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Corporate reputational elements reflected in organisational storytelling

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration

Johannesburg, 2010

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research was to create meaningful insights into the extent of and how corporate reputational elements are reflected in stories, told within an organisation.

The research focused on the researcher's organisation, Nashua Mobile Rosebank. The data was collected from 12 employees of the Rosebank branch in one on one taped interviews. The interviews were then analysed to determine whether they reflected any of the 27 elements in Schwaiger's (2004) literature.

The stories and dialogue did reflect some of the 27 corporate reputational elements. However, the findings showed more of a similarity between the 12 interviewee's perceptions than a reflection of the 27 elements modelled by Schwaiger (2004). The key findings were:

- That stories told within an organisation reflect some reputational elements, as set out by Schwaiger (2004).
- Four of the 27 elements were important to the respondents. Six elements were not reflected in the stories at all. These findings may be due to the nature of our business, our brand and what is important to our company.
- Respondents perceptions on corporate reputation were a reflection of Nashua Rosebank, the company and its brand, more than a reflection of Schwaiger's (2004) elements. This may have been because the model is designed to encompass all reputational elements regardless of the nature of the organisation.

The key message that emerged through the research is that every staff member affects the reputation of an organisation through the informal dialogue and stories they share, reinforcing, evolving and incrementally developing it.

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DECLARATION

I, Merlyn Mittins, declare that this research report is my own work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other university.

Merlyn Mittins

Signed at ……

On the …….. day of …… 2010

DEDICATION

To all my supportive and faithful friends, thank you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Moyra, thank for being my mentor

Peter Christie, Big Chief “Cool”, thank you for being creative and colourful.

Kerry, Heather and Graine thank you for your undoubting support.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research was to determine how and to what extent corporate reputational elements are reflected in organisational storytelling. This study used storytelling to determine whether employees revealed tangible and intangible elements of corporate reputation through the stories they told.

Organisational storytelling reveals cultural themes and values (Christie 1996). Bendixon and Abratt (2007) describe corporate reputation as a mixture of branding, communications, image, culture and identity. Fombrun and van Riel (1998) and Hutton, Goodman, Alexander and Genest (2001) concur and add that corporate reputation is the outcome of all the organisations activities.

Schwaiger (2004) states that corporate reputation is not only about financial indicators but human conduct as well. Sobel, Farelly and Taper (1992) state that literature on corporate reputation concurs, corporate reputation is most important, but do not agree on how to measure it. This research uses Schwaiger's (2004) definition and his 27 elements that make up corporate reputation, as a tool to evaluate corporate reputational dimensions. Schwaiger (2004) splits reputation into two components; the intangible employee or "sympathy" side of corporate reputation and the tangible financial "competence" side. Schwaiger (2004) also groups the elements into four factors, the factors represent quality elements, performance elements, attractiveness elements and responsibility elements.

1.2 Context of the study

1.2.1 Reputation

In the literature corporate reputation is a complex concept with conflicting definitions. This research defines corporate reputation for the purpose of this research, on page 5. It was difficult to define reputation because it is a plethora

of events, communications and activities that employees do every day within an organisation. Van Riel and Balmer (1997) and Balmer (2001) add that corporate reputation, corporate branding, corporate identity, corporate personality, corporate communications and corporate image are all integrated concepts.

The common actor to all these activities is the employee and his or her conduct. It is the individual in each of these areas of the business that through communication and action incorporates them. Employee dialogue bridges all listed aspects and provides vital connections across boundaries. Shein (1993) defines dialogue as a group process of communication. Abratt (2003) maintains that communication is vital, although the Abratt model does not specify what type of communication. Shein (1993) and Abma (2003) both specify that communication through dialogue is essential across boundaries within an organisation. Abma (2003) goes on to affirm that storytelling is one of the ways to stimulate dialogue.

An opportunity exists to explore a gap in the knowledge of gauging corporate reputational elements through storytelling within an organisation. It is this gap that this research report will address through a model to quantitatively determine the extent reputational elements being reflected in staff dialogue and stories.

1.2.2 Storytelling

The context of this study is organisational storytelling. The research looked at the corporate reputational elements and whether they were reflected in internal communication, in the form of stories.

The literature did reveal that storytelling is complex and a subject that is deep and rich with the potential for analysis.

Koestler (1981) broadly defines storytelling as creating, combining, reshuffling and relating already existing concepts, ideas, facts, frames of perceptions and associative contexts. Not only can stories be creative but also they are practical

and serve formal and informal needs. Griffin (2001) supports this and further explains that organisational stories reveal company values, behaviour and loyalty, these all help an individual to understand how the organisation works.

Storytelling and stories are a means to convey personal ideas and for people to engage with another. Stories reflect the individuals' personality, culture, behaviour, moral attitude and more complex feelings in order to communicate the idea behind the story. Both Denning (2005) and Allen (2005) agree that stories impart shades of emotion and meaning.

Informal means of communication in an organisation allow employees to share positive and negative thoughts and events freely in a trusting environment. Stories can be influential because they allow staff to portray an honest account and to address taboo topics. Griffin (2001) and Love (2008) believe stories are even more influential than formal communication like mission statements, emails, memos, newsletters or policy. By examining story themes a greater understanding of people and how they perceive themselves within the organisation can be gauged.

Stories are told in context, at a time and place where they are relevant in order to achieve understanding. Stories can be a powerful means of informal and formal communication and persuasion, imparting meaning to create relevance to ambiguous events (Allen 2005; Denning 2005; Gargiulo 2006; Love 2008).

The power of storytelling in an organisation was at first not obvious. Literature revealed the impact storytelling could have with in an organisation (Boje 1991b; Abma 2003). Individuals tell stories and it is the individual employees that make up the culture and identity of a company. Employees impact the organisational culture and identity and therefore impact the corporate reputation (Bendixon and Abratt 2007). Corporate reputational elements are exchanged when people communicate through storytelling.

1.3 Problem statement

1.3.1 Main problem

The main problem was to determine how and to what extent corporate reputational elements are reflected in the stories told within an organisation.

1.4 Significance of the study

This study provides guidance to themes, values, cultural behaviour and personality that arise from storytelling within an organisation. Storytelling can help organisations change their cultures, values and reputation. Boje (1991a) confirms that stories have the ability to create organisational change.

Top management may benefit from the knowledge of themes in storytelling to better understand employee values and culture and predict future behaviour. To prevent negative cultures or attitudes, Denning (2005) suggests the use of stories to understand how employees feel.

Corporate reputation can be improved if individual values and culture are aligned with organisational values and culture. Corporate reputation must first be gauged in order to determine whether there is alignment between organisation reputation and employee perceptions of the organisation. This research examines how to what extent employees perceive corporate reputation. Further research could address how to change the reputation, if necessary, once gauged. McCarthy (2008) believes that alignment of staff culture and company culture can be gauged using stories.

This research sought to build on the existing body of knowledge, on a subject that is becoming more significant.

1.5 Delimitations of the study

The case study was conducted on 12 stories. There are 19 staff members at the Nashua Mobile Rosebank branch in Johannesburg. The stories were told in

interviews in the November of 2009 within two week period. The scope is limited to only this branch of Nashua Mobile and no attempt to investigate other branches or other organisations was made. References to Nashua Mobile head office were made in the interviews, but only as a comparison.

1.6 Definition of terms

Corporate reputation as defined by Schwaiger (2004) allows for the broadest definition that includes both attributes and perceptions. European literature differentiates affective “soft” employee elements and cognitive “hard” financial performance elements of corporate reputation: whereas the U.S. literature highlighted only the financial aspects as in the Fortune 500 survey.

Schwaiger (2004: 49) defines corporate reputation as “a combination of cognitive and affective components”. Further he formulates that “a company’s reputation consists of the objective knowledge, subjective perceptions and the emotions held by individuals”.

1.7 Assumptions

The following are assumptions that the researcher has made for the purpose of this study:

- The stories analysed are honest accounts and reveal elements that are thematic.
- 12 stories from one organisation are enough to gauge whether common themes will emerge.
- That the association of the company and the researcher will not affect the analysis.
- That this researcher’s respondents have enough knowledge of the company to be able to clearly articulate their perception of reputation.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will review the relevant storytelling literature for the main problem. It begins with a consideration of the conceptual nature of a story. This is followed by the creative elements of a story and lastly, the facets of a storytelling organisation.

1.1 Storytelling

Every one of us tells stories because stories are a fundamental part of human intelligence and imagination. Both Boje (1991a) and McLellan (2006) agree that stories are part of how we interact with other, on a daily basis. Stories are fundamental because we use them as a tool to share a part of ourselves because we do not exist in isolation. Scott and Lane (2000) describe stories as self-defining tools that reflect our community or organisation, Boje (1995) adds that stories are told to those we affiliate with to envelope them into our community.

Stories help us teach others about ourselves, communicating our values, behaviour, our culture and our personality. Gargiulo's (2006) position is that stories are essential to learning and communication. Abma (2003) agrees that stories frame information to make it understandable and memorable.

A story told to different people at one time and place may have multiple interpretations because our personality, values and beliefs differ. But the same story told over time will also have differing interpretations because stories are unique to an audience or circumstances. Boje (1991b), Abma (2003), McLellan (2006) and Blair (2006) all are in accord, that the same story will have many interpretations over time and that a stories context depends also on place and time. We choose to share stories with certain audiences at a relevant time.

There are categories of stories, Denning (2005) claims as many as eight types and McCarthy (2008) as little as only two. Stories are diverse but to group stories into only "instructional" and "grounding" limits the scope. Denning (2005)

defines the eight types as: stories that spark action, identity stories, corporate identity stories, stories that proclaim and transmit values, stories that foster collaboration, political stories, share knowledge stories and inspirational stories. This research prefers to use Christie (1996), which suggests that there are four distinct categories of stories: northern accounts; western anecdotes; southern fables, myths and legends and eastern biographies. These broad geographical and cultural based types of stories allow for a myriad of reasons for stories and that they may be in various "accents". South Africans tend to be cosmopolitan and may reflect elements of all of the different categories.

1.1.1 The creative element of story writing

The act of creating stories consists of merging many aspects that are both factual and emotional into one. Stories require a creative act to take place because each time a story is enacted the teller creates changes to improve it or perhaps embellish it or even simplify it. Koestler (1981) describes the creative act as *coagitare,* "to shake together", reminiscent of ingredients in a recipe. De Bono (1995) describes an altogether more academic view that creativity is a change in perception and concepts. De Bono (1995) describes the thinking process after the creativity happens, but does not describe creativity in the present and as it occurs.

Since we all tell stories we must therefore be, to a greater or lesser extent, creative. If Verberne (1997) is correct that a creative mind is more effective at solving problems, then we need to engage our creativity more often. The creative process hinges on linking many ideas, perhaps previously unrelated. Stories require an individual to think, write or speak in an agile manner. Koestler (1981) also describes a creative brain as one that can cross-fertilise multiple ideas, Verberne (1997) adds, and then problem solve in different ways.

Like a story, creativity is also specific to a period in history. Our stories and the creativity employed will both be in context and relevant to the place and time of telling. Kandinsky (1977) a fauvist artist illustrates the creative age as one producing a style of creativity that relates better to itself than to another age. If a creative mind needs to be agile then, because our environment has become

increasingly complicated, we may be becoming more creative in the course of time.

A story is creative. It is not the creative element of the story that we identify with but the assumptions about the story we make. We make judgments about the actions, values and behaviours of people or company's that are revealed by the story. De Bono (1995) indicates that making judgments forces us to remain in our present position on a routine track and impedes creativity. Blair (2006) corroborates with De Bono on this view, judgments cannot be pronounced on the story itself as a medium of communication, only on the story outcome. If the listener identifies and agrees with the revealed values and behaviour then we accept it, and if we do not relate to the values and behaviour we reject it. We need to engage creativity but not judge it in order to develop, change and think differently. Boje (1991a) refers to stories as having the ability to allow the listener to draw parallels and think along two matrixes; Koestler (1981) is of the same opinion but calls the matrixes "planes". Storytelling is a way to be creative and to think in a non-routine way, if we stem our judgments in order to allow change in our notions.

Shein (1993) believed that dialogue forces individuals to focus on the thought process and on how our perceptions and cognitions are performed. If we are more aware of the thinking process, we will think better collectively and more creatively with the gradual creation of expanded and developed, shared meanings and common ground.

1.1.2 The elements of story

Stories are an account and will contain fact and fiction together with feeling. Literature from the 1970's and 1980's did not refer to informal communication, conversation or stories as management issues (Korver and van Ruler 2002). Formal messages and corporate communication were given priority. Kennedy (1977) stated that only facts were needed in organisational messages, the author was referring to formal communication. Even factual messages need to be delivered with appeal, motivation or passion in order for them to have an

impact. Later Dugan (2008) argued that both fact and emotion were needed in order for formal and informal communication to be remembered.

In a cluttered world we need both fantasy and fiction to interest us. Statistics and numbers with no passion will have little recall in the minds of listeners. A story cannot be replaced with jargon and statistics but should work in conjunction with it (Love 2008). A story needs to have facts to balance the creativity, using both engages the audience. In a good storytelling organisation Boje (1991b), Abma (2003) and Love (2008) all agree, stories will contain facts, be genuine, and inspire through emotional connections. Garguilo (2006) adds that this is because stories encode information, both facts and emotions.

Stories are often a fragmented process with the teller giving information, then the listener or reader filling in the gaps, again the teller shares facts and feeling and again the listener or reader needs to interpret the information. Denning (2005) is in accord with this notion and adds that stories can have lives of their own and can be unmanageable. Boje (1991a) believes stories have lives of their own because we manage the story by our interpretation and with an audience of more than one the story has many meanings or lives.

1.1.3 Storytelling organisations

An organisation is a storytelling system because it contains people and people tell stories. A storytelling organisation uses stories both consciously; mission statements, vision statements, emails, memos and unconsciously through employees that tell stories that reveal their own culture and values and those of their organisation. Boje (1991a) illustrates the idea that stories are sense-making tools and allow individuals to add to their own memories with institutional memories.

Employees identify and clarify the organisations values, culture and identity through storytelling. Hearing stories makes others aware of the rooted beliefs that individuals have within the organisation. Abma (2003) and Blair (2006) support this by saying that organisational stories help everyone to understand how things are done in the organisation. McCarthy (2008) and Love (2008) add

that individuals relate to the values and beliefs they identify with and reinforce this culture. Van Riel (1997) agrees that formal communication helps an individual understand the culture but did not mention informal communication.

Shein (1993) uses the word “dialogue” not story, but says dialogue is necessary as a vehicle for understanding cultures and subcultures. Organisational learning can take place when there is cultural understanding. Van Riel and Balmer (1997) suggest that more intense dialogue is necessary across all disciplines to discover how the formation of identity and cultures occur.

Many different stories are told about an organisation. An organisation may have a mixture of negative and positive, funny and serious stories that although contrary, are the sum of the heritage. The heritage of an organisation is the historical culture and values that persist. The emphasis of the values that the stories reveal will determine the more important beliefs. Boje (1995) used the term “multiplicity” to describe the many stories that are the organisations heritage. Hatch and Schultz (2003) and Aaker (2004) describe stories as creating the authentic heritage of an organisation. Schwartz (1999) says the heritage is created by the emphasis on values that occurs everyday in an organisation through customs, strategic vision, scripts, laws and company practice. This indicates that the cultural heritage is constantly adapting and renewing with new people and new communications.

Personal stories and organisational stories are told at work. Both types of stories reveal attitudes, values and the personality of the storyteller. Boje (1991a) believes stories contain a blueprint of the behaviour and that a story can predict the behaviour of an individual in the future. McLellan (2006), McCarthy (2008) and Love (2008) all support the concept that values and behavioural patterns are embedded in stories and that stories guide action. Muir (2009) adds that past stories from childhood can be so memorable that they shape present and future behaviour.

Stories can help make sense out of difficult ideas. The lessons that are learned through stories can be applied to other situations; they are not just applicable to only one instance. McCarthy (2008) further qualifies that because stories are

sense making tools the lessons are transferable to other disciplines and across organisational boundaries.

Stories are told and retold, omitting and adding bits. Stories change over time with telling. Bits and pieces of organisational experiences are recounted socially throughout the firm to formulate recognisable and rational collective accounts that serve as precedent for individual assumption, decision and action. Shein (2003) ascertained that the better an organisation achieves collective understanding the more likely a decision is implemented the way the group intended. Balmer (2001) qualified that in order for greater understanding, more dialogue between management scholars and different disciplinary perspectives are needed.

Boje (1991a) proposes that these story parts or experiences make up the institutional memory of the organisation. Stories in isolation are not as valuable as multiple stories, only then can the stories show patterns and relationship information. Boje (1991a), Gargiulo (2006) and Wheatley (2006) believe multiple stories show trends that in turn yield solutions, within an organisation.

1.1.4 Storytelling as a form of communication

Youtube, Facebook, Twitter and Myspace are all social networking sites that share stories. The increase in the interest and use of these sites implies a greater need to share feelings and thoughts. Leadbeater (2008) and Love (2008) both appreciate how important these websites have become to younger generations that need to be “connected”. Allen (2005) believes that sharing stories will be critical to doing business in the future because the act of storytelling displays a deeper consciousness.

Kennedy (1977) conducted interviews to ascertain where communication interactions or contact points occurred in organisations but did not reveal what format the communications where in or how information was passed on. The employees in the interviews felt that handling a pile of papers passed to them constituted a contact, perhaps because a conversation or shared experience,

however small, took place. Boje (1991a) and Gargiulo (2006) agree that most storytelling is part of conversation.

With so much information-exchange taking place in a company during conversation, organisations must understand more about conversation, dialogue and storytelling. Kennedy (1977) already understood in the 70's that informal communications were difficult to manage.

Organisational effectiveness is increasingly dependent on communication across divisions, boundaries and subunits. Shein (1993) considers that integration across subcultures within an organisation will depend on the ability to develop common ground and a common language. Shein (2003) refers to "dialogue" as creative communication because it requires the individual to be imaginative. Shein (2003) does not refer to stories being "dialogue". Storytelling as an informal and anecdotal approach is manifesting as a popular tool for leaders to communicate business strategy (Abma 2003; Allen 2005; Gargiulo 2006; Love 2008).

Great leaders rely on great stories to form good relationships and mutual purpose with staff. Griffin (2001) adjoins that good stories bind and bond staff to them. The more stories are shared, positive or negative, the more in-tune with employees needs, ideas, behaviour and concerns management can be. Gargiulo (2006) deems the need for top management to understand their employees as a top priority in order to communicate to them in a meaningful way.

Organisations use staff, customer and supplier stories to further communicate with stakeholder groups. Repeating stories that are familiar and that already have formed a bond with different groups attached to the organisation ensures collective cultural understanding. McLellan (2006) regards using customer stories for advertising campaigns a means to transfer knowledge that is "common". Abratt and Mofokeng (2001) remind us that an organisation cannot detach itself from the publics amongst which it operates. A connection between all stakeholders needs to be maintained.

1.1.5 Storytelling for organisational change

Employee job titles and tasks, within an organisation are changing more quickly. Organisational boundaries are more permeable, organisational structure is becoming flatter and this requires greater networking and communication skills across disciplines. Storytelling can successfully create communication channels within and across organisations. Boje (1991a) and McCarthy (2008) add that coping with rapid change can be managed with storytelling; Garguilo (2006) reinforces this concept that organisations are using stories and storytelling more to help with the changing environment.

A story is not a static thing but a process that changes and can itself be used for organisational change. Garguilo (2006) uses the word “galvanise” to describe what storytelling can accomplish when used to stir up and rouse employees. Change needs to be accomplished collectively and stories are a collective tool. Denning (2005) says stories can strengthen the culture of the organisation and create powerful collaboration.

1.2 Corporate reputation

The main problem was to determine how and to what extent Corporate Reputational elements are reflected in the stories told within an organisation.

This section will review the relevant literature on corporate reputation for the main problem. Especially highlighting the corporate reputation author this research uses Schwaiger (2004) and the basis of Schwaiger’s research; Fombrun and Gardberg (2000). It then considers the associated literature on corporate identity, corporate personality, corporate culture, corporate branding and image that constitute the integral elements of corporate reputation (Bendixon and Abratt 2007). Lastly the literature is concluded and the research question is set out.

Hutton et al. (2001) stated that a study of the Fortune 500 companies found that “Reputational Management” is a priority as a driving philosophy to success

amongst organisations. Authors of corporate reputation literature all seem to agree that the way in which stakeholders perceive an organisation is crucial in determining its success (van Riel and Balmer 1997; Fombrun and van Riel 1998; Balmer 2001; Argenti and Druckenmillar 2004; Berens and van Riel 2004; Schwaiger 2004; Abratt 2005). A strong reputation should enable an organisation to command premium pricing, to attract great talent, lower marketing costs and generate word of mouth endorsements and act as unique barrier to imitation from other companies. Therefore a strong reputation should be a core driver to succeed.

However the literature does not agree on the attributes that should be measured, nor the method used to measure the attributes, used to derive corporate reputation.

Much recent research on reputation suggests that reputation has been predominantly measured in financial terms. Davies, Chun and da Silva (2001) and Fan (2005) explain the deficiencies of measuring using only financial attributes and to use a sample that comprises of only executives. These measurement techniques cannot form a correct summation of corporate reputation as all staff are responsible for activities that occur on a daily basis.

Fombrun and Gardberg (2000) also agree that the literature on reputation lacks credible reputational measurements. Even perception measurements seem to differ but largely they either address reputation from an internal perceptive or an external one, but not both (Berens and van Riel 2004; Schwaiger 2004).

Most authors' stress that reputation needs to be managed once it has been gauged. Literature suggests constant vigilance and actively managing not passively defending reputation, for reputation to be most efficient. A good reputation can be long in the making but quickly destroyed.

Corporate reputation is a highly visible indication to customers of an organisations reliability and capability. A good reputation today has never been more valuable if one considers the 2008 US financial meltdown and the ripple

effect. Alsop (2004) and Fan (2005) consider how after the US companies struggled with reputations after the aftermath of the financial crisis, organisations with once great reputations found them non-existent or beyond repair. Argenti and Druckenmillar (2004) and Fan (2005) remind us that Arthur Anderson and Enron were destroyed because of a damaged reputation. Our global information sources are more transparent and the increase in the attention to social responsibility and ethical behaviour all suggest that organisations should focus on building and maintaining better reputations. Martha Stewart is good example of a bad reputation brought on by unethical behaviour and that organisation being crippled by the destruction of a reputation (Argenti and Druckenmillar 2004). Martha Stewart is also an example of how a reputation can be repaired.

There is a lack of consensus among the meanings of and the relationships between corporate reputation, corporate personality, corporate identity, corporate culture, corporate branding and corporate image. The literature often overlaps these concepts or interchanges words like “culture”, “identity” and “personality” when referring to them in a corporate context. However there is agreement that it is a complex area (van Riel and Balmer 1997; Balmer 2001; Schwaiger 2004; Abratt 2005). Hutton et al (2001) affirmed that there are multiple interpretations of reputation because it is the outcome of all the organisations activities.

Historically literature describes corporate reputation in terms of “attributes”, in the 1980’s, the literature refers to the “perceptions” contributing to reputation. Schwaiger (2004) refers to both attributes or “competence” and perceptions or “sympathy” in his measurement of reputation.

Reputation has become multi dimensional because all stakeholders hold slightly differing views on what kind of reputation a company has. Berens and van Riel (2004) pronounce corporate reputation too elaborate to be either good or bad. The varying perceptions of a company will also change over time as new and different expectations around what a company should be or do, are revealed.

Berens and van Riel (2004) illustrate 56 different reputation measurements from 1958 to 2004 that relate different elements such as defence contributions in the 50's that do not appear in recent measurements. Where as environmental friendliness is now more important as a criterion for good practise in an organisation.

There are also more and more studies on partnership, empowerment, teams and networks. Wheatley (2006) believes that this trend is because there is a realisation that relationships are paramount to understanding how and what to communicate. Communication is key to a successful organisation. Shein (1993) believes that communication is key because communities, organisations and governments realise the importance of the theory and practice of dialogue.

Culture is deeply embedded in organisational behaviour and it is the fusion of all the individual cultures that contributes to the corporate reputation. When we express the culture of the company we are showing our membership and ownership of the organisation. Harrison and Carroll (1991) convey the idea that understanding how culture is communicated helps organisations understand how to maintain the loyalty and allegiance of the employees, and work towards a good reputation. Stories are about collective behaviour. Hofstede and Bond (2001) say stories within an organisation can gauge cultural similarities and differences.

Fombrun and Gardberg (2000: 13) define reputation as "the net perceptions of a company's ability to meet the expectations of all its stakeholders". Davies, Chun and da Silva (2001) remark that Fombrun and Garberg (2000) overcame many deficiencies in their Reputational Quotient measurement method because it was measured on both perceptions and attributes. Fombrun and Gardberg (2000) measured reputation in a nationwide poll in the US using 6 dimensions that Schwaiger (2004) used as the basis for his 27 dimensions. Fombrun and Gardberg (2000) describe the 6 dimensions having 21 underlying attributes.

The top ten companies with the best reputation in the poll conducted by Fombrun and Gardberg were, for the most part, well known; Johnson &

Johnson ranked 1st, followed by Coca Cola, Hewlett Packard, Intel, Ben & Jerry's, Wal-Mart, Xerox, Home Depot, Gateway and Walt Disney. At least seven are well known globally.

The six dimensions were emotional appeal, Products and services, vision and leadership, workplace environment, financial performance and social responsibility. The attributes varied from 3 to 5 per dimension.

On the following page is Schwaiger's (2004) list of 27 elements. The Fombrun and Gardberg (2000) attributes were weighted evenly. Schwaiger (2004) added 6 more elements to the 21 of Fombrun and Gardberg (2000), namely: identity; affiliation; regret if the company did not exist; international recognition; transparent to the public and economic stability.

Figure 1: Reputational Quotient Fombrun and Gardberg 2000

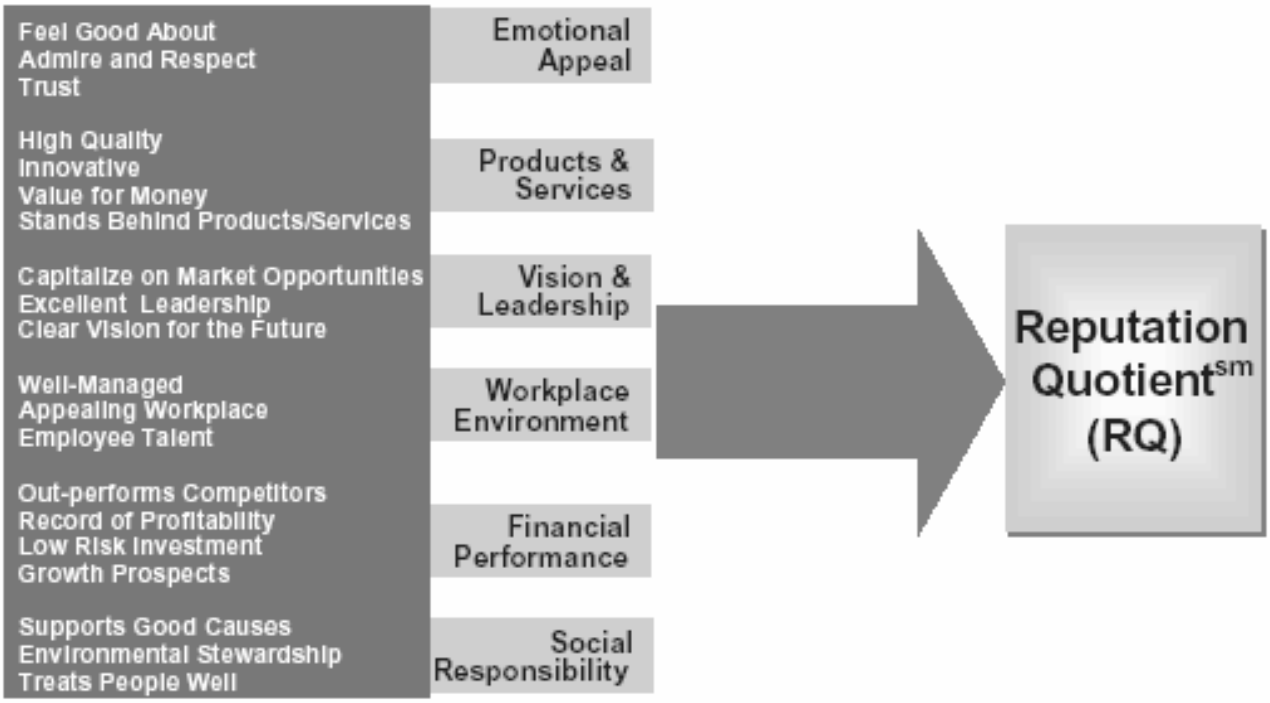


Figure 2: Schwaiger's 27 reputational elements

1. Can I as the employee identify with the company
2. Would I regret the company not existing
3. The company is a top competitor in the industry
4. I like the company
5. As far as I know the company is recognised world-wide
6. I believe the company performs at a premium level
7. The products or services offered are of a high standard
8. The products or services are value for money
9. The services offered are good
10. Customer concerns are held in high regard
11. The company seems to be reliable
12. The company is transparent with customer information
13. I regard the company as trustworthy
14. I have a lot of respect for the company
15. I believe the company has a fair attitude to competitors
16. I believe the company is more of an innovator rather than an imitator
17. The company attracts a high level staff
18. I could see myself working at the company
19. I like the physical appearance of the offices
20. The company is well managed

21. The company is economically stable
22. I assess the business risk as moderate compared to competitors
23. The company has growth potential
24. The company has clear vision
25. The company is profitable
26. The company behaves in socially conscious way
27. The company is concerned with the preservation of the environment

Schwaiger (2004) developed a further 21 elements to achieve 27 dimensions to measure corporate reputation. In Schwaiger's (2004) empirical research he evaluates reputation and not only appraises subjective perceptions of companies attributes; like success or products, but also allows an intrinsic disposition towards these attributes; a unsuccessful company can still be liked.

Schwaiger (2004) conceptualises reputation as an attitudinal construct and splits the construct into affective and cognitive components. Cognitive procedures can be described as information processing tasks that an individual can recognise in itself and the environment. Under the cognitive split, the stakeholders' subjective knowledge and perceptions about the company's attributes is appraised. Under the affective split the competence of the company in the eyes of the stakeholder is appraised. Schwaiger (2004) finally divides the 27 elements into 4 factors: Performance, Attractiveness, Responsibility and Quality.

It follows that corporate reputation is an indication about the quality of an organisations products, services and employees. A positive reputation makes purchasing easier for a customer in an uncertain environment.

Argenti and Druckenmillar (2004) convey an example of a good reputation as the Virgin brand. Richard Branson believes that as long as his companies deliver on the brand promise every day then his great reputation will prevail.

When customers get what they want their expectations are met and reputation is strengthened. When employees meet the expectations of customers and they are satisfied and happy, the employees feel good and their sense of purpose is met. Schwaiger (2004) agrees that researchers have found that strong reputations increase consumer confidence in their products and services.

Corporate reputation is a valuable and sustainable asset, although intangible because it is based on perceptions. Corporate reputation is a tool that can be used to create strategic competitive advantage because it sets an organisation apart from imitators.

1.2.1 Corporate personality

Corporate personality is formed when “what are we doing?” and “what shall we believe in?” and “how shall we operate?” are answered (Berstein 1984; Abratt 2001). Corporate personality is a combination of all the individual personalities in an organisation. Organisations have their own habits, traits and attitudes that derive from the individuals. Corporate personality is an extension of the personalities of the employees. Davies et al (2001) affirm that it is common for organisations to have personalities and to understand the personalities we must study them as if they were human. Aaker (1997) first saw the parallel between the measurement of human personalities and corporate personalities using the same five main modes. Davies et al (2001) agrees that a link exists between an organisations identity (internal) and image (external) through corporate personality.

Individuals within an organisation ask the questions above on a personal level, “what am I doing here?”, “do I believe in what the organisation believes in?” and “do I operate the way the organisation wants me to operate?”. These questions help us to identify businesses we want to work for and to check we still want to work for the one we are in. Organisations have multiple personalities Gioia (1998) says because people interpret these pivotal questions with slight differences. People view companies, like they regard people, as having personalities.

Balmer (2001), Gargiulo (2006) and McCarthy (2008) put forward that corporate personality is a reflection of the underlying cultures of various members of the organisation, multiple voices and multiple understanding. Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt (2003) agree and add that it is also what makes one company different from another.

1.2.2 Corporate identity

Corporate identity is a concept and a philosophy that is in continual renewal. An organisation that has endured might adapt its identity over the years in order to survive. The company identity is that which is enduring about an organisation.

The identity of an organisation is made up of the values, culture and vision of the organisation. Balmer (2001) declared that corporate identity literature had not combined ideas and there was not a multidisciplinary holistic approach.

Abratt (2003) defines the identity as the core values, the philosophy and the strategy of the organisation. Abratt (2003) further describes the corporate identity as the development of communications objectives and a communication philosophy. Therefore organisations will have multiple identities based on the many communications and philosophies. Schultz, Hatch and Larsen (2000) describe the multiple identity of an organisation as the “expressive organisation”. This “expressive organisation” shares converging interests but diverging perspectives and experiences, creating one faceted entity.

Hofstede (1994) proposes a far broader concept, that identity is the way an organisation goes about daily business and how it communicates through its employees to the outside world. Berstein (1984) and Abratt (2001) support this and add that the public also recognises a company by all its visual cues.

Whether the identity vacillates or is enduring, the identity is what is unique about an organisation. In order for an organisation to be unique, employees have to portray this uniqueness in their communications. Organisations are expanding their idea of employees as not just staff, but feeling and emotional beings. Balmer and Soenen (1999) and Love (2008) believe that the concept of

corporate identity should expand to include a mix of soul, body and mind of the employees.

All stakeholders need to be connected to the identity of the organisation in order to be effective. Balmer (2001) and Korver and van Ruler (2002) agree that the employee values and behaviours that they express through multifarious communications are at the core of corporate identity. An individual's identity, whether an employee, customer or supplier, and the corporate identity are interlinked. Kennedy (1977) and Aaker (2004) both are of the same mind when they put forward that people and organisations tend to do business with those they admire and respect. This is due to communicating and identifying commonality with the identity of the organisation.

A portion of our identities depends on the recognition of other people. In the 20th century, occupation and position in an organisational hierarchy provide a source of recognition. People increasingly get a sense of identity from relationships they form and the interests they share with others at work. Leadbeater (2008) and Schwartz (1999) note that organisational values are the aggregate of each individual's values.

1.2.3 Corporate culture

Shein (1993) acknowledged that cultural misunderstandings and communication failure is at the root of all issues. Employees have become increasingly important and even more so their cultures because we have a more cosmopolitan workforce. Personnel cultures, Balmer (2001) and Griffin (2001) agree need to be understood, in order to have integration with the corporate culture.

Climate and culture, Shein (1999) describes are different. Climate can fluctuate from week to week; it is the general feeling around a company. Culture is more stable or persistent (Harrison and Carroll 1991; Hatch 2004), and is the result of climate over an extended period. This distinction helps to explain why culture like identity can endure but also develop. The complexity of identity and culture

exist because each one is made up of as many individuals that make up the organisation.

Culture provides guidelines on how to behave, what is considered right or wrong, what is funny and what should be taken seriously. Shein (1999) describes culture as a process of constructing shared meaning over time. To gain cultural understanding one has to share daily life, to become familiar with the values and beliefs of that culture. Shein (1993), Schwartz (1999) and Surowiecki (2005) express that familiar cultures provide comfort, meaning and predictability.

Shein (1993) only describes two types of subcultures: hierarchical which is difficult to detect and functional that is easier to detect. Thompson and Wildavsky (1986) argue that there are three types of culture; hierarchical, functional and market. Since culture is a complex concept, describing types may not be useful.

1.2.4 Corporate image and brand

Kennedy (1977) emphasised the role that employees played in projecting a positive image. Later research from Balmer and Soenen (1999) and Abratt (2003) again highlighted the importance of staff, as they influenced the image of the organisation. Most authors agree that employees have more of an impact on the image of the company than the logo or advertising.

Corporate image is about all the experiences that customers, suppliers and employees engage in. Kennedy (1977), Bernstein (1984) and Abratt (2001) define corporate image as the net experiences, beliefs, feelings, knowledge and impressions that people have about the company. This results in corporate image changing and developing as new experiences happen. Abratt and Mofokeng (2001) further add that corporate image is a process where internal and external stakeholders overlap in their experiences.

The experiences of each individual and how they perceive the corporate image are different. Hatch and Schultz (1997), Scott and Lane (2000) and Balmer

(2001) believe the duality exists because of different interpretations of the images stakeholders perceive.

Fan (2005) identifies a brand in terms of two key relationships; the relationship between the customer and the organisation, the other as the relationship between other stakeholders and the organisation. What is clear from the literature is the depth of the often-emotional connection between a brand and a customer.

Corporate branding is the image and name we associate with a product. Usually a brand is well known and might refer to a product, service or a manufacturer. Balmer (2001) describes corporate branding as the tool that uses the vision and culture of the company explicitly as part of its unique selling proposition. Abratt (2003) defines corporate branding as reflecting the substance of a company with the purpose of distinguishing it from its competitors, to achieve competitive advantage. Corporate image and branding have a close association with each other as the visual product of an organisation.

A good company image improves attitudes by stakeholder groups internally and externally. Kennedy (1977) believes that the extent that a company has a good image amongst its employees and subsequently outside it rests in the hands of the top management. This idea has been developed to the point where it is no longer exclusively top management's responsibility, but all staff (Abratt 2003; Fan 2005).

A corporate brand creates expectations in the minds of customers as to what the organisation will deliver, meeting those expectations creates the corporate image in the minds of customers that an organisation wishes, this in turn enhances overall corporate reputation.

1.2.5 Research Question

To what extent and how are Corporate Reputational elements reflected in the stories told within an organisation?

1.3 Summary of Literature Review

Berger (2008) stated that we explain the world with words, but cited Magritte the modern painter to support that words are not enough. Art is created because we cannot explain everything in words; pictures and symbols supplement words. Stories are nonetheless powerful instruments within an organisation (Birkigt and Stadler 1986).

Shein (1993) and Dugan (2008) maintain that we live in a more complex world than ever. This elaborate system requires more information than a single person can process. We rely on others to help process portions and give us the information in another form. Boje (1991a) and Surowiecki (2005) continue this notion that it is increasingly difficult for a single person to know everything he needs to know because individuals are limited information processors. Each person in an organisation retains part of the cultural knowledge or a part of the storyline, a bit of the interpretation. A tremendous amount of knowledge and skill is embedded in the people of an organisation. Leonard-Barton (1992) points out that the more important knowledge in people is in the practices and values that constantly renew and support the knowledge base. In order for ideas to grow they need to be articulated, tested, refined, borrowed, amended and adapted. Leadbeater (2008) states that this cannot take place in only one persons head; invariably they involve many people sharing developing different insights into the idea.

Storytelling is a group activity that enables the individual to be more creative because storytelling is a creative communication. We need to engage the creativity that exists everywhere in our organizations. This can be achieved though lateral thinking or creative thinking De Bono (1995), because creative thinking, crosses domains and disciplines while performing problem solving and also cuts across patterns of routine behaviour (De Bono 1991, Wheatley 2006).

There is an increase in the amount of literature on the subject of storytelling. With this increase is a trend towards collective and collaborative learning. Kahan (2006) and Abma (2003) concur that storytelling brings together differing points of view in the spirit of collaboration. Korver and van Ruler (2002) point

out, organisations are becoming more aware of fragmented communications. To this end organisations are becoming more interested in their employees and what they are thinking, feeling and how they are behaving. Abma (2003) and Leadbeater (2008) remark on these trends, and corroborate that there is a trend towards social cultural approach to learning in which the learning process is collective and interactive, between groups. Abma (2003), Gargiulo (2006) and Blair (2006) agree that management should connect organisational stories to guide action and strategy.

Stories along with metaphors and other communication tools can contribute to the management of meaning in the organisation, strengthen organisational identity and resolve, Denning (2005) and Garguilo (2006) add that stories can even stir people out of bureaucratic lethargy and galvanise an organisation because they bring employees together with common purpose. Every organisation is a community; a community is about shared stories. People that work together form communities through building relationships and defining common ground. Common ground is the image of the company in words used by employees to other employees (Shein 1993; Blair 2006).

Corporate personality provides management with an opportunity to develop a corporate philosophy, which embodies individual personality, the core values and assumptions, which in turn constitute the corporate culture. Over time the personality of the organisation is a mix of the subcultures and these give the company a many faceted personality (van Riel and Balmer 1997; Balmer 2001).

Organisations are viewing a favourable corporate identity as one of the most important assets they can have (van Riel and Balmer 1997). Corporate identity is dependent on individuals that maintain the company ideal. This corporate identity manifests itself in the use of symbols, communications, rituals and corporate behaviour (Birkigt and Stadler 1986; Hofstede 1994).

Corporate image is a myriad of impressions communicated by the organisation and in particular, by its employees. Corporate image is conveyed via the signals and behaviours of the staff, which are then synthesized into an image by their audiences (Abratt, Bick and Jacobsen 2003). Like the corporate image,

brands are the link between the employee and customer because they are the product or service that represents the multiple cultures, values and identity of the organisation and therefore the employees (Fan 2005). Hutton et al (2001) terms “brands” as products or services seen by the external person that can be identified with. Never have the power of brands been more evident, brands represent a lifestyle choice and are chosen to represent or reflect our persona. Fan (2005) describes brands in terms of reflecting a culture themselves, and being a differentiation device that is a living memory and the future of the product. The brand is the visible entity that customers attach an emotional link to.

Corporate reputation although complex can be better understood if the culture, identity and values of individuals are compared to the organisations culture and identity. Stories are not only about entertaining or communication but also about the flow of culture and identity (Boje 1991; Blair 2006). Abma (2003), Blair (2006), Garguilo (2006) and Love (2008) assert that sharing a part of your life through telling a story creates a lasting commitment and shared values that support a greater sense of community within an organisation, and therefore a better reputation.

1.3.1 Research Question:

To what extent and how are Corporate Reputational elements reflected in the stories told within an organisation?

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methodology used. It begins with a description of the chosen method and its implications for the research. It then discusses the research design. This is followed by descriptions of the process that was used in data collection, analysis and interpretation. This chapter concludes a discussion on the validity and reliability of the research method.

1.1 Research methodology /paradigm

The research method used was qualitative, conducted in the interpretive paradigm, using stories and storytelling. Jermier and Domagalski (2000) affirm that there is a tendency to accept that insights into what people do at work, can be presented without positivist methods or analytical symbols.

Organisations and employees have been investigated through storytelling; this methodology has been employed by researchers such as Boje (1991a, 1991b and 1995), McLellan (2006) and McCarthy (2008).

This qualitative research used the case study. The case studied was Nashua Mobile Rosebank, this organisation is an franchise of Nashua Mobile South Africa. This branch is specifically focused on corporate clients such as Nedbank, Mckinsey Consulting and Avis that are large national clients together with SME's (small, medium sized enterprises). Our business is the installation and maintenance of SIM cards in an organisation. This entails on-selling Vodacom, MTN and Cellc packages whose prices are determined largely by ICASA and the three Networks. Our Nashua franchise sells the same products, at the same prices, as all the franchises and agents. Our differentiation comes through the way we service the client.

1.1.1 Qualitative Research

During the MBA program students were often warned that qualitative research was more difficult than quantitative research. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) state

that qualitative research starts with general concepts and questions; whereas quantitative research is specific. In doing the literature review it is now clear why “general” is more difficult than “specific”. This research report started with a general concept and an interest in both storytelling and corporate reputation.

Leedy and Ormrod (2001) identified many characteristics of qualitative research; this research report employed theory building, emergent design, and the importance of the researcher.

Theory building

The purpose of the research was to determine how and to what extent Corporate Reputational elements are reflected in stories told within an organisation. The 27 dimensions that make up reputation set out by Schwaiger (2004) were used as a comparison tool. Therefore this research builds on theory and does not test current theory.

Emergent design

Qualitative research by its nature, Leedy and Ormrod (2001) say, will be creative and flexible. The researcher uncovered a number of paths of interest and relevance during the readings. Therefore, there was a need for a flexible or emergent research design.

Role of the researcher

The researcher collected the data in the form of interviews. Individual staff in the organisation were interviewed and asked 8 broad questions. There was a possibility that the researcher imposed personal views on the research.

1.1.2 Research using qualitative data

Miles and Huberman (1994) remarked that qualitative data consists of words that are collected in a variety of ways like observation, interviews and documents. This research intends to collect stories that will be qualitative, that will in turn be interpreted in a qualitative fashion.

There are strengths and weaknesses to a qualitative design. Miles and Huberman (1994) describe some positive elements to qualitative research as the real or grounded nature of data because it is collected close to the event; qualitative data is complex and rich with information, qualitative data can reveal meaning that people place on events, organisations and processes environments. It is for these reasons that qualitative design is suited to the research question at hand.

At the same time, research involving qualitative data has drawbacks. Miles and Huberman (1994) describe qualitative data as often being biast, labour intensive, time consuming and often there is an overload of data together with inadequate sampling and the quality and credibility of the conclusions.

1.1.3 Interpretive paradigm

The interpretive paradigm was chosen for this research because it allowed for an emergent understanding of a specific situation in context, that of corporate reputation, which will be studied in-depth though the stories told in the interviews. The interpretive paradigm also acknowledged the role of the researcher in the process.

Klein and Myers (1999) identify *interpretivism* as the knowledge of reality that is gained only through social constructions such as language, documents, shared meanings, tools and other artifacts. Interpretivism concentrates on the complexity of human sense making as the situation emerges, by trying to understand the phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them (Klein and Myers 1999). This definition of interpretivism was considered similar to Interpretative Phenomenologoical Analysis (I.P.A.).

Smith and Osborn's (2007) Interpretative Phenomenologoical Analysis was investigated but was determined to be more concerned with the psychological sense-making of the individual interviewed rather than linking the individual stories with reputation as a concept, as this research is intended to do.

Ideographic methodology

Social research is concerned with the general or the *nomothetic* as opposed to the individual case. In this research a specific case site was studied with a view to understanding the corporate reputation through the individual's perception that make up the site. Therefore this research would be adding to theory. Benbasat I., Goldstein D.K. and Mead M. (1987) suggest the use of ideographic methodology in case studies because it allows for the understanding of a specific phenomenon in its context.

Non-positivism

This research is not positivist research, which holds that experiment, observation and measurement are the core of research. This research puts emphasis on the observation rather than the experiment of measurement sides. Therefore, within the assumption of epistemology, the non-positivism principle is more applicable to the proposed research (Klein and Myers 1999).

Voluntarism

Burrell and Morgan (1979) describe assumptions about human nature falling along a continuum: At the one end - people's behaviour can be pre-determined and at the other end - one will never know how people will react. This research is formed somewhere in the middle and that people's behaviour can, to a certain degree, be predetermined.

Nominalism

The researcher will be not independent of the interviews, observations and interpretations that make up this research. This research does not employ a nominalist approach because nominalism, in contrast to realism, does not assume that the world is made up of hard, tangible, immutable structures and that the world does not exist independently of the observer (Burrell and Morgan 1979).

The interpretive paradigm was chosen because the case study method and the specific research that will be conducted suits the underlying assumptions of this paradigm (nominalism, non-positivism, voluntarism and an ideographic methodology) better than a functional paradigm.

1.1.4 Qualitative Data Analysis

According to Benbasat et al. (1987), the nature of data analysis in a case study relies heavily on the integrative power of the researcher. The research broadly adheres to Miles and Huberman (1994) and their three concurrent activities: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing.

Data reduction

Miles and Huberman (1994) describe data reduction as the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming data that appear in written up field notes. These authors contend that data reduction continues throughout the analysis until the final report is complete, with such activities as writing summaries, coding, teasing out themes, making clusters, making partitions and writing memos having been carried out.

Data display

Miles and Huberman (1994) describe data display as the organising and compressing information that eventually leads to conclusions.

Conclusion drawing

Miles and Huberman (1994) describe conclusion drawing as the process of deciding what things mean, seeing patterns and causal flows, noting regularities, describing explanations, possible configurations, casual flows, and propositions. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) concur with the view that data analysis takes place concurrently with the data collection process.

Research using the case study method

A case study examines a phenomenon in its natural setting, employing multiple methods of data collection to gather information from one or a few entities people, groups or organizations (Benbasat, Goldstein and Mead 1987). The boundaries of the phenomenon are not clearly evident at the outset of the research and no experimental control or manipulation is used.

For Benbasat et al. (1987) the case study method lends itself to developing an understanding of how context and creativity interact as part of managerial and organisational issues. Therefore, the case study method is suited to the process of securing knowledge from individuals and then developing theories from the data.

1.2 Research Design

This research asked 12 respondents to describe “corporate reputation” and what it means to them in the form of 8 broad questions, these 8 questions (annexure 1) helped the respondent to evoke memories and perceptions in the form of stories and dialogue. The interviews were to be between 1-1.5 hours.

This approach provided an open-ended data sourcing method, which gave a rich and more nuanced insight into identity, values and culture than would conventional questionnaires.

The individual stories were analysed for the keywords in the 27 dimensions that constitute corporate reputation according to Schwaiger. This determined how and to what extent the 27 elements reflect reputation in stories told within an organisation.

1.2.1 Research story theme

The initial focus was to try to understand how and to what extent Corporate Reputational elements were reflected in stories told and relate the stories back to the 27 dimensions of Schwaiger (2004).

1.3 Population and sample

1.3.1 Case site

The population of this research is the entire 19 staff members of the Nashua Mobile in Rosebank. The 19 people included; technicians, managers, operations, client service, receptionist and sales staff.

1.3.2 Sample and sampling method

This research used stories told by 12 of the staff. The sampling allowed for enough data but tried to limit repetition. The 12 staff with the longest tenure out of the 19 staff members will be the sample.

Table 1: Profile of respondents

Description of respondent type:	Number to be sampled
Sales staff	4
Operations and managers	5
Technicians	3

1.4 The research instrument

This research did not use the Schwaiger (2004) questionnaire as a research instrument. Rather this research employed the keywords or elements in the 27 questions that make up corporate reputation as a guild line and structure to compare to reputational elements in the organisational stories.

1.5 Procedure for data collection

The data was collected over a period of two weeks in recorded interviews. The interview slots were chosen by the staff themselves, during working hours.

1.6 Data analysis and interpretation

Perry (2001) supports the use of rich dialogue and description to permit interviewees the chance to articulate ideas.

1.7 Limitations of the study

This research took the form of a study on the researcher's own company that involved qualitative research undertaken in an interpretive manner. That meant that there might be bias on the part of the researcher and the persons interviewed, which may affect reliability.

All reasonable efforts were made to prevent bias. The purpose of the research was to build on theory and to articulate patterns.

- Using interpretivism could be a weakness since the nature of interpretation is subjective.
- The sampling in the research is small, due to the labour intensiveness of qualitative research.

1.8 Validity and reliability

Leedy and Ormrod (2001) describe validity as measuring what it is supposed to measure. This research is qualitative using an interpretative paradigm, there may be validity concerns. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) say reliability refers to the accuracy and consistency with which the instrument produces results.

2.7.1 External validity

Yin (1994) states that external validity refers to the capacity of the research to make general findings beyond the immediate case study. Generalisations can be made in this research; the purpose of the research is to add to theory by testing the applicability of Schwaiger (2004) to a population.

2.7.2 Internal validity

Perry (2001) refers to internal validity as the soundness of cause and effect relationships that are discovered. Internal validity is not relevant in most observational or descriptive studies, such as interpretive research (Rowley 2002).

2.7.3 Reliability

Perry (2001) refers to reliability as to how consistently a technique used to measure a concept would yield similar results if other researchers were to replicate it. This research will be conducted in the interpretive paradigm and the role and interpretations of the researcher will play a significant part in the analysis.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research results. It begins with a description of the demographics of the respondents and how this differs from the demographics of the planned respondents. This is followed by a short summary of the interview process and its findings.

It then discusses the research findings in a summary table using Schwaiger's (2004) 27 elements. The table contains the elements and the number of interviews that the element was reflected in. This is followed by a bar graph showing the same results. The definition of corporate reputation by respondents and a selection of individual quotes illustrates how each element was reflected in the interviews. This is followed by story themes that emerged that could not be compared to the 27 elements. Then respondents are re-ordered or grouped to find new patterns in coloured tables.

Lastly, a few ideas that emerged as patterns in the individual interviews are communicated. This chapter ends with a conclusion of the research results.

1.2 Demographic profile of respondents

This research planned to interview 10 – 12 respondents determined by time and practicality. Twelve interviews were conducted in two weeks at the end of November 2009. Interviews were planned to be between 1 hour and 1 hour 30 minutes, this was to allow for rich discourse and ample data. All 12 interviews were between 45 minutes and 1 hour and 45 minutes.

The twelve respondents were six men and six women. This was not planned. The interviews were planned on the employees with the longest tenure; one male respondent was exchanged for a female respondent due to time constraints and holidays, enabling an even distribution of men and women.

The table below was used to plan the 12 interviews. Based on the tenure of the staff, 12 of the 19 employees were asked if they would agree to be interviewed, all agreed. The researcher agreed that no details would be shared unless the interviewee wished.

Although one respondent was exchanged for another the table below was not changed, due to both the old and new interviewees being from the sales department.

Table 2: Profile of respondents

Description of respondent type:	Number to be sampled
Sales staff (two male and two female)	4
Operations and managers (1 male and 4 female)	5
Technicians (all male)	3

A male respondent from the technical department had the longest interview time of 1 hour and 45 minutes. The shortest interview of 45 minutes, was a male respondent from the sales department. One male respondent, the researcher felt, had prepared although it had been stressed that this was unnecessary. The respondent with the shortest tenure reflected the least elements although the respondent with the longest tenure did not reflect the most elements.

1.3 Interview process

Twelve interviews were conducted in two weeks at the end of November 2009. The interviews were conducted at a busy time for Nashua as we were installing new technology for the national role out of Nedbank. Interviews took place just before our Christmas party.

In accord with Abma (2003) that says storytelling is one of the ways to stimulate dialogue, the timing of the interviews was at a time when people were excited to go on holiday, our Nedbank role out was proceeding well and was something to proud about and each staff member had received their bonuses for the year.

This was perhaps why respondents were expressive and articulate, one respondent portrayed a negative attitude but was responsive to the questions. Boje (1991b), Abma (2003), McLellan (2006) and Blair (2006) all are in agreement, that a stories context depends also on place and time. We choose to share stories with certain audiences at a relevant time. Interviews perhaps conducted in January would be very different. The researcher also believed that interviews conducted by our MD would have yielded different results.

All 12 interviews were done during work time and respondents could choose times that suited them. This allowed the respondent some control in the process but also promoted the idea that the interviews were important to the company.

This research employed Denning (2005) that suggests the use of storytelling to understand how employees feel. Our MD understood that the exercise would help understand staff member's feelings and staff felt their expression of ideas would be listened to. All respondents were keen to be interviewed; one reason may have been that they trusted that they would be anonymous if they wished. Building relationships is the first step toward building trust (Blair 2006). Another reason was perhaps that staff members for the most part are team players; therefore they wanted to be part of the process and the outcome.

Most respondents remarked that communication was a fundamental element of a business and this perhaps helped the process, because each respondent had an opportunity to express opinions, feelings and ideas. Leonard-Barton (1992) points out that the more important knowledge in people, it is in their practices and their values. The values of the staff and therefore the knowledge of the staff were echoed in the similarities of the responses in the 12 interviews.

Employees that understand and identify with the core ideology of the company make longer-term commitments to an organisation. McCarthy (2008) suggests that the more employees identify with the company the more they added to the competitive success, through amplifying values, with more dedication and commitment. Storytelling can be related to organisational commitment, the more frequently a story is told, with strength or passion and the more positive it is,

relates to how strongly the story teller believes and wants to promote the organisations values and ideals.

In order for ideas to grow they need to be articulated, tested, refined, borrowed, amended and adapted. Leadbeater (2008) states that this cannot take place in only one persons head, in this case the ideas were summarised and shared anonymously with the staff by way of figure 4 on page 56.

The staff were emailed figure 4 on page 56. Each staff member did not know in which order his interview was, nor was told. Staff could see the elements and the overlap of ideas and this supported their shared culture. This feedback process then allowed staff to share and develop the elements that were alike as well as the elements that were different. Kahan (2006) and Abma (2003) concur that storytelling brings together differing points of view in the spirit of collaboration.

Staff gave the researcher feedback when pointing out that they had not thought of an element that they now saw on the list, and then realised for themselves concepts that were important to them as part of corporate reputation.

1.4 The findings of the Research Question

Research Question: To what extent and how are Corporate Reputational elements reflected in the stories told within an organisation?

The summary of findings is represented in the table on the next page. The table lays out the 27 elements down the left hand side and number of times respondents remarked on an element in their interview on the right hand side.

The most an element could be reflected was in all twelve interviews, therefore twelve times, even if a respondent mentioned the element more than once. The total number of elements reflected in a story over the course of the twelve interviews was 153, out of a possible 324 (12 interviews * 27 elements) or 47%.

The elements may have been part of a story, commentary or dialogue in the interview, but were regarded as playing a part of corporate reputation and therefore noted.

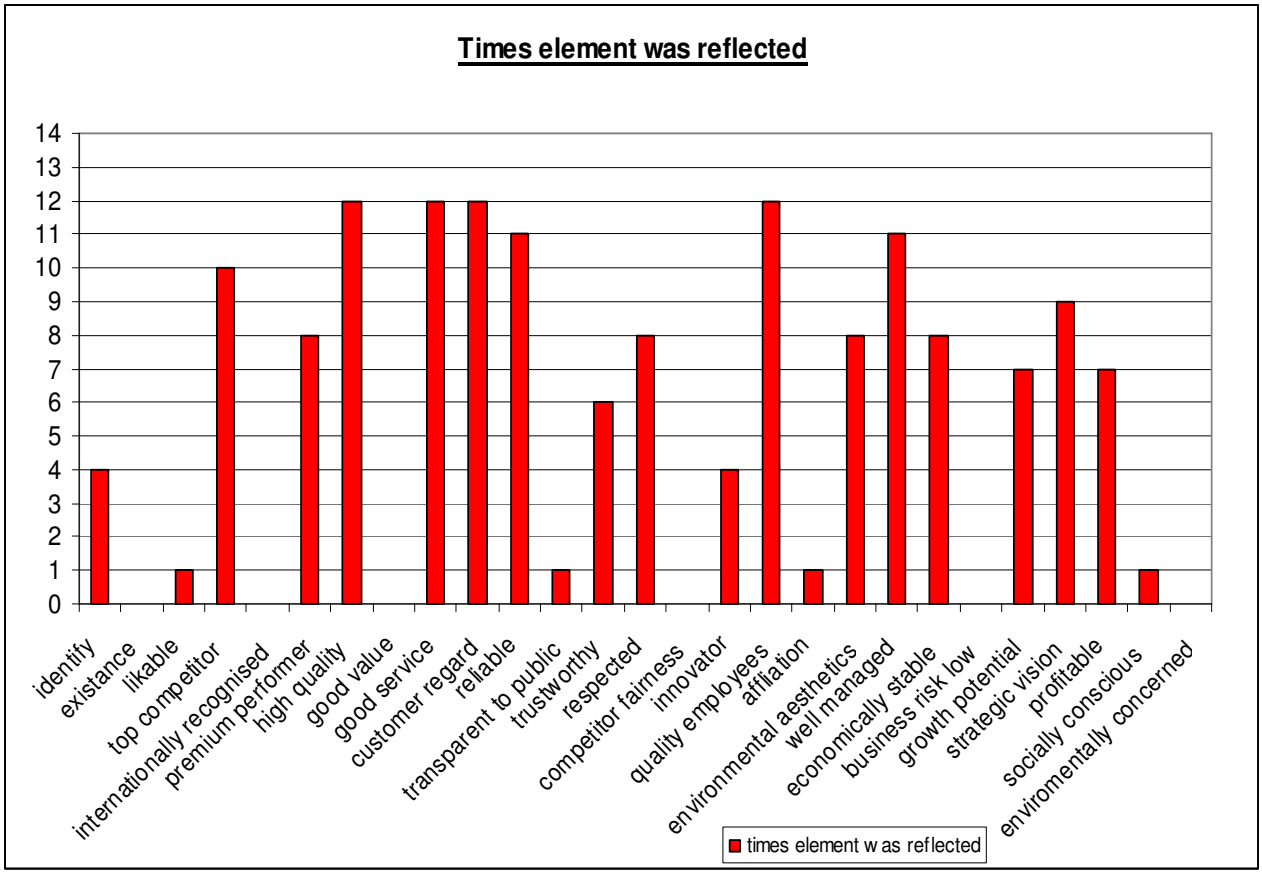
Table 3: Summary of elements reflected in the 12 interviews

Schwaiger's 27 elements of corporate reputation using Nashua Rosebank as the “company”	Number of times the element was reflected in the 12 interviews
*Nashua for the purpose of this table is "Nashua Rosebank"	
I identify with Nashua	4
I am happy Nashua exist	0
Nashua is a likable company	1
Nashua is a top competitor	10
Nashua are internationally recognised	0
Nashua is a premium performer	8
Nashua's products and services are of a high quality	12
Nashua provides good value services and products	0
Nashua provides a good service	12
Nashua has customer regard	12
Nashua are considered reliable	11
Nashua provide relevant information to the public	1
Nashua was trustworthy	6
I respect Nashua	8
Nashua deal fairly with competitors	0
Nashua is an innovator	4
Nashua attracts quality employees	12
I could see my self working for Nashua	1
Nashua's environment, offices	8
Nashua is well managed	11
Nashua is economically stable	8
Nashua offers a low business risk	0
Nashua offers growth potential	7
Nashua has strategic vision	9
Nashua is profitable	7
Nashua is socially conscious	1
Nashua is environmentally concerned	0

One element marked in red, Nashua's offices, was reflected in eight interviews. This element is marked in red to show that all respondents noted in the negative. Nashua's offices are important to corporate reputation but that currently they do not reflect our corporate reputation. All other references or reflections were in the positive, even if a respondent felt Nashua could do better and improve reputation by applying the element more.

The following graph visually represents the findings in table 3. Four elements were described in all 12 interviews: high quality, good service, customer regard and quality employees. The elements that were reflected more often in a single interview were the same four; high quality, good service, reliability and quality employees.

Figure 3: Bar Graph showing number of times the element was reflected



Six elements were not mentioned in any of the 12 interviews; that staff would regret the existence of Nashua, that Nashua is internationally recognised, the good value of Nashua's services and products, competitor fairness, low business risk and environmentally concern.

One element should not have applied to any respondent – affiliation – this element represented the concept "I could imagine myself working at Nashua". Since all respondents currently work at Nashua, the researcher believed that this element would have to be eliminated. One respondent mentioned a story of working at Nashua's competition and expressed what he thought it would be like working for Nashua. Therefore this element was applicable and remained one of the 27 elements.

1.4.1 Research question

To what extent and how are Corporate Reputational elements reflected in the stories told within an organisation?

Respondents reflected no less than nine elements in one single interview or 33% of the possible elements. The most elements reflected in one interview were 20, out of a possible 27, or 74%. These figures show to what extent corporate reputational elements are reflected, when using Schwaiger (2004) as a comparison. The elements were reflected in the process of the interview in the form of stories through dialogue and the answering of the 8 questions.

1.4.2 Interviewees definition of corporate reputation

Even though there was an overlap on the elements in the interviews, no two people defined corporate reputation in the same way. This is because it is a plethora of events, communications and activities that employees do every day within an organisation. The following are a few of the respondents views on what corporate reputation is.

Respondent 8, "Reputation is built on several different people in the company and what they do, to allow a client to judge our performance."

Respondent 5, “Corporate reputation is about how people associate themselves with your company, it’s your service, good or bad, your logo, your advertising and how people talk about your company.”

Respondent 4, “Reputation is how you handle clients, how we make money and what’s happening at the company, that’s how a person would know whether the reputation was good or bad.”

Respondent 2, “Reputation is about what people think about you and the way the way you carry yourself and the impressions you make.”

1.4.3 Individual elements and quotes form respondents

The following assortment of quotes reflected each element. Elements that were only mentioned once have not been included, since these would not mirror the overall perception of the staff at Nashua Mobile.

- The element “Identify” surfaced in the following quotes

Respondent 1, “I have a passion for Nashua Mobile, I find myself telling people about Nashua and they want to work here because I describe it with passion and my own experiences.”

Respondent 2, “We have a good reputation. In the first place we are familiar, staff have stayed for a long time in the company, it’s important, it’s like any relationship, if there are bad vibes or not a cultural fit we wouldn’t get anywhere fast. We have to like the Nashua idea, I tell people I work here, I’m part of the furniture.”

- The element “top competitor” was reflected in the following quotes.

Respondent 7,”We get to the problems and sort it out efficiently, our service is way above the rest, because instead of it becoming someone else’s problem we take ownership of the problem.”

Respondent 1, “We have merged and gained knowledge, we have more experience and a bigger client base than our competitors, its our competitive strength.”

Respondent 8, “If a company is 2nd or 3rd then they are always striving to be number 1, we are number 2.”

Respondent 12, “We’re the biggest LCR dealer, that’s cool.”

- The element “premium performer” emerged in the following quote.

Respondent 8, “Nashua HO ranks us well as a franchise, we carry the brand well, better than them in a lot of cases.”

Respondent 5, “Everyone knows Nashua Mobile”

Respondent 1, “I got this call at 7.30am to complain about Nashua head office, although the client doesn’t blame us for the bad service, he got great service from us, he keeps his business with us.” This remark is common to our environment, where we are “Nashua” but as a franchise we can only control so much of the process.

Respondent 6, “we have the best reputation with the PABX guys because we are always on time and we know what we’re doing.”

Respondent 9, “In conversations with Nashua head office, our paperwork is always in order and this means deals are processed efficiently, I get recognition for my work”.

- The element “high quality” appears in the following quote.

Respondent 10 – “I had an elderly lady come to fetch her new phone and I sat with her and showed her how to use the phone. She was really grateful and said her kids kept shouting at her because she couldn’t work a mobile phone. An hour after she left she and her husband came back because they had wiped their contact list. I helped them and I set an appointment for both of them to come in with the manual to have a lesson. The told me I had given the best service ever.”

Respondent 8, “From the clients point of view it is insuring the experience with us is a pleasure, it’s how we interact with those clients that determines what they think of us, is it professional, is it honest, with integrity?”

Respondent 4, “Our after sales service is the best, clients tell me this.”

Respondent 5, “I always say that we are the preferred mobile provider, we are the largest dealer. I give examples of clients we have like Nedbank, so they know we’re not Mickey Mouse, we’re reputable. Clients think that if we service Nedbank we must be good.”

Respondent 5, “Mike (our MD) says ‘get it done’, we’re efficient, we have to be.”

- The element “good service” was the most referred to element with numerous quotes.

Respondent 5, “The good and free service always gets our customers.”

Respondent 11, “If you don’t have service you won’t have a reputation. Ours is above and beyond”

Respondent 10, “I have experiences where clients are put through to me on the phone and I deal with them immediately.”

Respondent 12, “Clients are pleased about our service. I have friends with contracts here and they would never go anywhere else.”

Respondent 3, “We get to problems before the clients even know there’s a problem!” “I am proud to say that I work for a company that has the best after sales service, that’s how we maintain clients.”

Respondent 8, “from the customers point of view reputation is based on the level of service when the client wants it (service).”

Respondent 1, “Good service is an attitude and it’s fundamental to business.” “Clients have said to me, ‘you were honest’, I didn’t let them go around in circles, clients like honest service.” “When I came back from New Zealand,

(after trying to emigrate) clients came back to me saying ‘we’re so happy your back’ they only want to deal with one person.”

Respondent 5, “Service is big part of reputation.”

Respondent 4, “In terms of our customers our service is good, if the client calls now we go to the client, we are better than other companies, we communicate with customers, we phone and let them know what’s going on. The clients say ‘wow, Nashua has that attitude we can take our business to them’.”

- The element “customer regard” was revealed in the following quotes.

Respondent 6, “I chat to clients, chat to them and ask them if they are happy, if I can help in any way. I know the client pays my salary”.

Respondent 8, “Every person that works in this company and everybody who touches the client has to be careful how he conducts himself and what he does in front of the customer.”

Respondent 4, “We go to the client, we do what we need to do to fix the problem right the first time, the client is happy.”

Respondent 5, “we don’t have too many problems out there with clients, so when someone phones in we can fix their problem quickly, the customer sees that quickness.”

Respondent 1, “We are a good company to work for because we have a good attitude to clients.” “Our business is over the phone so we need to have a smile on my face, I’m at ease and the clients know this, we listen to the client. Honesty and loyalty are the reasons I have never lost one client in seven years.”

- The element “reliable” was articulated in the following quotes.

Respondent 4, “SS Telecoms is our best supplier, there equipment is reliable, if we call them they can come to a site, they help out change the equipment just like that. They know their equipment, our reputation is fine because of their help.”

Respondent 8, “Established brands with significant market share, recognisable brands that have been around for a 100 years and will be around for another 100 years, reputation and reliability are linked.”

Respondent 6, “We are reliable, we are proactive, we don’t wait for clients to see problems, we go to fix it before they know, we are speedy.”

- The element “trustworthy” was divulged in the following quotes.

Respondent 6, “Be honest with the client, the client says ‘thanks for being honest even though you screwed up’, he knows at least that he can trust you later on.”

Respondent 2, “No questions asked, they just take you’re word for it, they trust you to do it, fix it and we do, that’s why people come back.”

Respondent 4, “I trust our sales department to do their job, I trust our boss he knows what he’s doing.”

- The element “respected” was reflected in the following quotes.

Respondent 10, “Reputation is effected by upbringing, I respect Nashua, morality and honesty is the best policy.”

Respondent 11, “It’s about etiquette, the way we speak to a client, its going to effect the company, if you don’t give them respect they’ll cancel their contract in two years.”

- The element “innovator” emerged in the following quotes.

Respondent 3, “I didn’t rewrite everything, I changed the system, it was a waste of time, I streamlined my work and took a day off my workload at end month. We don’t have to do things the same as everyone else.

Respondent 2, “I’m a systems person, things must run like a clock. I like to change systems to make things go quickly.”

Respondent 1, “I think out the box, I can do things on my own, confidence to take my own choices.”

Respondent 8, “Nashua need to continue developing in order to create new products, to stay ahead.”

- The element “quality employees” was revealed in the following quotes.

Respondent 7, “Companies are based on individuals, if you can put in and get out something positive out, it should have a positive effect on the next person.”

Respondent 5, “The people here are cool, they have good attitudes, it’s relaxed.”

Respondent 4, “Everyone is happy, the reason why everyone thinks they get what they deserve, you work for Nashua and you think I deserve more, you get more.”

Respondent 8, “People don’t want to deal with companies anymore, they want to deal with individuals. It’s the individual that determines the ability of the client to deal with a company.”

- The lack of element “environmental aesthetics” was described in the following quotes.

Respondent 8, “Our traffic into the offices generally is not much, but we need to improve the boardroom and reception so that it looks more like the brand.”

Respondent 3, “Seriously, we need to smarten up the office, our reception looks terrible, its looks like nothing is going on here, what does the office say about our service?”

Respondent 12, “I sit in reception, I make it more “homey”, clients would feel more comfortable sitting there.”

- The element “well managed” that was reflected in all but one of the interviews materialised in the following quotes.

Respondent 9, “we are considered very competent by suppliers, agents and Nashua head office.”

Respondent 11, “Mike is so involved in everything, he wants updates to stay in the loop, he knows how to say thank you when you do stuff right.”

Respondent 4, “Our boss is a cool boss, if you are working, you earn for what you are working for, if you do your job, he (MD) is happy, if he is happy, then every one is happy.”

Respondent 10, “Mike knows we’re always on the ball here, getting stuff done.”

Respondent 4, “I feel secure here, it’s going well.”

Respondent 2, “Anyone can go to Mike, there’s an open line, he listens and sorts stuff out.”

- The element “economically stable” was described informally in the following quote.

Respondent 4, “I’m an employees and I look hundreds, if you look at everyone here, clients can see we are doing well.”

- The element “growth potential” was illustrated in the following quotes.

Respondent 3, “I perceive our growth as great and how we handle things, I won’t go anywhere, I’m part of the furniture.”

Respondent 5, “Our offices have an odd layout, they are too long and narrow. We could improve them, the reception doesn’t look like it should.”

Respondent 3, “Mike has a lot to do with the growth, he is hands on business man, if there’s an issue its get sorted out, immediately, there is an urgency to everything we do.”

Respondent 8, “Decide on a future and run with it, theirs is a lot of vision at Nashua but new development takes big bucks, Nashua is a cash cow, its got the reinvest the profit.”

- The element ‘strategic vision” was portrayed in the following quotes.

Respondent 1, “I am a forecaster, I like to plan ahead, your vision and leadership are important, the right people in the right positions.” “It’s good to work in a place where you feel comfortable, you know where the company is going, you know the products and services, and we work for a company with all that.”

Respondent 8, “It’s an ongoing thing, the most important thing is that senior staff stay motivated and actively engage with the staff because if you are motivated it automatically rubs off on everybody else, if we go into a slump it permeates right through the place.”

Respondent 2, “Reputation starts in the centre, like a rock, throwing it in the water the ripples are biggest in the centre, the idea flows out from the leader.”

Respondent 4, “A client calls me and wants to speak to Mike to report a fault. I said ‘can I help you?’ and they said ‘I want Mike does everything and knows exactly what’s going on. It’s easy to go up, when you have a boss like Mike.”

- The element “profitable” was explained in the following quotes.

Respondent 3, “We are COD (cash on delivery) because we have good cash flow, we pay people on time, they are glad to work for us.”

Respondent 4, “Even if we do the service, if we weren’t financially stable it wouldn’t work, we won’t be able to buy equipment or send out technicians, you have to make money *and* do a good job.”

Respondent 11, “If everyone gives 100%, you can grow and get listed on the stock exchange. I saw that at Orion. It’s down to each employee and what they do and how they do it that makes us money.”

Griffin (2001) explains that organisational stories reveal company values, behaviour and loyalty. This cultural heritage was certainly evident in all of the interviews, bar one. One respondent described a very different culture and set

of values to the rest of the staff. Shein (1993) acknowledged that cultural misunderstandings and communication failure is at the root of all issues. This difference goes a long way to explaining why this staff member battles to fit into the company and has more disagreements with other staff.

1.4.4 Interview themes

Shein (1993) and Abma (2003) both specify that communication through dialogue is what is essential across boundaries within an organisation. Respondents commented on areas outside their own: sales, marketing, technical or operations. The comments or stories made outside the respondents' own area were often the most enlightening. The creative process was employed and Verberne (1997) is supported in this research in that a creative mind is more effective at solving problems. The creative process hinges on linking ideas across disciplines that were previously unrelated. There was a creativity of thought employed in the interviews.

Many different stories were told about Nashua and other organisations to illustrate an idea or concept. There was a mixture of negative and positive, funny and serious stories that although contrary, are the sum of the personality, culture, image or heritage of Nashua.

The emphasis of the values that the stories revealed determined the more important cultural beliefs. These were the elements that were continually repeated and emphasised. Boje's (1995) use of the term "multiplicity" to describe the many stories was evident in the 12 interviews. Like a puzzle, respondents themes and stories overlapped, but most had a unique idea that they alone described. The following are themes that emerged in the stories that reflected Nashua Rosebank culture. These themes did not necessarily match with any of the 27 elements

- The captain theme

This "captain" symbol occurred in three of the interviews. Three male respondents used the word "captain" to describe our leadership. This image

was used in conjunction with the strategic vision and management of the company. Respondent 7 used a comparison, his last MD was a “Viking” but his current MD was a “Captain”. “Doug seemed to be the Viking, he likes to be in the news, throw money around, he’s the man, the only guy that can do it for you. He washed boats, that was his story, a rags to riches fairytale.” The same respondent describes our MD, “Mike is the captain of the boat and he listens to his crew, each crew has his own function and its done properly, it’s obviously going to effect the boat, that makes us a compact team.”

Respondent 1 also used the ship analogy, to describe the management, leadership, our competitor strategy and strategic vision of Nashua. “The captain has to steer you, not just you but the whole Nashua ship, he has to see into the future, Mike steers above the competitors”.

- The family theme

Denning (2005) and Garguilo (2006) agree that stories can even stir people out of bureaucratic lethargy and galvanise an organisation because they bring employees together with common purpose. Nashua Rosebank was often referred to as a family. Kennedy (1977) remarked that familiarity breeds favourability towards a person or company. Respondent 10, “I get along with just about anyone, I like everyone at the office, we’re like a family.” Respondent 12, “I have told clients how we help one another no matter what, we are close like a family.”

Every organisation is a community and can be an extension of your own family; a community is about shared beliefs. People that help each other and work together form communities through building relationships and teamwork on projects. Shein (1993) and Blair (2006) concur that “common ground” can be expressed as image of the company in words and stories used by employees to each other and outsiders. The respondents were chosen for the length of time with the company. This choice accentuated the family theme since the longer staff had known each other; the greater is the bond between them.

- The relaxed and informal cultural theme

Shein (1999) describes culture as a process of constructing shared meaning over time. Corporate culture provides guidelines on how to behave in a working environment. There seemed to be consensus on the climate of the office, that of a relaxed and informal setting, yet a “work hard first, play hard later” concept that contributed to our reputation of “we get things done”, but are laid back. Respondent 5, “People around here are cool, they have good attitude, it’s relaxed.”

- The appearance theme

Wheatley (2006) emphasised a realisation that relationships are paramount to understanding how and what to communicate. Respondents continually remarked how important our physical appearance was to customers and our relationships with them. Respondent 3, “First impressions are lasting impressions, clients see staff and the offices. Dress code is important because people look the way they work.”

Most seemed aware of the impact visual communication was for customers that comes into contact with staff. The aesthetics of the office too were described as not meeting the level of the perceived reputation.

- The professional theme

This research used all levels of staff in the interview process. Davies, Chun and da Silva (2001) and Fan (2005) explain the deficiencies of measuring a sample that comprises of only executives. All staff felt the necessity of performing at premium level and that professionalism would promote profit. Respondent 9, “ We won the best franchise of the year award three times in a row, it makes me feel good about my job, I can see how my part in this team makes a difference.” Respondent 2, “If you are happy in your position then you’ll perform at your best.”

The depth of data would have been severely lacking if only one level of management had been interviewed.

Davies, Chun and da Silva (2001) and Fan (2005) also expressed the paucity of measuring corporate reputation using only financial attributes This research's results demonstrate that financial elements are only one factor in the overall assessment of corporate reputation.

- The consistency theme

To gain cultural understanding one has to share daily life, to become familiar with the values and beliefs of that culture. Shein (1993), Schwartz (1999) and Surowiecki (2005) express that familiar cultures provide comfort, meaning and predictability. Respondents often relayed the idea of consistency in their stories. It seemed important that Nashua was a lasting company where they felt comfortable and relaxed. Respondent 2, "We have been in the same offices forever, we are still here, I'm like a piece of furniture, clients like consistency."

1.4.5 The extent to which stories reflect elements

According to Bendixon and Abratt (2007) employees impact the organisational culture and identity and therefore impact the corporate reputation. The results of this research support this.

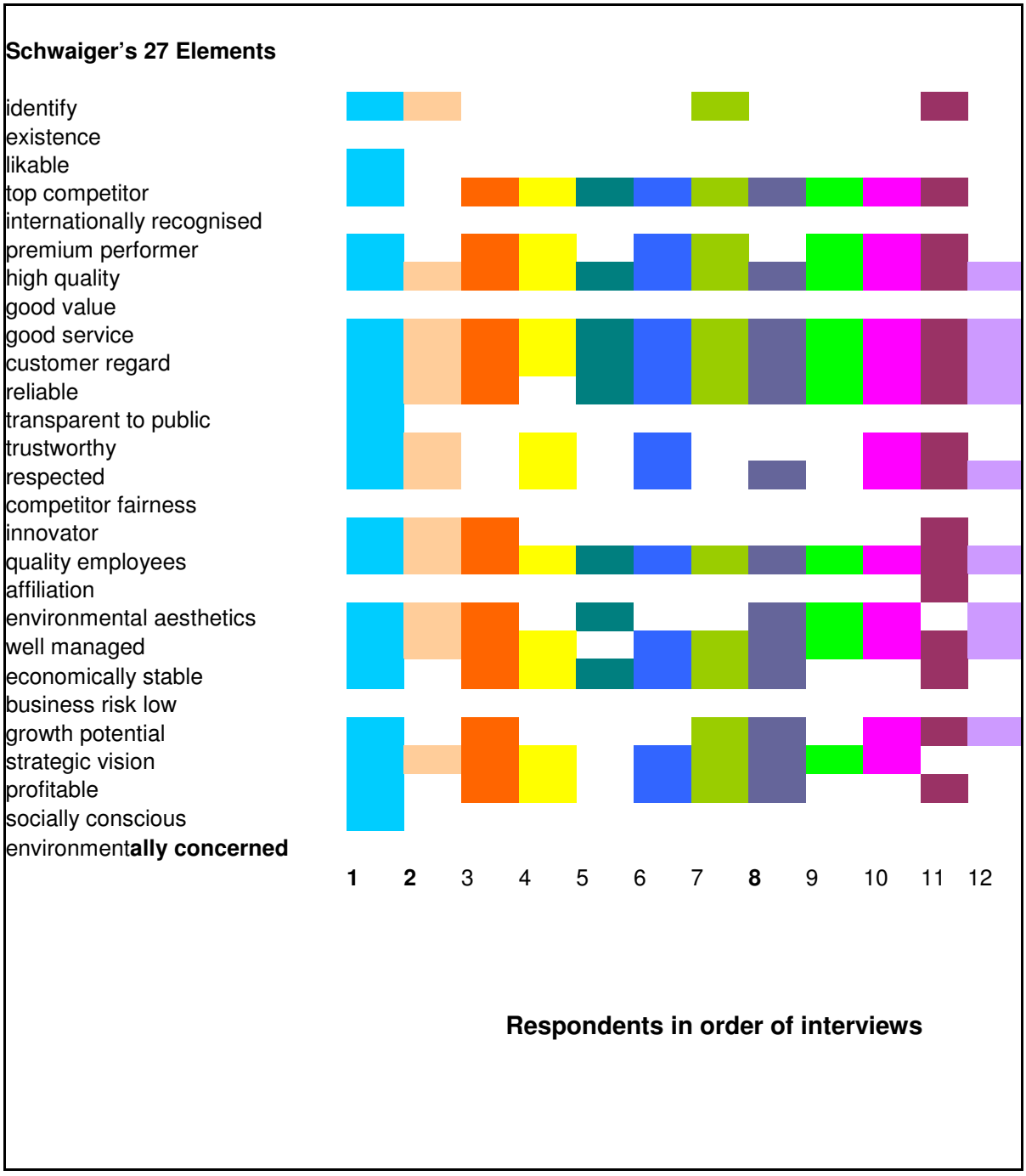
Respondents reflected no less than nine elements in one single interview and the most elements reflected in one interview were 20 out of a possible 27. These figures show to what extent Schwaiger's corporate reputational elements are reflected in stories.

This report's results sustain McCarthy's (2008) belief that alignment of staff culture and company culture can be gauged using stories. Through the examination of the parallels in story themes, a picture of the company seen through staff eyes emerges. This picture of the company is in-keeping with Nashua's image as it would like to be perceived. Stories were self-defining tools that reflected our 'community' within the company.

The results of the interviews indicate that financial indicators are not more important to corporate reputation than non financial indicators, as Schwaiger (2004) stated reputation is about human conduct as well. Overall the data

shows that corporate reputation is more about human conduct than profits, staff recognised that their good conduct enables Nashua Rosebank to make a profit and remain sustainable; there by creating the consistent and reliable company they wish to remain working for.

Figure 4: Schwaiger's 27 elements and respondents 1-12



The figure above has Schwaigers (2004) 27 elements of corporate reputation down the y-axis and each respondent is a number on the x-axis.

Each respondent is represented by a colour; each block indicates that this respondent reflected the element in their interview. This figure lays out the respondents in the order in which they were interviewed, left to right. This was random due to the interview slot being the choice of the respondent.

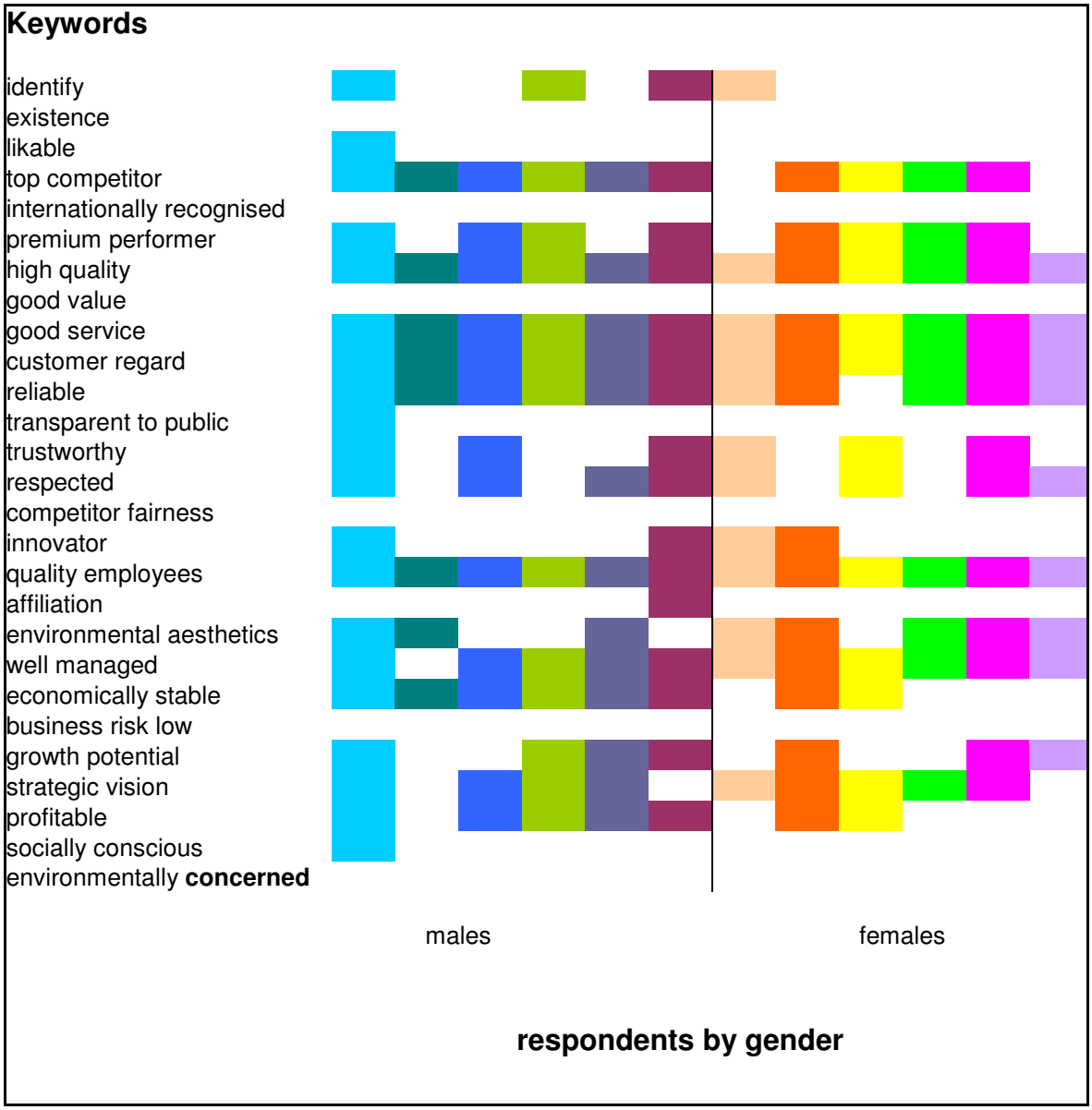
Illustrating each respondent by colour allows a different perspective of the results. Patterns are visible and a general similarity exists. The above spread of elements supports Bendixon and Abratt (2007) that describe corporate reputation as a mixture of branding, communications, image, culture and identity. This visual interpretation allowed the researcher to investigate the interviews in different orders to ascertain whether a better connection or correlation existed.

The following two figures represent divisions or a new ordering of the respondents. Firstly, men and women respondents were grouped together.

The figure on the next page demonstrated that the women respondents did look more similar to other women respondents because they reflected less elements overall. The men were the similar because they reflected more of the elements.

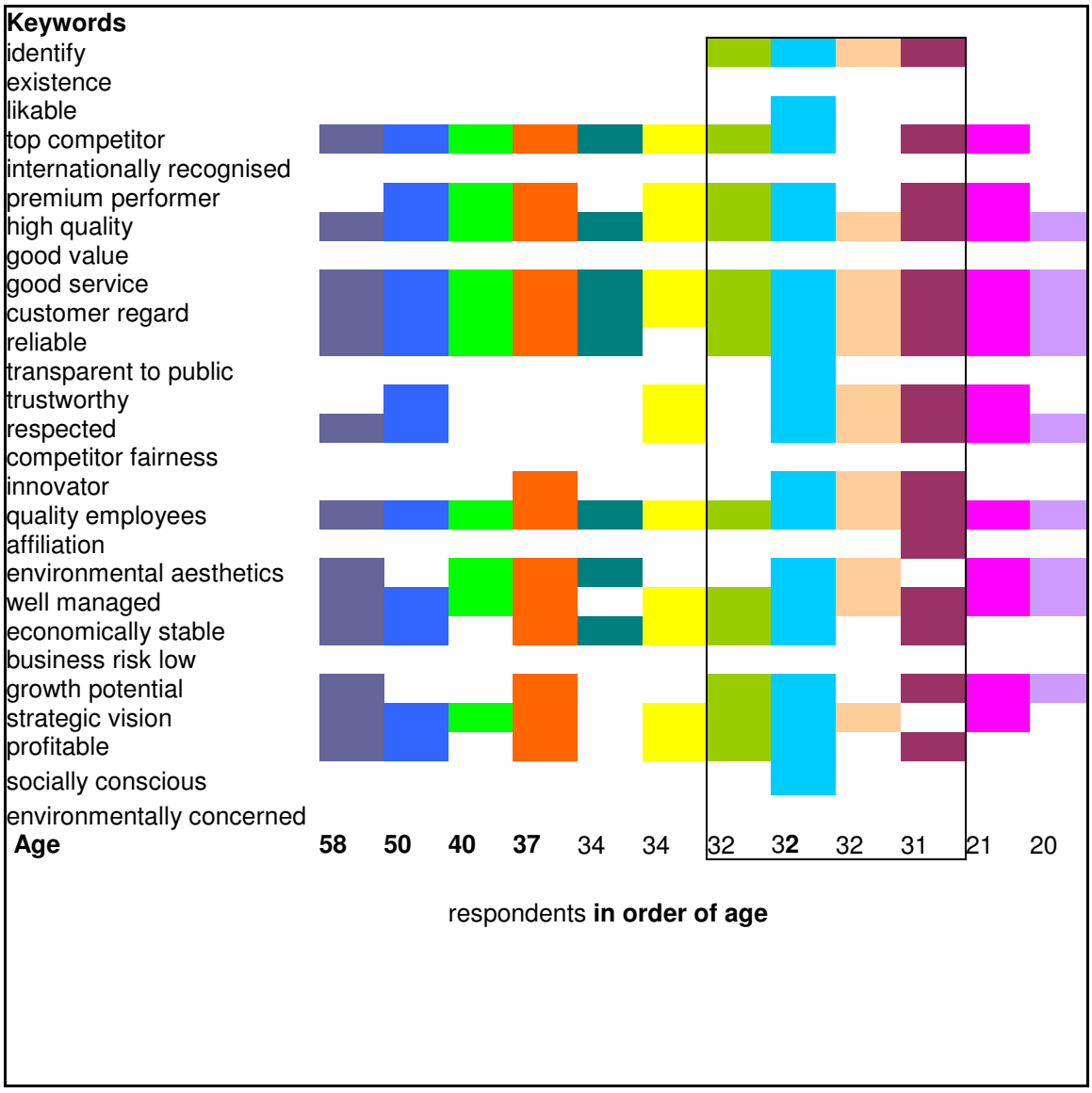
During the course of the interviews this reflection of less of the elements was not evident, what was apparent was how long a story was. The female respondents often told two or three stories reflecting the same element, perhaps to reiterate a concept. Where the men in comparison, told perhaps one story that may have reflected multiple elements. But this analysis showed only a marginal difference.

Figure 5: Schwaiger's 27 elements and respondents by gender



The next order change was the tenure of the 12 employees, the longest to the shortest. This showed no better connections. This was followed by tenure in the industry, this too yielded no revelation. The last was age of respondents in the figure below, from oldest to youngest.

Figure 6: Schwaiger's 27 elements and respondents in order of age



The group highlighted in bold of four respondents aged 31,32,33 and 33, all shared the element of "I identify with Nashua" in their stories. This age group corresponds to the target audience of Nashua Mobiles new advertising campaign. This could be purely coincidental but it is interesting. The campaign was started in October 2009 and new characters were introduced. This was not the usual sporty "hero" promotion. This campaign was about youthful yet

responsible people that use technology to the fullest. Words that were used to describe the Nashua Mobile brand were youthful, energetic and passionate.

The research results show enough similarity of stories to each other and further manipulation did not create a distinctly better connection, but interesting patterns had emerged.

1.4.6 The individual stories

A system is composed of parts, but we cannot understand a system by looking only at its parts. The summary of the respondents helped to illustrate the whole picture. Wheatley (2006) suggests we need to work with the whole system, even as we work with individual parts or isolated problems. This research endeavoured to analysis the patterns as a whole and in part. The following concepts are smaller parts of the whole.

In a storytelling organisation Boje (1991b), Abma (2003) and Love (2008) all agree, stories will contain facts, be genuine, and inspire through emotional connections. Although the following story topics were not necessarily repeated often, there were in most cases two or three respondents that reflected the following ideas that are not specifically one of Schwaiger's 27 elements.

- Happiness

Three respondents expressed how happy and content they were with their purpose and position. These 3 staff members believed this attitude could be discerned by customers and other staff members and so creating a better environment. The stories reflected how a smile could help when dealing with customers.

- Proactive

More than one respondent used the idiom "we go the extra mile" to describe Nashua Rosebank's attitude to suppliers, customers and staff. Our performance was recounted many times, often the stories were about staff taking the initiative and doing more than their job entails. Another idea that came across in

the interviews were stories that expressed how proud people were of their jobs and their service and this was the reason they were proactive.

- Right person for the right job

The quality of employees was an element that occurred in a few of interviews. Another more practical way of expressing this was how each person is correctly chosen for their specific tasks. One respondent's story of how a sale is processed and of each person's part they play to installation illustrated this.

- Confidence

Respondents expressed confidence through their stories, confidence in them selves, confidence in other staff and the confidence of Nashua's performance.

- MD hands on

The stories that reflected Nashua Rosebank as well managed all spoke of our MD as being "hands on". This idiom was repeated in many stories and emphasis on the reason that we are well managed was because our MD takes an interest in every facet of the business.

- The "Braai" and social gatherings

Together with the expression of the "community" theme there was often the remark that we should socialise on an informal basis more often. One respondent pointed out how many stories were told at the office after we have had a "get together" particularly the Christmas party. The same respondent remarked on how one staff member chose not to attend the Christmas party, the same staff member that battles to "fit in". This reflection of a team building spirit confirmed the common value system we have at Nashua Rosebank.

Stories are about collective behaviour. Hofstede and Bond's (2001) literature say that stories within an organisation can gauge cultural similarities and differences. There are enough similarities among respondents to agree in this case with Hofstede and Bond. Perhaps these elements could be used to develop Schwaiger's 27 elements to determine a South African list.

Stories can quell anxiety and enhance organisations ability to navigate through difficulties; stories create frameworks to make sense of events that have occurred, expressing lessons that are transferable over other disciplines (McCarthy 2008). Respondents remarked the process was therapeutic and helped them articulate ideas. Stories provide mechanisms to express often difficulties or problems that are often not discussed openly.

A more clearly understood set of values constructs serves as a platform for common understanding (Kennedy 1977; Blair 2006; McCarthy 2008). The degree to which people ascribe to a common value set will substantially contribute to the degree of consistency of behaviours or responses to events or situations the face. This research maintains then that the staff at Nashua Rosebank are consistent in their beliefs and their behaviour.

Research Question: To what extent and how are Corporate Reputational elements reflected in the stories told within an organisation?

The stories consistently reflected Nashua Rosebanks' staff perceptions of corporate reputation in context more than they reflected all of the elements that Schwaiger (2004) says contribute to corporate reputation. McCarthy (2008) discloses advice: that stories we tell reveal much about ourselves, but the ones we listen too may tell us where we are going (McCarthy 2008). This has been one of the aims of this research, to help Nashua Rosebank on the path to a better reputation.

1.4.7 Conclusion regarding Research Question

Corporate reputational elements are reflected in stories told within an organisation. There is a similarity in the elements that were discussed. There exists a consistency of 4 reflected elements: also 6 elements that were consistently not reflected in Nashua's organisational storytelling.

The extent to which Nashua stories reflect Schwaiger's 27 elements was enough to further test these reputational elements on other companies. In the 12 interviews, elements that were not one of the 27 put forward by Schwaiger,

but were mentioned as part of reputation could be tested as relevant elements to a South African context.

Most importantly the likeness between stories of the twelve respondents and the concepts that overlapped showed the cultural and personality “fit” of staff at our branch. The stories reflected Nashua Rosebanks’ staff perceptions of Corporate Reputation in context more than Schwaiger’s 27 elements reflect Nashua’s Corporate Reputational elements.

1.5 Summary of the results

The demographics of the respondents did not vary greatly from the planned demographics, with one substitution occurring.

This research found Schwaiger’s (2004) 27 elements useful as a comparison but no entirely comprehensive for the purpose of this research and perhaps the South African context. The 12 interviews conducted for this research showed a similarity to each other that demonstrated the extent to which corporate reputation is reflected in storytelling within Nashua’s organisation. The inclusion of the other themes mentioned, may be beneficial in further research conducted in South Africa.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

1.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and endeavors to explain the research results and to build on current theory.

The chapter begins with grouping the research findings into four factors set out by Schwaiger's (2004): quality, performance, responsibility and attractiveness. All 27 elements fall into one of the four factors. Each factor is then discussed.

The chapter finishes with a conclusion of the results that builds on current theory and the research question.

1.2 Discussion of the Research Question

Research Question: To what extent and how are Corporate Reputational elements reflected in the stories told within an organisation?

1.2.1 How stories reflect elements

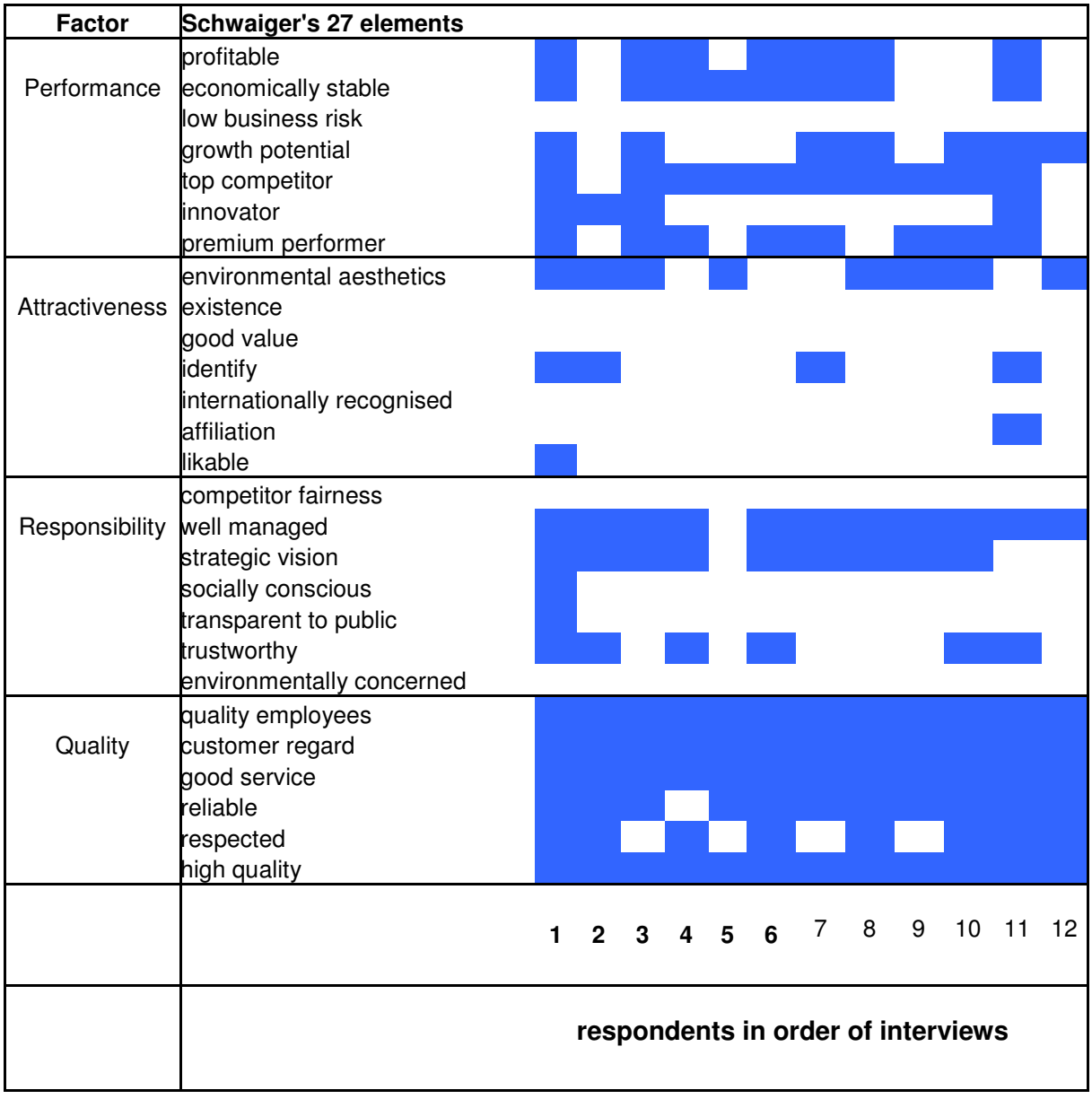
Stories reflect elements of corporate reputation by describing ideas through an analogy or an event. The analogy or event is described in such a way to pass information onto the listener in a way that reinforces a statement the respondent has belief in.

Schwaiger's four factors are similar to Fombrun and Gardberg's (2000) six factors on page 17. This is the model Schwaiger developed his 27 elements from. Schwaiger groups his 27 elements into 4 factors: Performance, Attractiveness, Responsibility and Quality. Fombrun and Gardberg (2000) had 6 factors: Emotional appeal, Products and Services, Vision & Leadership, Workplace Environment, Financial Performance and Social Responsibility.

Figure 7 below, divides the elements into 4 factors described by Schwaiger (2004) as tangible and intangible attributes. This new order of elements created a very different representation

The respondents' stories reflect the elements that are part of the Quality factor in the last quadrant, the most. This factor is clearly the most important factor of corporate reputation to Nashua Rosebank staff. The next most reflected factor in the stories, were the elements from the Performance factor, followed by Responsibility and lastly the least reflected is the Attractiveness factors elements.

Figure 7: Factor and 27 elements analysis



- Factor: Quality

An individual's identity, whether an employee, customer or supplier, and the corporate identity are interlinked. Kennedy (1977) and Aaker (2004) both are of the same mind when they put forward that people and organisations tend to do business with those they admire and respect. The employees at our Nashua Rosebank branch's stories reflect the elements that are part of the Quality factor there by confirming Quality as paramount to our cultural identity and integral to our good reputation.

Out of the 6 elements in the Quality quadrant four were reflected in all 12 interviews. The reliable element was in all but one of the stories and respected was in two thirds of the stories. The researcher noted that these elements were mentioned more than once in each interview consequently further reinforcing important values. This may also have to do with the industry we are in. Nashua sells the same products and services at a standard price, as our competitors. This means are only unique selling point or difference we can offer is "how" we sell the products is in our service delivery and quality of our performance.

Nashua Rosebank has a good company image and quality employees and this then may explain our perceived good reputation, by the staff. The study found that the more a company focused on "managing relationships with non publics" or "reputational management" as their guiding philosophy then the more likely that they were perceived to have a strong reputation (Hutton et al 2001). Kotler's (2003) stance and research concur, that a good company image improved attitudes by stakeholder groups internally and externally.

Employees that express consistent organisational values and interpretations of strategic vision display stronger unity, Kennedy (1977) referred to this as "voice" values are enduring therefore the longer an employee's tenure the stronger the unity, stability and trust and the more senior employees have values closer and more consistent with the organisation (Harrison and Carroll 1991; Blair 2006; McCarthy 2008). The results of this research do not support this statement, since the respondent with the longest tenure did not reflect the important

elements more often. Rather most staff had similar emphasis on the same elements.

Tenure cycles, McCarthy (2008) describes, in organisations have shortened resulting in different leadership challenges, this was evident in comparisons made to Nashua head office, where a new MD has changed the culture and created a more unstable atmosphere. In contrast no one has joined or left Nashua Rosebank in the last year.

Brand loyalty is disappearing and companies need to enhance customer experiences. Regard for customers was reflected and this regard is in the manner in which staff felt they communicated with customers. Respondents implied that their polite and friendly attitude allowed customers direct access to our "community". What was implied was that in the process of dialogue with customers that staff told stories to reinforce our value. Allen (2005) says telling stories allows customers to engage feelings, leading to loyalty.

Kennedy (1977) believes that the extent, to which a company has a good image amongst its employees and subsequently outside it, rests in the hands of the top management. Our structure is very flat and we are all in effect "top management", so it was apparent that staff felt they were each accountable for respect earned by customers.

- Factor: Performance

Most respondents believed that their performance directly impacted the company, this applied to the Nashua brand and as a part of Nashua, the Rosebank branch. In terms of Nashua Rosebank we are a small group, little is allowed to "fall between the cracks", problems if evident are quickly solved, no one person can afford to not "pull their weight". These idioms were used frequently in the interviews. Balmer and Soenen (1999), Abratt (2003) and Fan (2005) all point out that it is the responsibility all staff to perform well and guide reputation.

Nashua's brand was strong and well known, although not internationally, according to most respondents. Staff described the brand from visuals like

advertising and compared it frequently to competitors advertising, that they found lacking. Balmer (2001) explains that corporate branding as the tool that uses the vision and culture of the company explicitly as part of its unique selling proposition; this is done extensively at Nashua. The stories were often about the sport sponsorship and how other competitors do not seem to support South African sport as much as Nashua. The emphasis of Nashua branding sporting "heroes" has created a firm belief in the staff interviewed, that Nashua is like the "heroes" a premium performer. Organisational commitment reflects the strength of the employee's personalities and values toward identifying with the company and being part of the company (McCarthy 2008). Favourable commitment positively influences performance.

Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt (2003) agree that the corporate personality is what makes one company different from another. In this research Nashua is a top competitor, with a visibly distinctive brand, that performs well.

One element in this factor was not reflected in any story, low business risk. This was perhaps because in South Africa no business has particularly low risk. In the current financial climate it may be a long time before any company is considered to be a low risk.

Being an innovator rather than an imitator was also not overly important to our reputation at Nashua. This seems quite logical in an industry where homogenous products are sold, Nashua on-sell or resell products more than creating new ones.

- Factor: Responsibility

Berens and van Riel (2004) illustrate 56 different reputation measurements from 1958 to 2004 that relate different elements such as defence contributions in the 50's that do not appear in recent measurements. Where as the element of environmental friendliness is now more important as a criterion for good practise in an organisation. This statement did not hold true for this research, this is perhaps because this model was tested in 1st world Europe, where environmental concerns were more important to large corporations. In a 3rd world country the concern is with staying business, especially after the

recession. Even European countries concerns may have changed due to the financial crisis.

Harrison and Carroll (1991) convey the idea that understanding how culture is communicated helps organisations understand how to maintain the loyalty and allegiance of the employees, and work towards a good reputation. This was perhaps one of the reasons for the sharing of ideas because respondents felt they would be heard and that their input would be integrated into the strategic vision of the Nashua Rosebank. This is the correct assumption since this has already occurred. The social “community” theme has been implemented. We have diarised four team building events in the first half of the year. The second is the office environment. Our MD has recruited Nashua branding division to redecorate the offices.

Strategy and structure are dominated by cultural assumptions and that history of success and failure hardwires these cultural assumptions into their thinking (Shein 2003). If we continue to listen to the staff then the staff in turn will believe they will be listened to and a culture of communication will be fostered and cemented.

Abma (2003) and Blair (2006) support this by saying that organisational stories help everyone to understand how things are done in the organisation. The researcher hopes that the interview process will be re-enacted in the form of stories that will help new staff to understand our culture and reinforce the values to the present staff. McCarthy (2008) and Love (2008) agree that individuals relate to the values and beliefs they identify with and reinforce this culture.

- Factor: Attractiveness

This factor had the least impact; respondents reflected these elements less often than the other 3 factors. The environmental element was stressed in many stories with multiple iterations, but other than the odd reference to identifying with Nashua, this research has to conclude that this factor is not as relevant to our industry or business model.

The researcher did deem the element “regretting the existence of Nashua” would be an unusual reflection, especially since Nashua is consistent and established. For a respondent to consider Nashua not existing would oppose concepts like the “stability”, “consistency” and “reliability” that were all highlighted.

The six female staff members did not reflect attractiveness more than the six male respondents. Most respondents remarked on the actual appearance of the staff themselves, and how important this is. Most respondents agreed that sales staff and the technicians that are seen more often by customers, have to make sure they are dressed the part. This then affirms Davies et al (2001) that a link exists between an organisations identity (internal) and image (external).

Balmer (2001), Gargiulo (2006) and McCarthy (2008) put forward that corporate personality is a reflection of the underlying cultures of various members of the organisation, multiple voices and multiple understanding. In this research the multiple voices and multiple understanding is that drivers are Quality and Performance, and not Responsibility or Attractiveness.

This research highlighted that perhaps this lack of “attractiveness” is our weakness and these elements need to be addressed. Are they in fact impeding a better reputation for Nashua Rosebank?

1.3 Conclusion

By examining story themes and reflected elements, a greater understanding of the people and how they perceive themselves within Nashua was gauged. Employees like to share engaging stories, and the good ones get told and retold because they are entertaining while they connect cultures (Boje 1991;Hatch and Schultz 2003)

Literature revealed the impact storytelling could have within an organisation (Boje 1991b; Abma 2003). The process of storytelling has had a huge impact on this company, the individual stories that constituted this research have already merged into the culture to form and renew it. This progression has also

increased our community allegiance to each other and to Nashua Rosebank. Harrison and Carroll (1991) suggest that understanding how culture is communicated will help an organisation to understand how to maintain the loyalty. This research has helped to understand the culture and it is hoped has created more loyalty amongst staff.

The process was complicated to manage because stories contain nuance. As people engage together to learn about their collective identity, they are able to see how their part contributes to the whole. They can then take responsibility for changing themselves, and therefore changing the organisation.

Cooperation is the best way to get things done (Surowiecki 2005; Leadbeater 2008). Narrative knowledge is increasingly recognised as a vital if not the paramount type of organizational knowledge.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1.4 Introduction

This section will review the conclusions deduced by the analysis of the interviews. This is followed by recommendations by the researcher. Lastly further areas of research are put forward.

1.5 Conclusions of the study

As this research is qualitative and concerns a small case study, the conclusions drawn are tentative. Wheatley (2006) articulates the researchers concern that no two people will interpret the same information and get the same results. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) say qualitative research by its nature is creative and flexible.

We are beginning to look at the strong emotions of being human, and that feelings are not irrelevant at work (Wheatley 2006). The latest literature is congruent with the stories staff told. The researcher concluded that feelings and perceptions are not only not irrelevant but paramount if an organisation wishes to survive, grow and thrive.

The impact of vision, values and culture now occupies a great deal of organisational attention. The effects on organisational vitality can be recognised but often not defined. We now sense that some of the best ways to create continuity and congruence in the midst of turbulent times is not through the use of imposed controls but rather through self managed motivation. Firstly their state of mind has to be revealed through interviews or other means, before any motivating factors can be employed. Organisational culture and values act like fields, unseen but real forces that influence people's behaviour (Wheatley 2006).

Schwaiger (2004: 49) defines corporate reputation as "a combination of cognitive and affective components", this research construed that staff did reveal reputational elements to be a mixture of cognitive and affective

components. Further Schwaiger (2004) formulates that “a company’s reputation consists of the objective knowledge, subjective perceptions and the emotions held by individuals”. This research deduced that this too was the most encompassing and accurate description of “corporate reputation”.

The researcher used Christie (1996) to categorise the stories in this research but further divided the stories into Denning’s (2005) eight types of stories. Each story had a style and each story had a theme. Styles ranged from anecdotal to myths, biographical to accounts. Themes ranged from political to inspirational, identification stories to collaborative stories. All of them transmitted values.

In this process the storytelling was often a fragmented process. The researcher was aware of the bias and undertook to not divert the intentions of the respondent. The researcher concluded with Boje (1991a) and Denning (2005) that stories can have lives of their own and can be unmanageable because we manage the story by our interpretation.

The group of stories that make up the data for this research are about collective behaviour. Hofstede and Bond (2001) say stories within an organisation can gauge cultural similarities and differences. The research results provide a visual representation of the cultural similarities and differences that exist at Nashua Rosebank.

In this literature review the understanding of the literature on creativity was that it is not the creative element of the story that we identify with but the assumptions about the story we make. In conclusion this statement needs to be modified. The researcher did identify with each respondent and level of creativity employed in the telling of the stories, the researcher has previously studied art, and it is with this knowledge that this research comes to this epiphany. The creative process and its artefact are to be encouraged.

The researcher strived to not make judgments about the actions, values and behaviours that were revealed by the story because making judgments forces us to remain in our present position and impedes creativity. Blair (2006) says judgments cannot be pronounced on the story itself as a medium of communication, only on the story outcome. The conclusion drawn by the

researcher was that the researcher was not separate from the process but a part of it.

Stories are not only about entertaining or communication but also about the flow of culture and identity (Boje 1991; Blair 2006). The final conclusion that this research draws is that through this shared process, a lasting sense has unequivocally been impressed upon the researcher that shared values support a greater sense of community within an organisation, and therefore a better reputation.

1.6 Recommendations

The more stories are shared the more in-tune with employees needs, ideas, behaviour and concerns management can be. Management can only benefit by a process where staff collaborate and share their views. It is the recommendation, in light of the findings, employing a collaborative project like interviews on a broad topic such as reputation would help management and fellow colleagues understand each other better. Gargiulo (2006) deems the need for top management to understand their employees as a top priority in order to communicate in a meaningful way. In every organisation we need to look internally and see staff as critical resources.

Authors of corporate reputation literature seem to all agree that the way in which stakeholders perceive an organisation is crucial in determining its success (van Riel and Balmer 1997; Fombrun and van Riel 1998; Balmer 2001; Schwaiger 2004; Berens and van Riel 2004; Argenti and Druckenmillar 2004; Abratt 2005). Therefor working towards understanding what a company's reputation is perceived to be and then working on improving it is a further recommendation.

Corporate reputation is an indication about the quality of an organisations products, services and employees. A positive reputation makes purchasing easier for a customer in an uncertain environment. A strong reputation should enable an organisation to command premium pricing, to attract great talent,

lower marketing costs and generate word of mouth endorsements and act as unique barrier to imitation from other companies.

Reputation can be multi dimensional because stakeholders may hold differing but overlapping views on what kind of corporate reputation a company has. Gauging the feelings and perceptions of staff, then giving feedback on the findings, helps to lessen the extent of differing views of reputation. Staff can see the overlaps in their values and it is the conclusion of this research that by sharing the collective views of staff that they will become closer culturally. Staff in this case saw their similarities more than they saw their differences. This research recommends sharing and giving feedback if this kind of process is attempted.

Berens and van Riel (2004) pronounce corporate reputation too elaborate to be either good or bad. The varying perceptions of a company will also change over time as new and different expectations around what a company should be or do, are revealed. This kind of research should not be done only once, because perceptions change this researcher recommends that this process should be done every few years.

Abma (2003), Gargiulo (2006) and Blair (2006) agree that management should connect organisational stories to guide action and strategy. The findings of this research enabled practical solutions to current problems to be changed. It is a recommendation that once perceptions have been shared that they be a guide to the action and strategy of senior management in order to promote additional collaboration by staff and further idea sharing. Strategies from multiple perspectives take advantage of synergies and linkages (Blair 2006).

A story contains a blueprint that can be used to predict the future organisational behaviour (Boje 1991). The assumption of this research was that people's actions are not wholly unpredictable, the findings support that stories will help in forecasting behaviour and attitudes, which helps strategic planning in an organisation. Stories in isolation are not as valuable as multiple stories, only with many stories can patterns and relationships be revealed. Boje (1991a), Gargiulo (2006) and Wheatley (2006) believe multiple stories show trends that

in turn yield solutions, within an organisation. The stories that emerged from this research showed both trends and yielded solutions.

Building a community is often mistakenly thought of as creating an environment where everybody likes each other. The results show that it is enough to have common values because it is very difficult for all staff members to “like” one another. The impact and value of ideas and culture live on well past the experience of them (Leadbeater 2008). The interviews are over but staff are still talking about them. Do not underestimate the impact a collaborative project can have.

The verification of a discovery comes after the act; the creative act itself is for the scientist, as for the artist, a leap into the dark where both are equally dependent on their fallible intuitions (Koestler 1981). The final recommendation is that creativity should play a part in the collaborative process of gauging perceptions, with creativity comes agile and flexible thoughts that furnish new solutions. New solutions can come from breaking up a problem new ideas originate from previous ones with modifications (Verberne 1997).

1.7 Suggestions for further research

The potential impact of storytelling in an organisation is extensive. Replication studies on other South African company’s employees, would serve to deepen and develop theory.

An extension or development of Schwaiger’s (2004) list of 27 elements into a South African context would be more applicable. Creating and developing the elements that better describe corporate reputation for South Africans.

Then replication studies including external stakeholder interviews would then expand the model. This would deepen the theory and merge the external and internal views on corporate reputation.

A quantitative approach could use the Schwaiger questionnaire and weight the answers to the questions. This would perhaps increase the number of respondents but have less depth of a qualitative approach.

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APPENDIX A

Questions for semi-structured interviews

1. What do you understand “corporate reputation” to be?
2. What is Nashua Mobile’s reputation?
3. What is Nashua Mobile Rosebank’s reputation?
4. Can you give me an example (story) of an event that may of harmed Nashua Mobile’s reputation,
    - and then another example for Nashua Mobile Rosebank, where perhaps our reputation was harmed? This may be the same event.
5. Can you give me an example (story) of an event that may of improved Nashua Mobile’s reputation,
    - and then another example for Nashua Mobile Rosebank, where perhaps our reputation was improved? This may be the same event.
6. What is the best example (story) of an experience that describes Nashua Mobiles Rosebank’s reputation?
7. How do you describe Nashua Mobile Rosebank to people you meet?
8. Is there anything about reputation that you would like to add?