Corporate success tops the list of organizational milestones, most of the organizations, Government agencies, ministries, private companies and civil-society organizations equally strive for nothing but success in what they do. Companies that are in profit making business, their success is observed through the customers' satisfaction and the profit margin realized. In governmental institution success is realized in the implementation of national projects and the level of satisfaction among citizens for the services delivered to them. The secret behind attaining success in any organization of any magnitude is the clear definition of the business purpose, have organizational strategic goals must be set and last but not least an effective management principles as well as a clear balance between the hard and soft innovation. Despite acknowledging the fact that strong management principles may place the company on the success sit, it is also worth mentioning that management principles alone cannot sustain the status without paying attention to strategic alignment. Strategic alignment has a variety of importance, impact and benefits which will be vastly discussed throughout this paper.

KEYWORDS: IT Strategies, Strategic Planning, Technology Adoption, Alignment
INTRODUCTION

The department of Information Technology is charged with the responsibility of providing support, guidance and advice to all line functions/departments in the Organization, this support usually includes but not limited to the application and use of technology in business as well as innovation to improve business processes in the company with the aim of creating an enabling environment and maximizing business productivity (Cassidy, 2006). In addition, ICT units provide and manage ICT infrastructure and the same time collaborate with business units in order to fulfil their information sharing needs. This gives birth to the concept and the necessity to align business and IT strategies in-order to facilitate smooth operation across line functions.

This Research in a form of an assessment was undertaken among three (3) departments of National Planning Commission with the intent to:

- Measure the extent of the three (3) departments’ business strategies are aligned to the Information Technology’s strategy.
- Measure the different departments’ performance in the current status.
- Develop a model that will serve as a guide during strategic planning.

The focus of the project was to gain knowledge on how business and IT/IS strategies should be aligned to each other and test the hypotheses through further research and analysis of the qualitative data to be collected. It is also worth mentioning that this project is a 100 percent academic initiative by a student researcher, supported by the academic staff as sponsors. The research has been conducted within National Planning Commission of Namibia, guided by the academic terms and conditions of the University of Liverpool and the information and deliverables produced by this undertake should be regarded as academic materials belonging to the University.

Due to time and budget constraints the model developed had no implement guidelines/manual developed for it. The need for an implementation guidelines/manual and the actual implementation of the model was acknowledged but one would agree with me that implementation is another process that requires intensive consultations with the affected departments as well as management sensitization in the organization. In the interest of time and other factors, it is worth indicating that the implementation guideline/manual and the actual implementation have been left out for future development.

According to Advanced Business Consulting (2015) strategic alignment refers to a business process re-design, a process in which you re-align your strategic goals, the business model and process, the company culture and the key business/strategic
objectives and core values. When employees in an organization fully understand and accept your organizational goals, they are likely to develop a sense of ownership and usually make it in achieving organizational goals which translates to an amazing organizational performance. While it is true that a good strategic alignment leads to a satisfactory performance, the opposite is also true for the lack of strategic alignment in an organization can result into a failure. It is believed that a misalignment of business processes and organizational culture are the factors identified to be contributing to company failure. A company failure that comes as a result of the employees loose of business focus may also result in the company losing customers as the customers have in one way or another lost faith in the company. Effective planning in IT units, the IT workforce can increase organizational productivity, through information systems that carry out the actually processing of resource and transform the resources into usable ideas.

**Literature Review**

The literature review looked at existing studies in the same area as the research area of this project. This includes evaluating the content, summarize and evaluate the stories told by other authors. Besides gathering so much information about that specific area, it also helps one to understand your idea and establish the nature of the project. Literature goes the mare search for information, literature reviews would also identify and articulate relationships between existing literature and one's main research idea. What singles out an idea is identifying what has been done in that area and as a researcher you need to point out the gaps that exist in previous researches.

Bergeron, et al. (2003), believes it is very crucial to understand how a strategic alignment of IT and Business can translate to increased performance through Information Technology (IT) investments. Companies employ technology in their operations mostly in response to the rapidly changing world. Technology changes the ways of doing things either through a model or system solutions. The author also believes that Technology can be looked at as the mediating force between company processes, an important idea mentioned in this paper by Bergeron, et al. (2003). Is the alignment of strategies with the aim of achieving planning mechanisms and standardized applications development and implementation approaches; The research conducted by Bergeron, et al(2003), was a two-fold, on one side it looked at the relationship between IT and business strategies and on the other hand it analyzed the relationship between business and IT structure. The re-searcher's main objective was to establish the existence of the relationship between IT and Business strategy. Now that the existence has been established, I intend to take my efforts as further as identifying the relationship between IT/Business strategy alignment and company performance, develop a model that will serve as a guideline or a tool to be used by Government institutions.

Schwalbe (2014, pp. 146), echoed a similar concern of the challenge faced by organizations in sensitizing managers of line departments to understand the possibilities offered by technology as well as the limitation thereof. Understanding the importance of technology in the business operations leads to keeping the information technology professionals in tune with the changing business needs. Schwalbe
(2014), is equally a strong believer that Information Technology project selection should be guided by the strategic plan in place. IT has its focus on supporting the organization in achieving its business goals, and as a result a clear strategy on how to use IT to achieve the defined goals is a must do.

Revenaugh and Cook (2013) also looked at some issues world organizations face with regards to Information Systems implementation and business alignment, the authors used the Department of Defense as an example, the department had legacy systems and they authors explored the implementation of ERP systems in an attempt to determine the impact of ERP systems on the alignment of the Department business and IT strategy. The main objective was to carry out a study on the impact of the Department's goals of strategic alignment. Revenaugh and Cook pointed out how the world moved from the mentality of viewing Information Technology (IT) as an expense than seeing it as an enabler of business value. Like many other authors they strongly believed failure to leverage Information Technology may hamper company's performance.

In Australia a similar research was conducted with the aim to explore factors related to IT and Business alignment in organizations, this was carried out in five medium and large organizations with the intent to identify if and how I.T supported the organizational goals. Farrell (2003) indicated that the research was not intend-ed on comparing the use of Information Technology against financial performance of the sampled organizations. Similar to that undertake is the approach to the data collection which used interviews with senior officials of respective firms in seek for a holistic opinion, differently this project aimed at identifying the extent to which National Planning Commission of Namibia has its Organizational and I.T strategies are aligned with the assumption that some alignment/link existed be-tween these two important document/plans.

Tallon and Kraemer (2003) in a similar study investigated the relationship between strategic alignment and the benefits there of. An analysis was carried out on sur-vey data from over sixty (60) companies and the study revealed the existence of a significant link between strategic alignment and the benefits from IT irrespective of the company's strategic orientation or the focus of their IT units. The authors also noted that despite the strive for strategic alignment for IT business value, executives have been cautioned to enforce this principle with care as it may lock the organization into inflexibility and will have difficulties in reacting to environmen-tal issues.

REFERENCES


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