables like size and technological strength, even if ownership and internationalization allow for better control over technology. Market share may result in significant profits in industries that are often oligopolistic, particularly in a sector that is rapidly expanding like telecoms (Taka 2001).

The features of the MNO, the host country, the institutional distance between the MNO's home country and the host country, and regional considerations are all thought to have played an impact in how MNOs internationalize (Pogrebnyakov 2008).

2.6 Internationalization in Telecom Industry

Strategic management and international business research are two distinct professions, although they are melding more and more. To better understand how a corporation internationalizes, theories from these two domains should be combined. More interdisciplinary study that combines both strategic management and international business theories and models is required to better understand how firms are becoming more international. In industrialized nations, service sector companies are already the largest employers, and their significance in global commerce is growing quickly (Laanti 2009).

In industrialized nations, service sector businesses are already creating the largest employment opportunities, and their significance in global commerce is also growing rapidly. Additionally, services are playing a bigger and bigger role in global FDI (Sauvant 2005). The infrastructure and intermediate service sectors can be considered as the best examples of this, since their value to a nation's economy outweighs the direct financial impact they have. This is because these services are frequently essential to other industries.

Case study on SingTel, Sonera, Telia, and Telstra indicates their internationalization phases and approaches as a telecom service provider which is concerned with the company's strategies with respect to product, operation, market and organization (Laanti 2009). As part of their product strategy they employ in broad markets in the domestic phase, such as integrated telecommunications services, and specialty marketing in the learning phase, where they offer

know-how consulting projects and continue the consulting projects in addition to certain physical services and items. Very diverse and opportunistic product strategies were employed as a tactic during the opportunistic phase. For systems and networks, they partner with cable TV providers, paging devices, fixed line operators and mobile operators (Laanti 2009).

Additionally, some investments in businesses that offer directory services software and hardware related to IT mobile providers Fixed-line personnel Cable networks engage in investments in businesses offering directory services, software, and IT technology Data networks/cable systems, mobile operators, fixed line operators (services that are asset-based and location-bound), and so on. Ongoing products, services, and systems, such directory services Fixed network projects, mobile operators/paging operators, satellite systems, and data/internet directory services goods and services, including software. Additionally, data services active investments in regional and transatlantic data networks, as well as B2B engagement, were important. Very diverse and opportunistic product strategies are used during the opportunistic phase. They are concentrating more on mobile as a spearhead during the de-internationalization phase, and certain non-core companies were discharged. Throughout the mature period in domestic markets, they implement substantial product diversity (convergence) and integrated telecom goods (bundling). putting more of an emphasis on full-service companies in a few key regions. The businesses' operation plan once more used a staged approach. Throughout the Domestic era, they maintained their partnership. While they are still learning, exports remain their main strategy. On the other side, in the opportunistic phase, others employ exports, global/international partnerships, and FDI from minority enterprises. Again, FDI from minority and majority firms as well as the divesting of non-core operations and alliances were used during the de-internationalization phase. Finally, During the maturation phase, FDI adoption shifts from the minority to the majority. The companies employed a tiered approach in their marketing campaigns. During the domestic phase, they concentrate on domestic consumers, and during the learning phase, they do the same for emerging countries. Their goal during the opportunistic phase was the global and regional B2B offices. During the de-internationalization phase, they also give priority to regional operations and B2B active investments. As a result, they devote more time to regional and global enterprises during their development phase. Once more, the stages served the purpose of organizational strategy. The domestic phase employed the domestic organization structure, whereas the learning phase used the international organization structure. Additionally, the opportunistic phase employs

a multidomestic, global, and B2B organizational structure approach, and the de-internationalization phase utilizes multidomestic and global services. The maturity phase is finally accomplished by transnational, or domestic and multidomestic, as well as international B2B operations (Laanti 2009).

The new cycle in Telefónica's, which is a monopoly service provider of the Spanish telecom industry, internationalization, and the complex investment process in Spanish telecom are organized into four main sections, including an overview of Telefónica in the global market, Telefónica's entry into Central Europe with "esk" Telecom, the entry into untapped European markets with "O2," and the penetration of subjectively far-off markets -- China. The strategy of international alliance-building by Telefónica has a long history and has been improved upon throughout the years (Calvo 2021). It signed a strategic agreement in May 2000 with Terra and Bertelsmann, which was superseded by a strategic alliance framework agreement over three years later (Calvo 2021). It was a response to both the necessity to modify the goods and services as well as the changes that the Internet industry had to deal with, particularly the growth of broadband. The goal was to leverage synergies and provide value for both Groups by combining this Group's capabilities as a connection and access provider with those of the Terra Lycos Group's fixed telephone Internet portal in the residential, SOHO, and, when agreed upon, SME sectors (Calvo 2021). The previous pattern was forced into an irreparable crisis by this new integrated phone and Internet model, and a new offer emerged that could only be seized by completely integrated management between network operations and service delivery. Due to the convergence of the connection, access, and service layers, communications operators had to be created in order for Internet access providers to remain competitive. They therefore had only two options: either invest in network infrastructure, or completely merge with network operators that already had infrastructure and the necessary technical and human resources (Calvo 2021).

Telefónica sought to provide users with comprehensive solutions so they could successfully address new challenges. As a result, the company decided to combine with an online company as a strategic move. In this regard, the integration of the businesses that resulted from the merger with Terra had several advantages, starting with a rise in customers and market share and continuing with a better utilization of the client bases already in existence. This integration reduced costs and maximized investments through integrated network and platform management,

optimization of investments, and rationalization of organizational structures with the removal of duplication. As a result, management was improved, efficiency increased, and it became easier to identify content and service synergies (Calvo 2021). A more appealing and competitive fixed telecommunications service incorporating broadband Internet access would be made possible through integration, allowing for the exploitation of development prospects in new markets. Finally, it would enable the creation of a distinctive approach to e-commerce as well as general portals for information access and advertising (Calvo 2021).

The following technological and regulatory factors posed risks for Telefónica: markets undergoing rapid technological change that necessitated constant technological innovation; compliance with the terms and conditions imposed by each country's government when granting licenses to provide services; and user hostility toward mobile telephony because of the potential health issues brought on by radio electric emissions. In relationships with partners in joint ventures that are not controlled by Telefónica, additional specific risks of the Telefónica Group were added, beginning with country risk and continuing with those associated with the management of exchange rate or interest rate risk. Acquisitions and corporate integrations; a higher risk of solvency resulting from acquisitions, which results in more financial vulnerability and less strategic flexibility; and, lastly, lawsuit and other legal actions ongoing before courts and arbitration bodies in numerous countries. Country risks were divided into a number of categories based on the characteristics of the country's monetary, fiscal, monetary, and regulatory policies. Telefónica continued the globalization strategy that had been largely started two decades earlier in the new era of the convergence of telecoms and IT and the move to the preponderance of mobile telephony. A selected approach that included forays into open markets in sizable European nations as well as those with significant development potential in Eastern Europe and China dominated the new phase (Calvo 2021).

Research conducted by Chen and Athreye, (Chen and Athreye 2009) on the internationalization strategies of Chinese technology companies brought on by resource seeking played different roles in the growth strategies of the three telecom firms, namely: Huawei Technologies (Huawei), Zhongxing Telecom Equipment Corporation (ZTE), and Datang Telecom Technology (Datang), when faced with a highly oligopolistic and Western-dominated global market. With the dual goals of achieving global technical capacity and maximizing its core competencies in the

Chinese local market, Huawei set out on its internationalization adventure. With the rationale to do this, Huawei has embraced the "walking on two legs strategy" used by other prosperous Chinese companies (Chen and Athreye 2009). They created several internationalizations plans for both developed and developing nations. They avoided competition from MNEs from the developed world in emerging regions and made use of their affordable switches, which had been well-liked in the Chinese home market. Other low-cost EM MNEs, such as those from Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand, caused Huawei with escalating competition in 2003 (Chen and Athreye 2009). Huawei should create a particular advantage derived from differentiation to effectively compete with opponents from other EM MNEs. Huawei entered the European market through joint ventures and collaborations with Siemens and Marconi, two of the largest telecom companies in Europe. Huawei's foreign sales are increasingly being driven by Europe. In the US markets, where Huawei has also been sued for patent infringement, less dramatic effects have been observed. In 2007, 48% of Huawei's 68,000 workers were employed in research and development. To learn about cutting-edge technology and management strategies, Huawei has created R&D facilities in Silicon Valley, Dallas, Stockholm, and other industrialized countries. By obtaining access to top-tier personnel, state-of-the-art R&D facilities, and a dynamic research environment, Huawei enhanced its R&D and new product development (Chen and Athreye 2009).

According to estimates made, ZTE's prices for comparable products are between 25% and 90% less expensive than those of its western rivals. In addition, ZTE, which is more 'public' than Huawei, its more well-known rival, was the first Chinese telecom equipment maker to get ISO9001 quality standard accreditation. Before Huawei, ZTE started its globalization process, and it was the first telecom company to do so with support from the Chinese government. Before Huawei, ZTE started its globalization process, and it was the first telecom company to do so with support from the Chinese government. ZTE opened its first R&D facility in the USA, where it developed software, switching, and CDMA2000 1x technologies. This was done so that it could study advanced technology and management methods from developed countries. It opened its first international office in Islamabad, Pakistan, the following year. ZTE started out early, but it took them a long time to internationalize. Following China's entry into the WTO in 2005 and in response to pressure from Chinese policy, they made a significant push for internationalization (Chen and Athreye 2009). The CEO of ZTE claims that a lack of qualified workers for global

company is their largest obstacle to globalization. The main issue they failed to address was the lack of foreign talent and localization in host nations. Prior to 2005, ZTE initially concentrated its internationalization efforts mostly on developing regions in Asia and North Africa. Following this push, there were allegations of corruption, particularly regarding the awarding of contracts to ZTE in Ethiopia and the Philippines (Chen and Athreye 2009). With respect to NGN and mobile systems, Alcatel, Ericsson, Nortel, and Portugal Telecom; 3G systems with Hutchison; and optical transmission systems with Marconi, ZTE has more recently developed strategic collaboration partnerships. With Texas Instruments, Intel, Agere Systems, HHNEC, IBM, Microsoft (China), Qualcomm, Huahong NEC, and Tsinghua University, the company has also started cooperative laboratory relationships. Similar to Huawei, ZTE has collaborated on technology research projects with 50 academic institutions in China. ZTE is a full member of the China Communications Standardization Association (CCSA), just like Huawei. ZTE now operates 14 wholly-owned R&D facilities spanning Asia, Europe, and North America. All ZTE R&D management procedures adhere rigorously to international standards including CMM and CMMI. ZTE has standardized its R&D processes using these scientific management frameworks and open-source technology platforms, cutting R&D times, lowering costs, improving design flows, and ensuring the performance of new products (Chen and Athreye 2009).

The high-tech business Datang Telecom Technology Co.,Ltd. is owned by the CATT (China Academy Telecommunication Technology). It began to exist in 1998. In more than 30 provinces, cities, municipalities, and the Macao Special Administrative Region, Datang's services and goods are now widely accessible. Datang's strategy, in contrast to those of Huawei and ZTE, was only focused on the domestic Chinese market, where it aspired to gain a monopoly position through the deployment of a proprietary standard. As a result, when the Chinese government began promoting the internationalization of high-tech businesses in the late 1990s, Datang did not actually "go global" (Chen and Athreye 2009). It was said in the roadmap for network deployment in China that pre-commercial testing would begin following the conclusion of a number of test network across several cities.

Landline and mobile network and service integration has recently received attention from companies like Vodafone and Millicom. A core network, billing system, clientele, or reputation are examples of complementary assets that have helped Iliad (Free) enter the mobile

telecommunications market. The utilization of licenses is the other aspect. Since spectrum is a limited resource, each country has a limit on the number of licenses it may provide network operators. The gradual commitment of the Uppsala model is unworkable, which brings us to the third argument. Iliad was compelled to commence operations without supporting resources in order to take advantage of a unique opportunity made attainable by a government decision. Following this initial strong commitment, leveraging complementary assets was done gradually through a number of partnerships (Vialle, Whalley et al. 2021).

In the middle of 2020, Iliad Italia, an Italian provider of broadband infrastructure, inked a contract with Open Fiber to address the problems brought on by the fall in profitability. This partnership allowed Iliad Italia to expand more quickly into the market by enabling it to provide fiber-based internet services in 271 cities across Italy. Iliad Italia then consented to take part in Open Fiber's "co-investment" program in August 2021 (Vialle, Whalley et al. 2021). Even though financial information was lacking, it is obvious from the announcement that the investment will allow Open Fiber to increase the number of Fiber to the home (FTTH) in Italy. In turn, this would make it easier for Iliad Italia to offer fixed connection throughout the nation, enabling the delivery of integrated services (fixed and mobile). Iliad's introduction into the Italian market serves as an illustration of how an initial large investment was followed by a gradual process of leveraging complementary assets by entering into a number of partnerships. Through these alliances, Iliad Italia has been able to grow its operations in Italy both geographically and in terms of the variety of services it provides (Vialle, Whalley et al. 2021).

In South African telecom industry, the government implemented a partial privatization program and passed the Telecommunications Act in response to the growing need to liberalize the industry and increase its productivity. As a result, the South African telecommunications industry clearly benefits from extensive foreign engagement, from equipment suppliers through network operation to various value-added services. The relatively common option that the South African government selected was to sell a stake in Telkom to a foreign investor who will instantly bring technology, knowledge, and managerial skills to the company. Along with luring FDI, access to technology was seen as a crucial factor in selling to a foreign telecoms company. A major topic at this stage is the parameters that provide South African investors an advantage over rivals from other African, American, Indian, European, and Asian nations in bids. Commonly considered

elements in bid proposals include readiness to pay a higher license fee, a promise to generate employment growth in the sector, presentation of better technology transfer package, rollout targets being larger than those of competitors, price projections that are competitive, a declared intention to expand the coverage of fixed or cellular phone facilities to rural and other remote areas, promoting the general interest of consumers, and experience in running telecom networks on the African continent (Taka 2001).

2.7 Conceptual framework of the study

There are several theoretical frameworks designed to support the internationalization process; historically, the Uppsala model, which is an improved form of "the network-based method," is one of the most well-known staging frameworks. The Uppsala model's reasoning is predicated on the idea that organizations should gradually grow their international participation by beginning with a modest level of commitment and involvement and working their way up. Any rise in an organization's external market knowledge and resource allocation will, in turn, have a beneficial effect on the organization's degree of commitment to international markets. The Uppsala model emphasizes that firms begin their global participation by taking tiny steps toward a wider existence in order to lower risks and enhance the acquired knowledge (Al-Nimer, Ghaith et al. 2021).

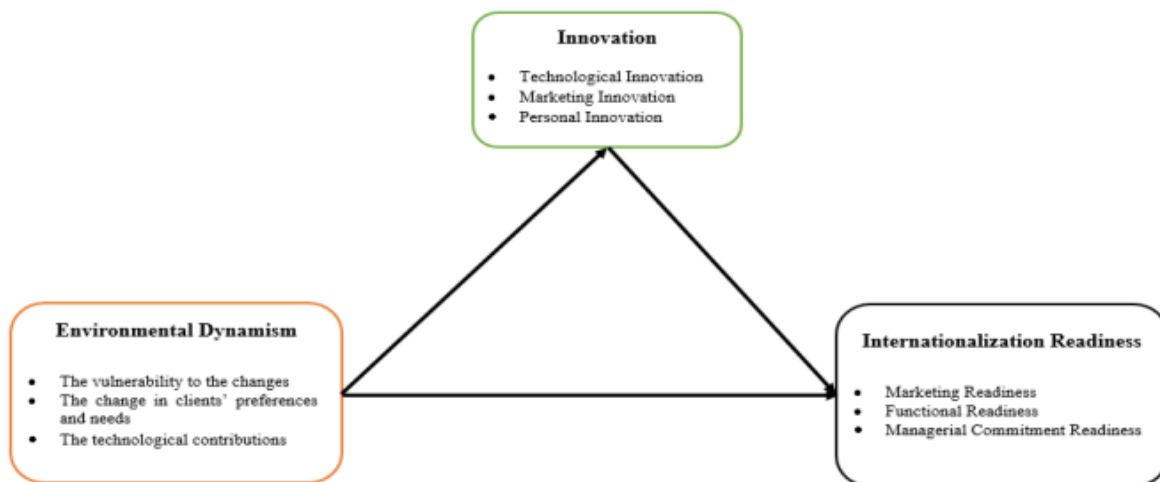


Figure 5: Conceptual Framework (Al-Nimer, Ghaith et al. 2021).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

Closely studying the contemporary situation of Ethio Telecom business practices, the potential to compete internationally and improvement areas that should be addressed before going to the international market. This will help higher management to address improvement areas, in the case of gaps in the readiness level dimensions in this research. This study therefore focused on studying existing business experience and perception towards international practices. In this chapter, therefore, the detail plan and the techniques used to answer the research questions to arrive at findings and conclusions will be presented.

3.1 Research design

Exploratory research, descriptive research, and explanatory research are the three fundamental types of research aims. Finding out what's going on and looking for fresh insights are the goals of exploratory research. A fresh perspective is being used to evaluate phenomena and pose questions. While developing an operational definition, this form of research is typically used in the early stages of the study when the concepts are not yet clear enough. This kind of research frequently uses a more qualitative approach, with the goal of gaining fresh perspectives on current problems and circumstances. The term "descriptive technique of research" refers to the category of study that sought to learn more about a phenomenon's current condition. This kind of study aims to present a precise profile of circumstances, individuals, or events. According to academics, descriptive research aims to observe and record a phenomenon that is occurring but to which no objective value can be assigned. Explanatory research, for instance, aids in determining the causes behind the occurrence of a certain phenomenon, according to scholars who have suggested that it is helpful for this form of research. Explanatory research offers a casual explanation for a topic or issue, typically in the form of relationships. To develop, elaborate, extend, or test a hypothesis, this kind of study enables one to get new perspective on a topic. Explanatory research's main goal is to pinpoint problems and important variables in a particular study challenge (Rahi 2017). In this research, a descriptive research approach will be used to assess the readiness of Ethio Telecom to move to an international market.

3.2 Research approach

Despite the fact that there are many other categories for research methodologies, quantitative and qualitative approaches still widely used. A qualitative approach is used to gather comprehensive information about a particular subject. A scientific methodology, the quantitative approach has its roots in the positivist worldview. This approach ignores an individual's emotions and sentiments as well as the context of the surroundings and instead concentrates on gathering new data from a broad population in line with the problem. Similar to this, we've spoken about how the quantitative approach measures something objectively through actions and views, allowing researchers to explain data rather than interpret it.

In this research, a mixed approach is adopted. Both qualitative research and quantitative research approach are used. For the qualitative research, interviews were used mainly to support the results of the analysis from the quantitative analysis. On top of that, secondary data, including related research and documents extensive revision were conducted.

3.3 Description of study variables

The following are mainly the study variables. Innovation, Internationalization readiness from marketing, functional, managerial commitment perspective and environmental dynamism. From the innovation point of view technological, marketing and personal innovation will be analyzed. Likewise, vulnerability to changes, changes in client's preferences and needs and technological contributions will be assessed for environmental dynamism.

3.4 Description of study area and target population

The top management with respect to leadership types, strategy, intention and concern with respect to the research area are part of the target population for the research. On top of that, based on the findings from the literature, technical and other levels of management hierarchy are considered as the target of this research. Consequently, the total population for this research is 595 managers, 108 directors and 22 chief officers (CxO's).

3.5 Sampling technique/methods and sample size

There are different sampling techniques that are used to take representative data from the population. This includes but not limited to Probabilistic sampling is a sampling strategy in which each unit has an equal likelihood of being chosen. According to the definition of randomization, simple random sampling is a sampling procedure where each unit of the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample. Random selection of the starting sample point and the subsequent selection of the instances throughout time is known as systematic random sampling. Stratified random sampling is a sampling technique in which every stratum, or subgroup, has an equal probability of being chosen at random. Each stratum is given an equally balanced representation. For this research's sake, purposive/convenience sampling will be conducted. Snowball sampling is a procedure where the researcher first enters a contract with a limited number of persons who are pertinent to the study topic before using them as contacts for other contacts. The population is divided into strata, and a quota is determined for the sample elements from each stratum. The fact that the element is not chosen using a probability sampling approach prevents the conclusions drawn from this kind of sampling methodology from being generalized. Sample size refers to a representative of the population. This kind of sampling method is practical and economical. The population size for the target groups of this research are considered from the executives, directors and managers of divisions of interest. The total population therefore is 22 chief officers, 108 directors and 595 managers. Subject matter experts (SME) from strategy and marketing divisions were also involved for focus group discussion (FGD). Considering the fact that all the executives and managers are not directly involved to the interests of this research 7 chiefs and purposive sampling approach is adopted for the managers. All the directors are considered for this research sake. Moreover, focus group discussion with marketing and strategy team were conducted. So as to estimate the sample size for the managers, sample size calculator from creative research methods were used (Systems). With the values of 95% confidence level and confidence interval 10, the sampling size for the managers will be 81.

Whereas sampling size calculation using the Sample Size Estimation by Yamane and Cochran, Krejcie and Morgan, Green Formulas, and Cohen Statistical Power Analysis by G*Power the estimation will be much higher than the one computed earlier (Chaokromthong and Sintao 2021).

Therefore, according to the research recommendation the sampling size can be computed with chi-square value of 3.841 (with 95% confidence level and 1 degree of confidence) $p=0.5$, $e=0.5$ and $N=595$ the sample size will be computed to be 234. Therefore, for this research sake, the questionnaire is distributed to 370 managers, and 108 directors. Google form is used as an underlying data collection tool. The questionnaire is uploaded to the google form and the link is distributed to each participant using an email. Microsoft work mail merge supported the distribution of the questionnaire with tailored email message to the participants with the link to access the form and also with the approval letter to conduct the research attached with it. On the first attempt 79 respondents filled the questionnaire form. After a week time, reminder email again tailored to each individual is distributed and after the reminder within a week period of time the number of responses has increased from 79 to 187. This figure is by 146 (78.1%) managers, 39 (20.9%) directors and 2 (1.1%) chief officers. Therefore, this figure is 180% of the first sampling calculated size and 62.4% of the second sampling calculated size. The directors accounted for 36.11% of the total population. From the interview point of view 2 executives has managed to dedicate their time for the interview and 2 executives responded via the questionnaire. For the sake of conducting focus group discussions (FGD), Microsoft teams were used. 8 SME experts were invited for the discussion and 5 managed to attend the discussion. The discussion is conducted online for around 55 minutes.

3.6 Data collection – source, types, instruments, etc.

The target populations of this study for the primary data are the chief executives, directors, managers and concerned team members. Focus group discussion (FGD) with SMEs from strategy and marketing division were conducted. Secondary data collected from publicly available information like annual report of the company, commercial code of Ethiopia, proclamation and directive issued by the National Bank of Ethiopia, Ethiopian communication Agency, and other governing bodies to regulate and supervise the company's governance were accessed. Moreover, literature related to the subject was exploited from publications and the internet.

3.7 Data analysis

Once the raw data is on hand, quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis were conducted. Particularly with the quantitative data collected via the questionnaire, a descriptive statistical analysis method and SPSS data analysis tool is used to tabulate the data and present it in tables. Information obtained from the open-ended questions were also analyzed together with the close-ended questions and to be used as supplementary data, to triangulate the responses gathered via the questionnaire in general. Moreover, to analyze the data obtained through interview qualitative method of data analysis were employed. Perhaps, the data gained through this method were used to support the information gathered via the main tool of the research, which is the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics is used to analyze the collected data. Frequency, mean, maximum and minimum values were calculated to get the summary of the collected data. Moreover, to see the relationship between variables, bi-variate correlations were calculated using the SPSS statistical data analysis tool. Conceptual analysis on the qualitative data, which is collected via interview, FGD and other secondary sources were used to support the analyzed quantitative data collected and identify factors that should be considered for IR.

3.8 Reliability and validity analysis

An internal consistency reliability test was conducted on the pilot research to see how well the items of a given construct combine and can independently assess that construct. "Reliability" relates to the consistency of a measure (if the findings can be replicated under the same conditions), while "validity" refers to how effectively a technique measures something. The term "validity" relates to a measure's accuracy (i.e., if the findings actually reflect what the measure is designed to represent). The reliability of the survey items were evaluated using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Al-Nimer, Ghaith et al. 2021). The reliability coefficient findings for the items vary from 0.937 to 0.988. According to several studies, reliability improves as Cronbach's alpha approaches one, with a reliability coefficient value of 0.60 denoting moderate reliability, 0.70 denoting excellent dependability, and 0.70 and above denoting very high reliability.

The reliability test conducted using SPSS statistical tool for the collected data is shown in the table below. The overall reliability test result is 0.927 which is acceptable. The validity of the

questionnaires were confirmed through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) (Al-Nimer, Ghaith et al. 2021).

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.927	42

Table 1: Reliability test for all dimensions

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha test result (Al-Nimer, Ghaith et al. 2021)

3.9 Ethical Consideration

Before the research is conducted in Ethio telecom, the researcher submitted a formal letter request which is supported by the university to the Chief Executive Officer’s office. The requested is supported by the CEO office and directed to the human resource division to complete all the necessary obligations. Once again, the researcher signed the expected non-disclosure agreement with the company to conduct the research. Accordingly, the HR division supported the research and distributed support letter to all the participants. The support letter is attached in the annex section of this paper. Moreover, the researcher has informed the participants of the study about the objectives of the study, and consciously consider ethical issues in seeking consent, avoiding deception, maintaining confidentiality, respecting the privacy, and

protecting the anonymity of all respondents. A researcher in general must consider these points because the law of ethics on research condemns conducting research without the consensus of the respondents for the above listed reasons.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND FINDINGS

In this chapter, data obtained from various sources are presented, analyzed and discussed based on the specific objectives and in line with the existing theory.

4.1 Analysis of Responses for the IR dimensions

4.1.1 Demographic Data

To better understand the respondents that are engaged in filling out the questionnaire for this research, this section of the survey assesses about their backgrounds. For that sake the following demographic information were collected. The respondents name (which is optional), email address (similarly optional), age group, gender, experience in the organization, and his/her position. Accordingly, the following values were collected.

Your age group?

186 responses

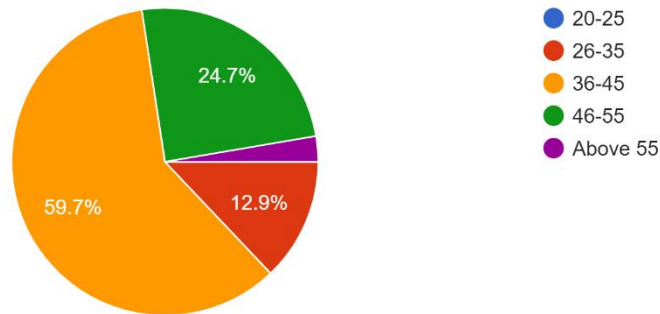


Figure 6: Respondents age group

Gender

186 responses

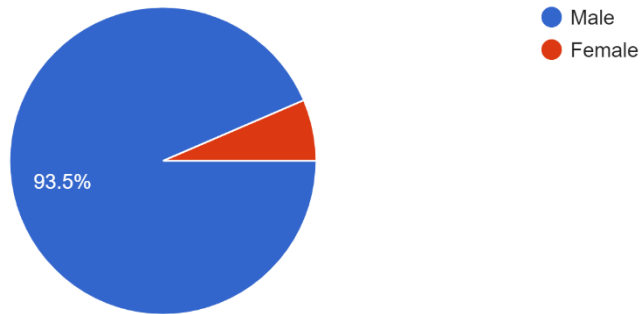


Figure 7: Respondents Gender

Your work experience in Ethio telecom

186 responses

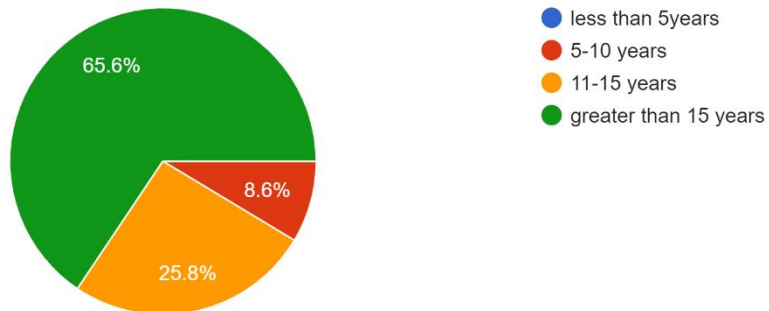


Figure 8: Respondents experience in Ethio Telecom

Job Position
187 responses

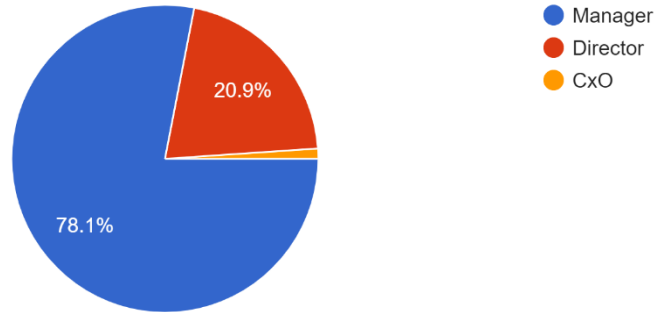


Figure 9: Respondents position within Ethio Telecom

In summary as indicated on the above figures, nearly 60% of the respondents are in the age group of 35 to 45 whereas nearly a quarter of the respondents are in the age group of 46 to 55. Around 13 percent of the respondents are in the age group of 26 to 35 and finally 2.69 percent of the respondents are above 55 years of age. From this data we can clearly see that the result is reflected mostly by mid ranged age groups which accounts nearly 85% of the responses. Most of the respondents are male and the participation of female management members in this research is very minimal. In a similar pattern, we can clearly see that those that have worked for greater than 15 years in the organization has a greater participation on the response and considering experiences greater than 11 years, more than 90% of the participants are in this experience group. Therefore, the responses are from those management members with long years of service in the organization. They are expected to have deep knowledge of the company’s products and services, vision, mission, goals, and strategies.

4.1.2 International Readiness assessment Dimension Data

For the sake of analyzing the data using the SPSS v25 statistical analysis tool, the following codes are used to identify questions under each assessment dimensions.

Questionnaire Category	Code
Marketing Readiness	MR
Functional Readiness	FR

Managerial Commitment Readiness	MCR
Technological Innovation	TI
Marketing Innovation	MI
Vulnerability to the changes	VC
Technological contributions	TC

Table 3: Questionnaire category coding.

The general response rates for each category is tabulated hereunder.

Dimension	Questions	Valid	Missing	Percentage
MR (99.57%)	MR1	187	0	100.00%
	MR2	185	2	98.93%
	MR3	186	1	99.47%
	MR4	185	2	98.93%
	MR5	187	0	100.00%
	MR6	187	0	100.00%
	MR7	186	1	99.47%
	MR8	185	2	98.93%
	MR9	187	0	100.00%
	MR10	187	0	100.00%
FR (99.79%)	FR1	187	0	100.00%
	FR2	187	0	100.00%
	FR3	187	0	100.00%
	FR4	186	1	99.47%
	FR5	186	1	99.47%
MCR (99.73%)	MCR1	187	0	100.00%
	MCR2	185	2	98.93%
	MCR3	186	1	99.47%
	MCR4	187	0	100.00%
	MCR5	187	0	100.00%
	MCR6	187	0	100.00%
	MCR7	186	1	99.47%
	MCR8	187	0	100.00%
T (99.57%)	T1	187	0	100.00%
	T2	186	1	99.47%
	T3	187	0	100.00%
	T4	187	0	100.00%
	T5	184	3	98.40%
MI (99.47%)	MI1	186	1	99.47%
	MI2	187	0	100.00%
	MI3	187	0	100.00%
	MI4	183	4	97.86%
	MI5	187	0	100.00%

VC (99.73%)	VC1	187	0	100.00%
	VC2	186	1	99.47%
	VC3	187	0	100.00%
	VC4	186	1	99.47%
TC (99.79%)	TC1	186	1	99.47%
	TC2	186	1	99.47%
	TC3	187	0	100.00%
	TC4	187	0	100.00%
	TC5	187	0	100.00%

Table 4: Response rate of questions per IR dimension.

4.1.3 Marketing Readiness

Market readiness refers to having the appropriate goods, services, or experience for the anticipated target global market. It can be a predictive tool since it highlights areas that need improvement so that marketing becomes a competitive advantage for the business. The questions are crafted in such a way that it can reflect the company’s preparedness for an international market. The following picture shows in detail the responses to the question to assess the marketing readiness of ethio telecom.

Dimension	Questions	Valid	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
MR (99.57%)	MR1	187	28	122	27	10	0
	MR2	185	17	107	44	17	0
	MR3	186	18	122	33	12	1
	MR4	185	54	118	6	7	0
	MR5	187	78	95	10	4	0
	MR6	187	72	101	11	3	0
	MR7	186	40	112	29	5	0
	MR8	185	17	110	49	9	0
	MR9	187	21	105	46	15	0
	MR10	187	14	98	63	11	1

Table 5: Marketing Readiness Assessment

Accordingly, nearly 60% of the respondents agree and 22% strongly agree on marketing readiness level of ethio telecom and believe that ethio telecom has the readiness from the marketing point of view. This includes products, services and experiences that the company has acquired is believed to make the company an internationally competent service provider. Even though the concept is supported by majority of the respondents, 3.3% of the respondents didn’t agree on the concept. On the other hand, nearly 15% of the respondents feel to be neutral.

4.1.4 Functional Readiness

Operational Readiness is the level of readiness obtained by an organization when it can start up and run operations in a safe and effective manner. It shows how people, processes, systems, and performance assessment are related. Good organizational programs and project preparedness are prerequisites for a successful readiness evaluation. Five questions were deployed to assess the level of preparedness of ethio telecom in this aspect. The responses are shown in detail hereunder. The five scale responses are shown in different color to clearly see the participants consent for the questions.

Dimension	Questions	Valid	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
FR (99.79%)	FR1	187	58	111	11	7	0
	FR2	187	26	118	28	14	1
	FR3	187	26	94	37	29	1
	FR4	186	38	99	37	12	0
	FR5	186	25	106	37	17	1

Table 6: Functional Readiness Assessment

The overall functional readiness assessment result shows that more than 55% of the respondents agree and more than 18% strongly agree that ethio telecom is functionally ready to move to an international market. This means that the functional organization of the company can allow the company to compete internationally with its current posture. Though most of the respondents support the idea, nearly 8.5% of the respondents didn't agree on this concept. Moreover, nearly 16% of the respondents are neutral to this concept.

4.1.5 Managerial Commitment Readiness

The company's ambitions plan to move to any business can't go without the commitment of the management. Its management shall buy the idea and own its move. Hence, this section of the data analysis addresses the readiness of ethio telecom management's commitment for the company to move to the international market. The responses are presented in a similar way to the other responses hereunder.

Dimension	Questions	Valid	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
MCR (99.73%)	MCR1	187	4	64	56	54	9
	MCR2	185	24	109	38	13	1
	MCR3	186	42	100	24	18	2

	MCR4	187	12	87	53	31	4
	MCR5	187	23	106	33	23	2
	MCR6	187	26	103	40	17	1
	MCR7	186	34	106	36	10	0
	MCR8	187	16	108	36	26	1

Table 7: Managerial Commitment Assessment

The respondents give their support the management’s commitment to compete internationally. This is supported by 12.13% strongly agreeing and 52.48% by agreeing for the provided data collection instrument questions. The contemporary management commitment posture of the company hence is believed to give the organization to move to be an international competent organization. Nonetheless, nearly 14% of the respondents didn’t agree on this concept whereas around 21% choose to be neutral for this idea.

4.1.6 Technological Innovation

New technologies are incorporated into production and consumption through the economic process of technological innovation. It comprises identifying emerging technical opportunities, planning the people and material resources required to turn those possibilities into valuable processes and products, and maintaining the necessary operations. In order to assess the current posture of ethio telecom to technology innovation and its readiness to join international market, the well-crafted questions were distributed accordingly and responses are shown hereunder.

Dimension	Questions	Valid	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
T (99.57%)	T1	187	9	44	74	58	2
	T2	186	36	108	28	14	0
	T3	187	23	113	38	12	1
	T4	187	25	101	36	21	4
	T5	184	11	90	65	17	1

Table 8: Technological Innovation assessment

More than 11% of the respondents strongly agree that ethio telecom has technological innovation that is sufficient to join the international market. Likewise, nearly 49% agree with this idea. Henceforth, 60% of the management team believes that the current technological innovation posture of the company is an opportunity for the company to be an internationally competent

organization. On the other hand, though nearly 26% of the respondents are neutral to suggest, around 14% of the respondents do not agree with this idea.

4.1.7 Marketing Innovation

Implementing an innovative marketing approach that involves major adjustments to product positioning, promotion, price, design or packaging is known as marketing innovation. The goal of marketing innovations is to increase a company's sales by better meeting consumer requirements, expanding into new areas, or repositioning a product on the market. The adoption of a marketing strategy not previously employed by the company is what sets a marketing innovation apart from other modifications to a firm's marketing tools. To assess ethio telecom’s market innovation practices and aligning that practice with the initiative of joining international competitors, the research questions were designed and distributed accordingly. The target audiences have responded to the questions as shown below.

Dimension	Questions	Valid	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
MI (99.47%)	MI1	186	9	39	92	40	6
	MI2	187	9	77	81	19	1
	MI3	187	35	111	38	3	0
	MI4	183	23	66	77	14	3
	MI5	187	27	114	33	12	1

Table 9: Marketing Innovation assessment

Looking into the aggregate responses, the majority of respondents give their consent by supporting the idea that ethio telecom has marketing readiness 46% by agreeing and 7.55% by strongly agreeing to the questions for this purpose. On the flipside, 31.51% choose to be neutral and 14% disagree and strongly disagree with the idea.

4.1.8 Vulnerability to the changes

How the organization is sensitive to changes and is keen to be affected by unprecedented changes especially the vulnerability to the changes in the trade policies across borders needs to be assessed for the sake of addressing the readiness of ethio telecom for international market. For that sake, research questions designed are distributed to respondents. Their reflections are presented as follows.

Dimension	Questions	Valid	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-----------	-----------	-------	----------------	-------	---------	----------	-------------------

VC (99.73%)	VC1	187	52	111	16	8	0
	VC2	186	56	119	10	1	0
	VC3	187	25	99	39	24	0
	VC4	186	19	88	37	41	1

Table 10: Assessment on Vulnerability to the changes

In accordance with the responses from the respondents, the target management group support the current posture of the organization for responding to susceptibility of changes 55.9% by agreeing and 20.38% by strongly agreeing to the concept. But nearly 10% of the respondents do not agree with this idea and 13.67% choose to be neutral.

4.1.9 Technological contributions

It is a type of technological development that is added to a company via the application of advanced industrial creativity and communication technologies. Question and respondents reflection is therefore presented with the following table.

Dimension	Questions	Valid	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TC (99.79%)	TC1	186	47	106	17	16	0
	TC2	186	9	52	33	86	6
	TC3	187	30	123	22	12	0
	TC4	187	28	122	20	17	0
	TC5	187	3	34	65	63	22

Table 11: Technological Contributions Assessment

Respondents, likewise, give their support the role of technological contributions for the readiness of ethio telecom 45.19% by agreeing and 13% by strongly agreeing to the concept based on the crafted questions. While 16% are neutral to the concept, 21% disagree with the concept and 4.42% strongly disagree with the concept. Hence, though still the idea is supported by the majority of the respondents, there is an area improvement accordingly to be addressed in this dimension.

4.1.10 IR assessment aggregate data

The overall aggregate information from the collected quantitative data is tabulated hereunder. Based on the number of questions in each dimension, the average result is also indicated accordingly.

Dimension	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	# of questions
MR	359	968	247	54	1	10
FR	173	528	150	79	3	5
MCR	181	783	316	192	20	8
T	104	456	241	122	8	5
MI	29	177	121	49	8	5
VC	152	417	102	74	1	4
TC	50	174	62	82	17	5

Table 12: Overall data collected from all IR dimensions

Dimension	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
MR	22.04%	59.42%	15.16%	3.31%	0.06%
FR	18.54%	56.59%	16.08%	8.47%	0.32%
MCR	12.13%	52.48%	21.18%	12.87%	1.34%
T	11.17%	48.98%	25.89%	13.10%	0.86%
MI	7.55%	46.09%	31.51%	12.76%	2.08%
VC	20.38%	55.90%	13.67%	9.92%	0.13%
TC	12.99%	45.19%	16.10%	21.30%	4.42%

Table 13: Overall normalized data collected from all IR dimensions.

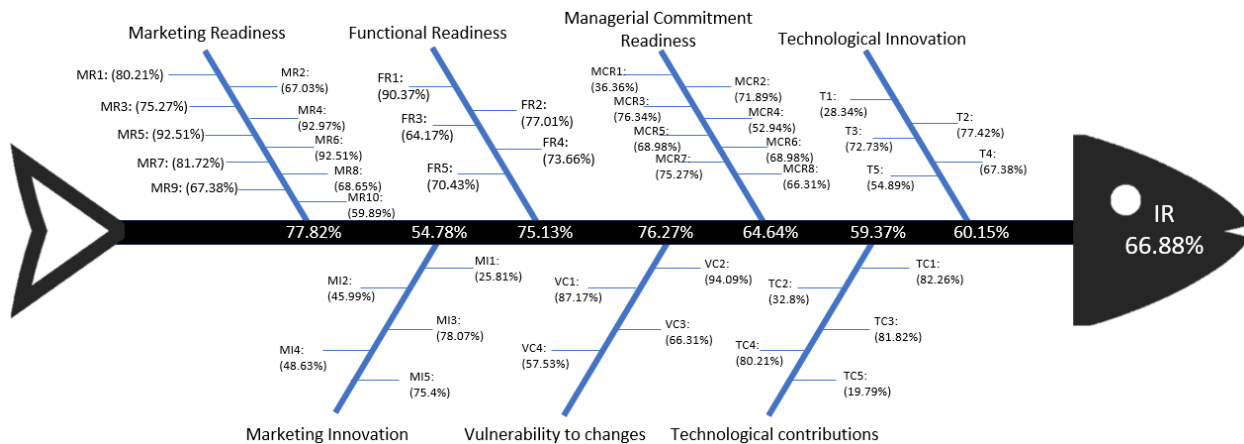


Figure 10: Fishbone Analysis for the Normalized overall IR dimensions assessment results

As shown in Figure 17, the analyzing responses from satisfaction survey scales indicates that the top management of the company give their consent by agreeing and strongly agreeing on the readiness level of the company on the identified seven dimensions.

4.2 Summary of Interview and FGD discussions

Ethio telecom is a big company currently taking dynamic and aggressive changes in its business engagement. Being one of the big companies with the highest annual revenue in the country, its business dimension has widened from being confined to communication service to financial and digital solution provisioning. This in fact mainly follows from the move from the country's government direction to liberalize the telecom industry. Ethio telecom currently launched many state-of-the-art technologies which have considerable contribution to enhance the digitalization era of the country. To site some of the services, tele-birr ® financial service, cloud service, fuel subsidy system, 5G network, modular datacenter, smart city project, and smart education will be an indicator for this. The company is also engaging in technological initiatives of the country by contributing in different dimensions, its contribution on the science museum can be sited as an example. There is a big potential for the company to be ready for an international competition. The change on the proclamation and revised regulation by the government is an opportunity for ethio telecom to move forward to look for international market. The company is authorized to work with capital of 400B ETB which was around 40B ETB. This will give an opportunity for the company to diversify, invest and operate in profitable areas. This has paved the way for the company to see other marketing dimensions abroad. The move to operate in one of our neighboring countries specifically, South Sudan is an indication for this potential. The company has more than 129 years of experience, throughout all these years, its services and products have been increasing. Moreover, the company has local as well as international business relations, partnership, collaboration and relationship with different organizations. The company is adjusting its business model and structure according to the dynamic nature of customers' needs as well as the technology trend. Currently, though there is a potential for the company to move to the international market, it has prioritized its mission for the realization of the country's digitization. This has limited the focus of its employees as well as business units to concentrate in the local market. This is an opportunity for the company to build its brand reputation and to

move to the international market. Moreover, this will allow the company to stretch its products and services in different sectors. The company adopted the well-known McKinsey's 7S model as part of its posture assessment, which will allow the company to quickly adapt to the international business model. There have been different interests expressed from our neighboring countries. These interests are not limited to services and products but also to getting support on developing their human capital and ethio telecom's leadership support. This is also another opportunity for the company to engage internationally in consulting and management outsourcing business. Currently the company is changing its structure and business model with an agile leadership approach. Telecom service by its nature is vibrant for an international business. If we see economic model for a country mainly it revolves around service sector, agriculture, and industry. Currently being in the digital era, telco service is the backbone for all these economic dimensions. They play vital role in the growth and are drivers for all services and products. That is why ethio telecom carved its vision to lead growth. There are untapped opportunities in the company that can be exploited to move to the international market. Currently, the company has more than 17K permanent and more than 18K contractual human capital. This is also another potential that can be exploited as an opportunity. The working culture of its employees has dramatically changed to be market oriented and customer centric. The aggressive penetration of the company for the past couple of years indicates how the risk-taking capability of the company has increased. This exercise can be extended to face the international market as well. There are some initiatives in strategy and marketing area, since there is no direct assignment to the international engagement, these activities are in its infant stage. Ethio telecom also has managed to prepare international events from participating and collaborating in international events. This is another opportunity for the company to move to the international market. International abiding rules and other countries rules and regulations, however, can be considered as a challenge for entering foreign markets. Once, the decision by the top management is made, the type and modality of engagement for international market will be done. This will be in accordance with the context of the target of interest and available business opportunities. There are no such publicly available engagements so far. The company has changed its financial system to the international standard using the IFRS financial model which is inline with the government's decision. This also can be considered as an opportunity for the company to flexibly adapt to the international market. Its contact center which can be accessed 24/7 with different interfaces like

voice, SMS, chat, and different social media platforms is another opportunity for the company to provide international service.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Following the trends in the international business trend and the context of telecom sector, the readiness level of ethio telecom is assessed in this research. So as to address the objectives of this research, qualitative data collection is conducted by interviewing and having focus group discussions with subject matter experts (SMEs). Likewise, revision of related reference documents were also used to support the research findings. On the other hand, quantitative data was collected by conducting survey using questionnaire. The purpose of this chapter is to summarize, discuss and conclude the output of the survey.

5.1 Interpretation and implications of the results

The data collected for both qualitative and quantitative survey was by mid level and top management of the company as well as publicly available resources. The respondents for the quantitative survey were mostly with more than 11 years of experience in the organization. The output of the survey to the target 7 dimensions of readiness, specifically marketing readiness, functional readiness, marketing commitment readiness, technological readiness, marketing innovation, vulnerability to changes, and technological contributions were supported by most respondents. Most of the respondents gave their consent to the readiness of the organization to international business. This is also supported by the output of qualitative data. Though the company is considered to be ready for international competition, the engagement by all employees and businesses units is not yet fully internalized since the organization's short-term focus is mainly in expanding its services with the new dimensions in the local market. This is also an opportunity for the international competition by capitalizing on its brand value, experience and customer base.

5.2 Summary

Ethio telecom, one of the giant service providers in Ethiopia, is operating in the country with telecom services, and recently with digital financial service and digital solution provisioning. Its services and products were expending aggressively in the country. In line with its mission, the company is leading the digitization of the country. The introduction of digital finance by its tele birr ®, supper app, modular datacenter, and a lot more within few months interval can be considered as the agility of the organization to dynamically revolutionize its business. The introduction of an international organization into the telecom market of the country is an

opportunity for ethio telecom to test its business posture. This experience and potential should not be limited to the local context but there is an opportunity for ethio telecom to move to the international market. For the sake of understanding its posture to internationalize its product and services, this research was conducted with an objective of identifying factors, challenges, opportunities, and assessing its readiness level with seven dimensions. These dimensions are marketing readiness, functional readiness, marketing commitment readiness, technological readiness, marketing innovation, vulnerability to changes, and technological contributions. Both qualitative and quantitative surveys were conducted. Top and mid-level management team were considered for this survey. Questionnaires for 479 (108 directors, and 371 managers) were distributed. Seven chief executives were also targeted for interview. Purposive sampling was adopted for selecting managers and chief executives. 187 responses were collected from the questionnaire distributed and discussion from both interview and focus group discussion by subject matter experts were included in this survey.

Accordingly, the output of the research dictates that all the participants agree that the organization is ready in all the dimensions extracted for this research's sake. Moreover, there are quite a number of opportunities that are available for the company to expand its existence in the international market. Factors that should be considered to go to the international market include reviewing its strategy, mainly its mission to engulf internationalization into context. Another factor can be the assessment of international and other countries' laws and regulations. The company's experience, dynamic and agile structural revision, business relation with local and international organizations, interests reflected by own initiative of our neighboring countries, government revision of directives and proclamations, residing 'born-international' services and the like are an opportunity and motivating factors for the company to expand its presence in the international market.

5.3 Conclusion

As a conclusion, the results of the assessment dictates that ethio telecom is ready for international marketing with respect to the seven dimensions. Factors, that should be considered as a basis for engaging in an international business are first and foremost to integrate internationalization in its mission which is currently confined to realizing the digital Ethiopia. Of course, the vision of the company is wider enough to address the international market. The green

light provided by the government for the company operation is an opportunity for ethio telecom to exploit for diversifying its market to international level. Moreover, its marketing posture, functional organization, managerial commitment, marketing and technological innovation abilities, technological contributions, and being vulnerable to change are an opportunity for the company to come up with the enablers and pave the way to be an internationally competent organization. Not only that, the experience and exposure to work with multinational organizations, vendors, suppliers, governing bodies, and standardizing firms is an opportunity that ethio telecom should use for moving to be an internationally competing firm. Therefore, businesses must develop long-term plans that address both stability and development in terms of consumers, market share, profitability, and expansion possibilities. Before engaging in international commerce, the company must critically review and assess its preparation for internationalization from a complete standpoint of the criteria that are defined for IR, regardless of its selected motivation and technique.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the fact that there is an implicit readiness level, it is the researcher's strong belief that the company will have a better readiness posture for internationalization. For the realization of internationalization of the company, the first and foremost intervention by the top management is to integrate the rationale into the mission of the company. The output of this research shall be used by top management and decision-makers to capitalize on the expansion of the company's business dimension. Other researchers can use the findings of this research as an input.

5.5 Research Limitation and Areas of Further Research

5.5.1 Limitation of the study

For the research to have a better result and also inclusion of perspectives, the expected CxO's input and also the input from the CEO has been vital. However, unfortunately the company is implementing restructuring and also in the introduction of many ambitious business initiatives into the market which makes all executives in a tight environment. With this and other undocumented reasons it was difficult to access all the expected participants to give their input for the research though they have given their consent to conduct the research and they were highly impressed and supported the research topic. This is the limitation that the researcher encountered during the research.

5.5.2 Suggestion for future research

Further studies shall be conducted to identify internationalization enablers of the company by integrating both the opportunities that the organization has with its strengths. Strategic leadership framework, strategic marketing frameworks, strategic human resource frameworks, and strategic financial framework for internationalization of ethio telecom shall be conducted for the company to further enrich its business spectrum to be an internationally competent organization.

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Annex I: Data Instruments

Questionnaire

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS, SCHOOL OF COMMERCE

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM (MBL)

Questionnaire

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a graduate student in School of Commerce, Addis Ababa University. Currently I am conducting research on “THE READINESS ASSESSMENT FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION (THE CASE OF ETHIO TELECOM)”.

The rationale of the research is to assess the company's current posture to be an international service providing organization. Your valuable input for the research will help the company to see its current stand and improvement areas.

Moreover, the research is undertaken as academic requirements of partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Business Leadership. Please extend your effort in providing the correct and complete information to present a representative finding.

Finally, I confirm you that your response will be kept confidential and used for academic purpose only. Thank you in advance for your kind cooperation and dedicating your time. If you have any inquiry, please feel free and contact me at bekalum@gmail.com

It might take you 25 to 30 minutes and I appreciate your commitment to spare your precious time for the success of the research and use of the outcomes to our company by responding to this survey in time.

You can fill the questionnaire from:

FILL OUT FORM

Or directly copy and paste the following link on your browser:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdi85QRe4gzafT5pRQ8T3z3sHrIkGptTW-uvCRITTSxZN5t5Q/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0&usp=mail_form_link

Yours sincerely,

Bekalu Mamo

Email: bekalum@gmail.com; bekalu.mamo@ethiotelecom.et

Tel: +251911502627



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3 MAY. 2023

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
College of Business and Economics (CoBE)
SCHOOL OF COMMERCE

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Handwritten notes: 31/05/23

To: Ethio Telecom
Addis Ababa

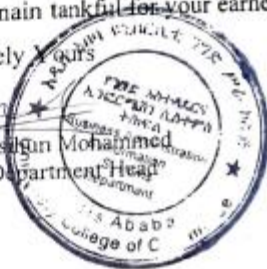
The Addis Ababa University School of Commerce currently runs nine Masters level programs and one Doctoral Program: Human Resource Management (MA), Project Management (MA), Marketing Management (MA), Developmental Economics (MSc), Corporate Finance (MA), Business Information Systems (MA), Digital Marketing (M.Sc.), Supply Chain and Logistics Management (MA), Business Leadership (MA, PhD) In addition to this, the School is also Preparing itself to launch some more expedient Programs very soon.

As an immediate and direct stakeholder to this socioeconomically pragmatic move, we would like you to cooperate with us by way of assisting our students to conduct academic researches and case analyses in your organization. As such, we kindly request your esteemed organization to provide student **Bekalu Mamo Tilahun ID.No GSE/4248/13** with information pertaining to **Readiness Assessment for Internationalization the Case of Ethio Telecom**. A copy of the paper produced may be provided to you if so demanded.

We remain thankful for your earnest Cooperations.

Sincerely,

Dr. Wasifun Mohammed
BAIS Department Head



Handwritten note: ID- An Selected Participants
Please Support the researcher
Mr. Bekalu in filling the questionnaire
via the link he will provide.

Dagim Tadele
Training & Development
Manager

The screenshot shows an Outlook email window. The title bar reads "FW: Research data collection for 'Readiness Assessment for Internationalization (The case of Ethio Telecom)' - Message (HT...". The ribbon includes "File", "Message", and "Help" tabs. The "Message" ribbon has various actions like Ignore, Delete, Archive, Reply, Forward, Meeting, Research, Team Email, Reply & Delete, To Manager, Done, Create New, Move, Send to OneNote, Actions, Mark Unread, Categorize, Follow Up, Find, Related, Select, Read Aloud, Immersive Reader, Translate, and Zoom. The email content shows a forwarded message from a redacted sender to Bekalu Mamo Tilahun and 22 others. Two attachments are visible: "Interview questions.pptx" (5 MB) and "AA University School of Commerce Bekalu Mamo.pdf" (882 KB). The text of the email reads: "Dear respected CxOs Greetings! Student **Bekalu Mamo Tilahun**, is one of our employee and a post graduate student from Addis Ababa university-College of Business and Economics has been working a Research entitled "**Readiness Assessment for Internationalization the case of Ethio telecom**" and get approval from our unit after signing the required Non-disclosure agreement with our company. Hence, Please help him by providing the necessary information considering the data sensitivity. The permission letter and possible list of interview questions are also attached herewith. And he will appear in person to your respective office. Thank you in advance for the cooperation. Best Regards [Redacted Signature] Training and Development Supervisor(HRD) Ethio telecom Tel. No: [Redacted] E- mail: [Redacted]"

Part 1

Personal Data

1. Your age group? A, 20-25 B, 26-35 C, 36-45 D, 46-55 F, Above 55
2. Sex A, Male B, Female
3. Your work experience in Ethio telecom
 - (A) less than 5years
 - (B) 5-10 years
 - (C) 11-15 years
 - (D) greater than 15 years
4. Job Position
 - (A) Manger (B) Director (C) CxO

PART 2

Note: Likert scale numbers range from 1-5 denoted by: 1= strongly agree 2= agree 3=uncertain 4= disagree 5= strongly disagree

The following statements and questions are intended to measure the extent to which the readiness assessment of Ethio Telecom for internationalization. Please select the correct answer by putting tick sign (√) on the scale ranging strongly agree through Strongly Disagree in the appropriate space provided.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Marketing Readiness					
1	Our company has an international marketing capabilities.					
2	Our company makes an international marketing diversification efforts					
3	Our company makes an international market entry efforts					
4	Our company is concerned with customers' reactions to the company's actions.					
5	Our company is interested in customers' satisfaction and how the relationship is maintained.					
6	Our company has invested in systems to support customer processes and to make the company more customer focused.					
7	Our company supports and reinforces customer service behavior.					
8	There is a perception of how customers perceive the technical outcome of the elements of an offering.					
9	There is a perception of how customers perceive the interactions with the company's employees at all interactive points.					
10	There is a perception of how customers perceive the interactions with physical systems.					
	Functional Readiness					

1	Our managers provide basic information about the services that the company focuses on.					
2	Our company plays a role in supporting employees.					
3	Our company management views its major role is providing information to the employees about the company.					
4	Our managers play a leadership role in educating employees on the importance of company work skills.					
5	Our managers provide information to employees about the mechanisms of production adopted by the company to produce products.					
Managerial Commitment Readiness						
1	Our company frequently involves the staff in important decision-making processes.					
2	Our company's management looks favorably on carrying out changes in any area to adapt and/or to keep ahead of new environmental situations.					
3	Employee learning capability is considered a key factor in our company.					
4	Our company rewards innovative ideas.					
5	All employees have a general understanding regarding the company's objectives.					
6	All units that make up our company (departments, sections, work teams and individuals) are well aware of how they contribute to achieving the overall objectives.					
7	All activities that occur in business transaction processes are clearly defined.					
8	All units that make up our company are interconnected, working together in a coordinated fashion.					
Technological Innovation						
1	External partners, such as customers, competitors, research institutes, consultants, suppliers, the government and universities participate directly in all technology innovation projects in our company.					

2	Our company has technological forecasting or foresight to meet future market conditions.					
3	Our company adopts available external knowledge and technology for internal development.					
4	Our company sells innovative technological products as new products.					
5	Our company promotes technological ideas that cannot be self-developed.					
Marketing Innovation						
1	Our company often buys intellectual property, such as patents, copyrights or trademarks, from external partners to be used for innovative projects.					
2	Our company often offers royalty agreements to other companies to better benefit from our innovation efforts.					
3	Our company is working on developing new market segments where we have related marketing innovation.					
4	Our company has unique business strategies/tactics that have never been used by competitors.					
5	Our company has the latest technologies and techniques to meet immediate needs.					
Vulnerability to the changes						
1	The marketing environment that our company faces is changing radically.					
2	The marketing environment that our company faces is changing continuously.					
3	There are frequent and major changes in government regulations.					
4	There are frequent and major changes in the number of competitors.					
Technological contributions						
1	The technology in our company is changing rapidly.					
2	It is very difficult to forecast what the technology in our company will be in the future.					
3	A large number of new product ideas have been made possible through technological breakthroughs in our company.					

4	There are frequent technological changes in this company.					
5	There is increased spending on research and development in our company.					

Table 14: Questionnaire List (Al-Nimer, Ghaith et al. 2021)

Interview



Figure 11: Interview presentation 1

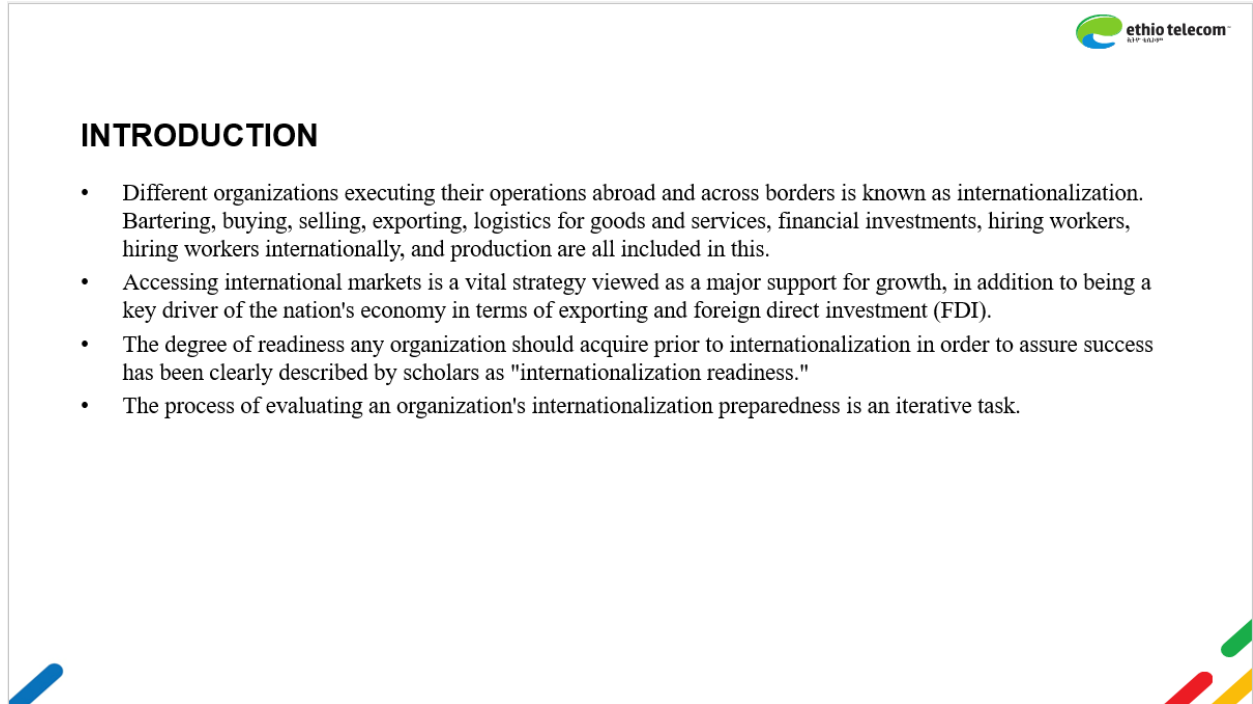


Figure 12: Interview presentation 2

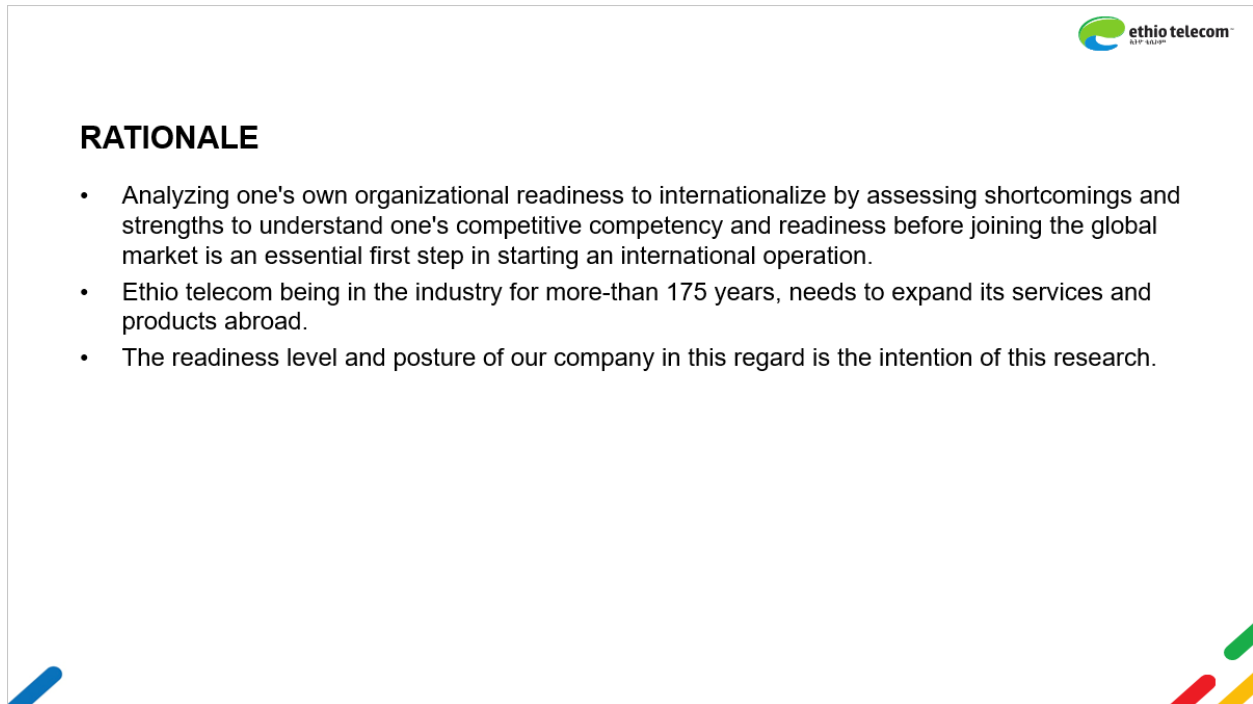


Figure 13: Interview presentation 3



INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- In terms of international property rights, what physical and intellectual property do Ethio Telecom own, e.g. patents?
- What is unique about Ethio Telecom's product or offering?
- What will motivate Ethio telecom as a choice to be an international organization?
- Which barriers can you believe that Ethio telecom can face in the very beginning of internationalization?
- What is the biggest risk/barrier that Ethio telecom can face in the process of internationalization?
- Where the company goals currently aligned with the choice to expand internationally?
- Do Ethio telecom have to adapt its offering to foreign demand, if yes how?
- How do you view the foreign demand and level of competition abroad? Resources, capabilities and time?
- Do you have to dedicate extra staff and time to commit to the internationalization process?
- What was the state of Ethio telecom's financial resources and the ease of accessing financial help from institutions to go abroad?
- In preparing Ethio telecom for international activities, what aspects do you consider to be important?
- When do you consider Ethio telecom is ready to begin with international activities? Why was this?
- What is your main concerns in the very beginning of internationalization?

Figure 14: Interview presentation 4

Focus Group Discussion (FGD)



FGD QUESTIONS

- What is unique about Ethio Telecom's product or offering?
- What will motivate Ethio telecom as a choice to be an international organization?
- Which barriers can you believe that Ethio telecom can face in the very beginning of internationalization?
- What is the biggest risk/barrier that Ethio telecom can face in the process of internationalization?
- Where the company goals currently aligned with the choice to expand internationally?
- Do Ethio telecom have to adapt its offering to foreign demand, if yes how?
- How do you view the foreign demand and level of competition abroad? Resources, capabilities and time?
- What was the state of Ethio telecom's financial resources and the ease of accessing financial help from institutions to go abroad?
- In preparing Ethio telecom for international activities, what aspects do you consider to be important?
- What is your main concerns in the very beginning of internationalization?

Figure 15: Focus Group Discussion points

Ethio Telcom Timeline

Timeline	Milestones and Organization
1890	Central Administration of Telephone and Telegraph System of Ethiopia
1894	Long distance voice communication with the assistance /Operator
1906	Dire Dewa -Djibouti telegraph service started
1907	The central office of Post, Telegraph and Telephone (PTT) System of Ethiopia
1910	Ministry of Post, Telegraph and Telephone (PT&T)
1952	The Imperial board Telecommunication of Ethiopia (IBTE)
1952	Installed radio stations for international and domestics services
1975	The provisional Military of Socialist Ethiopian Telecommunication Services
1979	Launched International communication through Sululta Earth Satellite Station positioned to three different directions
1987	The second largest satellite dish and The smallest largest but highly sophisticated satellite dish (32 M Radius)
1988	Digital exchanges installed
1989	Digital microwave & fiber cable communication systems initiated
1996	The telecommunications sector was restructured and two separate independent entities namely the Ethiopian Telecommunications Authority (ETA) and the Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation (ETC)
1997	Internet service introduced.
1999	Mobile service launched.
2003	Roaming service launched
2004	Broadband multimedia service launched
2007	Next Generation Network for Fixed, Third Generation (3G) network, and dense wavelength division multiplexing (DWDM) based on Optical fiber transmission introduced
2010	Following the Growth Transformation Plan (GTP) Ethio Telecom was born to focus on the improvement of telecommunication services, considering them as a key lever in the development of Ethiopia
2015	4G/LTE introduced in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
2020	LTE advanced introduced in selected areas of Addis Ababa
2022	5G service introduced in Addis Ababa
2022	Company moves from telecom service providing firm to digital solution provisioning

Likert scale coding for analysis purpose

Likert Scale	Code
Strongly Agree	1
Agree	2
Neutral	3
Disagree	4
Strongly Disagree	5

Table 15: Likert Scale Coding