ABSTRACT
Strategic intelligence is considered as a magnificent source of competitive advantage because it can enhance decision making process as it has information as its foundation. The important component towards making the strategic intelligence process successful is a management team that not only focuses on the process but also on its people and technology. The value of strategic intelligence is reflected in the ability of the organisation management maintaining reputation even in the situation of challenges that requires critical decisions. Strategic intelligence is a characteristic feature of intelligence, in almost every application, that it serves two distinct ends: One emphasis is for management, and the other is focused at the operational and functional level. Intelligence that is made purely for management and executive use which deals with the overview questions of mission, goals, objectives, programs, and resource planning is termed as strategic intelligence, for it helps in the development of organizational strategies. On the other hand, intelligence that services the daily needs of supervisors and line managers and emphases on immediate, routine, and on-going activities of the organization of the frontline functions tends to be termed operational intelligence. Operational intelligence is concerned with the identification, targeting, detection, and intervention (or prohibition) actions taken against illegal operations of any sort. Strategic Intelligence should be deep-rooted within organisation culture. The main objective of this paper was to identify the elements of strategic intelligence process and the various approaches to strategic intelligence management can apply towards the success of strategic intelligence process in long runs.

Key Words: Strategic intelligence, customer intelligence, knowledge management, synergy, information technology.

Introduction:
The concept of intelligence was first introduced by an American Professor, Vilensky in 1967 and stated that intelligence specifies data collection and processing of information in order to determine the right organization. Strategic intelligence is an evolving field of business consulting, which aims to undertake the task of revealing large, complex or complicated issues of transformation in a more comprehensible form. Organisations with high strategic intelligence have clear strategy and are continuously trying to improve and always looking for alternative ways to be more competent and real. Being creative, and adaptive, are organizations whose strategic intelligence is
spread throughout the organization creating flexibility, adaptive behaviour and continuous change (Blanding, M. 2012).

Strategic intelligence is considered as a magnificent source of competitive advantage because it can enhance decision making process as it has information as its foundation by providing useful information for organizations about their business environment, competitors, customers, and markets that are required to anticipate changes and design suitable strategies. Thus the organizations will have a strong understanding of the significances of strategic planning, and appropriately budget resources for new initiatives, on-going commitment to win the latest updates in product and technology, to advance current products in a new market, or to introduce new products to existing customers, have a position to shape the industry, by combining innovation and careful planning of the organization’s future, and invokes the organization’s ability to reflect on the past, understand current competitive actions, and predict future trends in the industry that will lead to organizational longevity.

The main objective of this paper was to study the importance of strategic intelligence in the organisation by identifying the elements of strategic intelligence process and the various approaches to strategic intelligence management can apply towards the success of strategic intelligence process in long runs.

**Review of Literature:**

Pirttimaki (2007), defines strategic intelligence as a realistic understanding of circumstances and using it to develop appropriate strategies and adapting the workplace to different situations.

Richard (2007), views strategic intelligence as a concept which is widely related to the organisation intelligence, organisational strategies, strategic resources of organisation, and strategic management.

Fleisher and Bensoussan (2007), states strategic intelligence is the gathering, analysis, and dissemination of data relevant to strategic decision making.

Liebowitz (2006), perceive that strategic intelligence is a term used for intelligence activities in the context of strategic planning and strategic management that addresses the needs of high-level decision-makers mainly focusing on practical activities.

Esmaeili (2014), concluded that strategic intelligence has a positive and meaningful effect on the strategic decision making and strategic planning in the organizations using the intelligent systems. In addition, the effective factors on the strategic intelligence were known were human resource intelligence, organizational process, technological, informational, financial resources, competitor, and customer intelligence.

Abdullah (2012), states that the significance of strategic intelligence is strategic leadership. Strategic leadership is a process of influencing the favourable prospects for success used by leaders; however, its impact on organizational culture, resources allocation, guidance through policy and consensus on the vague and unreliable complex global environment.

Acros (2015), Strategic intelligence is essential to change conditions and to address challenges from the environment and also for adaptation of the organization’s plans to a dynamic and evolving context.
Agha et al. (2014), concluded that there is a significant positive impact of strategic intelligence on organisation performance in the presence of strategic flexibility as a mediator variable.

Methodology:
This paper is based on a conceptual study on the review of literature from various sources such as research papers, articles, textbooks, and magazines, etc. on strategic intelligence and its importance in management of organisation. Different researchers have realised the fact that through strategic intelligence organizations can gain useful information about their business environment that are essential to anticipate changes and design appropriate strategies that will create value and build the future growth of profitability in the new markets within or in other industries.

Value of Strategic Intelligence
Strategic intelligence is a process of collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of intelligence that is crucial in policy making (Kuosa, 2011). Intelligence may be viewed in perspective of what an organisation want to know about its operation environment so that it can gain insight into its current process, anticipate and manage future changes. This is achieved through designing appropriate strategies that are aligned with organisation vision and mission. Strategic intelligence is a combination of different types of intelligence such as commercial intelligence and competitive intelligence that create synergy in an organisation’s intelligence and knowledge management to facilitate acquisition of valuable information in organisational decision making process. Further Strategic intelligence is important in organisations desire to deal with potential future challenges and opportunities to achieve success. The value and the role played by Strategic intelligence in realisation of an organisation’s success is indispensible. The value of strategic intelligence can be enhanced through the improvement of the skills of managers and employees which in turn affects their competencies to learn about the potential changes in their business environment, by giving them the ability to communicate freely to share their perceptions, new information and insights whenever and wherever the organisation requires such information, which will increase the ‘intelligence quotient’ of all organisational managers and employees (Tham & Kim 2002). Strategic intelligence is seen through the prospective of having relevant information in the hands of right people at the right time to make right decision for the future success of the organisation. The value of strategic intelligence is reflected in the ability of the organisation management maintaining reputation even in the situation of challenges that requires critical decisions. This is possible where the leaders are capable of identifying potential threats and changes that have occurred and guided by intelligence information at hand making suggestions to unravel the underlined mystery. Strategic intelligence focuses less on past and present issues compared to the future issues as it tries to predict and anticipate future and model it so that it is in line with organisation operations. By collecting and analysing the past data an organisation is capable of understanding its key points of improvements and opportunities available to sustain in competitive market.
Elements of Strategic Intelligence Process:
The elements that make the strategic intelligence process effective are:

- **Sensing:** Involves identifying suitable external indicators of change.
- **Collecting:** Emphases on ways of gathering information that is applicable and possibly meaningful.
- **Organizing:** Helps structure the collected information in suitable arrangements and media.
- **Processing:** Involves analyzing the information with proper methods and tools.
- **Communicating:** Focuses on packaging and abridging access to information for users.
- **Using:** Focuses on applying information in decisions and actions.

The important component towards making the strategic intelligence process successful is a management team that not only focuses on the process but also on its people and technology. Therefore Managers must create a culture where a diversity of mind-sets are explored, tested, and selected so that the organisation is capable of rapid navigation in market conditions that are constantly ever-changing.

Approaches to Strategic Intelligence
Management can utilise one of the two most common approaches to Strategic Intelligence, either a functional approach or a process approach to develop insights and intelligence about future trends.

- **The Functional Approach**
  Many organisations have various departments that helps determine how certain activities are directed in order to achieve the goals of an organization on a functional basis. Each functional department collects many pools of isolated external and internal data or intelligence, which is often used towards making departmental wise decisions. For example, the human resources department is responsible for creating, implementing and administering policies and programmes designed to make expeditious use of an organisation’s human resources; the finance department ensures that there is financial stability within an organisation to carry out activities across all departments, the sales department collects information on customer contracts, transactions and services; marketing department works with production department by providing information about the products that customers want, while purchasing department has the job for monitoring how many products or stock is required at any one time and buying accordingly; information technology department monitor trends in the IT industry and technical developments; and as innovation is the key to every business future, the research and development department ensure responsibility for innovation in products, creating its new design and style as well as for searching new ways of launching products by updating to the latest technological and economic trends. Strategic Intelligence in a functional organisation is often confined to isolated pools of data created by the departments who have applied their existing mind-sets concerning the organisations direction and strategies for success. Information is rarely widely shared and used by other
levels of managers in the organisation resulting in the decision making process producing inferior results.

In a functional oriented organisation, there are few barriers to sharing and utilising strategic intelligence to shape the future. These are:

1. The isolated pools of data are heavily influenced by the functional view of the organisation rather than a broader, general-management opinion of the organisation.
2. The interpretation of data is often affected by hidden assumptions of people, blind spots or taboos, or biases of past successes or failures and exploitations of the future.
3. Managers have limited scope to access to organisational-wide data upon which they can effectively act upon with agility.
4. Any dissemination of knowledge on an organisation-wide basis should be accomplished with minimal inconsistency and un-ambiguity in interpretation.

• The Process Approach

The process approach, in contrast to the functional approach to Strategic Intelligence, is based on a very different framework. The framework for a process approach to Strategic Intelligence should include the following principles.

1. Not all of the organisational knowledge or decision-making responsibility lies with top management and therefore strategic Intelligence should be organised to address the needs of the business unit and other general managers.
2. There must be a sharing of Strategic Intelligence in the organisation through decentralised processing which encourages a diversity of employee input, ideas and perspectives about the future. Though, this is critical as changes in industries, technologies, markets and customers take place rapidly resulting in no single group of senior executives being able to meet with the diverse signals from the business environment, nor appropriately factor them into new mind-sets about future business strategies and opportunities.
3. Technologies should be deployed for constantly managing and sharing internal and external intelligence accessible to managers acting on common problems and issues anywhere, any time.
4. The current challenge is not to confine Strategic Intelligence to the top of an organisation but to distribute the information across all levels, both globally and laterally to be aligned with decision-making responsibilities.

In this context, Strategic Intelligence should be deep-rooted within organisation culture, rather than being grafted on as another function. It is clear that the process approach to Strategic Intelligence would inculcate a culture of team spirit, sharing and contribution of information, including its re-use, and the continuous empowering of employees at all levels in the organisation.

Initiatives by the management towards a Successful Strategic Intelligence Process:

It is believed that process approach is the most effective way to organize strategic intelligence. But in some cases, such as acquisitions, an organisation might be required to keep the information confidential and only share it with few executives. However, in most situations, a more disseminated approach is desirable where the organisation
develops processes that allow for information sharing across business units and geographies. It is clear that with each approach there are risks associated, but the benefits gained from the process approach compared the functional approach are far superior. Building a strong process approach requires developing mature information capabilities which is not an easy task to complete. Managers must be determined and focused on improving information capabilities and remain committed to the process approach over time.

In order to focus on improving the maturity of organisation’s information capabilities, managers must keep in mind the important key points while designing a successful strategic intelligence process.

1. Managers must treat the information and knowledge flows of the organisation as “visible assets.” This can be done by developing organizational guidelines and a common language that will help people through the process of collecting, maintaining, sharing, and using information. Managers should also ensure that employees understand the business and know what information is critical to business performance.

2. As the technology and communication networks continue to advance in the area of information usage, the how and why employees use information become even more significant, and therefore managers must help the people to understand how to use technology effectively and create processes that people can easily function smoothly.

3. Management also needs to understand what influences others’ attitudes about information usage. In order to change employee behaviours and values, managers need to “walk the talk” and examine their own behaviours before they expect others to change. Managers must develop formal monitoring and incentive schemes to reward those employees that are engage in effective information usage (Marchand, 1997).

4. Managers should strive towards systematically usage of information as a competitive weapon to create business asymmetry. Asymmetry takes place when an enterprise has capabilities that their customer’s value and their competitors cannot match. Asymmetries can result from structural advantages such as scale, privileged relationships and extraordinary abilities in execution, and also from unusual foresight into trends, markets, customers. Hunter and Aron (2004) suggested that being able to gather and execute strategic intelligence better than the competition can be considered a source of business asymmetry that results in a competitive advantage.

Conclusion:
It can be concluded that strategic intelligence has a significant role in all areas of management and foundation of organisation’s future plans. There is a strong relationship between strategic intelligence and managerial skills that help the manager and the organization in achieving and sustaining competitive advantage. Strategic intelligence helps the manager in the strategic decision making process by providing organizational decision makers with accurate intelligence on which to base their
decisions thereby enhancing their competencies to meet the complex demands involving communication, planning, mobilizing, self-managing, strategic action in the complex global environment that organizations are currently facing.

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