



# The Role of Competitive Intelligence in Improving Performance through Organizational Learning, A case study Start-ups in Algeria

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*Received 8 March 2023 Accepted 23 March 2023*

**ABSTRACT** The study aims at identifying the role of competitive intelligence in improving company performance through organizational learning in start-ups, Relied on a descriptive-analytical approach with the use of a questionnaire to collect data, which was distributed to a random sample of 255 Start-ups in Algeria. The structural equation modelling was also used through the Smart pls 4 program to test the study's hypotheses.

The study concluded that there is a weak indirect role between competitive intelligence and the performance through organizational learning expressed in a correlation coefficient estimated at 23.1%, while the direct role was greater with a correlation coefficient of 61.6%. This is due to the fact that the mediator variable does not play its active role in strengthening the relationship between competitive intelligence and the start-ups performance despite this impact, start-ups in Algeria does not effectively carry out research to obtain available opportunities in the market.

**KEYWORDS:** competitor intelligence, market intelligence, organizational learning, start-ups, the performance

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

Business companies today face a range of difficulties regardless of their size or nature of work, as the resulting risks from unexpected changes in the environment are due to its successive changes, which in turn have an impact on the performance which requires experiment and practice methods and approaches that enable them to survive and compete in the market, including competitive intelligence. Among these methods is competitive intelligence, which in turn is a process that includes gathering analysing and communicating information about the environment to help in strategic decision-making (Dish man & Calf, 2008, p. 767). As it refers to the behaviour used by

both companies and nations to enhance competitiveness through better use of information for a company to effectively benefit from competitive intelligence efforts and operations (Moloi & Iyamu, 2015, p. 3), there must be a proper organizational awareness and a competitive culture (Saayman & al, 2008, p. 383). Despite the fact that competitive intelligence serves as a highly important tool for the company's strategy, represented in the planning, management, and official exploration of the marketing strategy model for the company (Safarnia, 2011, p. 2). Its purpose was to analyse information about competitors' activities, trends in a specific sector, and the market in general, in order to guide the

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company in achieving its goals and objectives (Artur, 2020, p. 2).

In order to ensure sustainability and continuity, companies work on improving their performance to reach high levels and have a competitive advantage. This trend has led to the emergence of human resources as a strategic supplier and a key element for creativity, learning, and technology creation. This is reflected through competitive intelligence and its role in improving organizational performance, as it has the ability to effectively produce goods and services that meet market demand (quality, term, and growth) and contributes to the economic system's movement (Lorino, 1991, p. 56). Performance is a positive attribute that companies can achieve for a certain period of time, resulting in positive outcomes compared to others. Performance in companies is subject to the measurement and evaluation process which helps the company ensure that all departments perform their various tasks with the highest possible efficiency. It also determines the outcomes that need to be achieved and the evaluation that is carried out independently by the relevant authority (Fermon & Grandjean, 2015, p. 1). Performance management should be properly administered as it is a system that sets goals and connects individual goals with organizational ones by defining the objectives and expectations towards each individual, followed by providing incentives that align with their performance (Lorraine Dori Ponu & Zubair, 2015, p. 2).

This study aims at achieving objectives related to clarifying the different concepts that pertain to competitive intelligence and organizational learning, the performance of the company, and to identify if the start-ups in Algeria have orientations and procedures aimed at developing the role of competitive intelligence in improving the institution's performance through organizational learning.

The study derives its importance from the role that competitive intelligence plays in improving the performance of start-ups in Algeria through organizational learning. The significance of the study also lies in the fact that it deals with a recent topic in the field of scientific research in Algeria and the scarcity

of studies and research related to it, as it is one of the first studies that applies competitive intelligence in start-ups in Algeria. Therefore, we look forward that it will be a reference for specialized scientific studies and a practical guide for start-ups.

The descriptive and analytical approach was adopted, by defining the variables of the study both theoretically represented by the variables of competitive intelligence and organizational learning, and performance of the company. In terms of the practical aspect, data was collected through a questionnaire designed and distributed to a sample of start-ups in Algeria. To process and test the study's hypotheses, structural equation modelling was used through the smart pls 4 program.

## **2. LITERATURES REVIEW:**

In this element, we will delve into the concepts related to competitive intelligence, organizational learning, and performance.

### **2.1. Competitive intelligence:**

Competitive intelligence is providing companies with the tools to make informed decisions. It is enabling companies to keep ahead of the competition and industry trends (Maune, Mobile Applications Adoption and Use in Strategic Competitive Intelligence: A Structural Equation Modelling Approach, 2022, p. 65). Competitive intelligence is defined and considered a crucial tool for the company's strategy represented in the formal planning, management and exploration process of its marketing strategy model (Safarnia, 2011, p. 2), where the latter includes the optimal use of public sources for developing data related to the competitive and market environment (Maune, 2014, p. 61). Competitive intelligence is also considered as behaviour used by companies and countries alike as a means to improve competitiveness through the best use of information (Moloi & Iyamu, 2015, p. 3). Besides, the importance of competitive intelligence lies in shaping strategic marketing decisions and building for companies aimed towards the market, given its fundamental role in central marketing decisions and the company, with the latter focusing on monitoring the competitive environment to provide actionable

intelligence to enhance the company's competitiveness (Macinnis & al, 2002, p. 179) .

Competitor's intelligence aims to assess the risks and opportunities in a competitive environment before they become apparent, this process is called early signal analysis, being a highly specialized activity where it has become necessary to design tools and means that can assist analysts in competitor intelligence in the process of collecting analyzing benefiting from knowledge and coming up with strategies effective work (Lipika & al, 2011, p. 2). Additionally, competitive intelligence also aims to analyze information about competitor activities and trends in a specific sector and the market in general, in order to guide the institution in achieving its goals and objectives (Artur, 2020, p. 2) .

Market intelligence is the set of means that enable managers to be constantly aware of developments in the market environment (Kotler & autres, 2006, p. 84). It is a strategy that links a company's activities, resources and capabilities to its external environment with the goal of maximizing current and future performance and converting current goals into more meaningful and achievable ones from both functional and operational perspectives (Johnson & Scholes, 1993, p. 20) . The latter affects the planning process both in the long and short run, and adds value to the company's strategic decision-making as well (Lackman & al, 2000, p. 6). Additionally, market intelligence studies the relationship between intelligence acquired through the internet, value creation, and variables such as customer relationships, innovation, productivity, and the efficiency of these connections (Rahchamani & all, 2019, p. 58).

Market intelligence performs a set of core functions that support strategic marketing information. It aims to fulfil the marketing goals of a company by determining the information needs of the intended strategic marketing objectives and conducting research to gather and deliver that information, processed appropriately for management, as well as executive managers who require intelligent data to develop and implement related marketing strategies. Furthermore, market intelligence has the

role of identifying business operations and techniques represented in the on-going information search, which contributes to improving the quality of strategic marketing programs. Finally, the role of predicting the future is for intelligence to be more effective when it can act proactively, in other words, anticipating future events (Јена, 2019, p. 3).

## **2.2. Organizational learning:**

Organizational learning is considered as a collective phenomenon for acquiring and forming competencies that can be more or less profound or sustainable. It leads to a change in the way situations are managed or in the situations themselves (bounfo, 1998, p. 182) .Organizational learning is also a means through which individuals in companies continuously discover how they shape the reality they work in and how they can change it (peter & al, 1994, p. 59) . Companies are considered large repository of knowledge, as their success depends on converting implicit knowledge into an explicit one, which is shared among the company's members (Marshall & al, 2004, p. 16). Organizational learning is a multi-level process in which individuals acquire knowledge through work and thinking together, and it is also a process of improving practices through better understanding, developing vision, knowledge, and connecting past and future practices and activities (Hillary, 2018, p. 3).

Organizational learning is composed of a set of elements that may come about through partnerships and alliances, as it generates a large accumulation of knowledge. Through this, the value and importance of the company increases, paralleling its assets, innovations, employee loyalty and customer satisfaction (stephen, 2000, p. 8). Additionally, learning companies are distinctive in that they are leadership-oriented, either transformational or transactional. As transactional leadership is encountered in such a way which helps leaders understand the appropriate way to achieve desired goals. As for transformational leadership, it is a new type in which it motivates employees to work together for the long term (jeery & Ann,

1999, p. 19). The more the scope of learning companies expands, the stronger the culture it creates, which leads to increased learning and is reflected in the results and development of the companies (Raanan & al, 2007, p. 66).

### 2.3. The Performance:

The subject of performance is considered to be of great importance in managing companies, considering its ability to ensure the sustainability and achievement of balance between the satisfaction of stakeholders and employees (Drucker, 1999, p. 73). The performance represents the values and principles prevailing in the organizations internal work environment, which regulate work strategies, ideas and visions that help develop the organization and ensure its continuity (Mbaindin, 2022), It is also considered as the ability to produce goods and services effectively in response to market demand (quality, deadline, growth), allowing for a surplus to move the economic system (Lorino, 1991, p. 56). Performance consists of three main elements, represented by efficiency, effectiveness, and potency. Efficiency refers to the relationship between the resources allocated and the results achieved, while effectiveness refers to the level of goal attainment. As for potency, it is the degree to which a companies able to reach its goals and achieve them. Therefore, performance is considered as a concept that reflects both the goals and the necessary means to achieve them (Brosquet, 1989, p. 1).

Furthermore, all companies should measure the effectiveness of their activities and the results of their work, because the information obtained will lead them towards achieving their goals and thus improving their performance. Therefore, a company that cannot measure its performance cannot monitor it, if it is so, it cannot manage it, and as a result, it will not be able to make sound decisions Performance measurement is important because it helps the company to ensure that all departments are performing their various tasks with the highest possible efficiency (Lingle & Schiermann, 1996, p. 56). It also provides a benchmark for evaluating the performance outcomes, as well as an independent evaluation by the

relevant authority. It measures the level of achievement (Fermon & Grandjean, 2015, p. 1) .

Performance management is a system that involves setting performance goals, defining measures, evaluating performance and providing feedback. This allows for the identification of training needs and the development of performance, as well as determining the reward system (Solikova Andrea & Gabriela, 2013, p. 20). As it links individual goals with organizational ones by clarifying expectations for each individual and then offering rewards that are aligned with their performance (Lorraine Dori Ponu & Zubair, 2015, p. 2).

The performance process in the company is subjected to the evaluation process, as the latter plays an important role by looking at the reasons and also concerned with the goals and ways to achieve them. It is a broader process as it considers the causes, also concerned with the goals and ways to achieve them (Lauras, 2004, p. 112).

### 2.4. Research questions:

Through this study, we will address the role of competitive intelligence in improving the performance of start-ups in Algeria through organizational learning. However, this study differs from previous ones in that it takes into account a mediator variable represented by organizational learning, unlike other studies, it dealt with each variable separately, and it also focuses on start-ups in Algeria. On this basis, the following problematic was raised:

**- What is the role of competitive intelligence in improving the performance of start-ups in Algeria through organizational learning?**

As a preliminary answer to the problematic, the following main hypothesis was adopted:

There is a strong positive correlation with statistical significance at a 0.05 level of competitive intelligence in improving the performance of start-ups in Algeria through organizational learning.

## 3. DATA AND METHOD:

In order to test the hypotheses of the study and to reach results about the role of competitive intelligence in improving the

performance of the company through organizational learning, start-ups in Algeria were studied as a case study.

### 3.1. Study Population and Sample:

The study population was made up of all 756 start-ups in Algeria. A simple random sample was selected using the equation of Steven Thompson, with a size of 255 start-ups. 231 start-ups that were suitable for analysis were retrieved, resulting in a response rate of 90.58% (Thompson, 2012, p. 51).

### 3.2. Analysis and Presentation of the Study Tool:

In order to test the relationships between the variables of the study and to build a

standard model while ensuring its validity, a questionnaire was designed which included (20) questions divided into three axes. The first one is concerned with competitive intelligence with questions ranging from 01 to 08. The second deals with organizational learning from 09 to 12, while the third is about organizational performance from 12 to 20.

The variable representation statements of the study model that combines the latent and measured variables should be represented in order to test the biases .e. the extent to which the questions are able to express and measure the real variable, it was found that there are statements that do not achieve the required minimum of 70%, and this can be clarified through the following table:

**Table 1.** Examine the question ramifications of the modified default form

Latent variables		paragraphes	Saturation coefficient
Competitive intelligence	Competitor intelligence	M1	0,857
		M2	0,861
		M3	0,598
		M4	0,762
	Market intelligence	MA1	0,872
		MA2	0,812
		MA3	0,705
		MA4	0,849
Organizational Learning		O1	0,579
		O2	0,558
		O3	0,841
		O4	0,879
Company performance	Efficiency	K1	0,795
		K2	0,744
		K3	0,794
		K4	0,751
	Effectiveness	F1	0,117
		F2	0,881
		F3	0,937
		F4	0,686

**Source:** Prepared by researchers using smart pls 4

From Table 1, it can be seen that there are indicators less than 70% in the dependent variable "Performance of the company F1",

and this variable has been previously removed.

However, despite the fact that there are indicators that do not comply with the

condition, they are not less than 40%, but they were kept in the model because they increase the composite reliability values or the average variance, as the following figure

shows the adjusted study model after the mentioned indicators are removed.

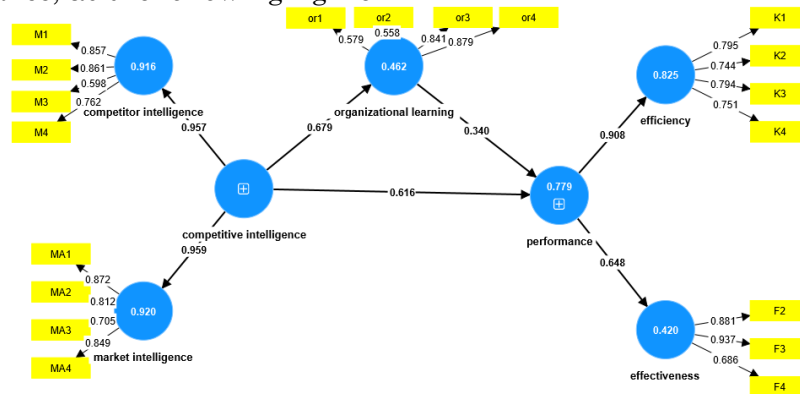


Figure 1. The modified model

**3.3. Reliability evaluation:**

By measuring the reliability of the study tool, the Alpha Cronbach index was relied on and reinforced with the composite reliability

index CR, and the results were as shown in the table below:

Table 2. The value of the alpha Cronbach and the RHO indicator

Variants		Alpha Cronbach	Indicator RHO	Vehicle Reliability
Competitive intelligence	Competitor intelligence	0,774	0,798	0,857
	Market intelligence	0,826	0,838	0,895
Organizational Learning		0,725	0,869	0,814
Company performance	Efficiency	0,774	0,777	0,854
	Effectiveness	0,792	0,845	0,878

Source: Prepared by researchers using smart pls 4

As seen from the previous Table 2, all of the alpha Cronbach’s coefficients are greater than 0.7, and the RHO values are also high and exceed 0.70. This makes it possible to rely on the proposed questionnaire, and the CR index is greater than 0.7 in all dimensions. Therefore, it can be said that the study tool is characterized by reliability.

value is greater than or equal to 0.50, meaning that the model explains more than half of the variance in its indicators. The following table shows average variance extracted AVE:

**3.4. Measure of Convergent Validity:**

It is determined that the model has convergent validity if the accepted AVE

Table 3. The asymptotic validity measure of the model

Variants		Extracted average variance
Competitive intelligence	Competitor intelligence	0,604
	Market intelligence	0,659

<b>Organizational Learning</b>		0,532
<b>Company performance</b>	<b>Efficiency</b>	0,595
	<b>Effectiveness</b>	0,709

**Source:** Prepared by researchers using smart pls 4

From the Table 3, we note that all AVE values are accepted from a statistical standpoint because they are greater than 0.50. Thus, it can be determined that the model has convergent validity.

of the factors, (the independent variables dependent on the dependent variables through the mediator ones), are calculated. The following table shows the results of the determination coefficient:

### 3.5. The R<sup>2</sup> determination coefficient test:

In this stage, the values of the determination coefficient that relates to the overall impact

**Table 4.** The coefficient of determination R<sup>2</sup>

<b>Variants</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup>Adjusted</b>
Company performance	0,776	0,774
Organizational Learning	0,460	0,457
Effectiveness	0,437	0,434
Efficiency	0,814	0,813
Market intelligence	0,920	0,919
Competitor intelligence	0,916	0,915

**Source:** Prepared by researchers using smart pls 4

According to the Table 4, it is noted that all coefficients are positive and statistically acceptable, where competitive intelligence explains 0.46 of the organizational learning, which is a mediator interpretation. However, competitive intelligence and organizational learning together explain 0.72 of the company performance, which is a large interpretation. It is similar to the modified coefficient of determination, where its results are close to the results of the coefficient of determination, to indicate the predictive quality of the model.

### 3.6. Evaluating Model Validity:

After confirming the validity of the measurement model, we move on to

evaluating the validity of the previously determined building model. This is by calculating the conformity quality index using the GOF. The calculation is done using the following formula:

$$GOF = \sqrt{AVE \times R^2}$$

$$GOF = \sqrt{0.619 \times 0.720}$$

$$GOF = 0.667$$

Therefore, with a GOF of 0.66, which is greater than 0.36, the model is characterized by high quality.

### 3.7. Results analysis:

The significance of the paths is confirmed by relying on the bootstrapping technique by generating 500 partial samples. The results were as shown in the following figure:

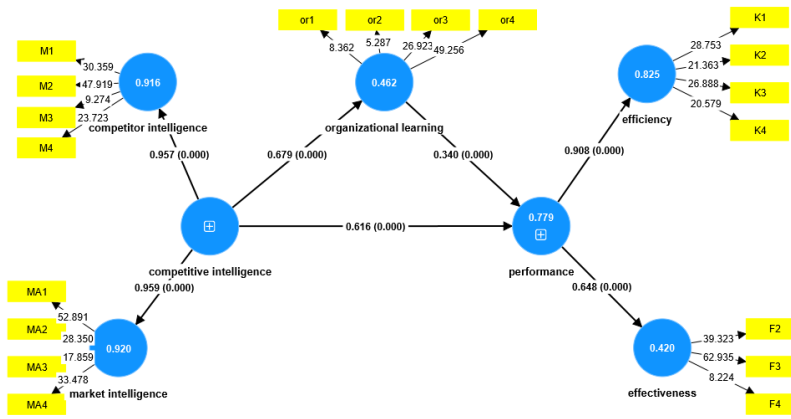


Figure 2. Statistical significance of the paths of the structural model.

3.8. Paths analysis:

The following table illustrates the results obtained from the analysis of the relationship paths between the model variables.

Table 5. The results of the structural model trajectories analysis

paths	Paths value	T-value	Std. Dev	P-value
Company performance ; Effectiveness	0,648	10,272	0,064	0,000
Company performance ; Efficiency	0,908	51,520	0,018	0,000
Organizational Learning ; Company performance	0,340	7,496	0,043	0,000
Competitive intelligence ; Company performance	0,616	15,006	0,041	0,000
Competitive intelligence ; Organizational Learning	0,679	19,796	0,034	0,000
Competitive intelligence ; Market intelligence	0,959	154,049	0,006	0,000

Source: Prepared by researchers using smart pls 4

The previous Table 5; indicates that all the model coefficient paths have statistical significance at a level less than 0.05, which indicates the presence of a relationship between the model structural variables, meaning:

- There is a statistically significant positive relationship between competitive intelligence and organizational learning.
- There is a statistically significant positive relationship between organizational learning and the company's performance.

- There is a statistically significant relationship between competitive intelligence and company's performance.

3.9. Hypothesis Testing:

The sub-hypotheses and the main hypothesis will be tested in order to determine the impact of competitive intelligence on the performance of start-ups in Algeria through organizational learning.

-First Hypothesis Test:

There is a statistically significant relationship at a level of 0.05 between



competitive intelligence and organizational learning in start-ups in Algeria.

**Table 6.** The results of the first hypothesis.

paths	Beta	Std. Dev	Value T	P Value
<b>Competitive intelligence ; Organizational Learning</b>	0,679	0,034	19,796	<b>0,000</b>

**Source:** Prepared by researchers using smart pls 4

According to the Table 6, the correlation coefficient between the variables is 0.679, which indicates a positive correlation that

aggregates the variables and is characterized by being a mediator relationship. Furthermore, we notice that this correlation is statistically significant at the level of 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis which states that: there is a statistically significant relationship at a

**Table 7.**The results of the second hypothesis

paths	Beta	Std. Dev	T Value	P Value
<b>Organizational Learning ; Company performance</b>	0,340	0,043	7,946	0,000

**Source:** Prepared by researchers using smart pls 4

From the table 7, we note that the correlation coefficient between the variables is 0.340, indicating a positive weak relationship that is characterized by a weak relationship between the variables. Additionally, this correlation is statistically significant at a significance level of 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis which states that there is a statistically significant

level of 0.05 between competitive intelligence and organizational learning in start-ups in Algeria.

**-Second Hypothesis Test:**

There is a statistically significant relationship at a level of 0.05 between organizational learning and performance of start-ups in Algeria.

relationship at a level of 0.05 between organizational learning and performance of start-ups in Algeria.

**-Third hypothesis test:**

There is a statistically significant relationship at the 0.05 level of significance between competitive intelligence and the performance of start-ups in Algeria.

**Table 8.** The results of the third hypothesis

paths	Beta	Std. Dev	T Value	P Value
<b>Competitive intelligence ; Company performance</b>	0,616	0,041	15,006	0,000

**Source:** Prepared by researchers using smart pls 4

From the table 8, we note that the correlation coefficient between the variables is 0.616, indicating a positive and strong relationship between the variables. This correlation is statistically significant at a level of 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis which states: There is a statistically significant relationship at the 0.05 level of significance between

competitive intelligence and the performance of start-ups in Algeria.

**-The main hypothesis test:**

There is a strong positive correlation with statistical significance at a level of 0.05 between competitive intelligence and performance of start-up in Algeria through organizational learning.

**Table 9.** The results of the main hypothesis test.

paths	Std. Dev	Beta	P value	T value
<b>Competitive intelligence; Organizational Learning; Company performance.</b>	0.032	0,231	0,000	7,218

**Source:** Prepared by researchers using smart pls 4

From the table 9, we notice that the correlation coefficient between the variables is 0.231, indicating a positive correlation that combines the variables together, and which is characterized by a weak relationship. We also note that this correlation is statistically significant at a level of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis which states that: There is a statistically significant role at a level of 0.05 for competitive intelligence in improving the performance of start-up in Algeria through organizational learning.

**4. RESULTS:**

The study reached a set of results related to competitive intelligence and its role in improving the performance of start-ups in Algeria through organizational learning. It was concluded that competitive intelligence is part of the strategic information management process, which is necessary for the company's strategies, as it assists to understand the methods and strategies used by competitors to gain and sustain a competitive advantage, and that organizational learning is the main driving force for improving organizational performance. It was also concluded that there is a relationship between competitive intelligence and the company's performance with an average degree estimated at 61.6%, Despite this impact, start-ups in Algeria do not effectively carry out research to obtain

available opportunities in the market. This direct relationship between competitive intelligence and the performance of start-ups was better than the indirect relationship through organizational learning as a mediator variable, which was weak, estimated at 23.1%. This is due to the fact that the mediator variable does not play its active role in strengthening the relationship between competitive intelligence and the start-ups performance. Through a review of the results and the correlational relationships, it was concluded that the reason for the weakness of the impact is due to the fact that start-ups in Algeria do not work on updating their programs for developing their employees' skills and providing training and education programs on the one hand, and on the other hand, they do not do a good job in analyzing their competitors and early detection of risks and opportunities available to them.

**5. CONCLUSION:**

Competitive intelligence is considered one of the most significant systematic operations that work to improve the performance of a company through organizational learning. It is a solid foundation in the field of making strategic decisions and determining the priorities of the company intelligence requirements to lead the path of competitive intelligence in terms of collecting, analyzing and distributing information. It aims to

determine the purpose and new sources of competitive advantage identify strengths and weaknesses of competitors and their reactions, as well as to identify the priorities of agreement on research and development activities.

Based on previous results, we recommend that start-ups in Algeria prioritize competitive intelligence as a necessary means of making strategic decisions in the company, which helps improve its performance. They should also give more consideration to organizational learning, as it is the process through which the company aims to improve its overall capabilities, develop itself, activate its relationships with its environment, adapt to its internal and external variables, and mobilize its employees to be more attentive in

following and acquiring knowledge for the purpose of development and excellence. Besides, it is also essential to conduct on-going and continuous improvement processes for competitive intelligence, which assists achieve a competitive advantage. Additionally, start-ups in Algeria should also pay more attention to organizational learning in order to achieve its expected role in improving the relationship between competitive intelligence and organizational performance and to provide training and education programs for individuals. Furthermore, they should conduct research to identify available opportunities and use modern systems and methods for analyzing their competitors.

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