

## The Impact of Strategic Intelligence Dimensions on Environmental Performance in Dhofar Municipality

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to identify the levels of availability of strategic intelligence and the degree of application of environmental performance in the municipality of Dhofar, Sultanate of Oman, as well as the impact of strategic intelligence dimensions (foresight, systems thinking, strategic vision, partnership, motivating employees) on environmental performance. The analytical descriptive methodology was used to test the hypotheses of the study. Electronic questionnaire was used as a tool to collect data from the convenience study sample of 224 municipal employees, and the SPSS statistical analysis program was used to test hypotheses. The results of the study showed high levels of both strategic intelligence and environmental performance in the municipality of Dhofar. The multiple liner regression analysis also showed that all strategic intelligence dimensions positively affect the environmental performance of Dhofar Municipality, except strategic vision does not affect environmental performance of Dhofar Municipality. The study proposed some implications and recommendations based on the study findings.

**Keywords:** strategic intelligence, environmental performance, Dhofar Municipality

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## 1 Introduction

Strategic intelligence is a modern concept in management science, involving the collection and analysis of business information, customer concerns, competition behavior and organizational change to generate insights that help making better decisions. When companies use strategic intelligence to assess environmental risks and opportunities, they can identify areas for improvement and develop strategic plans that correspond to their objectives (Barnea, 2017). By implementing sustainable practices, companies not only make profits, but also contribute to the long-term preservation of the environment. This is why investing in smart strategies to improve environmental performance is a smart step for companies that wish to maintain their competitiveness while keeping pace with the global market (Amara, 2018).

Strategic intelligence is also an important tool for companies and organizations that seek to succeed in the long term, as it involves collecting and analysing more information about business, competition, business trends, changes and other factors that may affect business. Using this knowledge, institutions can develop better strategies to solve problems and seize opportunities (Kori, Muathe & Maina, 2020). Strategic intelligence also plays an important role in risk management by detecting threats before they turn into serious problems. In today's rapidly evolving digital environment, leading intelligence firms have an advantage over their counterparts in terms of speed and innovation (Shalaka, 2021).

Environmental performance also indicates the impact of the organization's operations, products and services on the environment, as it must consider improving its environmental performance through the use of effective strategies such as waste reduction, energy provision, water supply, carbon reduction and electricity at home (Al-Ayeb and Baqa, 2012). Modern organizations are developing systems that can measure economic, social and environmental performance to monitor and evaluate their functional performance, including monitoring key measures such as carbon footprints or water use patterns to identify areas for improvement. By prioritizing environmental sustainability and integrating sustainable practices into day-to-day processes, professional organizations can not only reduce their negative impact, but can also improve the representation of those involved through a commitment to sustainability in line with their reputational relationship. Environmental performance is an important factor in the responsibility of the organization (especially the government) or organization that wants to successfully deliver services and products.

Under the conditions of the developing world and high competition, organizations seek to respond to the changing aspect of service, especially in internal and external services, to increase efficiency in the process of evaluating opportunities and upgrading services. This study will therefore help to demonstrate the importance and adoption of strategic intelligence in Dhofar municipality and how it can contribute to the development and improvement of the environmental performance. Despite the interest of recent foreign studies and leading institutions in the topic of strategic intelligence, as one of the most recent and important key entry points that gives the institution the advantage of having useful predictive information, and the fact that it is the mechanism that helps to transform the enterprise from being affected by changes occurring in its external environment to being influential in transforming environmental threats into opportunities so that they can be exploited (Balajoz & Bumisbah, 2015), the awareness of the importance of strategic intelligence remains limited in developing countries, whose

institutions are underperforming. Moreover, the vision remains unclear in terms of the impact of strategic intelligence on the overall performance of the organization (Brahimi, 2022). Accordingly, this study tries to answer the following question:

What is the impact of strategic intelligence dimensions on improving environmental performance in Dhofar municipality from the point of view of its staff?

## 2 Literature review

Although the concept of strategic intelligence began as a "military" strategy, it has been deeply adapted to the business landscape, providing strategists with an intrinsic force to gather, analyze, and disseminate intelligence information and solve related business problems (Silas, 2013). Thus, it aims to reduce levels of uncertainty through opening jobs that can maximize profits. This confirms that strategic intelligence involves strength and competitiveness for the organizations (Morton, 2016). In many scenarios, strategic intelligence is used to create a major business strategy (Heidenrich, 2007) which means it promotes planning, which is also market intelligence because it is a smart, regular, and continuous process from a customer perspective, as this then informs that the concept of strategic intelligence is a priority for value creation for all stakeholders. Furthermore, strategic intelligence is described as a policymaking tool, existing procedures, processes, and participatory decision-making tool (Acheson, 2008). A different way of thinking about strategic intelligence is to consider its absence as a "behavioral failure of the market" (Gavetti, 2012). Pellissier & Kruger (2011), and Mandel & Barnes (2014) defined strategic intelligence as a vital tool for decision-makers at all levels, by providing them with accurate and timely information, where strategic intelligence can help them make better decisions that protect their interests and promote their goals. In addition, some researchers referred to strategic intelligence in additional dimensions, including a leader's vision and an insight into the future in a way that differs from others (Johnson, 2014).

Previous studies have identified the dimensions of strategic intelligence in several dimensions. In this study, the dimensions of (Maccoby, 2011) and (Al-Kadhi & Al-Shabshah 2022) were adopted, which are (foresight, systematic thinking, strategic vision, partnership, motivating employees). The researchers have adopted these dimensions for their inclusiveness of strategic intelligence and also for their applicability to the municipality of Dhofar.

### 2.1 Foresight:

Foresight is a key element for an organization's success because it involves being proactive and not reacting. Essentially, foresight indicates predictability and preparedness for future events and changes that could affect the organization's operations, as well as its overall direction (Kuosa, 2011). Therefore, having insight helps organizations become more flexible, competitive, and effective in their decision-making processes.

Looking ahead to external factors is also an important aspect of today's institutions. In an increasingly complex and dynamic environment, it is important to anticipate trends, potential market changes, regulatory requirements, technological developments, and other factors that may affect their operations. This requires a deep understanding of the business landscape, strategic thinking ability, creativity, and analytical skills (Abuzaid, 2017, Torres & Pena, 2021).

## 2.2 Systematic thinking:

Systematic thinking is the ability to systematically and effectively identify different elements, collect, analyze, and use information so that organizations can make sound decisions, solve problems, and achieve their objectives (Al-Nuaimi, 2008). This practice improves an organization's productivity: it can also help it develop its strategies to continue to focus on the task it performs. On the other hand, systematic thinking is a crucial aspect of accomplishing any task. Whether it's solving a complex problem, deciding, or preparing a presentation, structured thinking helps individuals prioritize, critically evaluate, and communicate their ideas effectively. It also involves arranging ideas logically, classifying them into smaller segments, and coherently linking them. Thus it enhances an individual's ability to process information efficiently, analyze complex situations, and come up with sound solutions (Tashtouche & Torjoman, 2018).

In addition, systematic thinking helps individuals continue to focus on their goals, reducing their chances of being distracted by irrelevant information (Maani & Maharaj, 2004). Furthermore, systematic thinking promotes creativity, where individuals can analyze problems from different perspectives, explore new possibilities, and develop innovative solutions.

## 2.3 Strategic vision:

Vision is to predict the future, as it is a long-term goal that provides guidance and motivation to the organization's members. A well-defined organizational vision can also help the organization focus on its goals, make better decisions, attract and retain talent, motivate staff, innovate, and adapt to change (James & Lahti, 2011).

On the other hand, the vision must be clear, specific, and motivating for all its employees and be confused with the mission and capabilities of the Enterprise in achieving it, as well as its measurability and achievement during a certain period (Foster & Akdere, 2007). Organizational vision also plays an important role in the success of an institution, that is, it serves as a roadmap that guides the organization's decision-making process. In addition, a well-designed vision statement can inspire employees, stakeholders, and customers, thereby strengthening their commitment to the company (Kantabutra, 2020).

## 2.4 Organizational Partnership:

Organizational Partnership means the ability of an organization to establish strategic alliances with other companies is very important, and entering into joint ventures with these companies yields many benefits: sharing resources, entering new markets, reducing costs, increasing efficiency, innovating and developing new products or services, building relationships with other institutions and gaining a high competitive advantage (Al-Eila, 2017). Organizational partnership is also a collaborative agreement between two or more entities to achieve a common goal such partnerships can be formed between public and private institutions, non-profit organizations, or even government agencies, as the partnership's objective is to share resources, knowledge, skills and experiences to achieve mutually beneficial goals (Brinkerhoff, 2022).

In addition, partnerships have become more important in the modern business world, especially with globalization and growing competition (Street & Cameron, 2007). Organizations have recognized the importance of working together to achieve their goals and remain competitive in their markets. Successful

partnerships also require a clear understanding of each organization's goals, as well as the development of effective communication and decision-making strategies, and require a high level of trust, as stakeholders must rely on each other to fulfil their commitments (Markova & Trapeznikov, 2022). On the other hand, there are also some challenges to organizational partnerships, where it can be difficult to manage partnerships, it can take a long time, and partnerships can also be risky, as there is always a possibility that a partnership won't work. Regardless of these challenges, organizational partnerships can be a powerful tool for achieving common goals (Peachey et al., 2018).

## **2.5 Motivating employees:**

Motivation is essential for employees to perform their best, as passionate employees are more productive, creative, and involved in their work than others. Organizations can also motivate staff by providing them with factors that concern them. By understanding what motivates employees, enterprises can create a workplace that helps improve productivity (Manzoor, 2012). Many factors can motivate employees as meaningful work, growth and development opportunities, appreciation and gratitude, and a positive work environment (Dobre, 2013; Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020).

## **2.6 Environmental performance:**

The importance of environmental performance has become increasingly evident in recent years as the world's population continues to grow and resource consumption at an unsustainable rate (Goodland, 1993). Climate change, pollution, deforestation, and water scarcity are just some of the environmental challenges we face. These problems not only threaten the natural environment but also threaten human health and well-being. It has therefore become important that the organization improve its environmental performance by adopting more sustainable practices and reducing its impact on the environment (Abbas, 2023). Environmental performance refers to the impact of an individual, organization, or industry on the environment, measured by a range of indicators such as carbon emissions, water use, waste generation, and land use, environmental performance is often used to assess the effectiveness of environmental policies and regulations (Grabosky & Gant, 2000). Institutions are working to minimize their activities that are as harmful to the environment as possible and contribute to their protection, while concern for the environment has become important at the level of states and governments. Many laws and regulations have been enacted to reduce environmental damage, plant waste, and others (Dkhili & Dhiab, 2019). Environmental effectiveness indicates the ability of policies, programs, and projects to achieve the desired environmental outcomes. The challenge in assessing environmental effectiveness is that environmental outcomes are often long-term, uncertain, and difficult to measure (Hamed et al., 2021). Furthermore, environmental effectiveness is not only a question of reaching a set of environmental objectives but also involves assessing the broader environmental, social, and economic impacts of environmental initiatives. Environmental effectiveness therefore requires a comprehensive approach that takes into account the complex interactions between the various elements of the environment and their relationship to human well-being (Al-Azazi and Ayada, 2022).

Environmental performance assessment is an important tool used to assess an organization's environmental impact and to comply with environmental regulations and standards (Thoresen, 1999; Goodall, 1995). The results of these assessments help identify areas for improvement and inform decision-makers about environmental policies and practices (Kiker et al., 2005).

Environmental performance assessments provide an important means for enterprises to assess and improve their environmental sustainability and are increasingly used as a benchmark for good environmental stewardship (Melnyk, Sroufe, & Calantone, 2003). Previous studies have indicated that strategic intelligence can have a positive impact on overall performance (Kori et al., 2020). Hadi & Salim study (2023) also emphasized a statistically significant role of strategic intelligence on an outstanding performance in general, and a statistically significant relationship between the dimensions of strategic intelligence (Foresight, motivation, Vision, Systems Thinking, partnership) and outstanding performance. The results of the study (Kori et al., 2020) also indicated that strategic intelligence has a statistical importance to the performance of Kenya's commercial banks.

There are also several reasons why strategic intelligence can improve environmental performance. First, strategic intelligence can help organizations identify and understand environmental risks (Huff, 1979). This can help organizations develop strategies to mitigate these risks. Second, strategic intelligence can help organizations identify new opportunities to improve their environmental performance. For example, the environment is a key factor in shaping organizational performance, and strategic intelligence can help organizations understand the ever-changing environment (Brahimi, 2022). Understanding this relationship is also critical for managers in anticipating the market, competitors' movements, and other external factors that are likely to affect an organization's performance. In addition, strategic intelligence is responsible for providing timely business intelligence and predicting external factors, while the environment provides data (Ahmad and Abdul Kadhim, 2021). A good understanding of the environment and the current market situation enables enterprises to leverage their strengths, reduce risks, and take advantage of new opportunities. On the other hand, strategic intelligence can help organizations communicate their environmental performance to stakeholders. This helps to build trust among stakeholders, thus increasing support for environmental organizations (Hussien, 2023).

Based on the above literature, researchers can develop the following hypothesis:

- H1. Foresight impacts environmental performance in Dhofar Municipality.*
- H2. Systematic thinking impacts environmental performance in Dhofar Municipality.*
- H3. Strategic vision impacts environmental performance in Dhofar Municipality.*
- H4. Partnership impacts environmental performance in Dhofar Municipality.*
- H5. Motivating employees impacts environmental performance in Dhofar Municipality.*

### **3 Methodology and analysis**

This study used the analytical descriptive method, where the descriptive method was used to characterize the level of strategic intelligence and environmental performance in the Dhofar Municipality, where strategic intelligence was described in this study through five dimensions: foresight, systems thinking, strategic vision, partnership, and motivating employees based on the scale used in Alqadi and Albashabsha study (2022) where each dimension of strategic intelligence encompassed 5 items, the total number of strategic intelligence was 25 items, while the environmental performance variable consisted of nineteen items was measured according to Resen & AbdulRazaq scale (2022).

The study population consists of 1,300 employees in the municipality of Dhofar, where the questionnaire was distributed electronically through an electronic link for easy data collection. A convenience sample of Dhofar municipality employees was selected, with the number of responses reached 224 responses valid for analysis. The study employed Likert scale 5 points, with response options ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”), for all variables.

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the study sample, the sample profile consists of (66% males n=148), 70% of the sample are young and their ages less than 40 years. Regarding the educational level of the sample 39% are holding diploma degree or less, while 36% have bachelor degree and 25% are postgraduate degree holder which means they have a sufficient amount of knowledge to do their jobs. Majority of the sample 68% are seniors with long experience more than 10 years, so they have a good level of loyalty to Dhofar municipality.

**Table 1: Demographic characteristics**

Characteristic	Categories	Number	Percent
<b>Gender</b>	Male	148	66
	Female	76	34
<b>Age</b>	30 and less	50	22.5
	31-40	84	37.5
	41 and above	90	40
<b>Educational Level</b>	Diploma or less	87	39
	Bachelor	81	36
	Postgraduate	56	25
<b>Job Experience</b>	Less than 5 years	47	21
	5-10 years	24	11
	11 or more years	153	68
<b>Total</b>		<b>224</b>	<b>100</b>

All the variables in this study are available at a high level, Cronbach's Alpha test indicates high and acceptable values above 0.6 confirming the validity and stability of the study tool.

**Table 2: Descriptive statistics**

Variables	No of items	St.D	Mean	Cronbach's Alpha
Foresight	5	0.817	3.96	0.860
Systematic thinking	5	0.860	3.82	0.893
Strategic vision	5	0.860	3.86	0.933
Partnership	5	0.937	3.83	0.919
Motivating employees	5	0.780	3.94	0.860
Environmental performance	13	0.831	3.99	0.942

The results of Table 3 show the impact of strategic intelligence dimensions on environmental performance in the municipality of Dhofar, where four dimensions, namely foresight, systematic thinking, motivation, and partnership, had a statistically significant positive effect at the level ( $0.05 < \alpha$ ), so the first, second, fourth and fifth hypotheses can be validated. The third hypothesis related to strategic vision has no impact

on environmental performance but this effect is not significant based on the level of significance as it was ( $0.097 > \alpha$ ).

On the other hand, based on the results of Table 3, the value of the  $R^2$  regression coefficient was (0.625) indicating that the dimensions of strategic intelligence represented 62.5% of the factors affecting environmental performance in the municipality of Dhofar as well as other factors representing the remaining proportion. The calculated F value was (72.766) at a degree of morale equal to ( $p < 0.000$ ) which is greater than the tabular F value. Based on these findings, four hypotheses can be accepted: H1,2,4, and 5; while H3 was not approved.

**Table 3: Hypothesis test**

Variables	Coefficients B	T value	Sig	$R^2$	F	Sig
Foresight	11.681	4.804	0.000	0.625	72.766	0.000
Systematic thinking	0.129	2.659	0.019			
Strategic vision	0.314	3.427	0.001			
Partnership	-0.003	-0.027	0.097			
Motivating employees	0.247	2.825	0.005			
	0.195	2.899	0.004			

## 4 Discussion

This study aimed to identify the levels of availability of strategic intelligence and the degree of application of environmental performance in the municipality of Dhofar, Sultanate of Oman, as well as the impact of strategic intelligence dimensions (foresight, systems thinking, strategic vision, partnership, motivating employees) on improving environmental performance from the employees' perspective.

The results of the descriptive analysis of strategic intelligence in the five dimensions of stewardship, structured thinking, strategic vision, motivation, and partnership showed a high level in the municipality of Dhofar based on the views of the sample selected for this study. These results were identical and reinforced by previous findings such as Resen & AbdulRazzaq (2022). These results explain the Dhofar Municipality's adoption of strategic intelligence approaches.

The results of the descriptive analysis of environmental performance also showed a high level of environmental performance in the municipality of Dhofar. This result is also consistent with previous research findings such as Brahimi Study (2022). These results underscore the interest of Dhofar Municipality in environmental aspects and its constant endeavor to improve its services to citizens and to work to resolve environmental problems on an ongoing basis. The municipality periodically supervises operations related to the environment and creates appropriate teams to solve some problems that may cause harm to citizens such as fighting harmful insects, lifting unauthorized garbage places, and following up its operations in improving the public image and natural appearance of the governorate.

The results showed the validity of the first hypothesis, which states that there is an impact of foresight on environmental performance in the municipality of Dhofar. These findings are consistent with previous studies that have emphasized the positive role of foresight in business continuity management at Amman Greater Municipality (Al-Najjar & Al-Hariza, 2020). Based on these findings, the importance of foresight is



highlighted in the strategic planning of an organization where foresight is a critical element of a successful institution, allowing it to anticipate and prepare for future challenges and opportunities. By identifying emerging trends, understanding market dynamics, and predicting potential disruptions that could affect the organization's operations (Alshaya, Al Hatab, and Abdul Hamid, 2019). foresight also includes assessing technological advances, demographic shifts and organizational changes. In addition, organizations can identify areas of potential growth or vulnerability through the use of a proactive approach scenario planning, and strategic thinking processes.

The results of the test confirmed the second hypothesis, which states that there is a positive impact of systematic thinking on environmental performance in the municipality of Dhofar. Institutions need to instill a culture of systematic thinking to work and compete effectively in today's fast-paced business environment. This also entails dividing complex problems into manageable parts, identifying relevant data, and systematically analyzing them to draw accurate conclusions (Kraus et al., 2020).

The results of the study showed a positive impact of the partnership in improving environmental performance in the municipality of Dhofar. The results of this hypothesis aligned with the findings of previous studies that emphasized the positive role of the partnership in improving the organization's performance (Park & Park, 2013). Partnership within the organization refers to a collaborative approach where individuals or teams work together to achieve a common goal while drawing on each other's strengths and experience (Kraus et al., 2020). In the professional context, partnership plays an important role in promoting innovation, efficiency, and overall organizational success. It also promotes effective communication, confidence-building and mutual accountability among team members, leading to greater synergy and productivity (Anwar et al., 2020).

Finally, the results showed the validity of the fifth hypothesis, which confirm how motivating employees improves environmental performance in Dhofar municipality. This result is identical to the results of previous studies (Jabbar & Abid, 2014). This can also be achieved by setting clear goals, providing feedback and recognition of achievements, providing opportunities for growth and development, and creating a positive working culture that values transparency, trust, and equity (Levine et al., 2017).

## 5 Implications

The current study has many practical implications based on its findings, particularly

municipalities in Oman, aiming to enhance the strategic intelligence practices and improve the environmental performance:

First, promote the adoption of strategic intelligence as an important part of various administrative activities in the municipality so that the dimensions of strategic intelligence are focused and measured periodically, which raises the municipality's overall performance and environmental performance in particular in the long term.

Second, focusing on environmental performance as a fundamental criterion for measuring the municipality's performance, as the importance of the municipality and its achievements are largely related

to its environmental performance and the municipality must therefore establish different criteria for measuring its environmental performance and work towards improvement.

Third, Improving the municipality's strategic vision by embracing all actors in its environmental activities as well as involving the employees in the design and identification of plans and strategies in line with the Oman Vision 2040, which has focused its priorities on the development and protection of environmental resources in the Sultanate of Oman.

Fourth, establishing external partnerships with the community and governmental and non-governmental institutions that are active in the field of the environment, such as the Omani Environmental Protection Association, about environmental protection as well as attention to local culture in the development and implementation of projects in different regions of the Sultanate of Oman.

## 6 Conclusion

The study aimed to explore the impact of strategic intelligence facets (foresight, systematic thinking, strategic vision, partnership, motivating employees) on the environmental performance in Dhofar municipality in Oman. The findings confirmed the positive impact of all strategic intelligence facets except vision on the environmental performance in Dhofar municipality.

The study implications highlighted the importance of increasing the caring of decision makers about the strategic intelligence practices, specially the partnership with more parties working within the Omani society to improve the municipality's environmental performance.

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