

**Economic Intelligence: Its Concept and The Requirements for Its Success in The Industry**

الذكاء الاقتصادي: مفهومه ومتطلبات نجاحه في المنظمة

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University of Ziane Achour Djelfa (Algeria)**Received:** 14/11/2024**Accepted:** 24/05/2025**Published:** 28/28/2025**Abstract****Keywords**

Our article aimed to provide a comprehensive summary of everything related to economic intelligence. In addition, we highlighted the requirements for its success in the industry in light of the current economic and technological changes compared to the tools and means.

We concluded that achieving the success of applying economic intelligence in the industry is through focusing on modern technological means, paying attention to the developments of competing institutions and seizing the available opportunities by focusing on the social environment, economic growth and the information.

Economy; economic intelligence;
industry;
information;
technology.

JEL Classification Codes : A11 ; L16 ; D83 ; O33**الكلمات المفتاحية****الملخص**

هدف مقالنا إلى تقديم حوصلة شاملة حول كل ما يخص الذكاء الاقتصادي من حيث ماهيته وخصائصه، أهميته وأهدافه، مراحل، أدواته ووظائفه كما سلطنا الضوء على متطلبات نجاحه في المنظمة في ظل التغيرات الاقتصادية والتكنولوجية الراهنة مقارنة بما تمتلك المؤسسات من أدوات ووسائل، وتوصلنا إلى أن تحقيق نجاح تطبيق الذكاء الاقتصادي في المنظمات يكون من خلال التركيز على الوسائل التكنولوجية الحديثة، الاهتمام بمستجدات المؤسسات المنافسة وكذا اغتنام الفرص المتاحة من خلال التركيز على البيئة الاجتماعية، النمو الاقتصادي وكيفية الحصول على المعلومة التي تخدم المنظمة وتكسبها الميزة التنافسية.

الاقتصاد؛
الذكاء الاقتصادي؛
المنظمة؛
المعلومة؛
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I.INTRODUCTION:

Economic intelligence is a management concept that related to how information is managed from a strategic perspective, through planning and how it affects the environment. Industries have become aware of the threats that surround their environment and seek to take risks to ensure the protection of information and maintain its asymmetry with the information of other organizations.

In addition, seizing the available opportunities in order to develop and expand in the market, and here the role of economic intelligence in ensuring the competitiveness of the organization, especially in light of the changes in the competitive environment.

We can see the importance of the novelty and uniqueness of information by increasing the organization's ability to adopt a new system that ensures continuity, stability and competitiveness, which can only be achieved by controlling, transferring, storing and distributing information. Then through the organization's possession of an effective system of economic intelligence that helps it continuously achieve efficiency, In light of the above, we can ask the following questions: What is economic intelligence? What are the requirements for its success in modern industries?

II.THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PREVIOUS STUDIES:

1.Economic Intelligence (EI):

A. The concept of economic intelligence:

The origin of the concept of economic intelligence is Anglo-Saxon from the origin of the word Business Intelligence or Competitive Intelligence and the first studies on it were by the thinker Augular Pionnier. (Boudrama, 2018, p.428)

Economic intelligence is related to the accurate analysis of information for all economic agents in order to achieve a position in the economic field, institutional and economic security, and strengthening the policy of influence. (Sadiki, 2015)

Baumard's definition: ‘‘Economic intelligence is not just the art of observation but an offensive and defensive exercise of information, and its goal lies in linking many areas to serve the strategic and tactical goals of the organization, it is a tool to link the behavior of the organization with its knowledge.’’ (Marouf, 2014, p. 22)

Economic intelligence is defined as the ability to collect, analyse, develop, disseminate and protect strategic economic information, in order to strengthen the competitiveness of a State or a company.

EI is based on three pillars: strategic intelligence (the search for and analysis of useful information), the protection of tangible and intangible assets, and influence.

Economic intelligence is of major strategic importance. It lies at the very heart of the competitive challenges facing national economies. Such as, knowledge of the geopolitical, economic, technical and legislative environment constitutes a real competitive advantage. (cycles business intelligence, 2024)

Today, economic intelligence is recognised as a professional tool for strategy and management for States and companies in the globalized world. Its implementation is based on three main pillars:

1- The mastering of strategic information, which means its early collection, analysis and treatment, in order to understand and anticipate one's external environment; this first step is often called 'watch' and is indispensable to the two other pillars.

2- Economic security, which is defensive and directed at protecting economic assets, especially immaterial ones.

3- Influence –active or offensive–, which means to be at the cutting edge for seeking opportunities and innovation and to be able to act on one's environment (regulations, norms, image...) and not only be passively dependent on it.

The three pillars have been defined in order to make it easier to understand and implement the concept, although they are actually interdependent, for a company, failing to anticipate a new crucial norm in a sector is the result of a poor watch that might put it at risk, revealing a lack of influence and network as well. (Claude, 2012)

Economic intelligence can be defined as the coordinated search, processing and distribution processing and distribution of information useful to economic players, with a view to its exploitation.

These various actions are carried out legally, with all the necessary to preserve the company's assets, in the best possible conditions of quality. (Henri, 1994)

It can also be said that economic intelligence is based on:

- Data production.
- Processing data.
- Data dissemination and acquisition.
- Maintaining the necessary and useful data in the business.

B. Characteristics of economic intelligence:

The characteristics of business intelligence are as follows:

- Using strategies and tactics that help the organization achieve a competitive advantage.
- Coordinating the efforts of employees by achieving managerial strength.
- Creating strong relationships between different actors in university institutions and schools.
- Creating groups of influence.
- Integrating scientific, technical, economic, legal and geopolitical knowledge.
- Economic intelligence is enabled by the commitment of actors to the confidentiality of information. (Boudrama, 2018)
- Studying the present in order to understand and predict the future, as well as diagnosing economic phenomena in time and space.
- Controlling vigilance and risk techniques and information networks.
- Applying and creating a collective culture of work and information among all administrative levels.
- Creating business networks for economic intelligence. (Bensmina & Bourehla, 2016)

C. Objectives of Economic Intelligence:

The objectives of economic intelligence are as follows:

- Economic intelligence contributes to forecasting in order to take precautions in the organisation's environment and take preventive measures.
- It helps organizations to predict current and future environmental changes.
- Shaping the convictions of decision makers and policy makers that creative decisions and policies.
- Providing strategic information that enables organizations to understand current and future threats. (Ait Mohamed & Amziane, 2017)

D. Objectives of economic intelligence for business industry:

The objectives of economic intelligence for business industry are as follows:

- The ability to set standards to compete internally and externally.
- Satisfying the needs of suppliers and consumers and satisfying their desires.
- Developing research, technology and patents.
- Expanding financial and economic initiatives.
- Developing products and service lines through the marketing planning process.
- Improving the organization's image in front of public opinion. (Bensaoudi, 2020)

E. The importance of economic intelligence:

The importance of economic intelligence lies in the following:

- Developing a performance improvement product that allows achieving quality.
- Contributes to achieving a competitive advantage among organizations.
- Achieving cooperation between economic customers.
- Linking projects in different fields.
- Ensure the protection of economic property.
- Economic intelligence is based on the philosophy of managing information in order to make decisions.
- The exploitation of information by different projects. (Boudrama, 2018)

The exact role of economic intelligence remains a widely debated issue. According to Dr. Mark Lowenthal, Senior Specialist in U.S. Foreign Policy, no one questions the importance of economic issues but there is "no broad consensus" about the Intelligence Community's proper role in it. He noted that the issue has been oversimplified by calls for "more economic intelligence" unsupported by any "knowledge of long standing activities in that area or of the likely utility of these intelligence activities and products to economic problems or issues." Lowenthal argues that no persuasive case has yet been made that "U.S. economic competitiveness requires large-scale aid from the Intelligence Community." (Manning, 2024)

Also, the practice of economic intelligence enables us not to reduce the problem, but to understand it in such a way that the essential links between different elements can be identified.

Whereas in an approach based on reducing complexity, the company's analytical effort analysis results in a synthesis of all the elements concerning a given project, the business intelligence approach aims to link and correlate different key factors (individuals, technologies, strategies), in order to attempt to intentions of a competitor. (Henri, 1994)

F. Elements of Economic Intelligence:

Economic intelligence is based on three basic elements:

★ **Strategic vigilance:** It is based on 4 functions:

- **Forecasting:** Through the ability to make predictions about plans, opportunities, difficulties, and customer feedback.

- **Discovery:** Identifying new competitors or organizations that can be bought and discovering new opportunities.

- **Monitoring:** By observing the market, products, and developments in different areas of the economy.

- **Learning:** Acquiring new economic knowledge and learning from the success of competitors in order to build and develop the industry. (Khalifaoui, 2013)

★ **Protection:** By protecting information and predicting the risk that may affect the industry, as well as protecting it from competition and monitoring the industry from the risk of data symmetry.

★ **Influence:** In the presence of a set of policies, including the policy of coordination and the policy of frustration.

- **Coordination policy:** By coordinating with other organizations and dealing with them, especially if they are competitors and pose a risk to the industry.

Δ The key elements of economic intelligence:

The key elements of economic intelligence are as follows:

- Information as a strategic tool.
- Logic as an internal network.
- Logic as an external network and optimization.
- Smart indirect strategies to compete.
- Defensive and offensive use of information.
- Consideration of cultural factors.
- Differential problem management. (Habba & Benbrika, 2014)

G. Stages of Economic Intelligence:

The stages of economic intelligence are as follows:

★ **Need identification stage:** Determining the need for information to carry out the necessary tasks, where the organization must know the basic raw material required by the EI system, as the need identification stage is considered the most difficult step in the stages of EI.

★ **Information Gathering Stage:** It is the stage that follows the stage of identifying needs, where information is collected from various available sources, and the paths of searching for the necessary information and the means used for this from human, material and moral resources. (Habba & Benbrika, 2014)

All levels of the organization require specific and accurate information and this requires us to identify the sources of this information:

-Official sources:

Δ They mainly contain:

- Press.
- Books.
- Media.
- Data banks and compact discs.
- Other official sources of information.

Δ Unofficial sources:

The most important characteristic of these sources is that the information they provide requires personal effort from the individual who wants to collect the information, he must stay in touch, move, waste time, etc. until he gets it, and these sources vary, including the following:

- Competitors themselves.
- Suppliers.
- Study missions and travels.
- Exhibitions.
- Student interns.
- Internal resources of the industry. (Chalil & Ghalay, 2014, p.27)

*** Information Processing Stage:** Processing the collected data in order to analyze, understand and use it. Translating the information is an essential step in the process, as it enables the clarification of information hidden in the lines of documents. (Marouf, 2014)

*** Dissemination:** At this stage, the data is transformed into information that is actionable and it can be used in the decision-making process. As it must be transformed into action so that it achieves benefit, as specialists in economic intelligence are able to install technologies that allow it to be exploited in the industry. (Chalil & Ghalay, 2014)

H. Types of information:

There are three main sources of economic intelligence. The first, open sources, range from official statistical publications, newspapers, radio broadcasts, and trade publications to IMF country studies. Unclassified sources generally constitute the foundation of any economic analysis, an interpretation of the overall picture.

The second are the reports and cables from U.S. embassies and consulates, compiled by State Department economic officers, Treasury Department attachés, and officers of the Foreign Commercial Service.

The third, clandestine information, is obtained without either the knowledge or consent of foreign governments. It can come from satellites, from intercepted communications, or from secrets stolen by a foreign national employed by the United States. (Manning, 2024)

I. Tools of Economic Intelligence:

According to the study of (Takrarat, Basri, & Mohamed, 2018), economic intelligence tools are centred around five elements, which can be explained as follows:

- **Data warehouses:** It is a new technical trend described as the latest concept in the field of information systems and we can see the importance of this element in many business applications, especially in large-scale organizations with different branches.

- **Processes (extract, transfer and store):** These are tools designed to extract and integrate data from different sources based on a specific extraction map.

- **Analytical processing:** This technique is called OLAP, which is an abbreviation for On-Line Analytical Processing. The results of the continuous updating of data and the use of real-time processing systems have been that transactions have grown exponentially and changes and modifications in quantitative and valuable data have increased, resulting in the inability of traditional-style data analysis tools to perform their traditional functions of information processing, data analysis, and information production. (Takrarat, Basri, & Mohamed, 2018)

J. Functions of Economic Intelligence:

Levet and Paturel identified four basic functions of economic intelligence:

- Controlling scientific and technological heritage and knowledge:** Identifying knowledge and skills, knowing the laws and standards of industrial and intellectual property, applying industrial security and protection rules, controlling information technology, and being aware of the cost of information.

- Prospecting and discovering opportunities and threats:** Anticipating threats, controlling vigilance techniques, exercising power poses, conducting complementary statistics, network mining capability, ability to exploit attacks.

- Coordination of strategies and activities:** Meaning of dialogue, collective culture of information, scientific synthesis-coordination of closed information, ability to motivate and activate networks.

- Developing practices to influence in the service of the state or organization:** Mastering the application of information warfare techniques, valorization of information, investment in information, acquisition and ownership of the information network. (Benkhadija & Oulad, 2017, p.177)

2. Requirements for the success of economic intelligence in the industry:

The requirements for the success of business intelligence in the organization are as follows:

- Changing demands by moving from product-based demands to function-based demands.
- Supporting international partnerships and joining the World Trade Organization, which enables the organization to expand its scope and allows it to deal with various external institutions.
- Protect the organization from external risks such as financial crises and look for opportunities to deal with organizations that are not affected by the crisis.

- Searching for opportunities and exploiting them as crises at the level of competing organizations, as well as buying low-priced shares and exploiting them at the right time.

Therefore, the application of economic intelligence contributes to keeping pace with changes and gaining a competitive advantage, this can only be achieved by providing the following requirements:

- Awareness of the role of the environment surrounding the business organization in its development by adopting methods to exploit its components.
- Recognize the market and its mechanisms as the basis for the success of the industry and accept its rules.
- Accept competition as a necessary part of the organization's plans.
- Information is an important resource that can be used to influence the various people around the industry, including customers, clients and competing organizations.
- Adoption of modern and renewable technology as an important element of modern management and smart selection of information by working to improve the efficiency of operational processes.
- Willingness to invest to keep pace with the scientific and technological developments of the actors in the organizations.
- Obtaining information and knowledge that enables monitoring and control of the fields capable of achieving competitive advantage and adopting modern technology.
- The ability to sense changes and predict their effects, as well as the opportunities available in the organization's environment in order to exploit them, with the ability to identify obstacles to avoid their effects.

Δ The conditions for achieving effectiveness:

The conditions for achieving effectiveness include the following:

- The actors must be convinced of the usefulness of the project and the activation of their energies.
- There must be a clear vision of the organization's strategy.
- Objectives must be set in line with the organization's vision.
- Objectives must be achievable in the field by providing the required tools and mechanisms.
- Developing a culture of business intelligence in the organization by clarifying its functions in the organization's code, reports and periodic meetings by the concerned departments.
- The need to provide effective communication networks at all levels of the organization in order to facilitate the flow of information and data necessary to maintain its balance and the continuity of its activities.
- Organizations need to develop expert and qualified people to deal with the huge amount of information so that they master the use of the necessary tools and means skillfully while maintaining confidentiality that enables the organization to create new opportunities and supports the ability of experts to make decisions and solve issues, especially in dealing with unexpected crises.

- The ability to organize and exploit information in a timely manner with the ability to deal with time-bound information without delay or obstruction to enable the organization to compete.
- Knowledge management and exploitation that gives the organization the ability to control unforeseen situations and crises.

III.CONCLUSION:

Economic intelligence is one of the projects that must focus on developing and providing the required means and tools in order to achieve organizational effectiveness, as information nowadays has become a source of achieving wealth in light of the current technological development.

Therefore, industries must strive to develop their machines, means, train decision makers, and human resources responsible for this field in general.

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