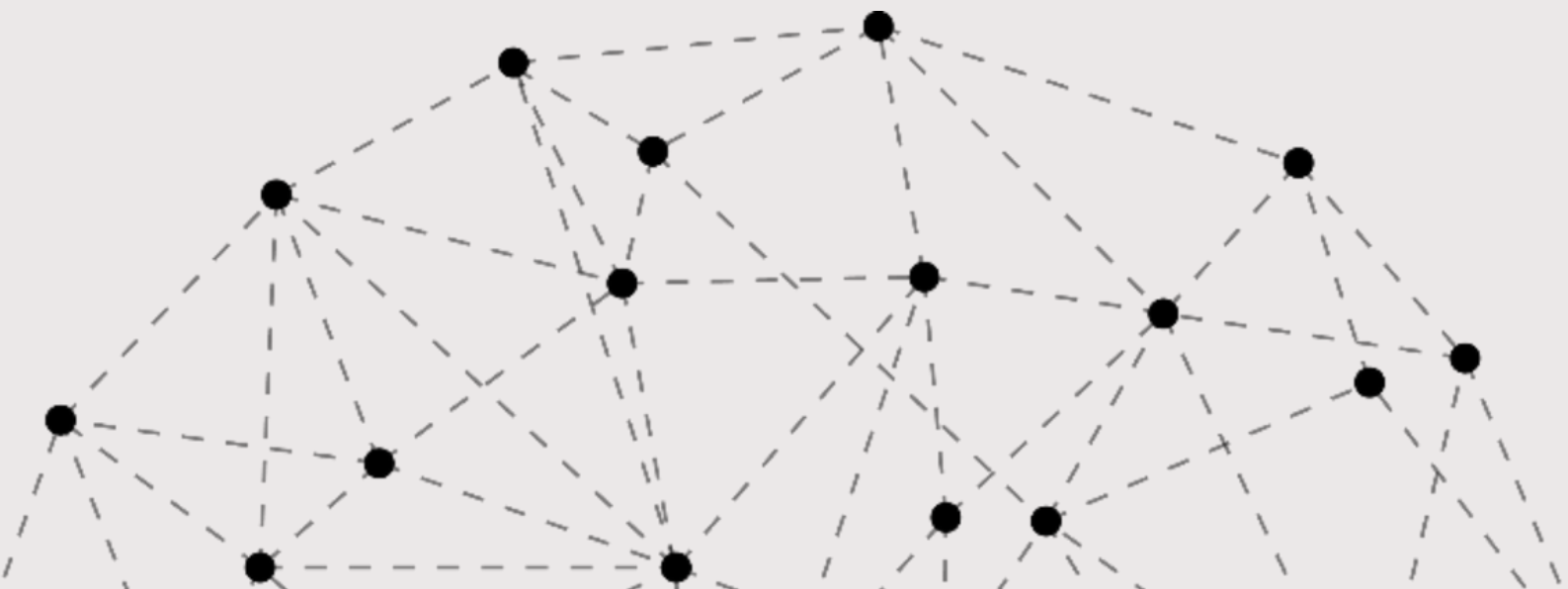


InterAgency Institute
BEYOND INSTITUTIONAL BOUNDARIES

THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF INTELLIGENCE AND THE CHALLENGES TO THE MODERNIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE.

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Policy Statement

In recent years, intelligence activity has undergone several transformations associated with the dilemmas of complex threats and international security and the emergence of new tools and technologies for data analysis, information, and knowledge construction. With software, artificial intelligence, and sophisticated computational social science methodologies, intelligence studies have gained new performance and reached undergraduate and postgraduate courses as an academic discipline. However, other challenges have emerged, such as the intense flow of information and fake news, which hinder the analytical process of building intelligence. The need to filter, collect, and analyze data quickly, accurately, and truthfully has become a significant problem for the intelligence area, which needs to adapt to new actors, threats, and interference that arise for intelligence and national security. This policy brief aims to take a reflective approach to the professionalization of intelligence and the need for the academic field of studies to adapt to the complex challenges of national and international security.

Background

Intelligence is a complex, multiple, and interdisciplinary concept that has been used beyond the exercise of intelligence activity but is endowed with a series of academic studies mainly in Political Science and International Relations. Intelligence Studies, the academic discipline adopted in universities in the United Kingdom and the United States, has gained repercussions with the construction of analytical knowledge aimed at thoroughly verifying data and trends in the context of national security directly impacted by international security.

According to Richards (2016), Intelligence Studies is a specific model characterized by changes in the global situation. According to the author, they are a social science capable of dealing with activities and thought processes, the logical and analytical construction of people, and, more specifically, policymakers and decision-makers. In this sense, they need to adapt to processes and political and structural changes in society to achieve evolution and trends that impact relations between states when at a strategic level.

Intelligence activity originated in ancient times and gained prominence during the great wars and espionage during the Cold War. Espionage during this historical period played a prominent role in the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. Collecting secret information that could strengthen both countries and decision-makers was essential in the conflict. The infiltration of agents into strategic organizations to gather data and information and the manipulation of information affected the security of these countries and foreign relations.

In this situation, the leading intelligence organizations and agencies were created to structure a body of professional analysts who could work in state intelligence or intelligence at a strategic level, mainly related to national security threats, which were previously directly related to conflicts and wars. However, intelligence also became a tool in periods of peace, attentive to domestic and non-military events and threats that could threaten the existence and stability of the State.

With the creation of national intelligence service structures, the activity gained significant weight in the role of National Defense. The dynamism and efficiency required for intelligence actions meant that the process of professionalization and studies aimed at the sector deepened in academia. But, before we talk about the profession of professional intelligence analysts, it is essential to highlight the defined function of Intelligence in this background.

Intelligence services are dedicated to collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data, using tools and methodologies that help them anticipate trends and estimates about threats to national security. They mainly serve high-level decision-makers and are structured from the most strategic environment to the operational environment. Sophisticated situational analyses and methods that generate intelligence are intended to guarantee the State's institutional security and use foresight as an opportunity to prepare for threats or even take advantage of benefits for the nation's competitive development.

However, more is needed to address the implemented intelligence services structures. It is necessary to professionalize them as a form of specialized resource and as a permanent instrument to support decision-making and protect the State. Conceptual, theoretical, situational, historical, legal, ethical, technological, and human aspects that can strengthen intelligence activity are studied. Using the same reasoning, we can discuss and expand our vision about the Intelligence discipline that has gained notoriety in universities and at International Relations conferences such as the

the Strategic Intelligence session of the International Studies Association.

For Stephen Marrin (2016), the practice of intelligence is complemented by academic studies in the field of Intelligence. Therefore, there are several possibilities for Intelligence as a subarea of International Relations or Strategic Studies to improve theories, concepts, and data and information analysis methods. With technology and methodological sophistication, various complex data analysis software or even modeling have been used to build prospects for the decision-making process.

These tools cannot replace the sensitivity and intuition of the analyst, who can add several factors to their studies. Still, they are efficient in helping the analyst since the amount of data and information has grown exponentially in the era of globalization.

So, what would be the most valued skills for an intelligence analyst? Would academic disciplines be capable of improving and complementing intelligence professionals throughout their careers? Would we have developed theoretical bases of intelligence and solid epistemological construction to develop the area of knowledge? These are issues that permeate changes and transformations, as well as the need to update world trends. Transforming data and information into intelligence is complex and demands time, logical construction, the use of technologies, theoretical debates, and in-depth knowledge of history and culture.

The skills valued by intelligence analysts are not only technical but require ethical and confidential behavior that corroborates their role. Some technical skills involve knowledge of technology and artificial intelligence, software learning, information security, risk management, vulnerability analysis, attack prevention, and production of micro scenarios, among others. As for behavioral aspects, soft skills include leadership, effective communication, teamwork, creativity, problem-solving, and innovation.

Findings

As a trend towards improving intelligence analysts, several countries have adopted the practice of professionalizing intelligence, including the specialization and training of qualified professionals to deal with the complex demands of this field. It is essential to highlight that current technologies, such as artificial intelligence and automation, are becoming relevant to improve data collection and interpretation. Ethics and legality in

the use of information, the guarantee of protection of individual rights, the constitutionality of intelligence actions, and respect for privacy are some factors that reflect the demand for training.

In several countries, such as the United States, the demand for training and qualification in complex areas of operation and analysis has been growing, and the improvement of intelligence careers has been relevant to contemporary challenges. In that same country, after the terrorist attack of September 11, lessons from mainly the field of intelligence and the dynamism and control of information, between compartmentalization and sharing of knowledge with other agencies, made the North American government reformulate the intelligence structure. The homeland security environment is equipped with an interagency relationship and intelligence working across the board and supplying information to agencies considered 'first responders,' or emergencies, for threats.

To achieve the training and professionalization of the intelligence community, the USA implemented, during the Cold War period, the National Intelligence University (NIU), which currently offers bachelor's degrees in Intelligence Sciences, Master's degrees in Strategic Intelligence Sciences, Master's degree in Technological Intelligence Science, intelligence studies certificates and continuing education. NIU's purpose is to be the academic center for the intelligence community, with the mission of advancing the intelligence profession through a collaborative and integrated approach in the context of education, which maintains rigorous methods, analytical problem solving, engagement, dynamic, and academic reach.

In Brazil, however, the academic process of intelligence studies are subjects in strategic studies courses, international relations, or higher studies courses offered by the Ministry of Defense through the Brazilian Defense College, among other classes at a strategic-operational level aimed at public security actions. However, this impact of the academic area in intelligence is related to the career model of intelligence analysts that form the Brazilian Intelligence Agency (ABIN).

Currently, ABIN is made up of intelligence agents and officers who go through a testing process and become government officials. Upon entering the intelligence agency, they are trained through internal courses offered in person and online and then become part of the strategic intelligence framework of the Brazilian state. Throughout the career, progression is made through an advanced intelligence course offered by the same

institution through the ABIN Intelligence College. However, other training and specialization courses for analysts are not considered for career purposes, which presupposes a low incentive for analysts to seek new forms of curricular updating.

The results of professionalizing intelligence and strengthening the intelligence community have seen little progress in recent years. In 2023, the Brazilian government made a new proposal for the Brazilian Intelligence System, SISBIN, a network of agencies that are part of the intelligence community under the ABIN pillar. The bodies that made up SISBIN were all linearly integrated into the network, even though some had little reach or training in the area. The new model proposed for SISBIN creates a new division between the agencies of the Brazilian intelligence community, and the composition now has the central agency – ABIN, agencies considered permanent, dedicated agencies, associated agencies, and federated agencies.

SISBIN was created to integrate actions and planning between agencies and exchange information through a technical and secure channel. In this way, the central agency achieves capillarity and contact with other agencies at the state level, interconnecting agendas and exchanging information and actions.

To better describe the categories of agencies that make up SISBIN, decree no. 11,693, of September 6, 2023, qualifies each of the categories. The permanent agencies would be dedicated to the country's governance, external defense, internal security, and foreign relations; dedicated agencies to intelligence or similar activities that work on strategic matters set out in the National Intelligence Policy (PNI); associated agencies are entities that are related to topics also covered by the (PNI) and; federated agencies are those that makeup SISBIN after hearing from the external control agency of intelligence activity.

This new reformulation at the levels of the functions of the agencies in the academic community reaffirms the constant need for training and specialization in intelligence activity and, therefore, for the process of qualified professionalization of these agents, both in the central agency ABIN and in the agencies that make up the intelligence community constituted by SISBIN. Adequate training and theoretical, conceptual, and methodological aspects are reflected in intelligence practice.

When it comes to intelligence actions that are currently carried out in an interagency environment, in which each agency has an organizational culture and a “modus

operand,” as well as a practical understanding of planning and operationality, the process of professionalization and improvement becomes essential for agencies to establish an environment of trust and knowledge exchange, signaling the strengthening of intelligence in Brazil, as concepts will be debated, exchanged, and improved.

In the meantime, the academic community of Intelligence Studies complements and strengthens this network. These researchers will develop and expand theories and concepts, practicing active methodologies with simulations and games that impact the decision-making process, presenting new analytical tools that can consolidate different expertise in the benefits of integrated intelligence.

Recommendations

How intelligence activity develops or becomes sophisticated is directly related to the degree of studies and academic performance in updating literature and methods and, therefore, directly impacts practice. In this article, we consider it relevant to state how much research in intelligence, integrated models, and the form of communication and relationships promoted by and for the intelligence community can significantly alter the information path to the primary decision-maker. Time, consistency, integrity, and logic of information promote the success of intelligence activities, but to be achieved, they require alignment to construct knowledge.

We recommend some essential points so that Brazilian intelligence activity can successfully play its role and expand its capacity. Among these points are:

- (i) Update the career plan for intelligence agents and officers. As a justification for this measure, we understand that the intelligence analyst career needs to be accompanied by attractive items in the job market, which are inviting and can guarantee the analysts' continuity in their career and not the “brain drain” to other professions.
- (ii) A process of professionalization with the valorization of the intelligence school and other courses offered in the strategic and operational scope of intelligence. We recognize a significant number of professionals in the security and defense sector, as well as other agencies who need training and demand places on recognized courses. Therefore, there is a need for more significant financial

incentives so that intelligence courses and schools can better play the role of qualification and training and the recognition of these courses for career purposes.

- (iii) Promote greater integration with the academic environment and, therefore, the university. Educational research is a form of conceptual, theoretical, and methodological updating. The development of research will support other functions of the professionalization process, including training. The more research, the more testing capacity for new methods we can achieve and the better practices we can perform.
- (iv) Dissemination of knowledge in intelligence. Suppose we want this field to truly become an area of academic expertise, interdisciplinary and hybrid. In that case, we must invite new researchers from different knowledge areas to participate. This can be achieved only by disseminating knowledge about intelligence and its prominent role in ensuring national security.

Conclusions

As intelligence studies developed as an academic field of International Relations, Political Science, History, and other areas of knowledge, we moved away from the inertia of thinking about intelligence only from the conjunctival aspect of the Cold War or geography from North America, not limiting, therefore, to the cultural and organizational aspects of a country or region or even the traditions of the use of intelligence in specific contexts.

Based on its analytical models, intelligence has expanded its capacity for use and practice. We know that State Intelligence is closely related to war and conflict and, therefore, to aspects linked to national defense. Thus, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (Richards, 2016) are strategic for defense. But, beyond peace and war, intelligence has reached thematic perspectives of significant impact. It is relevant to ensuring national security and defense development, including economic or commercial intelligence, technological intelligence, intelligence and health, intelligence and the environment.

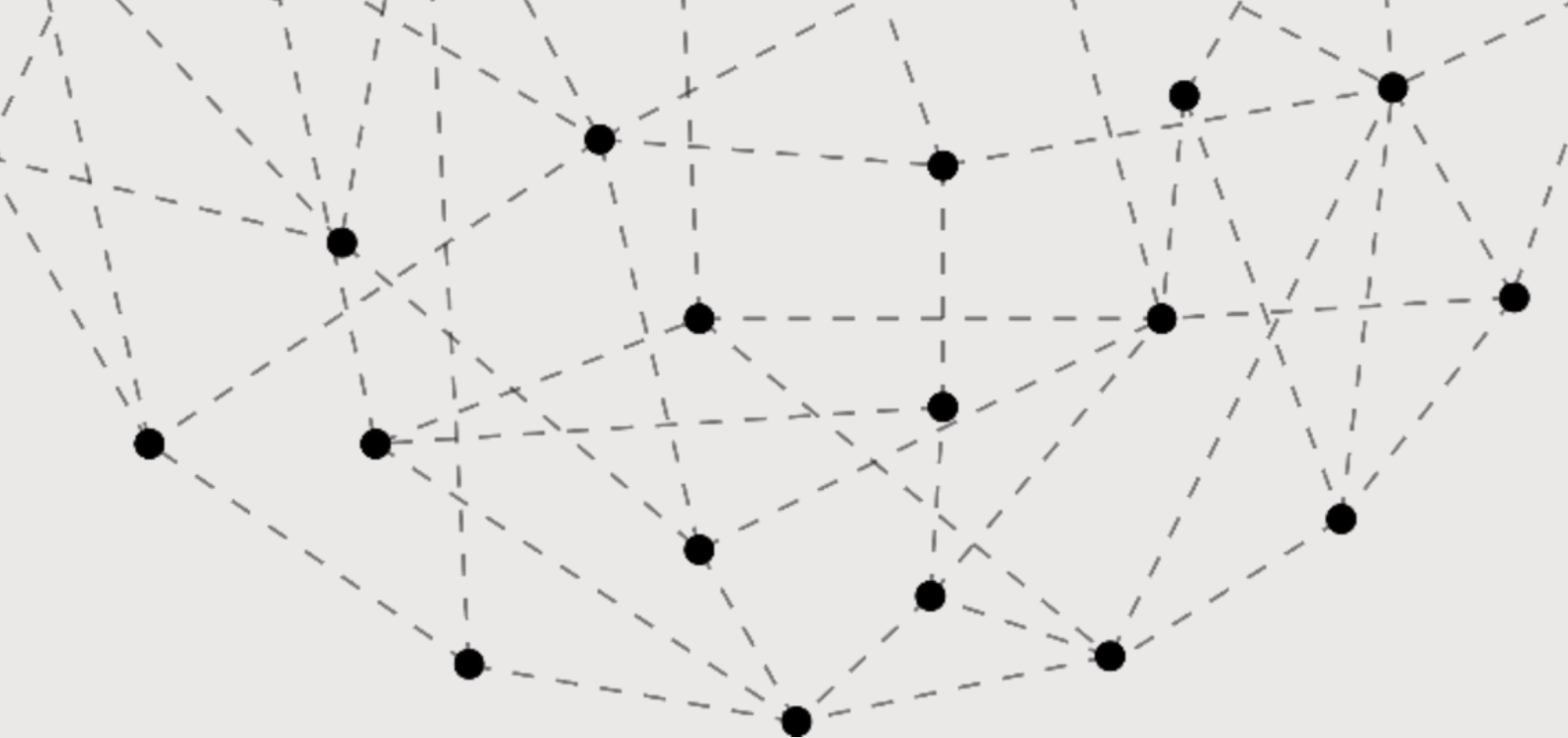
Due to the need for qualification and updating of intelligence activity, it is considered relevant that the professionalization process becomes attractive, promoting intelligence analysts with the degree of specialization they acquire or seek to acquire through academic means. We argue here that intelligence as an academic discipline is as relevant as practice. In this sense, both would be integrated and complementary to intelligence training and training processes.

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