An Evaluation of the Role of Economic Intelligence in Enhancing Competitive Performance and Market Analysis: A Field Study on a Sample of Iraqi Companies

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Abstract

This study will research the effect of economic intelligence on market and competition analysis and how it assists organizations to make information based strategic decisions. A descriptive-analytical methodology was adopted and a field study was conducted on a sample of employees in different fields, whereby a questionnaire was the main mode of data collection tool. The results indicated that there was a positive correlation of high order between economic intelligence and the improvement of organizational competitive performance. Nevertheless, its ability to influence the analysis of the market was discovered to be weak, which shows that the utilization of available data was weak in this field. The case study also outlined a number of challenges, the most significant of which is the poor information infrastructure and the lack of knowledge regarding the significance of institutional competitive intelligence. The study comes to the conclusion that the need to adopt training programs to improve the skills of employees in terms of gathering and analyzing competitive intelligence, establishing economic intelligence special units within organizations, and developing strategic information systems that can ensure the decision-making climate and make organizations much more flexible to respond to competition and market dynamics.

Keywords: *Economic Intelligence; Competitive Performance; Market Analysis; Strategic Information; Competitor Analysis; Competitive Intelligence; Decision-Making.*

1. Introduction:

The modern world is experiencing the basic changes in the business environment, which is rapidly changing and becoming more complex as a result of the globalization process and ongoing technological development. This fact has made competition among organizations to stiffen, forcing them to pursue modern tools and techniques which would improve their survival, growth and be able to adapt to these changes. Economic intelligence is one of the most critical of these tools, that has brought an increasing interest considering the kind of strategic information it offers, and organizations can make informed and effective decisions.

An integrated system that seeks to gather, analyze, and share information pertinent to the external and internal environment of an organization is defined as economic intelligence. This increases the organizations capacity to foresee both the challenges and opportunities and also attain sustainable competitive advantage. It is a key instrument in aiding the strategic organizational performance because it entails the market analysis, the activities of competitors as well as the monitoring and tracking of economic trends.

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Despite its importance, the application of this concept to the contexts of Arab institutions is still in its infancy, and it is hampered by various issues, namely the lack of information infrastructure, the lack of expertise in a specific field, and the lack of institutional consciousness about the importance of economic intelligence in the strategic planning and analysis processes. In this regard, the current research aims to explore the purpose of the economic intelligence in the market and competitor analysis by exploring the connection between the implementation of the economic intelligence behaviors and its effectiveness in enhancing the competitiveness of an organization. In addition, the study attempts to assess the existing implementation situation, the barriers to its efficacy, and make effective recommendations to improve its practice in line with the market requirements and the changing conditions.

1.1 Research Problem:

Despite the speedy development of tools and techniques of data collection and processing, many Arab organizations, among them the ones functioning in Iraq, are still facing the challenge of using economic intelligence to market and competitor analysis effectively. This gap has a negative effect on their competitive abilities and prevents their ability to make effective strategic choices.

How Does Economic Intelligence Contribute to Market and Competitor Analysis to Enhance Organizational Competitiveness?

From this main question, several sub-questions can be derived:

- To what extent are Arab or Iraqi institutions aware of the importance of economic intelligence?
- What are the most commonly used tools for market and competitor analysis?
- How does economic intelligence support strategic decision-making?
- What are the main challenges organizations face in adopting an effective economic intelligence system?

1.2 Research Significance:

The current study is not just a presentation of theoretical models but rather a synthesis of empirical pathway between the economic intelligence and the market and competitor analysis. It serves as an invaluable guide among scholars of economics, management, marketing and strategic innovation. The academic value of this question can be summed up in the following manner:

i. Expanding the Theoretical Framework of Economic Intelligence: The paper provides a detailed explanation of the phenomenon of economic intelligence by challenging it through the economic, managerial, and strategic prism, thus contributing to the theoretical knowledge by making these perspectives intertwine with the dynamics of the market and the competitiveness of businesses.

ii. Offering a Classification and Comparative Analysis of Market and Competitor Analysis Tools: The study logically expounds on various instruments such as SWOT, PESTEL, PORTER, and feasibility studies hence provides a comprehensive academic account of a comparison. It also highlights competitor analysis tools, including strategic monitoring, open-source intelligence (OSINT), and benchmarking, thus it is a significant theoretical source of scholars.

iii. Closing the Chasm between Theory and Practice: The research attempts to draw a direct connection between the theoretical and practical approaches by making suggestions to carry out a field study or case analysis in a real institutional context. This attempt helps to build the first model of the stimulation of economic intelligence in Arab or, to be more exact, Iraqi organizations.

iv. Combining Economic Knowledge with Management and Information Sciences: The paper broadens the academic horizons by merging the various aspects of knowledge such as strategic analysis, intelligence information and marketing in multidisciplinary areas.

v. The current study has helped in the formation of strategic decision support tools by clarifying the position of economic intelligence in improving competitiveness and decision making, thus offering a theoretical and practical value of the tools to the researchers and practice.

vi. Setting the Stage of New Research: The study provides a baseline on which future research regarding the formation of digital economic intelligence systems, analysis of economic intelligence in key industrial areas, and the study of the nexus between economic intelligence and digital transformation in the new economies can be conducted.

1.3 Research Objectives:

This research will adopt the approach of filling the gap between a thorough theoretical comprehension of economic intelligence and its practical implication in an organization. It aims at providing workable recommendations contributing to competitiveness and facilitating strategic decision making within business settings.

i. To establish the conceptual framework of economic intelligence by elucidating the meaning of economic intelligence, managerial intelligence and strategic intelligence, and by differentiating between economic intelligence and competitive intelligence.
ii. To examine the instruments of economic intelligence, one should pay attention to the market analysis tools (SWOT, PESTEL, and Porters Five Forces), and competitor monitoring tools (OSINT, strategic surveillance and benchmarking).
iii. In accentuating the role of economic intelligence in aiding the decision making process, it will be important to analyze the relation between economic intelligence and competitiveness in the contemporary market set up in order to support the enhancement of strategic decisions made by the organization.
iv. To strengthen the theoretical literature on economic intelligence in the Arabic language by providing a profound conceptual model that can be used by the researcher as a theoretical guide.

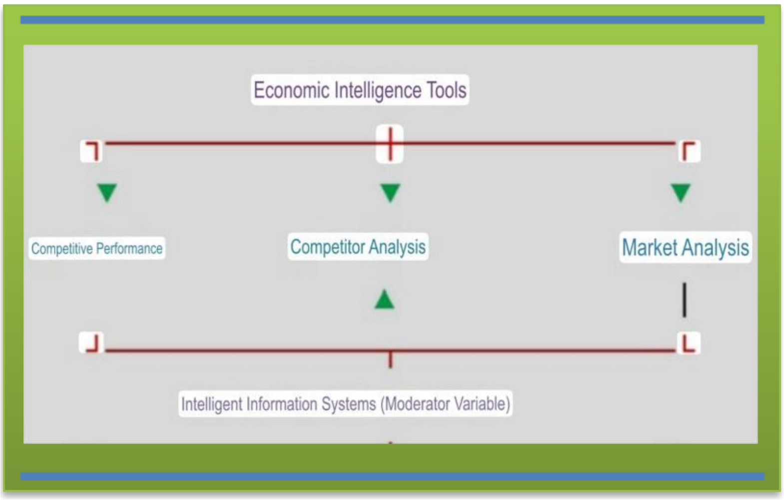
The main objectives of the field study include:

i. It is to measure the degree of awareness of economic intelligence tools in organizations.
ii. Examining the level of market analysis tools application (SWOT, PESTEL, Porters Five Forces).
iii. Determining which competitor analysis tools have been used (e.g., strategic surveillance, open-source intelligence).
iv. Assessing the effectiveness of economic intelligence in driving the improvement of competitive performance and decision-making.

1.4 Research Hypotheses:

i. The effectiveness of market analysis is positively related to the use of economic intelligence.
ii. EI helps in enhancing organizations in monitoring and analyzing the competitors.
iii. Resorting to the economic intelligence tools and techniques can make the process of making strategic decisions more precise.
iv. The reason why economical intelligence has not been fully adopted in organizations is that forecasting of market and competitor dynamics is weaker.
v. There is a mediating role of information systems between economic intelligence and market analysis.

Figure 1 illustrates the hypothetical model.



Source: Prepared by the researchers.

2. Methodology

2.1 Study Methodology:

i. **Study Type: Field and applied research.**
ii. **Data Collection Tool: A structured questionnaire will be used, which will be aimed at the employees of the administrative department, marketing and strategic planning departments.**
iii. **Study Population: A sample of other institutions in Iraq or Arab countries in the different sectors (industrial, service, technological).**
iv. **Sample Size: 5–10 institutions.**
v. **Analysis Patterns: Descriptive statistics analysis with the help of SPSS or Excel software.**

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 First: The Concept of Economic Intelligence

i. Definition of Economic Intelligence (Economically, Administratively, and Strategically):

Economic information is a form of external information, which is focused on the industry, transportation, trade, financial and monetary systems, and natural resources. Regarding the institutional spheres of interest, it is possible to mention the economic, political, social, and military spheres of activity. These domains in turn are further subdivided into various sub areas, which seek to acquire information and data that can be used to enhance growth and development of the respective sector.

The most complicated in its structure is economic intelligence which includes industrial and commercial intelligence. It takes into consideration all the details that can benefit the rivals.

Industrial intelligence, thus, includes the following directions: scientific and technical intelligence (as the most resourceful short-term way) by means of exploration and acquisition of commercial information. It is also concerned with financial, marketing and management concerns.

The economic intelligence is a field of secret operations that include gathering, analyzing, and utilizing highly useful information that, in turn, falls across the entire market economy.

Economically, economic intelligence is a system for collecting, processing, and utilizing information related to market changes, economic policies, international trade, and geopolitical risks. Its aim is to enhance the competitiveness of the state or institution and guide its decision-making within a dynamic global economic environment. It focuses on:

- Market and sector analysis
- Monitoring macroeconomic trends (inflation, interest rates, trade)

- Supporting economic planning and public policy

Administratively, economic intelligence serves as a tool to support operational decision-making within the organization by collecting and analyzing information about competitors, suppliers, customers, and markets. This contributes to improving efficiency, reducing risks, and guiding daily operations effectively. It focuses on:

- Operational efficiency and processes
- Procurement, marketing, and pricing
- Enhancing organizational performance at the executive level

Strategically, economic intelligence is an integrated system that supports high-level, long-term decision-making by monitoring the external environment, analyzing future opportunities and threats, and anticipating changes. This ensures the reinforcement of the institution's or state's position in a competitive environment. It focuses on:

Long-term planning

Innovation and institutional transformation

Economic security and the protection of strategic resources and interests

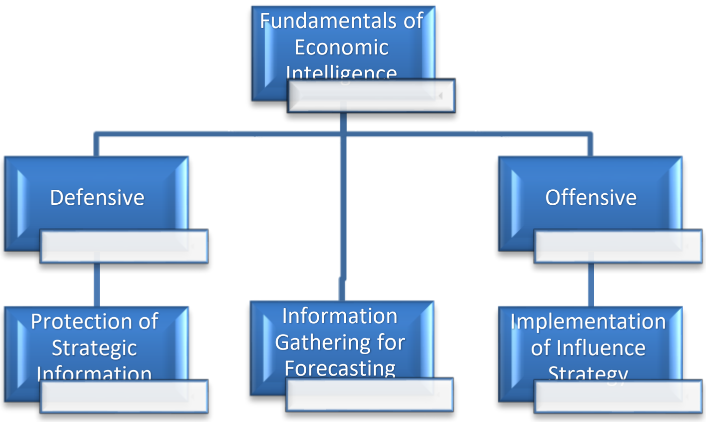


Figure 2 illustrates the fundamentals of economic intelligence.

Table 1 provides a brief comparison between the above concepts.

Concept	Primary Objective	Beneficiary Level	Scope of Application
Economic	Supporting policies and economic development	Governments, research centers	National / international
Administrative	Improving operational efficiency and daily decision-making	Executive departments	Institutional / operational
Strategic	Guiding long-term planning and decision-making	Top management / decision-makers	Institutional / national / international

Source: Prepared by the researchers, 2025.

Among the most important aspects of economic intelligence are:

- Research and development activities.
- Financial operations of companies, including project financing and investment policy.
- Characteristics of the technological process and research outcomes.

- Marketing, especially delivery schedules, client lists, market conditions, information about concluded transactions, and product sales reports.
- Production organization.
- The business philosophy of competing company executives, their commercial strategies, and so forth.

The main objective of economic intelligence is to ensure competitive advantage, which is the most crucial condition for success in a market economy.

There are two types of competition: fair and unfair. Fair competition involves maximizing profits through creating better products and providing better services that is, a justified struggle between price and quality.

Unfair competition includes economic espionage, corruption, false advertising, dumping, and other tactics used to undermine a competitor's economic achievements or force them out of the market, among others.

As practice has shown, many companies combine fair and unfair competition in their activities, and today this has become the norm in modern business.

Methods of obtaining confidential information about competitors' activities can be conditionally divided into legal and illegal.

ii. The Evolution of Economic Intelligence over Time

Economic Intelligence Strategy, An enemy's strategy reflects their intentions, which can only be confirmed through intelligence; failure of intelligence in any war leads to disaster. Intelligence is a directed activity carried out by individuals to gather information about the actions of the enemy (competitor) in order to assess the situation and make decisions.

Commercial intelligence emerged in the 11th century when Italian cities were opening trade routes to the East. All merchants and diplomats from Venice who traveled to foreign countries were obliged to act as agents for the Venetian ruler, in both commercial and political matters. Thanks to this, the small republic gained and maintained a leading position despite the discovery of new oceanic routes and the formation of large states.

Today, no strategy, industrial or commercial policy, or any investment or research project can succeed without a deep understanding of the forces that govern the world: technology, economy, and politics. Those who possess better information today can secure a decisive advantage in the current global economic war.

The essential characteristic of economic warfare is clever cunning and persistent activity, making economic intelligence critically important for achieving success.

iii. The Difference between Economic Intelligence and Competitive Intelligence

Table 2 illustrates the differences between economic intelligence and competitive intelligence.

	Scope	**Economic Intelligence**	**Competitive Intelligence**
1.	Concept	It is the process of collecting, analyzing, and disseminating strategic economic information to support decision-makers in the state or organization. It includes information about markets, policies, economic trends, opportunities, and risks.	It is a systematic system for collecting and analyzing information related to competitors, products, and the competitive environment to help companies make strategic decisions that enhance their market position.

2.	Objective	Supports macroeconomic decision-making (in government or public and private institutions) and achieves economic security.	Improving the competitive ability of companies and institutions in the market.
3.	Coverage	Broader and more comprehensive; includes analysis of the macroeconomy, global markets, government policies, geopolitical risks, and international trade.	Relatively narrower; focuses on direct competitors, strengths and weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the specific market.
4.	Beneficiaries	Governments, major economic institutions, ministries of planning and trade, economic security agencies.	Companies, private institutions, marketing teams, business development, and strategy managers.
5.	Tools and Sources	International economic databases, economic reports, and political and economic analyses related to strategic intelligence agencies.	Market reports are collected from competitors' websites, customer reviews, as well as business news, relying on SWOT and Porter analysis.
6.	Final Outputs	Strategic economic reports, economic forecasts, risk and opportunity maps at national and international levels.	Market analyses, competitor reports, recommendations for improving products and services, pricing and distribution strategies.

Source: Prepared by the researchers, 2025, based on [17-19].

iv. Pillars of Economic Intelligence:

Economic intelligence (or competitive intelligence) refers to the act of gathering, interpreting and applying strategic data to aid decision making in institutions. It consists of activities contributing to the knowledge-based decisions and understanding the competitive environment. It possesses four key pillars, which are [2]:

- Strategic Monitoring: This refers to continuously observing the external environment, which consists of competitors, market, technology, regulations, etc., with the aim of detecting weak signals that may affect the institution in the future.
- Information Collection & Analysis: This entails the collection of information and data through various channels either publicly or confidential legally, of course, and its analysis to derive useful information that aids in forecasting and in making decisions towards the realization of the goals of the institution [6].
- Security of Strategic Information: This pillar will address the protection of proprietary knowledge of the institution against leakage or industrial espionage, which is done through cybersecurity systems, data encryption, organizational awareness of the employees.
- Influence / Offensive Actions: This involves attempting to influence the surrounding environment in favor of the institution, such as influencing legislation, enhancing the institution's image, or promoting ideas or trends that serve its interests.

2.2.2 Second: Market and Competitor Analysis in the Context of Economic Intelligence

i. **Concept of Market and Competition:** The market is a system of economic relationships between sellers and buyers that allows the exchange of necessary resources. The concept of the market is closely linked to goods, as the product is its basic unit. Due to the division of labor, people are compelled to exchange products with one another because the market arises from limited human resources; when an individual cannot produce everything they need alone, they must exchange goods this leads to the emergence of the market [11].

Each type of market targets different products and exploits physical goods, mental expenses, and intellectual labor, but they share fixed characteristics such as:

- Unregulated demand: The consumer decides the quantity of goods and services they need.
- Unregulated supply: The manufacturer decides the quantity to be produced.
- Price: It is not independently regulated but depends on supply and demand.

The market's most important functions must answer the following questions: What, how, and for whom to produce? Accordingly, it performs the following functions [16]:

- Pricing: Price is determined based on market laws: supply, demand, and emerging competition, reflecting the product's utility.
- Mediation: The market connects consumers and producers, allowing all parties freedom of choice.
- Regulation of supply and demand: This leads to a balance between goods and services.
- Information: Provides data about goods, sellers, demand volume for specific goods, and the overall economic condition.
- Incentive: Through continuous response to demand by supply, market participants improve product quality, create new technologies, and maintain economic efficiency.
- Clearing: The economy is freed from unnecessary activities and weak units, encouraging the development of promising units.

Competition is the struggle among market participants (companies, entrepreneurs) for customers, market share, and resources (raw materials, employees, capital, technology, information). The term "competition" derives from the German word konkurrieren (to compete, rivalry, competition), which in turn is borrowed from the Latin concurrere, literally meaning "to run together" [18].

The phenomenon of competition has been known since ancient times with the emergence of goods production. It was first recorded in the sciences in the eighteenth century when the Scottish economist and philosopher Adam Smith observed that competition is a natural state of the economy, as the market cannot exist without the self-interest of its participants.

A market economy includes a large number of companies and entrepreneurs. Each participant seeks to gain personal benefit in the market: attracting more customers, increasing sales and profits, growing market share, and acquiring valuable limited resources. The pursuit of these goals leads to competition [1].

Functions of Competition: The main functions of competition in a market economy are considered as follows [12]:

- Regulatory: Competition helps achieve a balance between supply and demand. In a competitive environment, it is not profitable for a company to produce more products than it can sell (due to increased costs) or less than consumers need (due to lost profits). Therefore, companies and entrepreneurs introduce into the market exactly the amount of goods and services that customers require.
- Allocative: The English translation of the word "allocation" means "placement." Competition encourages companies to position themselves where demand and profitability are highest. For example, it is convenient to open order pickup points near densely populated residential areas, public transport stations, or metro stations. This makes it easier for customers to reach the location, increasing foot traffic and profits for the pickup point.
- Creative: The presence of competitors and the desire to surpass them motivates companies to develop and advance: to innovate and implement new technologies, improve and update production, and enhance the quality of goods and services.

- Adaptive: To survive and outperform competitors, companies and entrepreneurs must adapt to changing market conditions and customer needs.
- Control: Competition means the existence of alternatives for consumers; they can choose goods and services from different companies and entrepreneurs. This prevents any single company from abusing its market position, gaining dominance, and becoming a monopoly.
- Distributive: A competitive market influences the fair distribution of resources, products, and profits. This function is viewed from several perspectives, mainly [20]:
    - ❖ Companies choose the fields, industries, and sectors in which they wish to invest.
    - ❖ Products (goods and services) are distributed among consumers.
    - ❖ Profits are distributed among successful market participants, while outsiders exit the market.

ii. Types of Markets and Forms of Competition

Markets take various forms and depend on many characteristics; therefore, they are classified according to the following features:

- **By regional principle:** local, regional, national, and global.
- **By subjects involved:** buyers, sellers, government agencies.
- **By purpose:** markets for goods, services, and financial markets.
- **By form:** cooperative markets, state markets, rental markets, joint venture markets, taking into account production types closed, saturated, mixed.
- **By legality:** legal, illegal.
- **By degree of goods saturation:** balanced, deficit, surplus.
- **By degree of economic freedom:** free, regulated.

The main advantages and disadvantages of the market are as follows:

Advantages:

The number of participants in market relations is not limited, allowing free competition among them. Freedom of access to all types of economic activities. No restrictions on the movement of capital and labor within the market. Information is freely available to all participants. [10]

Disadvantages:

- Everything depends on the situation.
- Long-term forecasts are impossible.
- Environmental problems.
- Unemployment.
- High prices and inflation.

iii. Market Analysis Tools:

- SWOT Analysis: A framework used to analyze the internal and external environment of any project or institution, aiming to build a strategy that maximizes strengths and exploits opportunities while minimizing weaknesses and avoiding threats.
- Porter's Five Forces Analysis: A strategic tool to analyze the level of competition within an industry, determining market attractiveness and aiming to evaluate the industry's appeal and make decisions related to market entry, continuation, or changing competitive strategy.
- PESTEL Analysis: A tool for analyzing the macro external environment, used to understand the factors surrounding an institution or project in various aspects. It aims to analyze external influences that the institution cannot control but which impact its strategy.
- Economic and Marketing Feasibility Studies: A research done to ascertain the profitability of a project based on the cost, revenue, cash flow and such measures as the payback period and the payback period. It also examines the market size, the customer segments, the competition, product pricing and distribution channels, to determine whether there is adequate demand to warrant the implementation of the project. Feasibility

studies have the aim of making an informed decision on the investment that is made on basis of realistic data and precise estimates. [15]

Table (3): Comparison of Market Analysis Tools

Tool	The main domain	Focus	Used in	Nature
SWOT	Internal and external	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats	Developing overall strategy	Descriptive analysis
PORTER	External – Industry	Competitiveness and industry	Entering a new market / enhancing competitiveness	Strategic analysis
PESTEL	External – Overall environment	Political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental factors	Analyzing the impact of the general environment	Macroeconomic analysis
Economic Feasibility	Internal – Financial	Profitability, costs, and returns	Evaluating an investment project	Quantitative analysis
Marketing Feasibility	External – Market and demand	Market size, customers, competition	Conducting market study before launching a product or service	Qualitative and quantitative analysis

Source: Prepared by the researchers, 2025.

Lastly, it is evident that the above tools are analysis tools that assist in the process of understanding the environment and the position of the competitiveness (SWOT, Porter and PESTEL). One should also depend on economic and marketing feasibility studies that are more concerned with financial and commercial analysis of a particular project to achieve the intended outcomes and goals. These tools also need to be combined to create a holistic vision that can help in making correct and well-researched strategic choices.

iv. Competitor analysis tools can be addressed as follows:

Monitoring financial and commercial performance of competitors: This can be defined as the analysis of financial and commercial data that is accessible with respect to competitors and this may be in the form of balance sheets, profit and loss accounts, annual reports, sales performance, and market shares. This is done to know the financial position of the competitors, their ability to grow, and the extent of threat they are posing which assists in evaluating their competency and range of maneuver.

This tool is used in pricing decisions and analyzing competitors' financial strengths and weaknesses.

Strategic monitoring: This instrument may be regarded as a systematic, ongoing process of overseeing and appraising the strategic choice, plans and policies of the rivalry, including introduction of new products, new markets and also establishment of strategic partnering and alliances. It is aimed at forecasting future actions of competitors and explaining their strategic tendencies.

This tool is used in counter-strategic planning and studying potential market movements.

Open Source Intelligence (OSINT): This is the practice of obtaining intelligence about the competitors by use of publicly available sources of information such as internet, official websites, social media networks, news articles, and open databases. The purpose of it is to access the most valuable and cost-effective information on the activity of the competitors without breaching the law. It also is applied to marketing tracking and follow up of brand movements of competitors.

Benchmarking: Benchmarking entails the use of measurable criteria of the performance of the company against that of its competitors or even the best practices in the same field of operation using benchmarks like customer satisfaction, operating efficiency, operating costs and response time. The primary purpose of benchmarking is to find out the gaps and enhance internal performance according to results of others. It is a tool applied in the development of organizations, quality improvement, and better service provision.

Table 4: Comparison between Competitor Analysis Tools

Tool	What is analyzed	Sources	Main objective	Nature
Financial and Commercial Performance Tracking	Financial reports and sales	Official / Publicly disclosed	Measure the financial and commercial capability of the competitor	Quantitative and analytical
Strategic Monitoring	Strategic decisions and directions	Reports / Field monitoring	Predict future behavior of competitors	Strategic analysis
Open Source Intelligence (OSINT)	Public and non-confidential information	Internet / Media	Collect low-cost information about competitors' activities	Descriptive intelligence
Benchmarking	Operational/organizational performance of companies	Internal and external	Improve performance by comparing with best practices	Standardized and practical

Source: Prepared by the researchers, 2025.

Lastly, it is evident in the above that competitor-analysis tools put emphasis on reported financial values and performance, as compared to strategic monitoring which gives emphasis on long-term plans of competitors. The Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) tool, however, is much dependent on gathering information on the open sources without infringing on the entities of other competitors. It also seeks internal upgrading through comparative measurement with the competitors or benchmark companies empirically.

3. Results And Discussion

3.1 Applied Framework / Field Study

Considering the high rates of change that are witnessed in the global economy and the growing intensity of competition within institutions, the ability to innovate with time and foresee the challenges has become an unquestionable factor in determining the survival and success of corporations. Therefore, economic intelligence has developed to a sophisticated strategic tool as organizations now enable themselves to collect, analyze and efficiently utilize strategic information to guide decision making and achieve the sustainable competitive advantage.

The current empirical research attempts to review and evaluate the contribution of economic intelligence to intensifying institutional competitive performance, by conducting a systemic study of its applied uses and quantification of its impact in various business environments. Moreover, it aims at defining the economic intelligence tools and methodologies currently in use and also defining the factors that inhibit and promote its efficiency in the institutional settings. The use of analytical tools- in the form of economic intelligence surveys and quantitative data analysis- are used to assess the extent to which they are applied to improve the performance competitiveness of the institution. These tools allow defining the areas of improvement, in line with the criteria set in the questionnaires developed and distributed among staff members in various industrial, technological, and economic institutions in different sectors.

Case Study:

This paper clarifies the position and the tools of economic intelligence in boosting competitive performance through empirical research in exploring the correlation and impact of the two main variables: economic intelligence instruments and competitive performance advancement. In this respect, 150 questionnaires have been sent to the respondents of different hierarchical levels. A set of 138 (138) valid completions were reached resulting in a reliability coefficient (Cronbachs alpha) of 0.91. Statistical analysis of the instrument was done using SPSS.

Research Variables:

There are two variables in the study. The first is the independent variable (economic intelligence) that was dealt with using 10 items in the questionnaire. The second is the dependent variable (competitive performance improvement), which was covered through several criteria representing a summary of the literature's factors influencing competitive performance improvement. Each criterion consisted of a set of questions in the questionnaire.

Statistical Analysis Used:

The data were statistically processed using descriptive statistics, measures of central tendency, and measures of dispersion such as frequencies, percentages, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, correlation coefficient, followed by ANOVA and linear regression analysis.

The five-point Likert scale was adopted as the measurement scale, as shown in Table (5).

Table (5) Five-Point Likert Scale

General Direction	Weighted Average	Response	Likert scale
Strongly Disagree	From 1.00 to 1.79	Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	From 1.80 to 2.59	Disagree	2
Neutral	From 2.60 to 3.39	Somewhat Agree	3
Agree	From 3.40 to 4.19	Agree	4
Strongly Agree	From 4.20 to 5.00	Strongly Agree	5

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the literature.

The figure below illustrates that the percentage of the survey participants who represented the commercial sector were higher than the other sectors and stood at 43, as compared to 29 in the construction sector. Regarding the number of employees in the economic institutions, medium sized enterprises recorded a response rate of 57 per cent with large institutions recording 14 per cent. In terms of cumulative professional tenure, the respondents were spread in four categories, the first category, less than five years, reflected at 14; the second category covering a period of five to ten years was at 29; the highest percentage was among those with between 11- 15 years of professional experiences, with the percentage being 43. Regarding educational qualifications, bachelor's degree holders formed the largest percentage at 62%, followed by master's degree holders at 28%, and then doctoral degree holders at 10%.

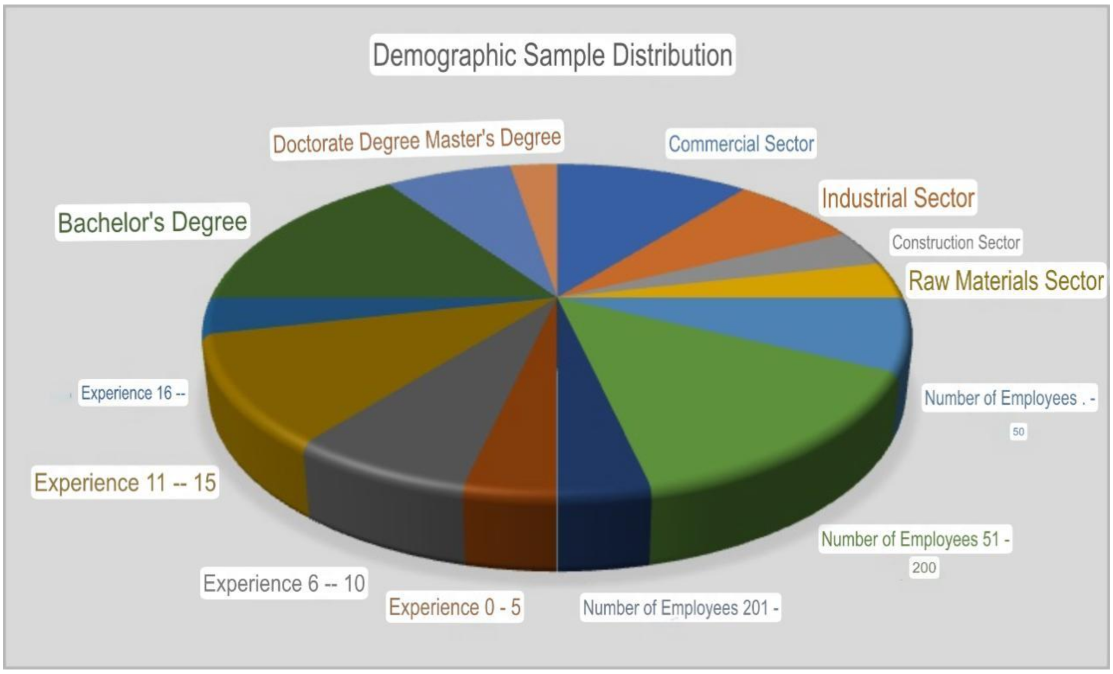


Figure 3: Demographic Sample

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the SPSS statistical software.

Analysis of Research Variables:

The questionnaire included three main sections related to economic intelligence, consisting of eight items; another main section related to the key factors contributing to competitive performance, also composed of eight items; and a third section related to market analysis, consisting of five items, totaling 24 items along with demographic factors. Each section was analyzed separately using the arithmetic mean and standard deviation, with an indication of the sample's trend for all items.

Table (6): Means and Standard Deviations for the Economic Intelligence Section

Sample Trend	Standard Deviation	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		Question
			1	2	3	4	5		
Agreement	0.84	3.86			32	72	50	N	1
					10.5%	63.2%	26.3%	%	
Neutral	1.08	3.00		66	44	22	22	N	2
				42,9	28,6	14.3	14.3	%	
Strong Agreement	0.50	4.43				88	66	N	3
						57.1	42.9	%	

Agreement	0.84	4.14			44	44	66	N	**4**
					28,6	28.6	42.9	%	
Agreement	0.54	4.00			22	110	22	N	**5**
					14,3	71.4	14.3	%	
Agreement	0.35	4.14				132	22	N	**6**
						85.7	14.3	%	
Neutral	1.08	3.00		66	44	22	22	N	**7**
				42,9	28,6	14.3	14.3	%	
Agreement	0.73	3.43		22	44	88		N	**8**
				14,3	28,6	57.1		%	
3.63			**Weighted Mean**						
0.78			**Standard Deviation**						

Table (6) shows the overall trend for this axis (economic intelligence), where five items indicated agreement, two items were neutral, and one item showed strong agreement, with the highest mean of 4.43 and a standard deviation of 0.50, while the lowest mean was 3.00 with a standard deviation of 1.08. This indicates that the majority of the surveyed sample agreed that there is a significant role for economic intelligence combined with employee experience as an integrative work. Many also supported the possibility that the institution relies on market and competitor information in its decision-making, emphasizing the necessity for the institution to professionally focus its efforts on collecting competitive information from primary sources. Additionally, the institution faces difficulties in collecting, organizing, and analyzing the required information for decision-making.

Table (7) displays the means and standard deviations for the competitive performance axis.

Sample Trend	**Standard Deviation**	**Mean**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**		**Question**
			1	2	3	4	5		
Strongly Agree	0.70	4 .29			22	66	66	N	1
					14.3	14.3	42.9	%	
Neutral	0.93	3.00		44	88		22	N	2
				28.6	57.1		14.3	%	
Agree	0.35	4.14				132	22	N	3

						85.7	14.3	%	
Agree	0.64	4.14			22	88	44	N	4
					14.3	57.1	28.6	%	
Agree	0.99	3.86		22	22	66	44	N	5
				14.3	14.3	42.9	28.6	%	
Agree	0.91	3.57		22	44	66	22	N	6
				14.3	28.6	42.9	14.3	%	
Agree	1.19	3.43	22		44	66	22	N	7
			14.3		28.6	42.9	14.3	%	
Agree	0.64	3.86			44	88	22	N	8
					28.6	57.1	14.3	%	
3,89			**Weighted Mean**						
0.65			**Standard Deviation**						

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the SPSS statistical program.

Table (7) shows that the general trend for this axis was agreement for three items, strong agreement for one item, and neutrality for one item. The highest arithmetic mean reached 4.29 with a standard deviation of 0.70, while the lowest mean was 3.00 with a standard deviation of 0.93. The majority of opinions agreed that the (competitive performance axis) focuses on the institution's monitoring of competitors' performance in financial aspects, with unanimous strong agreement that the institution should rely on periodic analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. There was also unanimous agreement on the necessity of clearly focusing on training specialized employees in collecting, organizing, and analyzing competitive information.

Table (8) Arithmetic Means and Standard Deviations for the Market Analysis Axis

Response Direction	Standard Deviation	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		Question
			1	2	3	4	5		
Agree	0.54	4.00			22	110	22	N	1
					14.3	71.4	14.3	%	
Neutral	1.25	3.14	22	22	44	44	22	N	2
			14,3	14,3	28.6	28.6	14.3	%	
Agree	0.35	4.14				132	22	N	3

						85.7	14.3	%	
Agree	0.76	4.00			44	66	44	N	4
					28.6	42.9	28.6	%	
Agree	0.84	3.86			66	44	44	N	5
					42.9	28.6	28.6	%	
3.83			**Weighted Average**						
0.75			**Standard Deviation**						

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the SPSS statistical program.

Table (8) shows that the general trend for this axis (Market Analysis axis) was agreement on four items, except for one item which showed a neutral trend. The highest mean score was 4.14 with a standard deviation of 0.35, while the lowest mean score was 3.14 with a standard deviation of 1.25. This indicates a general consensus on the role of market analysis in improving competitive performance in light of economic developments and in mitigating institutional factors that cause business competition. Attention to collecting and analyzing market information contributes to improving the competitive position of the institution, and it is necessary for the institution to use scientific methods efficiently in collecting and analyzing market information.

Table (9) Correlation coefficients between artificial intelligence and administrative work pressures

Economic Intelligence Tools	Economic Intelligence	Competitive Performance	Market Analysis
	0.87	0.96 **	0.46

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the SPSS statistical program

**** Correlation coefficient is statistically significant at the 0.01 level**

Table (9) shows the Pearson correlation coefficients between economic intelligence tools and the dimensions addressed in the questionnaire. There is a strong positive correlation between economic intelligence tools and economic intelligence itself with a value of (0.87), and a very strong positive correlation with competitive performance with a value of (0.96), both statistically significant at the 0.01 level. The relationship between economic intelligence tools and market analysis is a moderate positive correlation with a value of (0.46).

This indicates that the use of economic intelligence tools is primarily associated with the competitive performance of institutions, as they employ electronic methods and tools to collect and analyze market and competitor information to bridge gaps, create opportunities for innovation, and enhance competitiveness with other institutions and functional factors in the second degree. These factors are considered the most important reasons for dealing with the concept of economic intelligence and using its tools, as institutions can focus on these factors to achieve better results by analyzing strengths and weaknesses.

Table (10) Regression Analysis Results

Independent Variable	Dependent Variables	Correlation Coefficient (R)	Coefficient of Determination (R^2)	ANOVA Value F	Sig Significance of F	Unstandardized Beta (B)	Value T	Significance of T
Economic Intelligence Tools	Economic Intelligence	0.872	0.760	9.480	0.05	0.840	3.079	0.05
	Competitive Performance	0.961	0.924	36.658	0.009	0.709	6.055	0.009
	Market Analysis	0.464	0.215	0.823	0.431	- 0.281	4.177	0.025

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the SPSS statistical program.

Table (10) presents the results of the regression analysis to determine the effect of the independent variable (Economic Intelligence Tools) on the dependent variables across its three dimensions: Economic Intelligence, Competitive Performance, and Market Analysis, using a multiple linear regression model. The results showed that the regression model is significant for the Economic Intelligence dimension, as indicated by the F value of (9.480) with significance (0.05), and also significant for the Competitive Performance dimension with an F value of (36.658) and significance (0.009), which is below the significance level of (0.01). However, the regression model for the Market Analysis dimension was not significant. The results also indicated that the independent variable explains 76% of the variance in Economic Intelligence, 92% of the variance in Competitive Performance, and 21% of the variance in Market Analysis, according to the coefficient of determination (R^2). Considering the values under the Beta (B) column along with the associated t-values and significance levels, it is concluded that every one-unit improvement in the application and use of Economic Intelligence Tools contributes to reducing work-related pressures associated with Economic Intelligence by (0.84). It also contributes to reducing work-related pressures associated with Competitive Performance to a lesser degree by (0.71), while the contribution of Economic Intelligence in reducing work-related pressures associated with Competitive Performance is minimal at (0.11).

4. Conclusion

4.1 Fourth: Results and Recommendations:

Results: The researchers reached a set of key findings, including:

a. A high level of awareness regarding the importance of economic intelligence, as the survey results showed that the majority of the sample agreed on the significance of economic intelligence, especially in supporting decision-making and achieving competitiveness, with high arithmetic means (exceeding 4.0).

b. Actual use of market and competitor analysis tools, demonstrated by good levels of use of tools such as SWOT, PESTEL, and Porter, in addition to strategic monitoring and open-source intelligence, indicating the presence of practical field practices, although not entirely systematic.

c. The association between economic intelligence and competitive performance is strong as the correlation coefficient of the two is 0.96 and thus the application of economic intelligence instruments contributes greatly to the market performance of the institution.

d. Conversely, the economic intelligence effect on market analysis has a relatively small effect since the statistical analysis portrays an insignificant value ($R^2 = 0.215$, Sig = 0.431), which points to a deficiency in converting market information into effective strategic analytical tools.

e. Various barriers hinder the successful implementation of economic intelligence, the main ones being the difficulties that are involved in obtaining credible, current information, the shortage of skilled staff to handle data and competitor analysis, and the ordeal of consolidated electronic infrastructure to gather and analyze competitive intelligence.

Recommendations:

The researchers recommend a set of measures that could support and encourage the use and adoption of economic intelligence tools, as follows:

a. The policies in the institution must be clearly stipulated to help in the activation of the economic intelligence; there is the need to incorporate the economy intelligence within the organisational structure of the institution and have a special unit or department that is in charge of the systematic process of gathering of information and analytical evaluation of the strategic information.
b. Strategic and marketing departments workers must be trained specifically on strategic analysis tools to such a degree that internal programmes are created to train employees to be skilled in strategical analysis methods like SWOT, strategic monitoring, and open-source intelligence (OSINT).
c. Develop internal and external databases by working on establishing information banks related to the market and competitors, continuously updating them to ensure fast and accurate access to information.
d. Encourage digital transformation in market analysis by relying on intelligent analytical software and specialized applications for market monitoring and trend analysis, which contributes to improving decision-making efficiency.
e. Enhance cooperation between institutions to exchange legal competitive information, contributing to the creation of information exchange networks within the same sector (such as industrial or healthcare sectors), allowing effective monitoring of competitors without breaching privacy or ownership.
f. Adopt performance indicators linked to economic intelligence by measuring the impact of economic intelligence on competitive performance periodically through quantitative indicators, such as market response speed, accuracy of risk forecasting, and quality of strategic decisions.

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A field questionnaire on Economic Intelligence, Market Analysis and competitors

Dear participant: this study aims to assess the reality of the use of economic intelligence tools in enterprises and the extent to which they affect the analysis of the market and competitors. All information will be treated strictly confidentially and used for scientific research purposes only.

Part I: general statements:

1. The sector to which your organization belongs: ___________________________

2. Number of employees in the Enterprise: less than 50 □, 50-200 □, more than 200 □

3. Years of experience in field: less than 5 years □, 5-10 years □, more than 10 year's □

Part Two: the axis of Economic Intelligence:

4. How well do you know the concept of Economic Intelligence?

5. Does your organization have an economic intelligence unit or team?

6. The company is working on using scientific methods in market analysis.

7. The enterprise relies on market information and competitors in making its decisions.

8. The foundation uses long-term plans in achieving its goals.

9. The organization directs its efforts in collecting competitive information from key sources in a professional manner.

10. Making decisions at the enterprise is after an in-depth study of the topic.

11. The enterprise has difficulty collecting, systematizing and analyzing the information required in making decisions.

Part three: the axis of competitive performance

12.The enterprise is based on periodically analyzing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

13. The enterprise is interested in following the performance of competitors in financial aspects.

14. The company uses electronic methods and tools to collect and analyze market and competitor information.

15. The company prepares periodic reports on market developments and competitors to support senior management.

16. The institution provides a database specializing in market and competitor information.

17. There is a clear interest in training personnel specializing in the collection, systematization and analysis of competitive information.

18. Decision - making is based on internal sources of information.

19. Consultants from outside the enterprise can be hired to make certain decisions.

Part Four: the focus of market analysis

20. Interest in collecting and analyzing market information contributes to improving the competitive position of the enterprise.

21. Investing in market analysis makes it easier to make decisions.

22. Spreading the culture of change reduces the obstacles to the use of scientific methods in the analysis of information.

23. The institution's adoption of economic intelligence is a strategic necessity.

24. The company uses scientific methods to efficiently collect and analyze market information.