UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY-ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY ALIGNMENT IN PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS IN THE GAMBIA

MOMODOU SABALLY

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SUPERVISOR:

PROF. TIMOTHY MWOLOLO WAEMA

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DECLARATION

This project proposal is my original work and has not been presented for any examination in any other institution.

MOMODOU SABALLY

Signature …… Date 16 August 2023 ……

Supervisors' Approval

The study project has been submitted for Departmental review with our approval as the internal supervisors.

Signature: Date: 16th August, 2023

Prof. Timothy Mwololo Waema

School of Computing and Informatics

University of Nairobi

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved family, whose unwavering love, support, and encouragement have been the driving force behind my academic pursuits. Their sacrifices, guidance, and belief in me have been the foundation of my success, and I am forever grateful for their presence in my life.

I also dedicate this thesis to wife whose support and inspiration have helped me persevere through difficult times and overcome challenges. Her presence in my life has been a constant reminder of the importance of compassion, perseverance, and self-belief in achieving one's goals.

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ABSTRACT

Organizations and information technology managers have shared a common concern over the alignment of organisational strategy and information technology. IT-organizational strategy alignment plays a significant role in ensuring that IT investments lead to enhancements in organizational performance. There is a gap between IT expenditure and service delivery in public organizations. The purpose of this study is to examine the information technology organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. The objectives of the study are: to investigate practices of information technology organizational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia; to evaluate the extent of information technology organizational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia and to assess the challenges of information technology organizational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. This study is guided by Strategic Alignment Model (SAM) and Waema's Business-IT strategic alignment maturity framework (2024). This study adopts a descriptive and case study research design. There are 13 state corporations under the purview of the ministry of finance and economic planning in the Gambia. Employees working at the headquarter offices in these organizations are the target population of this study.

Additionally, the study will employ non-probability size sampling to arrive at the number of employees per organization. Purposively sampling technique will be used to select participants in the organization. This study will use different strategy for data collection. Qualitative data will be analysed using narrative analysis. Results will be presented in the form of charts, tables and graphs.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ITOA	IT-Organizational Alignment
CIOs	Chief Information Officers
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IS	Information Systems
IT	Information Technology
ITG	Information Technology Governance
MBOs	Multi-Organizational Organizations
NPM	Net Profit Margin
PPM	Project Portfolio Management
ROA	Return on Assets
SAM	Strategic Alignment Maturity
SAMM	Strategic Alignment Maturity Model

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Aligning organizational and information technology (IT) is a top management priority for firms all over the globe. Organizational-IT alignment is crucial for firms and has attracted a lot of interest from academic scholars over the past 25 years. Effectively integrating corporate plan alongside Technology shall benefit companies far beyond unsuccessful integration would (Chidinma & Bestman, 2022). IT includes all methods and strategies utilized for automatically handling and retrieving information. The tools can be any mix of computers, telecommunications and office systems (Castellanos, 2021). Information technology is actually the management of information using computers and software. Alignment is a more advanced form of integration, where IT is integrated along with key objectives as well as base strengths of the firm. Alignment also refers to the ability to show a positive correlation between information technologies and the generally accepted financial measures of performance (Mongale et al.,2021).

In order to achieve organizational objectives like increased efficiency and optimal return on investment, organizations must integrate IT with organizational strategy. The goals might not be achieved, though, due to the quick changes in both the organizational environment and technology. It may be challenging to anticipate such disruptions while developing organizational and IT strategies, some of which may not have been addressed or anticipated by experts in time. It can be thought that it is unrealistic to integrate IT with organizational strategy in light of the stated rapid organizational and technology developments. This creates the impression that IT is left out of the overall strategy plan (Slim et al.,2021).

Collou (2021) states that a system consists of integrated hardware, software, personnel, processes and data with the aim of gathering, storing, processing, sending and displaying information. The organization's capabilities, its work processes, its people and its development and execution methodologies all work together to decide how well that mission is realized.

Globally, organizations strive to align their organizational operations with information technology. According to Renaud and Bot (2018), all organizations in the United States of America use IT. The organizational purpose of the IT organizations in larger companies is to provide and manage IT infrastructure and applications to support the company's organizational goals. The goals of the IT organization must be in line with the strategic requirements of the organizational, regardless of whether the IT function has been outsourced or is housed within a company. Finding the right balance between the firm's available supply and the demand for IT is frequently difficult. The majority of IT companies have limited capacity to perform tasks other than the incremental ones required to maintain the organizational urgent demands. A process-ambidexterity framework for IT enhances the entrepreneurial skills of the IT organization, which in turn better aligns the IT function with the company's organizational operations. Process ambidexterity makes use of process adaptability and alignment. It's advantageous for individuals in charge of IT, the executives who oversee IT, and their colleagues in the organizational functions that rely on IT to enable process alignment in the IT department and process ambidexterity generally.

According to Vatharkar et al. (2018), the primary elements that may influence the alignment of organizational and IT strategies in the United Kingdom include organizational culture and the provision and acknowledgment of skills. Information technology governance (ITG) has been highlighted as an organizational capability of major importance for IT strategy alignment and the

delivery of organizational through IT in Brazil (Tonelli et al.,2017). The outcomes and significance of ITG are not well understood, nevertheless. IT performance and organizational performance are favorably associated. The relationship between IT and a company determines how well IT performs and also has a favorable relationship with organizational performance. IT performance is not significantly connected with decision structure or process maturity. In India, Sharma and Behl (2020) emphasize that, in the current organizational climate, information technology (IT) must be strategically aligned with the enterprises' main activities. IT connection, IT infrastructure, and IT human resources all have a big impact on how IT strategically aligns with organizational. A company's IT investments and expenses are in line with its organizational goals and priorities.

Ajibade and Mutula (2020) acknowledge that efforts to promote regional integration in Africa over the past 20 years have not produced noticeable progress. Despite few proof of swift continental trade and the integration of monetary facilities in Africa, the current status order continues. To foster regional cooperation and establish a United States of Africa with a unified monetary and fiscal structure, economic integration is a viable and alternative strategy. The failure to harness technological innovation and match it with regional integration would improve organizational effectiveness. African economic integration should be implemented via a organizational and IT alignment strategy.

Sibanda and Ramrathan (2017) observe that the exponential growth of information technology has created opportunities and challenges in South Africa. How firms employ information technology and integrate it into their strategy to fully utilize its powers as an enabler is a fundamental challenge. There isn't much empirical data on how information technology affects organizational strategy because it changes so quickly. In order to help organizations, align their

information technology and organizational strategy, the Strategic Alignment Model is widely used. However, as technology advanced, it's possible that this model is no longer useful. Organizations must therefore identify the variables that influence this alignment. Organizations must be more adaptable in their organizational structures and tactics as consumers gain greater influence. Information technology and strategy can be better aligned when cross-functional responsibilities are integrated at the management level of a firm.

Although the South African government invests a lot of money in IT projects, its success has lagged behind that of other nations (Gertzen et al.,2022). This can be clearly linked to lack of IT-Organizational strategic alignment in organizations.

Many organizations believe that the failure of IT efforts is the cause of their inability to realize their strategic vision (Sibanda & Ramrathan ,2017). Several public sector firms have reached a level of maturity where their IT portfolios are tied to the organization to ensure strategy alignment. This does not support their organizational strategy. PPM procedures are not in line with the advantages and projected strategic vision of South African organizations. The priorities of the PPM do not reflect prudent investment and a balanced portfolio (Gertzen et al.,2022). Organizations encounter difficulties in guaranteeing effective and efficient resource allocation. PPM projects require governance because there is potential for risk to obstruct portfolio success throughout the project portfolio lifecycle.

Planning, rational-adaptation in information systems planning, IT managerial resources, and the success of IT implementation are all elements that are likely to affect congruence. However, organizational circumstances, particularly time of the study, and the person whose opinion is being sought all play a significant role in determining their relative value (Prayitno,2020).

The development of e-government has led to ongoing improvement. Organizations are still working to computerize their operations. It will thus take time for an IT governance strategy to develop. IT is dynamic, making it challenging to integrate with organization strategy. IT might not always be engaged in creating the overall organizational strategy (Mgunda, 2019). Organizational units could be unaware of or neglect IT dynamism and other unpredictable aspects, such as management and client behavior, and situations that necessitate regular system adjustments and re-inventions. Constant rearranging of personnel and resources during organizational changes is necessary for an organization to maintain its competitiveness (Lailah & Soehari, 2020).

IT-Organizational strategy alignment is Each of the key drivers of technology achievement for a firm, (Njanka et al.,2021). Utilizing technology in an efficient and suitable way in accordance with the strategies, objectives, and requirements of the company can have a significant positive impact on an organization. Among these advantages are improved member cooperation, rivals edge, improved effectiveness, higher ROI, procedural assistance, as well as expansion. Despite the unavoidable advantages, organizations nevertheless encounter significant obstacles in creating a culture of openness and humility between information technology and organizational strategy. These difficulties include poor communication, poor return on IT investments, a lack of technologically savvy workers, and competing agendas.

The coherence of the IT and corporate strategies is influenced by conceptual insertion, functional insertion, corporate fit, and Technology fit. Operations created and implemented by companies to strengthen their marketplace rivalry are included in IT-organizational strategy alignment activities. From the four stages of IT-Organizational strategy alignment, they can be deduced (Sharma & Behl, 2020). Planning, modeling, managing, and measuring are some of these tasks.

Planning is the process of converting organizational goals into quantifiable information system services.

IT- Organizational Alignment (ITOA) is still among the top management priorities in many organizations due to its strategic advantages. Understanding the value of ITOA in enhancing organizational performance and achieving a competitive edge has been emphasized (Luftman,2000). ITOA is a dynamic process that requires ongoing adjustment by organizations. Additionally, additional information on the obstacles to ITOA in other organizations is still needed. Managers of organizational and information technology should work to achieve and sustain organizational-IT alignment and enhance organizational performance.

The gap between what organizational managers need and expect and what information systems give is closed by research. Infrastructure is designed through modeling to maximize commercial value. It pinpoints the assets required to provide information systems services at anticipated service levels (Sharma & Behl, 2020). Driving results through centralized service support is part of management. In the management phase, the IT personnel are able to provide the stated service levels. Measuring helps operations run more smoothly and verifies commitments. It enhances organizational transparency of operations and service levels (Sharma & Behl, 2020).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

For many years, organizational and IT managers have shared a common concern over the alignment of organizational and information technology strategy. IT organizational strategy alignment plays a significant role in ensuring that IT investments lead to enhancements in organizational performance. Public organizations, many of whom have made significant IT investments, are very concerned about alignment. For organizations in the public sector, achieving alignment between organizational and IT strategy is challenging. There is a gap between IT expenditure and service delivery in public organizations. Despite the fact that IT and service delivery are frequently treated independently, alignment might not be easily achievable. Lack of agreement and clarity, wherein many parties pursue various objectives, poses a major problem.

In order for an organization to be aligned, people must be involved; otherwise, alignment is hampered. Another resource barrier is one in which resource allocation and alignment are unrelated. The majority of public organizations have separate budgeting and planning procedures. This is related to the management barrier where it is difficult to get feedback on how the strategy is being applied and whether it is effective. To be successful, according to many scholars, the procedure must have the full backing of the management (Luftman, 2000, Henderson and Venkatraman, 1993,1999).

Previous studies have not adequately dealt with IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations. Most of the studies focus on private organisations and small and medium enterprises, hence presenting a knowledge gap. Chanyagorn and Kungwannarongkun (2017) investigated the readiness of IT integration in private firms. Additionally, Lailah and Soehari

(2020) explored the impact of IT on organizational operations and innovation. Mongale et al. (2021) investigated IT alignment in commercial banks in South Africa. Slim et al. (2021) examined the effect IT-Organizational strategy alignment in small and medium enterprises in Iraq. Other studies used secondary data for analysis (Njanka et al.,2021), hence a methodological gap. Yet, other studies were carried out in other jurisdictions (Yami & Joghataei,2018; Chidinma & Bestman, 2022), hence a contextual gap. It is thus important to focus on public organisations, which operates for the provision of services and products to its citizens. Alignment might provide difficulties that need to be managed carefully if unwanted organizational and IT costs are to be avoided. Given the difficulty of IT alignment, it can be argued that organizational and IT strategies are separate entities. This study, therefore, focus on IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to gain deeper understanding of the information technology organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia.

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

i. To investigate practices of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia
ii. To evaluate the extent of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia.
iii. To assess the challenges of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The administration of public organizations may benefit from this study. The unstable environment of today necessitates the development of an IT-based sustainable competitive advantage. This study could be helpful as a guide when developing an organizational strategy for public organizations that integrates IT. The results of the study will explain the difficulties in aligning information technology and organizational strategy within public organizations. The results of this study may be helpful to IT policy makers as they make decisions in the future about organizational strategy alignment. The results may be applied to determine how IT might be used to enhance performance.

This study would be crucial to researchers. The study would add to knowledge on information technology organisational strategy alignment in public organisations. As a result, the study would serve as a valuable source of information for other academics and researchers interested in the same field or a similar one. Finally, the study would be important to all readers. Information technology organizational strategy alignment is currently well-known and gaining popularity throughout society.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The respondents' attitudes and way of responding to the survey and interviews cannot be controlled by the researcher. This will be mitigated through a request for respondents' honesty in responding to the survey questions and ensuring that all questions can clearly be understood and easily interpreted by the respondents. Obtaining data from staff might prove difficult because of the exclusive nature of the information to be sought from them. To tackle this problem, the

researcher will assure them that the data collected would be treated confidentially and that it would only be used for academic purposes.

1.7 Delimitations of the Study

The study is limited to examining the IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. The study will thus focus on practices, extent and challenges of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia.

The study acknowledges that there could be other facets of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. However, only the aforementioned ones will be focused on by the study. The study will be carried out within a specified time frame and scope. The study will only issue survey questions and conduct interviews with the respondents who are willing and comfortable to participate. This is geared towards achieving confidentiality.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The study is limited to examination IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. The study focus is on the practices, extent and challenges of information technology organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

While conducting this study, a variety of assumptions will be made. It is expected that the respondents are aware of the concept of information technology organisational strategy alignment and will be able to provide the study with the relevant and accurate facts and information required. Additionally, it is assumed that the respondents will provide honest, and unbiased responses

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses literature relevant to the study. Accordingly, the study's theoretical framework, empirical review, and suggested conceptual framework are all discussed. The chapter adopts a systematic review of literature, based on the research objectives that is: practices of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations, extent of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organisations and challenges of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organisations.

2.2 Empirical Review

This section discusses studies of information technology organisational strategy alignment in public organisations. The practices, extent, challenges of information technology organizational strategy alignment in public organisations are discussed.

2.2.1 Practices of Information Technology Organizational Strategic Alignment in Public Organizations

According to Vatharkar and Fomin (2018), organizational performance is impacted by the alignment of organizational and information technology strategies. An entire organization is involved in the alignment the elements influencing realignment throughout top executive level have received considerable focus within writings. Therefore, it is of a strong feeling that a study of IT- Organizational strategy is required more specially in the public organizational domains and more emphasis on the strategic level, as it is the driving force.

Overall, structure, process, and relational mechanisms play a vital role in IT-Organizational strategy alignment. IT management must focus on designing and implementing an appropriate organizational structure, establishing effective processes, and fostering positive relationships to ensure that IT initiatives are aligned with organizational strategies. By addressing these factors, organizations can enhance their operational efficiency, drive innovation, and achieve their strategic goals through the effective use of information technology.

Table 1: Overview of IT Governance Practices (adopted from Schlosser & Wagner, 2011)

IT Governance Structures					
ID	Practices (references)	Description	Importance (From 1-5; mean)	Agreements with practice	Impacted alignment level
S1(Structure)	Joint steering committee (Luftman & Kempaiah 2007)	Committee at top level to prepare and make decisions, and to ensure transparent communication	4.88	8	Strategic
S2(Structure)	Organizational structure (Luftman & Kempaiah 2007)	General structure (hierarchy, Degree of specialization standardization, …)	4.25	8	Strategic
S3(Structure)	Role of IT within the organization (Tallon et al. 2000)	Strategic role of IT within the organization	3.75	7	Strategic
IT Governance Processes					
ID	Practice (references)	Description	Importance (From 1-5; mean)	Agreements with practice	Impacted alignment level
P1(Process)	Joint coordination of	Process to align business and IT	4.75	8	Strategic

	IT and business goals (Reich & Benbasat 1996)	Goals			
P2(Process)	Joint coordination of investment planning (Luftman & Kempaiah 2007	Process to transparently evaluate and prioritize IT investments	4.75	8	Strategic
P3(Process)	Joint coordination of IT and business plans (Chan 2002)	Process to formulate strategy in cooperation of business and IT	4.50	8	Strategic
P4(Process)	Reporting between IT and business (Luftman & Kempaiah 2007)	Process to regularly report relevant IT issues to the business	3.75	8	Strategic
P5(Process)	Joint financial controlling and budget responsibility in IT projects (Künkele,2007)	Process to control IT budgets in all project/product/service phases	3.63	8	Strategic
P6(Process)	*Joint definition of roles and responsibilities*	Process to ensure that business and IT conjointly take responsibility for decisions, actions, and risks	3.38	8	Strategic
P7(Process)	*Consideration of business requirements for strategic service management*	Process to define service catalogues and service level agreements	3.13	7	Strategic
IT governance relational mechanisms					
ID	Practice (references)	Description	Importance (From 1-5; mean)	Agreements with practice	Impacted alignment level
R1(Relational)	Strategic meetings	Frequency and effectiveness of (formal) strategic	4.38	7	Strategic

	between IT and business (frequency+ effectiveness)	business/IT meetings on various issues			
R2(Relational)	IT management participates in business planning (Kearns & Sabherwal 2006)	Frequency and intensity of top IT Managers being involved in business planning	3.50	8	Strategic
R3(Relational)	Business management participates in IT planning (Kearns & Sabherwal 2006)	Frequency and intensity of top Business managers being involved in IT planning	3.50	6	Strategic

The above table gives a clear and brief understanding of the IT Governance practices in few selected organizations. Though, a wider investigation to multiple industries is needed. It is evident that alignment between IT and Organizational strategy cannot be achieved without the effective practices of the three (3) stated practices structure, process and relational mechanism. These practices are key in IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations. The table is structured in accordance with previous research (e.g., De Haes & Van Grembergen 2009).

Furthermore, there is evidence from the literature that steering committee involving both IT and Business forms the highest and most crucial element (Luftman & Kempaiah 2007). This will act as the first step in aligning IT and organizational strategy. It promotes clearly defined goals and objectives of the organization, and, provide a clear direction for the IT department to align their strategy and resources accordingly. The joint coordination of IT and Business goal and a joint coordination of investment planning in the process mechanism practice indicates high

importance in strategic alignment in an organization. This supports the assumption that IT should be involved in the strategic planning process from the beginning to ensure that their capabilities and resources are aligned with the organization's strategic goals. This will also enable IT to provide valuable input on how technology can be used to achieve those goals.

Sharma and Behl (2020) argue that in the current organizational environment, information technology alignment must be a part of an organization's core activity. Their results demonstrated that three IT aspects, namely IT connection, IT infrastructure, and IT human resources, had a substantial impact on the IT strategic alignment of organizations. An organization's IT investments and expenses are in line with its organizational goals and priorities. Hence, it is vital for this study to consider the practice of IT connection, IT human resources and IT infrastructure an influencing factor in creating IT – Organizational strategic alignment in public organizations. Also, without disconnecting the practices of aligning IT investment initiatives to reflect organizational strategy and goals.

2.2.2 Extent of Information Technology Organizational Strategic Alignment in Public Organizations

It has been found that Belfo and Sousa 2012 study had given dimensions and applications of Luftman model for IT business alignment. It is found that Luftman had focused on the dimensions of talents, IT, cooperation, leadership, and transparency. Particular framework had been given by Luftman and this study had given the various implications and importance of it. However, it is found that there have been some additions or contributions to this theory in recent time. Waema (2024), has added new dimensions and thinking to it after some years. In his contribution we could find an added extended outlook of Luftman model as he has added the dimension of external environment which is very important for IT- Organizational oriented

practices and its extension on strategy alignment. It is also found that various organization has tested the Waema's IT-Business strategy alignment maturity framework which is added in the conceptual framework and attempted for the first time in this country. This would provide new strategies and approaches for IT-Organizational strategy alignment implementation approaches in public organizations inThe Gambia.

Kitsios and Kamariotou (2019) evaluated information systems and digital organizational strategy. IT strategy has evolved into a functional-level strategy that must be in line with the organization's overall goals. The old business planning has been affected through these technological advances, leading CIOs to reevaluate the function of technology planning and create a fresh plan into a comprehensive phenomena dubbed "digital corporate plan." It combines digital resources with all of the functional and process techniques. Many organizational leaders believe that their IT team has a digital strategy. Digital strategy does not include particular technological communities, mobile apps, or systems that respond to straightforward customer requests. To increase productivity and deter rivals against replicating it, a digital organizational plan needs to be implemented with an increasingly transparent structure and significant asset appropriation methods. Yet, both internal and external to the organization considerations will affect how a digital strategy is implemented. IT executives are unsure about their position in the digital age and are unable to transition from being purely technological experts to organizational strategists. While many IT leaders think outsourcing is a good way to lower costs for producing IT, they fail to recognize the significance of using digital resources to develop new IT capabilities. IT leaders should use digital organizational strategy as a chance to differentiate themselves from rivals by creating and putting into practice successful digital organisational strategy plans. To concentrate on the stages of the strategic planning process and

improve organization performance, they might look beyond the conventional perspective of IT strategy and systems.

However, some organization extends to Project Portfolio Management which governance mostly focuses on monitoring spending rather than managing procedures and allocating money to programs and projects according to priority throughout the many components of the portfolio lifecycle. Along with the advantages of IT portfolio management, the paper lists significant obstacles to Project Portfolio Management success. It is therefore conceivable for scholars and practitioners to revisit ideas and practices with the objective of increasing effectiveness now that the challenges have been acknowledged (Prayitno,2020).

2.2.3 Challenges of Information Technology Organizational Strategic Alignment in Public Organizations

Despite the values that IT-Organization strategy alignment brings, we can still argue that there are still some remittance challenges for organizations to achieve alignment between IT and Organizational strategy.

Studies and experience have served as a focal point that explain to us that fusion between IT and Organizational strategy in short term is easy and adequate through specially designed process but achieving the same success and adequacy is much more challenging (Leganza, G., 2003). Many organizations seem to gauge their IT Business value through short term measures failing to consider the long-term business value of the implemented system. The long-term alignment has been identified as beneficial but difficult to attain factor. Hence, according to (Hu, Q. and C.D. Huang,2006) a holistic strategy that integrates and combines the immediate as well as long-term perspectives is necessary to achieve a mutually beneficial relationship amongst IT and

management. The continuous changes in the organizational and IT environments make it challenging to achieve mature alignment between the two (Ullah and Lai ,2018)

Luftman (2000) believes that an appropriate and timely alignment of organizational strategy and IT strategy can immensely contribute to achieving organizational performance. The study also revealed that many organizations fail in harmonizing the capabilities of IT for the organization's long-term value, as a results of certain identified inhibitors and enablers (Luftman et al., 1999).

One of the rate inhibitor or challenges in aligning IT-Organizational strategy is communication among the business domain and the IT domain which is supported by renowned researchers like Luftman and others. It is challenging for IT managers to present business challenges that are comprehensible from an IT perspective since they are plagued by imprecise and ambiguous business needs (Hayles Jr, R.A. 2007). According to (Njanka S Q, G Sandula, R C Palacios, 2021). It's difficult to build a successful IT-Business strategy without effective collaboration between IT managers and business leaders. The miscommunication can be rooted from the lack of understanding each other's domain where IT cannot comprehend what the organizational business is and what it wants and at the same time the organization/business management are not understanding the IT domain.

IT investment have been experiencing a lot of downsides in IT related projects without releasing the value or investment return in many developing public organizations. A contentious discussion about if "IT issues" to enterprises any longer began more than 10 years ago as a result of the increasing complexity of handling and obtaining productivity from IT (Hayles Jr, R.A, 2007).

It is evident that well-tailored training programs and awareness building are required to address the challenge of inadequate skills in the public organization. And, according to (Smith, H.A., J.D. Mckeen, and S. Singh, 2007) for business executives to comprehend each other across their industries, they require the appropriate training and knowledge. Studies have shown that the competence of both IT and Organizational business is evolving descriptively, therefore, IT and organizational managers should continuously equip themselves with training and learning new things to be able to strategize. It can be difficult for them to decide what kind of technology is best for the firm considering the variety of solutions for information technology available on the marketplace (Njanka, Sandula & Palacios, 2021). It is from this backdrop that IT – Organizational strategy alignment is essential and the continuous training of both IT and organizational manager to acquire the most up to date solutions. How organizations employ information technology and integrate it into their strategy to fully utilize its powers as an enabler is a fundamental challenge (Sibanda and Ramrathan, 2017).

The lack of support from the organizational executive specially in the public organizations which is characterized with rigid bureaucracy tends to experience difficulties in attaining IT – Organizational strategy alignment. It has been reported by several studies and listed on the top chart as an inhibitor by Luftman (1999 Absence of assistance might result in financial issues and wasted possibilities for creative data technology applications. Without, the senior executive support IT initiatives are set to lack championship thereby acting as a major challenge in achieving IT-Organizational strategy alignment.

The table below list the enablers and inhibitors of IT-Organizational strategic alignment. The more we minimize the inhibitors and maximize the enabler, it will result to alignment of IT and Organizational strategy in an organization.

ENABLERS	INHIBITORS
Senior executive support for IT	IT/Business lack close relationships
IT involved in strategy development	IT does not prioritize well
IT understands the business	IT fails to meet its commitments
Business-IT partnership	IT does not understand business
Well-prioritized IT projects	Senior executives do not support IT
IT demonstrates leadership	IT management lacks leadership

Table 2: Inhibitors and Enablers of Business-IT Alignment (Luftman et al., 1999)

2.2.4 Comparison of Different Frameworks Studied

Table 3: Comparison of Different Frameworks Studied

Author(s)	Method (s)	Organizations/ Subjects	Issues Examined/Domain	Findings
Waema (2024)	• Framework development	Theoretical	• The elements of Luftman's (2000) SAM were further developed.	• The creation of a SAM that measures congruence across the 11 categories and shows the degree of alignment (IT Business).
Henderson & Thomas (1992)	• Model testing • Case study	Case study of Hospital	• A case investigation involving a hospital setting and the SAM model • Examined how strategy fits into the larger idea of organizations. • It has been argued that aligning IT and business objectives is not enough.	• The creation of a SAM that assessed alignment across two categories and four domains to evaluate the degree of congruence (between company operations and IT). Hospitals should use this. • 2 categories (strategic integration and fit) • 4 domains (IT infrastructure, hospital IT strategy, hospital business strategy, hospital infrastructure)
Henderson & Venkatraman (1993) (1999)	• Model development	No Data	• Model Development – re-fined SAM model • Companies' inability to derive value through IT because of an	• The four categories were identical as in the previous model, but their elements were updated. • Recognizes the identical two categories as the earlier version (SAM)

			absence of coordination between IT and business	
Luftman, Lewis and Oldach (1993)	• Framework development • Case study	Case study of IBM	• Added to the organizational framework and procedures, technological infrastructure and procedures, corporate strategy and IT planning factors. • ITG was recognized as a component of the IT strategy triangle.	• Defined the oversight of IT defined the degree of technology possession, the potential for technological partnerships, or combination. • Explains in more detail the components of the IT strategy, computer systems, and procedures for IT, as well as the tactical application of IT and operational integration. • Believes there is a connection between each of the four areas • Based on SAM model, Develops the Strategic Alignment Framework (SAF)
Henderson & Venkatraman (1991)	Model development	No Data	• Model Development - SAM	• Development of SAM • Conceptual Fit and Operational Integration are the two aspects that have been established) • Established four categories: business planning, information technology tactics, structure of the organization & operations, and information technology design & operations

Henderson (1990)	Conceptual Model development	Interviews with senior line executives (28 interviews conducted)	• Building productive working connections between staff members and information systems managers is crucial.	• Offered a model that describes the idea of a cooperation between company as well as information systems executives • A broad Business-IS connection was offered.
Luftman (2003)	Assessment methodology development	Tested on 50 global 2000 companies	• outlines six requirements for IT business position, sometimes known as maturity groups: interactions, value/ competency measurements, administration, collaboration, technological dimension, and capabilities.	• Created models of maturity for every one of the six main criteria's subdivisions. • Creates an organizational strategic cooperation evaluation score.
Sledgianowski and Luftman (2005)	Case study Measurement tool development	International specialty chemicals manufacturer	• To evaluate the level of strategic aligning over six standards, the case study company used the SAM Assessment (SAMA) concept.	• Contrasted initial evaluations of strategic coordination with subsequent evaluations • Due to the tracking technology being used to the firm, cash flow, amounts of debt, and the number of workers have all improved.

Luftman, Papp & Brier (1999)	Interviews	Interviews conducted at IBM's International Commercial School with companies and information technology executives	• 12 elements of congruence are listed. • Determines factors that aid or interfere with business/IT synchronization • Examines the findings of a multi-year planning assessment. • SAM mode was used.	• Discovered that key drivers for IT include strong administrative backing, IT involvement in strategy formulation, IT understanding of the company, business-IT relationship, well-prioritized IT initiatives, and IT that exhibits management. • Business and IT don't get along well, IT prioritizes poorly, IT breaks promises, IT doesn't understand company, and top managers refuse to back IT.
Luftman & Brier (1999)	Surveys	Executives attending classes at IBM's Advanced Business Institute	• Lists the top 6 strategic cooperation drivers and obstacles. • 12 elements of congruence are listed.	• Highlights the elements that firms with effective alignment focus on • Highlights the essential success elements for the steering group

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The strategic alignment model and Waema's Business-IT alignment maturity framework are the key frameworks that will guide this study.

2.3.1 The Strategic Alignment Model (SAM)

The SAM framework for strategy alignment indicates that strategy is a continuous process in an organization, and aligning the internal and external domains is crucial to attaining competitive advantage in the market place. The majority of research depends on the Strategic Alignment Model (SAM), which Henderson and Venkatraman (1993, 1999) developed to gauge the degree of strategic alignment in businesses (Avison et al., 2004). The model proposed four different strategy domains: organizational process and infrastructure, business strategy, IT strategy, and IT infrastructure and process and sub divided into twelve components. The alignment of the four (4) domains can easily help an organization thrive in the ever-changing business and IT environment. According to the authors, the model is built on two solid foundations: strategic fit and functional integration, where each block has an internal and external domain.

The exterior area, which pertains to the competitive marketplace remains the organization's primary objective and involved with judgments regarding corporate scope, distinctive competency, and governance. Strategic planning is the name given to this field. As opposed to the interior area, which is focused on decisions that determine the organizational structure, the design or redesign of crucial managerial procedures, and the advancement of capacities for human resources. Corporate structures and procedures are the name given to this area. Based to its technical magnitude, system abilities, and oversight of IT, a company's standing in the field of

information technology is an issue of the exterior sector in the field of IT planning. IT planning is the phrase for this area. The inner field, on the contrary, is focused on the way the computer system should be set up and handled in relation to its design, procedures, and capabilities. Strategic cohesion at the level of the business, according to Hua (2007), can only take place when 3 of the 4 business sectors are in agreement (Henderson & Venkatraman, 1989).. This indicates that a change in one domain automatically affects the other domains. This classification of IT and organizational strategy makes it easy for a proper assessment of strategic alignment in organizations. The SAM's constantly changing behavior also enables it to identify linkages across domains (Henderson and Venkatraman, 1993).

However, other studies (Becker, S., 1997) argue that the idea behind the alignment of strategies is that computer technological advances and company strategies must coincide in order to give businesses a competitive advantage and deliver successful remedies. In contrast, Henderson, J.C., N. Venkatraman, and S. Oldach (1996) suggest that in order to maximize a company's rivalry prospective, "plan fit" and "significant incorporation" must be taken into account. and enhance alignment. SAM addresses the strategic integration of organizational and IT strategies; in this context, it is referred to as a driver. On the other hand, it is referred to as a catalyst when addressing the operational accord of business procedures and organization and IT systems and organization. This skill makes it possible for the structure to be thoroughly researched in order to aid in the comprehension of this study. According to Maes et al. (2000), the SAM framework does not take into account all the important variables that affect how organizational strategy and IT are aligned; these variables go beyond the horizontal component (Strategy and IT). The process of aligning organizational strategy into IT is actually influenced by many other factors like social, financial, political and cultural.

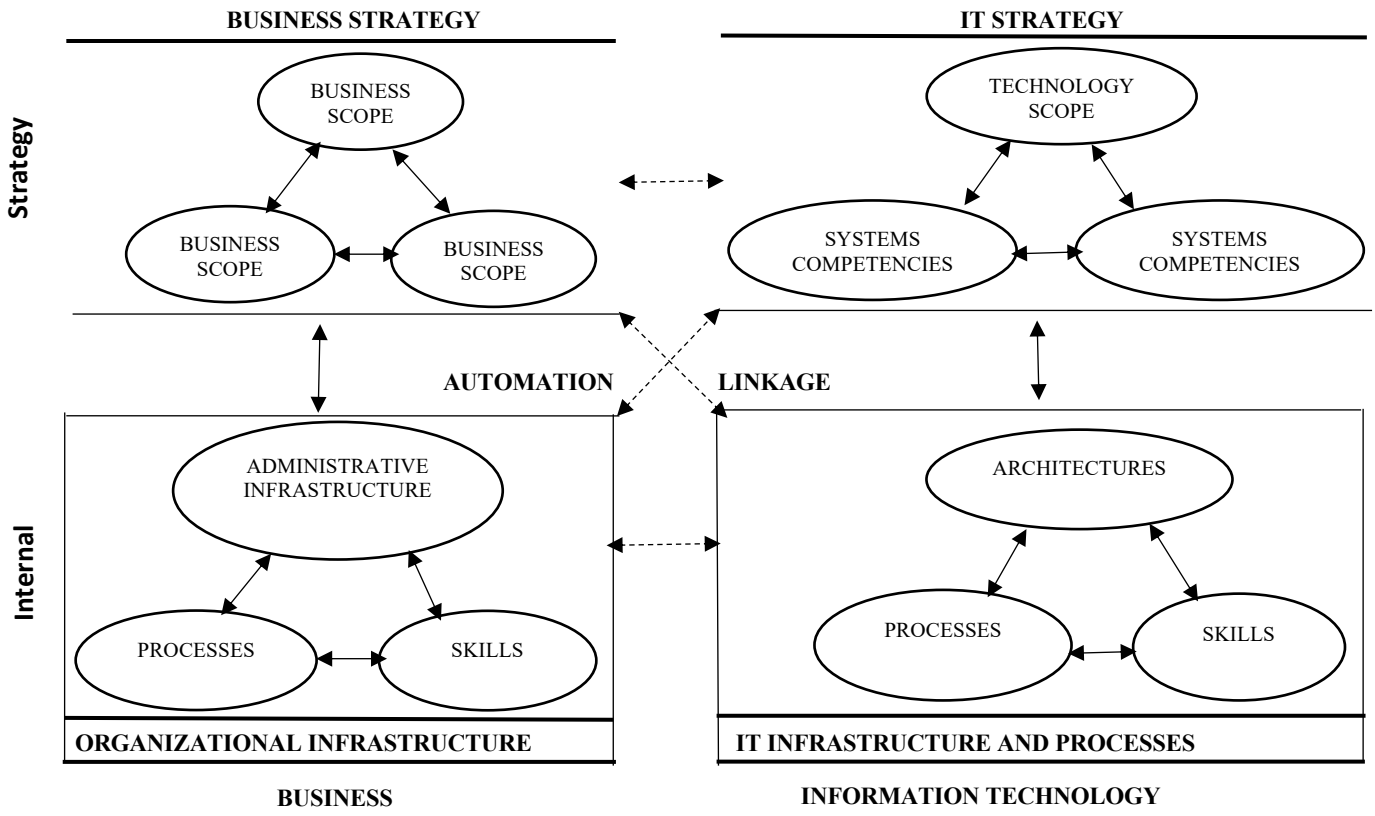
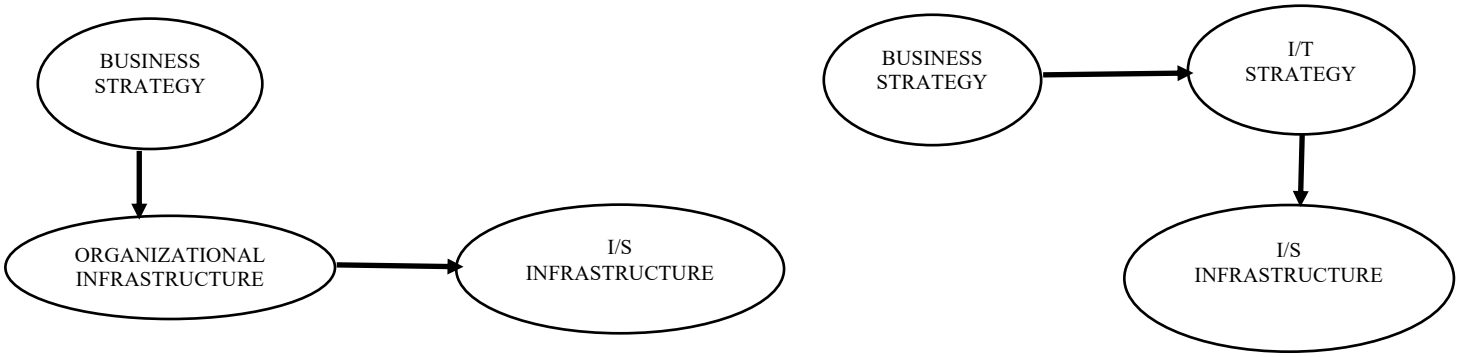


Figure 2.1: Strategic Alignment Model (SAM) (Henderson & Venkatraman, 1993)

With regards to the cross-domain relationship the first two cross-domain relationship is realized only when the organizational strategy is recognized as the driver. Which takes the strategic execution perspective, adopting the classic view strategic management and the most common practice in organizations. The corporate approach is thus trusted to serve as the foundational area between the corporate layout and the IT framework. The additional perspective is known as "technology evolution," and it involves using the strategy for IT, structures, and procedures to evaluate the execution of a chosen business plan. Thus, making the IT strategy the anchor domain in the organization. This is normally realized in high information intensive organization. The remaining perspectives occur if IT enhanced organizational strategies with related implications. The business's new IT capabilities are tied to the economic prospective viewpoint, that will have a great influence on organizational strategy and strategy execution within the

organization. It results to generating new processes and interorganizational capabilities for valuable resources. Finally, the service level perspective alignment aims IT client requirements are produced in this way, and an additional function of a company's approach is to generate by creating goals that encourage consumer interest. It guarantees an effective application of IT in businesses.

Furthermore, looking into the types of perspectives from the framework, we believed that the research objective one (assessing the IT-Organizational strategy alignment practices in public organization in the Gambia) can be well addressed by the first two type of perspectives specifically, thoughts regarding the compatibility of IT transition and plan implementation. Because these are the two (2) perspectives that are likely to be dominant in the public organization in the Gambia for my case study.



Strategy Executive Alignment Perspective

Technology Transformation Perspective

Figure 2.2: The first two cross-domain relationship of SAM

2.3.2 Strategic Alignment Maturity Model (SAMM)

This model was proposed by Luftman et al. (2008). According to the model, alignment includes both how the organization and technology are aligned as well as how they could or should be. Alignment is often used interchangeably with words like integrate, fit, and match. This tool is useful for measuring the alignment of an organization. The six components of skills, governance, partnership, valuation, technology scope, and communications make up the 41 aspects that make up the Luftman (2000) Strategic Alignment Maturity (SAMM) model.

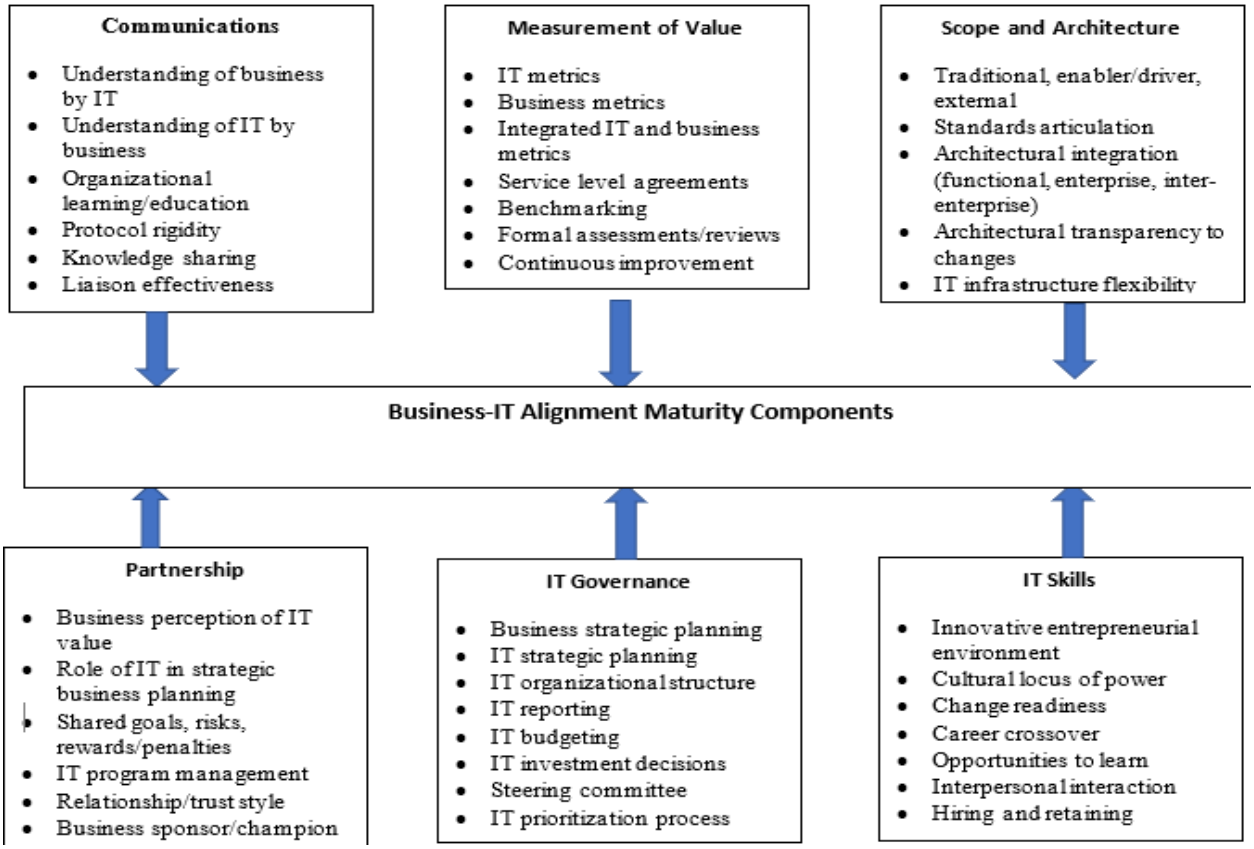


Figure 2.3: Strategic Alignment Maturity Model (Luftman et al.,2008)

This framework has provided the blueprint of how to assess an organization's IT-Organizational strategy alignment. The majority of SAMM approaches, however, put a heavy emphasis on the

strategic factors that support and facilitate the strategic alignment of an organization and its IT, which gives the study a proper guide. These procedures include, for instance, the following: including IT in managerial strategy development; guaranteeing that all IT projects have effective managerial funding and champion(s); working together with the business to develop advantageous initiatives; IT comprehending the business; and recognizing the impact that IT programs have on the performance of the company.

Area	Level	Attributes
Communication maturity: Liaison effective IT's ability to comprehend enterprise, intra- and inter- organizational education and learning, protocol stiffness, and information exchange	1	IT/Business are not well-versed
	2	Minimal business and information technology knowledge
	3	Excellent comprehension; comfortable communication; burgeoning
	4	Unified, bonding
	5	Pervasive, informal
IT Value measurement/competency maturity: Information Technology Metrics, Commercial Metrics, Integrated Metrics, Customer Service Contracts, Comparison, Formal Evaluations/Reviews, and continual enhancement	1	A few mathematical computations
	2	Operational cost effectiveness is measured.
	3	A display which gauges certain savings is created.
	4	Analyzes affordability, evaluates certain partner significance, and manages display
	5	Extension of Actions to Outside Partners
Governance maturity: IT and business strategy development, budgetary management, steering groups, and the assigning priorities procedure	1	Reactive goals, a cost center, and no structured process
	2	Functionally tactical, sporadically responsive
	3	Organization-wide processes that are pertinent
	4	Throughout the corporation is controlled
	5	Connected among entrepreneurs and the company itself
Partnership maturity: Organization IT Value Perceiving IT's Place in Comprehensive Business preparing, Penalties/Rewards, Risk, IT Programme Leadership, and Communal Goals Style of Trust/ Relationship, Commercial Champion/Sponsor.	1	Conflict and the expense of using IT in business
	2	IT is becoming a resource and a process facilitator.
	3	Conflict is viewed as an inspiration, and IT is an operational accelerator.
	4	IT supports or propels corporate strategy
	5	Collectively, technology and business may change and innovate

Scope and architecture maturity: Traditional, Enabler/Driver, External, Standards Articulation, Architectural Integration, Visibility in architecture, adaptability, adaptability, and management of new technologies	1	conventional (such as bookkeeping and email)
	2	Transaction based (e.g., DSS, ESS)
	3	Throughout the entire organization
	4	Partners integrated
	5	With collaborators, evolve
Skills maturity: Power dynamics within cultures, adaptability to change, creativity, business ownership, style of leadership, career merge, education/ training, and staff recruitment and retention.	1	IT involves danger but offers little payoff; only technical education
	2	Varies between functional groups
	3	Becoming supplier of value; balancing hiring of technical and company employees
	4	Combined benefits and liabilities
	5	Rewards/ careers/ education across the organization

Table 4: SAMM and its areas, maturity levels and attributes

In the above table, we can clearly visualize the areas and levels of maturity, and according to the model, IT-organizational alignment can be envisaged as six areas of maturity that can be tested in an organization in any industry. For each of the six categories, this maturity model basically stratified the alignment between the organization's business strategy and IT strategy into five (5) levels, namely:

i. Unplanned or initial processes when IT and the company are not synchronized or in agreement
ii. Dedicated procedure whereby the firm has vowed to coordinate with IT
iii. The connection among IT and the company is built, and the procedure concentrates on achieving business goals
iv. Process improvement or management that reinforces the idea of IT being the "Value Center"
v. A procedure that has been improved when IT and company strategic planning are combined and have achieved the co-adaptive stage

The model gives a well-structured way of assessing IT-organizational strategy alignment and provides a way forward to achieve a higher level of alignment maturity within an organization. The SAMM framework will guide this study with the required concept that IT-organizational strategy alignment in public organizations in The Gambia should consider that alignment of IT-organizational strategy alignment can yield better results in organizational performance, which offers a practical method to measure alignment in organizations.

2.3.3 Waema's Business-IT Strategic Alignment Maturity Framework

This framework is an extension of the SAMM framework; it argues that the SAMM framework has neglected the external environment, which is crucial in the present IT and business environment because of the disruptive complexity of both IT and business. The framework added a seventh (7^{th}) dimension, which is called the external environment. The framework also updated the original items or attributes from the SAMM framework, thereby giving a wider and more comprehensive insight about the attribute to the respondents when assessing the most current and realities of business and IT in today's environment.

The framework has integrated, with modifications, some of Jelonek's (2018) questions on self-assessment of the maturity of MIS business alignment in relevant parts. The framework helps researchers include the external environment in their assessment, which was a limitation in the SAMM framework. The framework will equip this study with the tools it needs to conceptualize the extent and challenges of IT-organizational strategy alignment in public organizations in The Gambia, which happens to be my second research objective.

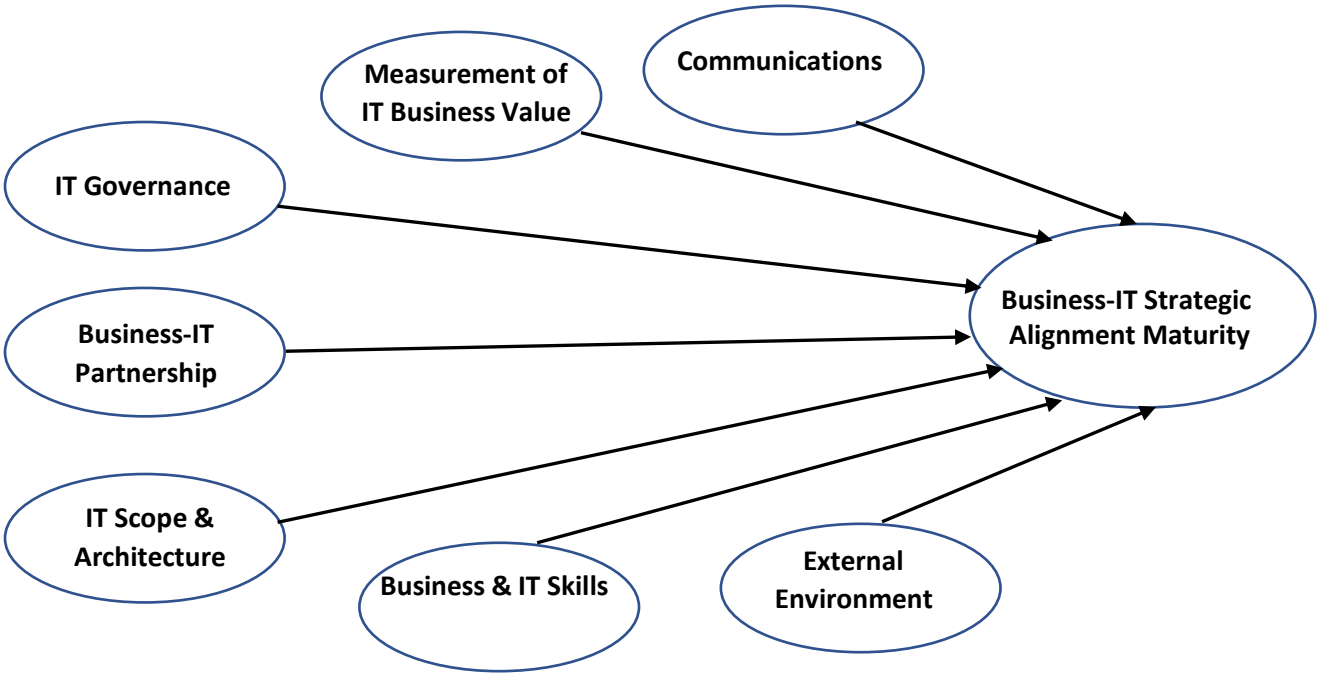


Figure 2.4: Waema's Business-IT Strategy Alignment Framework (2024)

2.3.4 Justification for the Theoretical Framework

Based on the study objectives and the review of the literatures, the frameworks adopted are Henderson & Venkatraman (1993) and Waema's Business-IT Strategic Alignment Maturity Framework.

Section I

For research objective one the Strategic Alignment Model (SAM) proposed by Henderson and Venkatraman (1993, 1999) will be adopted. This framework served as the well fitted framework to address the research objective one (assessing the IT-Organizational strategy alignment practices in public organization in the Gambia). In addition, the structure is organized

amongst 12 elements across four disciplines. It also posts four perspectives namely Service level alignment perspective, Strategy execution alignment perspectives, Competitive potential alignment perspective and Technology transformation alignment perspective. However, we only focus on the first two (2) perspective of the framework; Strategy execution alignment perspective and Technology transformation alignment perspective because these are the two (2) perspectives that are likely to be dominant in the public organization in the Gambia for my case study.

2.3.5 Operationalization of the conceptual frameworks

Table 5: Operationalization of the conceptual framework 1

Dimension/Domain	Attributes/Components	Descriptions
BUSINESS STRATEGY	Business Scope	Consists of the financial markets, goods, services, clientele, and places where a firm conducts company operations, in addition to the rivals, producers, and prospective rivals that have an impact on the highly competitive business climate.
	Distinctive Competencies	A potential advantage in competition for an organization are its core competencies. This covers things like branding, research and development, improved item or service manufacture, cost and price framework, and marketing and shipment networks.
	Business Governance	how much a company controls how its executives and the company's board of members interact. How the business handles its agreements and collaborations with key business partners as well as how restrictions affect it
ORGANIZATION INFRASTRUCTURE & PROCESSES	Business Structure	The way the organization does its organizational structure or organizes its businesses. For instance, central, decentral, functional, matrix, vertical, horizontal, federal, and geographic
	Business Processes	The operation or flow of the company's business activity. Operations that add value as well as process optimization for crucial

		company operations are the main problems.
	Skills	What is needed to accomplish specific business competencies. Also, involves such HR considerations as culture, motivation, fire/hire, educate/train
IT STRATEGY	Technology Scope	To what extent does information technologies support or create strategic business opportunities. Also, include, the crucial techniques and technology in data.
	IT Competencies	Characteristics that distinguish the IT services and the creates business advantage to the organization.
	IT Governance	The degree to which company executives and managers of IT divide assets, hazards, and oversight of IT and external relationships does IT depends on like outsourcing, Vendors etc. Also, include project selection and prioritization issues.
IT INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROCESSES	IT Architecture	The variety and sorts of l/T services and goods offered to the company are determined by decisions, goals, internal setups, and rules
	IT Processes	Software development, program maintenance, and information technology management processes and operations
	IT Skills	Skills required to maintain architecture and execute the processes.

Section II

For objective two and three of the study, the Waema's Business-IT Strategic Alignment Maturity Framework will be adapted to address the objectives. Waema's framework is chosen because of its relevance to the study and its adoptions of Luftman's (2000) Strategic Alignment Maturity Model by expanding the dimensions and giving a better insight into the dimensions in the current business-IT environment, thereby creating comprehensive respondent input. The framework has

seven dimensions as opposed to the Luftman (2000) SAMM, which has six dimensions. Waema's strategic alignment framework of seven dimensions includes: Communications, measurement of IT business value, IT governance, business-IT partnership, IT scope and architecture, Business and IT skills, and External environment (absent in Luftman 2000 model). These dimensions support the concept of IT-Organizational strategic alignment in public organizations, with clear indicators of the extent and challenges on IT/Organizational Strategy alignment in organizations. The table below shows the Operationalization of the conceptual framework.

Table 6: Operationalization of the conceptual framework 2

Dimensions	Meaning	Variables
1) Communications	The nature and efficacy of the technology and business companies' interactions, as well as their sharing of data and expertise, so that both parties may understand each other's respective goals, plans, corporate and IT surroundings, hazards, and priorities—as well as how they can accomplish them	*1.* IT's comprehension of business
		2. Business' comprehension of IT
		3. Intra/inter organizational education/ learning
		4. Protocol rigidity in communication between business and IT
		5. Knowledge sharing between IT and business
		6. Breadth/effectiveness of sharing of knowledge and ideas by liaisons/consultants/facilitators with business and IT
2) Measurement of IT business value	Assessment of significance is the process of demonstrating the benefits of technological advances and the IT staff to the organization using measurements and KPIs that are acceptable to both the company as well as IT	*7.* Focus of IT KPIs
		8. Focus of business KPIs
		9. Alignment of IT and business KPIs
		10. Service level agreements (SLAs)
		11. Formal assessments/reviews of the business value of IT
		12. Continuous improvement of IT management practices
		13. IT function contribution to business
3) IT Governance	This outlines the decision-	*14.* Business strategy development
		15. IT strategy development

	making procedures used by IT and business managers to set IT priorities, allocate IT resources, and supervise operations at all three phases. The degree to which an organization can link its overall strategy to its IT goals, operational preparation, risk management, and financing is known as the level of IT governance sophistication. The management of information technology involves who has the authority to make decisions, why those decisions are made, and how those decisions are made.	*16.* IT organizational structure alignment with IT strategy *17.* Reporting structure for IT *18.* IT budgetary control *19.* IT investment management *20.* IT governance committee *21.* Effectiveness of IT governance committee in business-IT alignment *22.* IT prioritization process *23.* IT reaction capacity to business changes
4) Business-IT partnership	Partnership evaluates the collaboration between companies and information technology businesses, taking into account how each views the other's contributions as well as how IT helps define a company's approach and the reverse	*24.* Business perception of IT value *25.* Role of IT in business strategy development *26.* Shared goals, risks, rewards/penalties *27.* IT program management *28.* Business-IT relationship/trust style *29.* Business championship/sponsorship of IT
5) IT scope and architecture	This evaluates IT's capacity to provide an adaptable infrastructures its assessment and use of cutting-edge technologies, its capability to support or drive improvements to business processes, and how well it can deliver beneficial tailored options for internal company departments and outside consumers or collaborators.	*30.* Role of IT in business *31.* IT policies and standards *32.* Enterprise IT architectural integration *33.* IT architectural transparency to changes *34.* IT infrastructure flexibility and agility
6) Business and IT skills	IT-specific hiring, preservation, instruction,	*35.* Innovative ideas and entrepreneurship *36.* Locus of power to make IT decisions *37.* Management style

	evaluations of performance, career prospects, and personal growth in abilities are all measured by this in terms of hiring and firing processes. Additionally, it assesses a company's capacity for instruction, willingness to adapt, and willingness to embrace novel approaches.	*38.* Readiness for change
		39. Career crossover between business and IT
		40. Continuous IT education and cross-training
		41. Opportunities to learn
		42. Inter-personal interactions and trust between business and IT
		43. Attraction and retention of professionals
7) External environment	This assesses the extent to which IT is externally focused to take advantage of opportunities and thwart challenges in the external environment, and partnerships with key external business and IT stakeholders	*44.* Appraisal of emerging developments in IT for opportunities and challenges
		45. Appraisal of changes in customer needs and preferences for opportunities and challenges
		46. Appraisal of competition environment for opportunities and challenges
		47. Appraisal of macro environmental trends for opportunities and challenges
		48. External benchmarking of IT
		49. Knowledge of potential IT suppliers of key systems and services
		50. Participation of key business and IT partners in strategy discussions

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The investigation procedure is detailed in great length in the section that follows. The section describes the research's methodology. It has been defined and talked about the approach of research selected for the current research. The targeted population is identified, and data is given about the manner in which the study sample will be selected from it. The methods and equipment utilized to conduct the study are outlined. In addition, the techniques used for analyzing information are highlighted. Moral problems are discussed in the conversations.

3.2 Research Design

The systematic approach which an investigator uses whenever undertaking scientific investigations is referred to as a research design. For it to produce accurate results and decisions, the structure of techniques and methods explains the way the many research components—such as information gathering tools and the intended population—are linked during every phase of the investigation (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018). This research adopts both a case study and form of a descriptive survey. While the case study design will ground the first objective, which will employ the first two cross domain alignment perspective of SAM namely: Strategy execution perspective alignment and Technology transformation perspective alignment.

A scenario investigation is a type of investigative methodology employed to evaluate a comprehensive grasp of a complicated subject in its actual context. (Saunders et al. 2016whilst examining revolutionary IS problems in a real-world situation as well as looking into a subject with little to no prior investigation, scenario studies are recognized as a valid IS investigation

technique (Benbasat et al., 1987). Case investigations are frequently used to examine, explain, or characterize occurrences or occurrences in their natural environments (Yin ,2009). Though case Investigation might be characterized in a variety of ways, but the essential objective is the requirement to thoroughly examine an occurrence or phenomena within its original setting. The use of case study will enhance our deep understanding of how public organizations in the Gambia practices IT-Organizational strategy alignment.

Therefore, a case study research methodology will be employed for objective one since it is most suitable when "a the "way" or the "reasons" inquiry is posed regarding a current sequence of happenings, of which the researcher has barely or no influence" (Yin, 2003, p. 9), it is used in a variety of contexts. The research objective one satisfies this criterion.

The descriptive survey questionnaire design will address the objective two and three, from Waema's framework by administering survey questionnaires. For the research to address such aims, the relationship amongst the goals of the research will be carefully looked at utilizing simultaneously quantitative and qualitative approaches.

3.3 Target Population

The entire number of individuals from which a investigator can derive findings is known as the investigative demography (Chan & Luo, 2021). The demographic size of an investigation is important for the precision of the information that is going to be collected, and this in turn influences the credibility of the investigation's findings. All the aforementioned institutions included in this investigation fall underneath the ministry of finance and economic planning.

The ministry is charged with the responsibility of oversight and governance of state corporations. There are 13 state corporations under the purview of the ministry of finance and economic

planning in the Gambia. Employees working at the headquarter offices in these organizations are the target demography of the research.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

(Kendra, 2018) A representative number is a portion of a demography. Zhao (2021) defines the method of sampling as the methods or procedures an investigator will use to determine the precise proportion of participants in a researching project. The method describes how to select people who are a trustworthy representation of the broader intended demography from which these individuals were selected.

This study employed a non-probability sampling techniques in line with the study objective. In this case purposively sampling technique was employed. To administer questions relevant to objective one, as such, the study will sample respondents from both IT and Business functions across the selected four (4) organizations, by purposively selecting each head of department within the ten (10) departments available in each case organization, to satisfy object one (case study). Based on the services and goods they offered as well as their sizes (particularly, large and middle size), the four (4) research organizations were chosen. These sizes were chosen because larger organizations are more frequently prioritized and implement business-IT strategy alignment and its relevance to organizational performance (Wu et al. 2015a). To administer questions relevant to objective two and three the study will sample five IT staff and five business staff (preferably at managerial position) within the 13 organizations. Purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents based on their conversance with the objective. Respondents were selected in this regard, across all 13 public organizations under the Ministry of Finance, in the Gambia. Within each department, the sample purposively included four chosen organizations with ten departments; selection of each head of department for objective one (case

study) and five respondents from the IT department, and five distributed among the remaining departments for objective two and three. This brings the total sample size to 140.

3.5 Data Collection Instrument

The information for the present research will be gathered through a variety of approaches. The sampled workers will receive survey surveys from the research. Initial quantitative information is gathered using a survey questionnaire. According to Xerri (2017), one benefit of employing survey questionnaires is the ability to gather data from a sizable sample. The period required to complete a survey questionnaire is one of its drawbacks (Stefan, 2019). Through planning forward as well as informing participants of the goals of the research, this issue will eventually be resolved. The questionnaires for the surveys will include seven dimensions of Waema's framework: Communication, Measurement of IT business value, IT Governance, Business-IT partnership, IT scope and architecture, Business and IT skills and External environment. The survey questionnaires will consist of closed ended items. Closed ended items will require the respondent to tick the appropriate response from the provided alternatives.

The participants will additionally be given an explanation of the research's importance. The investigator will instruct the respondents on how to complete the study questions. The participants won't include their names on the survey surveys in order to maintain their privacy and confidentiality. In order to ensure honesty, the investigator will also reassure those who participated that there are no risks associated with taking an active role in the research project.

Person-to-person interviewing shall be used in the task's case study in order to gather information from the 13 firms' chosen chief executive officers. Participants might provide additional details about the topic of discussion during interview (Jain, 2021). Data on IT-

Organisational Strategy Alignment Practices in Public Organizations in the Gambia will be gathered through interviewing.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

Once the instruments have been successfully evaluated, the investigator will start collecting extensive data. The investigator will hire and educate two study helpers. The investigator will explain the study's aims to the study helpers. The management of the survey questionnaire will take place personally. Using the aid of study helpers, survey questionnaires will be distributed to employees of the 13 organizations. Workers who consent to participate in the research investigation will be notified about it and given an explanation of its goals. Participants who choose to take an active role in the research will receive survey questions and have timeframe to finish them. The investigator and the study's helpers will help participants who have trouble completing the survey questionnaires. After being gathered, the survey forms will be checked for validity.

Following the task of distributing the survey poll, the investigator will hold interviewing conferences to satisfy objective one which takes the approach of a case study, to develop a deeper understanding of the practices of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations in The Gambia. This shall begin with scheduling meetings with the 13 organizations' individual chief executive officers. The executives in charge have been informed of the research's objectives. The conversations are set to occur in a formal atmosphere that is silent and distraction-free. It will take about 30 minutes for each session. The objective is to get comprehensive data from those who participated (Oben, 2021). The interviewees will be made aware of the recordings. Information will be gathered throughout the interviews using an information capturing equipment. The usage of information capturing is going to enable the

dialogue to be reviewed again and quoted verbatim (Al-Yateem & Nabeel, 2017). Furthermore, it will enable the investigator to concentrate on the participants' nonverbal cues.

3.7 Data Analysis

The initial phases in the evaluation stage shall involve inspecting and cleansing the information being analyzed. Following the coding of the questions, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (version 26) shall be used to conduct the evaluation. The rate circulation, proportions, averages, and standard deviations will be used to translate the numerical data into useful data.

Thematic analysis of qualitative data includes reorganizing participants' narratives while taking into account their context, conditions, and experiences. The study's results will be displayed in tables and charts for explanation, revealing connections amongst the goals of the investigation.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

Researcher would request the university for approval. Relevant authority will be contacted for authorization to conduct the study. An introductory letter from the researcher explaining the study objective and the information that will be requested from respondents will be provided. Consent from the respondents to take part in the study will be requested. Nobody who responds to the survey will be harmed, have their personal information disclosed, or be forced to take part in the research. Participants will be informed of no risk associated with participating in the study, and that all information gathered would be treated in confidence.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This section discusses the examination of field outcomes and how they were discussed in light of earlier research that were similar. The study was done using SPSS version 26, and the outcomes are shown respectively in tabular and graphical formats. The section is divided into 5 primary parts: an introduction, describing evaluation, review of outcomes, and tool dependability and reliable outcomes. The introduction includes the feedback speed, tool dependability, and reliability test outcomes.

4.2 Response Rate

Considering the selected sample size, a total of 130 survey questionnaires and 40 key formant interviews were administered by purposive sampling technique. Out of these 108 survey questionnaires and all 40 interviews were dully responded to. This makes a response rate of 86.4% as broken down in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Response	140	86.4
Non-Response	22	13.5
Total	162	100.0

Source: Survey Data (2023)

The documented returning proportion of 86.4 percent was recognized as being outstanding as well as sufficient for descriptive evaluation of information, in line with Creswell (2013). According to Collis and Hussey (2009), a yield of returning of at least 70% is "exemplary," a rate of returning of 60 percent is "good," whereas a rates of returning of 50 percent is "adequate." The hiring and coaching of a pair of study helpers to help in the management of the questions underneath the direction and control of the investigator is credited with the high returning rates.

4.3 Demographic Information

The population data of those who responded is covered in this part of the article. The population information that was collected for the survey was used to give a general overview of the personalities of those who took part. By doing this, it would be possible to confirm that the study's conclusions are representative of various viewpoints based on various populations. The department, job title, and managerial rank of each respondent were included in the data that was required in this respect. The results are displayed in tables, charts, and graphs as percentages and frequencies.

4.3.1 Respondents' Department

Respondents were asked to indicate their respective departments with a view to ensure that the study findings are representativeness of any differential experiences with respect to information technology-organisational strategy alignment in public organizations in the Gambia. Results in this regard are as illustrated in Figure 4.1.

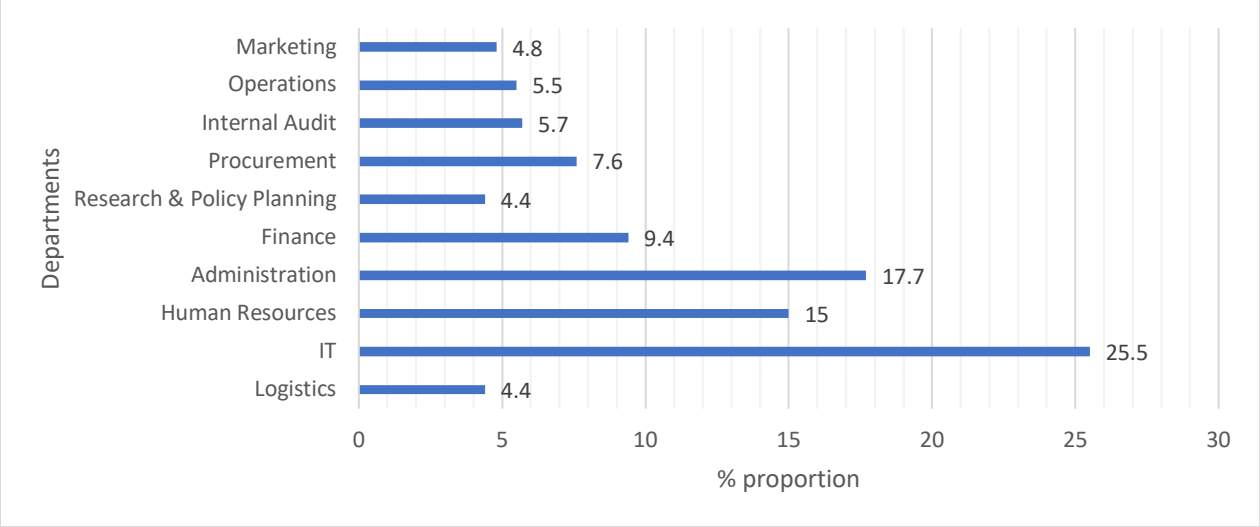


Figure 4.1: Respondents' Department

Source: Survey Data (2023)

Conclusions shown in Exhibit 4.1 show that most people who responded (25.5%) were from the IT department, followed by 17.7% of respondents affirming to being from the Administration department. Further 15.0% of respondents indicated that they were from the Human resources department, while Finance and Research had response rates of 9.4%. Policy Planning and Logistics Departments had 4.4% each. Operations and Marketing departments had the least response rates at 5.5% and 4.8% respectively. The finding implies that the study is representative of the various perceptions pertinent to information technology-organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia, based on respondents' department.

4.3.2 Respondents' Designation

Participants were requested to state their respective designation in order to give a general impression of the specialization among respondents. This would also ensure that the study findings are representativeness of any differences in perception of information technology-organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia, based on respondents' designation. Figure 4.2 gives a depiction of the outcomes.

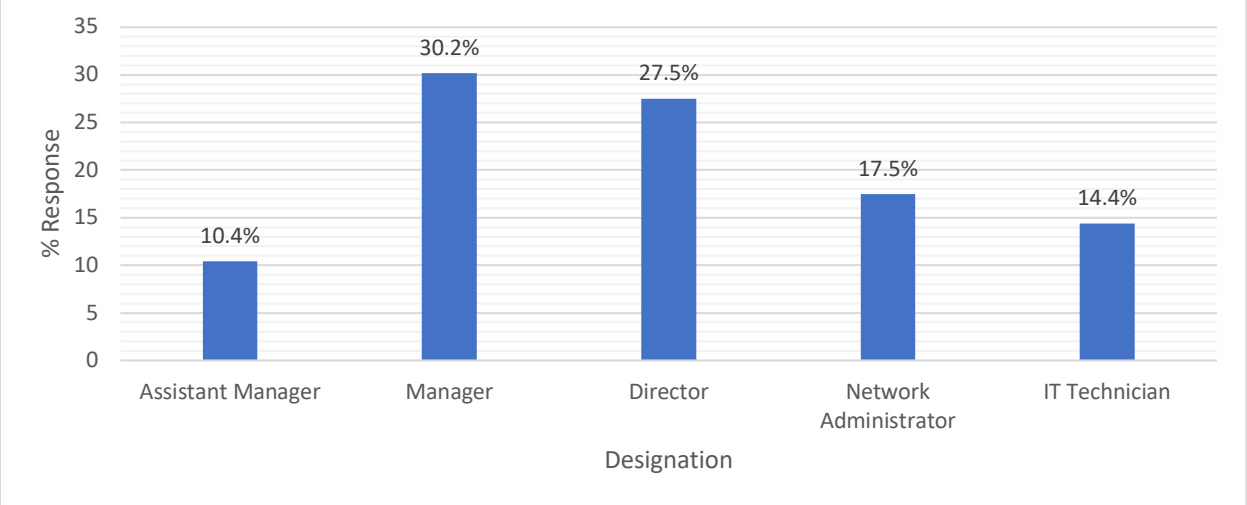


Figure 4.2: Respondents' Designation

Source: Survey Data (2023)

Based on the depiction advanced in Figure 4.2, most participants (30.2%) indicated that they were Managers, followed by 27.5% indicating that they were Directors. A further 17.5% affirmed to being network administrators while 14.4% were IT technicians. Further, 10.4% of respondents were assistant managers. The finding implies that the study is representative of the various perceptions relevant to information technology-organisational strategy alignment in public organizations in the Gambia, based on respondents' designation.

4.3.3 Level of Management

The goal of the investigation was to learn respondents' level of management. This was deemed crucial since it would guarantee an accurate representation of the diverse perceptions of technology-organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia, based on level of management. Figure 4.3 illustrates the findings.

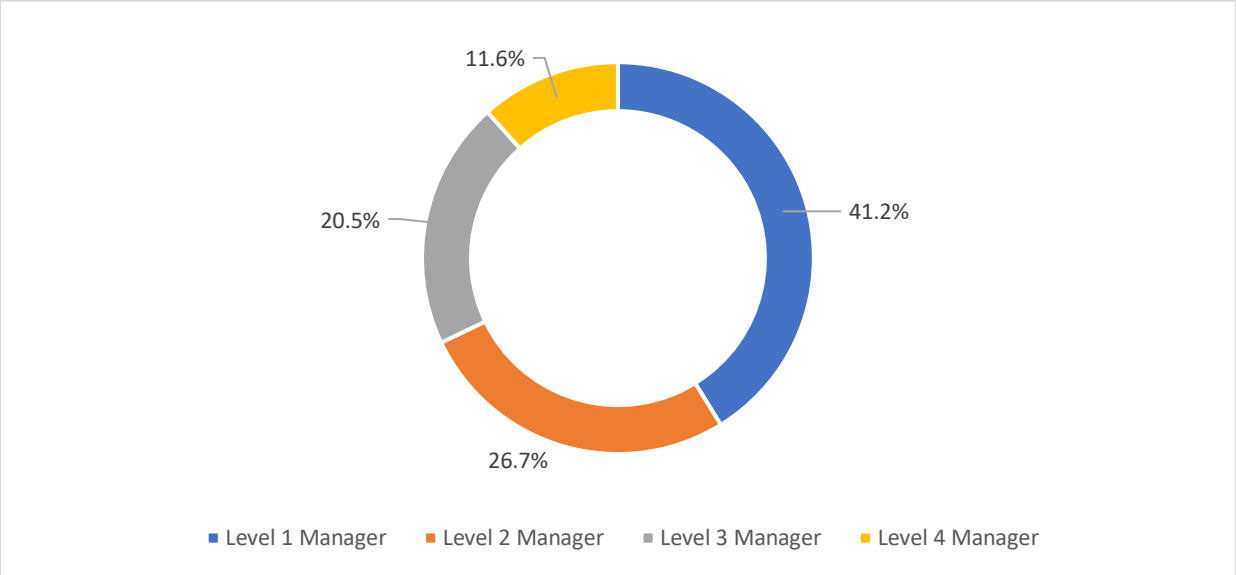


Figure 4.3: Level of Management

Source: Survey Data (2023)

Conclusions shown in Exhibit 4.3 reveal that most people who responded (41.2%) were level 1 managers, followed by 26.7% who affirmed to the middle level cadre. A further 20.5% indicated

that they were level 3 managers while11.6% were from level 4 management. It can be inferred from the finding that the study is representative of the diverse perspectives in relation to technology-organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia, based on level of management.

4.4 Practices of IT-Organisational Strategy Alignment

In order to ascertain how most responders responded to the interview inquiries, the first primary goal of the investigation is examined in this section's examination. The study sought to investigate practices of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. To address this objective, the study conducted four case studies, in which key interviews were conducted with 40 Heads of Departments across four organizations. The study adopted the thematic content analysis in analyzing the qualitative data obtained from the key informant interviews. This involved transcription of the interviews, generation of codes and themes and their discussions in a narrative form. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), themed research is a technique for finding, examining, and presenting connections (themes) inside of information. Thematically evaluation offers mobility in analyzing information, a framework for organizing topics, and aids in understanding the subject of the study (Creswell et al., 2010). Braun and Clarke (2006) assert that thematic matter evaluation commences the minute the investigator notices patterns in the material they have gathered. The steps followed by this investigation throughout the theme matter evaluation of all four instances are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Steps in Thematic Content Analysis

Step	Procedure
1. Transcribing	Every single interview was conducted, and all conversations were precisely recorded.
2. Familiarizing	For the sake of familiarization, the entire transcript was listened. Additionally, the data was filtered by removing

	superfluous words and repeats.
3. Generation of initial codes	To better understand the material, it was repeatedly read several times while keeping an eye out for connections and implications. Following that, the beginning of coding begins.
4. Search for pertinent themes	The coding standards were adjusted to create a consistent pattern by grouping the elements into potential themes
5. Definition and theme naming	After then, the primary themes and smaller ones were established.
6. Production of the report	Following the definition of the topics and smaller themes, assessment and creation of reports began.

Source: Braun and Clarke (2006)

The study drew from the Strategic Alignment Model (SAM) by Henderson and Venkatraman (1993), with a focus on the first two type of perspectives of the model; Strategy execution alignment perspectives and Technology transformation alignment perspective to guide the analysis. This owes to the fact that the SAM model is designed to assess and enhance the alignment between IT and Organizational strategy. It provides a framework for evaluating the IT and Organizational strategic alignment and identifying areas for improvement.

4.4.1 Case Study One

The first case is a state corporation in the Gambia, that provides a variety of postal and allied services, such as mail delivery domestically and internationally, parcel offerings, services for transferring money, and shopping services like selling postage stamps and envelopes. It operates a network of post offices and postal agencies throughout The Gambia, ensuring that postal services are accessible to both urban and rural communities. Like many postal services worldwide, the organization faces challenges in adapting to the digital age and increased

competition from private courier companies. Its financial sustainability may depend on various factors, including modernization efforts, service diversification, and cost management.

Key informants from the corporation were asked to indicate whether or not their organizations had an Organizational IT Strategy. It was established in this regard that organization does not have an Organizational IT Strategy. A respondent for instance offered that:

> *"No there is no IT strategy available for now but we are working to achieve that soon."*
>
> [Q1, interview 3, Banjul]

The lack of an Organizational IT strategy in the organization can be attributed to several factors. This may include lacking the necessary understanding and expertise in IT to develop and implement an Organizational IT strategy. IT is a rapidly evolving field, and staying updated with the latest trends and best practices can be challenging, especially for organizations with limited resources for IT training and capacity building. Public organizations in The Gambia often face resource constraints, including limited budgets and staffing shortages. Allocating resources specifically for developing an IT strategy may not be a priority when there are pressing needs for basic infrastructure, service delivery, or capacity building in other areas. Limited resources can hinder the ability to invest in IT planning and strategy development. By addressing these factors and creating an enabling environment, public organizations in The Gambia can overcome barriers and develop comprehensive organizational IT strategies that align with their goals, enhance service delivery, and leverage technology effectively.

Key informants were also asked to describe how IT strategy is developed in their respective organizations. It was revealed that in the absence of an Organizational IT strategy, IT initiatives in public organizations can still be developed through alternative approaches. While an IT

strategy provides a comprehensive roadmap for aligning IT with organizational goals, the absence of one does not necessarily mean that IT initiatives cannot be pursued. IT initiatives can be driven by specific business needs or demands within a public organization. Business units or departments may identify IT solutions or improvements that can directly address their operational challenges or enhance service delivery. These initiatives are often developed based on immediate requirements and may not be part of a broader strategic IT plan. A respondent indicated that:

"We rely on the IT department to come up with various IT initiatives."

[Q2, interview 1, Banjul]

After that, responders were requested to say whether the IT Managers participate in the formulation of the organization's organizational strategy. Contrary to expectation, it was found that some IT Managers do not participate actively. A respondent shared that:

"Actually, we do not participate rather we are sent documents for feedback"

[Q3, interview 7, Banjul]

It is the researcher's opinion that IT managers should ideally participate in the formulation of the organization's organizational strategy. As technology plays an increasingly crucial role in the operations and success of modern organizations, the involvement of IT managers in strategic decision-making is essential.

When asked on the roles the IT Managers perform in the development of IT strategy, it was discovered that clear roles are non-existent in the organization, as an organizational IT strategy does not exist. According to a respondent:

"We do not play a role because there is nothing like IT strategy"

[Q4, interview 2, Banjul]

It is expected that IT managers play several important roles in the development of IT strategy. Their involvement is crucial for ensuring that the IT strategy aligns with the organization's goals, addresses technological opportunities and challenges, and supports the overall business strategy.

Similar responses were obtained when the researcher sought to find out the roles that senior organizational managers perform in the development of IT strategy. A respondent intimated that:

> *"Since, there is no IT strategy, senior organizational managers do not perform any role. Instead, many of them have the notion that the organizational strategy should cover all"*

[Q5, interview 6, Banjul]

It was expected that senior organizational managers play key roles in the development Technology approach. The group participation is essential for coordinating the information technology (IT) approach with the overall organizational strategy, ensuring executive support, and driving its successful implementation. By performing these roles, senior organizational managers provide strategic direction, resource allocation, executive support, and governance oversight to ensure the successful development and implementation of the IT strategy. Their involvement is crucial for driving alignment between IT and the broader organizational goals, maximizing the value of IT investments, and enabling the organization to leverage technology effectively.

After that, responders were requested to say how organizational strategy influences the development of the IT strategy. It was found that organizational strategy plays a significant role in influencing the development of the IT strategy. The organizational strategy provides the

overarching direction and goals for the organization, and the IT strategy is designed to support and align with those objectives. According to a respondent:

> *"The IT strategy is developed to ensure alignment with the broader organizational goals and objectives. It takes into consideration the strategic priorities and focus areas identified in the organizational strategy."*
>
> [Q6, interview 1, Banjul]

Overall, it was discovered from interview responses that the organizational strategy provides the context, goals, and priorities that shape the development of the IT strategy. The IT strategy is designed to support the organizational strategy by aligning technology initiatives, resource allocation, risk management, innovation efforts, and performance measurement with the organizational goals and objectives. The close relationship between the organizational strategy and the IT strategy ensures that technology investments and initiatives are purposeful and Impact the company's general performance.

Participants got requested to specify how in their experience, the organizational strategy impacts on the IT infrastructure in their organization. A respondent shared that:

> *"It of course influences the IT infrastructure because there was a time that we were asked to upgrade the internet by the financial manager in other to optimize the link of coverage between the headquarters to various location within the country where our presenters might be reporting from through live channel. This has tremendously impacted on our network infrastructure"*
>
> [Q7, interview 4, Banjul]

It is deducible from the response that the organizational strategy may involve initiatives to enhance collaboration, streamline processes, and improve the flow of information within the organization. The IT infrastructure plays a crucial role in enabling seamless integration and interoperability between different systems, applications, and data sources. The organizational strategy informs the selection and implementation of integration of technologies, middleware, and data standards that support the desired integration goals.

Participants were given the opportunity to describe how much the organization's strategy influence the IT infrastructure, IT applications and IT processes. A respondent opined that:

> *"The strategy of the organization basically has a big say or influence in what we do in the IT Department. The strategy of the organization can greatly impact on the IT infrastructure, applications and the processes in various ways and dimensions. I have witnessed a lot that have changed in my IT Department all through the adoption of the organization strategy. We have used and still using applications and processes that have been design and introduced by the senior management even though some of the applications are not fit for the purposes."*
>
> [Q8, interview 5, Banjul]

It is deducible from the finding that overall, the organization's strategy has a profound influence on the IT infrastructure, applications, and processes. It ensures that these elements are aligned with the organization's goals, support its strategic initiatives, and enable the successful execution of its business strategies.

The goal of the investigation was also to learn from the key informants, whether IT strategy influences the organizational strategy in the organization. A respondent indicated that:

"IT strategy enables the attainment of organizational objectives"

[Q9, interview 4, Banjul]

It can be inferred from the finding that IT strategy plays a crucial role in enabling the achievement of organizational objectives. It identifies how technology can support and enhance various aspects of the organization, such as improving operational efficiency, enhancing service delivery, optimizing resource allocation, or facilitating innovation. By aligning IT initiatives with the organizational strategy, IT strategy ensures that technology is leveraged effectively to meet the organization's goals.

After that, responders were requested to say how the organizational governance influence the IT governance in the organization.

"Most of the time this influence is done by senior management of the organization coordinating extremely with the board and the public regulators to influence the ways and manners in which the IT department should work with particular vendors, partners, how to choose projects."

[Q10, interview 8, Banjul]

It was expected that organizational governance and IT governance are closely interconnected in public organizations. Organizational governance refers to the system and processes through which an organization is directed, controlled, and managed to achieve its goals. IT governance, on the other hand, focuses specifically on the governance of IT systems, processes, and resources within the organization.

The investigation also aimed to determine the degree to which the organizational scope like service, product, customers affect the technology scope. It was found that in the organization, the

nature and scope of services offered by an organization directly influences the technology required to support those services. Different services have distinct technological requirements, and the organization must align its technology scope accordingly. A respondent indicated that:

> *"The organizational scope does also have a heavy weight influence on our technology scope and can even reach to the point that our way of supporting the organization will be reenforced just as I explained early about the internet upgrade which expanded our technology scope and presently the senior management is about to implement the usage of drones to cover events as the unfold in a particular event. This would immensely expand our technology scope because we want to serve and compete in the industry."*
>
> [Q11, interview 10, Banjul]

It is deduced from the finding, that the organization's service scope determines the need for specific technology platforms to deliver services effectively. For instance, an e-commerce organization may require an online storefront, payment gateway, and inventory management system as part of its technology scope to facilitate online transactions and order fulfillment.

Respondents were asked to show how the organizational distinctive competencies affected their IT competences. A respondent observed that:

> *"Organizational distinctive competencies like to operate in a unique way or creating a distinctiveness in terms of providing quality video and reporting events in a more timely and accurate manner was a challenge and this have impacted on our IT competences by recruiting experts and collaborations with some media firms outside the country which creates competences in the department."*

[Q12, interview 1, Banjul]

It is deducible that organizational distinctive competencies represent the unique strengths and capabilities that set an organization apart from its competitors. These competencies are often aligned with the organization's strategic focus and core objectives. The strategic focus determines the IT competences required to support and enhance the distinctive competencies. IT competences are developed and aligned in a way that directly supports the organization's unique strengths and strategic direction.

Key informants were asked to indicate whether their organizations had ever made a joint development venture with another IT organization to enable the organization realizes its IT strategy. A respondent answered in the affirmative as follows:

> *"Yes! We do have a joint development venture with some IT firms which basically, help us witness our organizational strategy but not the IT strategy because we do not operate with our own IT strategy yet. It does not exist! Maybe you come and help us after your program."*
>
> [Q13, interview 3, Banjul]

By establishing a joint development venture with another IT organization, public organizations can leverage external expertise, resources, and capabilities to realize their IT strategy more effectively. The collaboration enables access to specialized skills, reduces development time and costs, fosters innovation, and increases the likelihood of successful outcomes aligned with the organization's IT strategy.

Participants were challenged to describe how the IT strategy influence the IT infrastructure. With the organization lacking a strategy in place, no sufficient responses were advanced. A respondent offered that:

"It does not influence it there is no IT strategy yet."

[Q4, interview 19, Banjul]

It was expected that the Information Technology (IT) plan significantly shapes and influences the computer systems inside the organization. an organization. The IT strategy is developed in alignment with the overall business objectives and goals of the organization. It outlines how technology can enable and support the achievement of these objectives. The IT infrastructure is designed and implemented to align with the specific technology requirements and capabilities identified in the IT strategy. This ensures that the IT infrastructure is directly supportive of the organization's strategic direction.

The goal of the investigation was to learn whether IT strategy affect IT skill development and training in respondents' organization. A respondent explained that:

"I believe it would but I cannot confirm because I do not have one yet."

[Q5, interview 23, Banjul]

The IT strategy plays a vital role in shaping IT skill development and training in public institutions. It guides the identification of required skills, skill gap analysis, training needs assessment, prioritization of training initiatives, and development of training programs. By aligning skill development efforts with the IT strategy, public institutions can ensure that their IT workforce has the necessary competencies to support the successful implementation of the strategy and achieve the organization's IT objectives.

The study also sought to determine whether IT strategy affects IT processes like procurement, development and maintenance in their organizations. no sufficient response was advanced, as the organization lacks an organizational IT strategy.

The study deduces that IT strategy has a significant influence on IT processes like procurement, development, and maintenance in public organizations. It guides decision-making, standardization, resource allocation, and governance in these processes to ensure alignment with the organization's strategic objectives, technological requirements, and emerging trends. By integrating the IT strategy into these processes, public organizations can optimize their IT operations, achieve desired outcomes, and effectively support the organization's overall mission and goals.

The study probed on what respondents' think are the performance measures that they use to assess the alignment between organizational and IT strategy. A respondent intimated that:

> *"Sorry to say, but there are no performance measures to evaluate alignment between IT and Organizational strategy yet. I wish it was available hopefully we shall reach there soon."*
>
> [Q17, interview 7, Banjul]

It is important to note that the choice of performance measures may vary depending on the specific organizational context, industry, and strategic objectives. Organizations may use a combination of these measures or develop customized measures tailored to their unique needs to evaluate the alignment between organizational and IT strategy effectively.

Finally, respondents were asked to describe how IT management is viewed in the organization. A respondent shared that:

"Honestly, we are termed as the supporting unit but the management are now beginning to realize that we cannot be left out. Hopefully, with the trend of technology we will be part of the decision-making body of the organization. Which will help us to fit in ideas and thoughts together in one bowl to move the organization to a desired state"

[Q18, interview 6, Banjul]

It is deduced that IT management in most public organizations is recognized as a critical function that supports operational efficiency, drives innovation, ensures information security, and enables strategic decision-making. It is viewed as a strategic partner, facilitator of digital transformation, and promoter of transparency and collaboration. Effective IT management is essential for public organizations to leverage technology effectively and fulfill their mission of serving citizens and delivering public value.

4.4.2 Case Study Two

The second case serves as the principal agency responsible for the administration, development, and operation of the country's ports. Its primary mandate is to facilitate efficient and secure maritime trade, import, and export activities. The organization manages several major seaports in The Gambia, including the Port of Banjul, which is the country's main port and an essential gateway for international trade. Other ports may include those located along the Gambia River. It oversees the development and maintenance of port infrastructure, including piers, terminals, berths, cargo handling equipment, storage facilities, and other essential port services.

Key informants from the case were asked to indicate whether or not the corporation had an organizational IT Strategy, to which the respondents indicated that there was no organizational IT strategy in place:

"……. We do not have on yet, but are in the process of embarking on a digital transformation, and an IT strategy would be one other requisite guides in the process……."

[Q1, interview 11, Banjul]

The finding was contrary to expectations owing to the fact that the organization is responsible for managing seaports, which involve complex logistics, cargo tracking, and customs operations. In modern port management, IT systems are integral for vessel scheduling, container tracking, inventory management, and customs clearance. An organizational IT strategy would be highly likely to optimize port operations and improve overall efficiency.

Key informants were also asked to indicate how an IT strategy was developed in the organization, to which no sufficient response was provided, as the organization lacks an organizational IT strategy. It would however be expected that developing an IT strategy for such an organization would involve closely integrating IT systems with port operations. The strategy would emphasize real-time cargo tracking, efficient vessel scheduling, and customs clearance processes. IT experts, logistics managers, customs officials, and port staff would collaborate to understand the specific needs and challenges. The IT strategy would need to address the complexities of port management.

Key informants were then asked to indicate whether IT Managers in the organization participate in the formulation of the organization's organizational strategy. It was established in this regard that IT Managers actively participate in the formulation of the organizational strategy to ensure smooth and efficient port operations. They particularly focus on technologies that optimize cargo tracking, customs processes, and vessel scheduling. A respondent offered that:

"…….IT Managers would collaborate closely with logistics and operations teams to identify areas where IT systems can improve port efficiency and customer satisfaction……."

[Q3, interview 13, Banjul]

When asked on the roles that IT Managers perform in the development of IT strategy, no substantive response was advanced, as the organization does not have an IT strategy in place. Ideally however, IT Managers in the organization would collaborate with logistics and operations teams to identify opportunities for IT systems to streamline cargo tracking, customs clearance, and port operations. They would also work towards enhancing the integration of IT systems with international shipping networks to improve communication and information exchange between ports.

Similarly, no substantive response was provided when key informants were asked on the roles that senior organizational managers perform in the development of IT strategy. Ideally however, senior managers in the organization would lead the development of the IT strategy to optimize port operations, cargo tracking, and customs clearance processes. They would seek ways to improve efficiency and reduce turnaround times. They would also play a key role in integrating IT systems with port operations and logistics, ensuring seamless information flow and efficient coordination among various departments.

Key informants were further asked to indicate how organizational strategy influences the development of the IT strategy. It emerged that the lack of an IT strategy in the organization can be attributed to the organizational strategy's goal not including the need to achieve seamless port operations. The organizational strategy's emphasis on effective logistics management would drive the IT strategy's development to ensure integration between IT systems and port operations for better coordination and information flow. It would focus on IT systems that optimize cargo

tracking, vessel scheduling, and customs clearance processes to enhance port efficiency. A respondent intimated that:

> *"……If the organizational strategy includes goals for digital transformation, the IT strategy would involve adopting digital technologies that modernize port operations, facilitate e-services, and improve the overall port experience for stakeholders……."*
>
> [Q6, interview 19, Banjul]

After that, responders were requested to say how the organizational strategy has impacted on the IT infrastructure in the organization. It was established that given the critical nature of port operations, the organizational strategy has emphasized disaster recovery and business continuity planning, necessitating robust backup systems and redundancy in the IT infrastructure. The organizational strategy's objective of achieving seamless port operations would impact the IT infrastructure by requiring real-time data processing and communication capabilities. This would involve investing in advanced networking and communication technologies.

Responses were requested to describe how the IT strategy influence the IT infrastructure. With the organization lacking a strategy in place, no sufficient responses were advanced. An organizational IT strategy that emphasizes real-time cargo tracking and vessel scheduling would however influence the IT infrastructure by requiring powerful servers and high-speed networks for real-time data processing. An IT strategy that leverages IoT for tracking and monitoring cargo movements would further require the deployment of IoT devices and sensors, impacting the IT infrastructure. According to a respondent:

"…….If the IT strategy focuses on improving integration with logistics and operations, the IT infrastructure would need to support seamless data exchange between different systems and departments……."

[Q8, interview 15, Banjul]

Additionally, the investigator wanted to determine how much the organization's strategy influences the IT infrastructure, IT applications and IT processes. It emerged that owing to its lack of IT focus, the organization's strategy does not significantly influence the organization's IT infrastructure, applications and processes. Ideally however, the organization's strategy would heavily influence the IT infrastructure to support real-time operations and data processing. The strategy would require investments in advanced networking equipment, IoT devices for cargo tracking, and cloud computing for scalable data storage. The strategy would also lead to the development of specialized applications for vessel scheduling, cargo tracking, customs clearance, and logistics optimization. These applications would facilitate seamless port operations and improve coordination among various stakeholders. The strategy's focus on process optimization and efficiency would impact IT processes by driving the implementation of automated systems for cargo handling, documentation, and logistics management.

No substantive responses were advanced, when key informants were asked on whether IT strategy influences the organizational strategy in the organization, as there was not extant strategy. Ideally however, an IT strategy emphasizing real-time data processing and analytics in the organization would impact the organizational strategy by enabling agile and data-driven decision-making. Quick access to operational data would facilitate better port management and optimization. An IT strategy focusing on integrating various port operations and communication channels would align with the organizational strategy's goal of improving collaboration among

different departments and stakeholders. IT initiatives that streamline cargo tracking, vessel scheduling, and logistics would support the organizational strategy's aim to enhance the organization's competitiveness in the global shipping industry.

After that, responders were requested to say how organizational governance influences IT governance in the organization. It emerged from the interview, that since the organizational governance in the organization follows a centralized approach, it has led to a similar arrangement in IT governance. The port facilities do not have any level of autonomy in their IT decision-making, which impacts overall IT governance coordination. A respondent observed that;

> *"……The organizational governance's adherence to industry regulations also influence IT governance, ensuring IT initiatives comply with port industry standards, data security regulations, and international trade requirements……"*
>
> [Q11, interview 18, Banjul]

The research additionally aimed to determine how much the organizational scope like customers, service, product, customers affect the technology scope in the organization. It was found that the organizational scope involves managing seaports and facilitating international trade and logistics. The technology scope in the organization would thus be influenced by the need for real-time tracking and monitoring of vessels, cargo, and customs clearance processes. IT infrastructure would include advanced communication systems and IoT devices to facilitate seamless port operations. The organizational scope would further drive the technology scope to focus on integrating various port operations and connecting with global shipping networks to enhance communication and coordination.

Participants were challenged to describe how organizational distinctive competencies had affected their IT competences. It was established that the organization's distinctive competencies include efficient logistics management, port operations, and international trade facilitation. As such, the organization's IT competences are geared towards enhancing logistics and port operations through technology. The IT team thus focuswa on developing real-time tracking systems, vessel scheduling tools, and communication networks to support seamless port activities.

Key informants were asked to indicate whether their organization ever made a joint development venture with another IT organization to enable the organization realizes its IT strategy, to which they affirmed. Upon probing, the study found that as a port authority dealing with complex logistics and international trade, they were open to collaborating with IT organizations to leverage specialized technologies and expertise in the shipping industry. A respondent offered that:

> *"……. The organization may seek partnerships to develop advanced IoT-based cargo tracking systems, port management software, or real-time communication platforms that facilitate seamless information exchange among various port stakeholders……."*
>
> [Q14, interview 13, Banjul]

Respondents were also sked to indicate whether IT strategy affects IT skill development and training in the organization. As there is no IT strategy in place, no substantive answer was provided. Ideally however, the organization's IT strategy may have a significant impact on IT skill development and training due to the organization's reliance on technology for port operations, logistics, and international trade facilitation. The organization would also prioritize skill development in areas like IoT technologies, real-time data analytics, and communication

systems. IT staff would need expertise in managing advanced port management software and integrating various operational systems. The IT strategy would further emphasize staying updated with the latest technologies and innovations, requiring ongoing training and skill development for the IT team.

The study also sought to determine whether IT strategy affects IT processes like procurement, development and maintenance in their organizations. Similarly, no sufficient response was advanced, as the organization lacks an organizational IT strategy. Expectedly however, the organization's IT strategy would emphasize real-time data processing, cargo tracking, and logistics optimization. This would influence IT processes to prioritize agile procurement, rapid development, and proactive maintenance. IT procurement in the organization would also focus on sourcing technologies for real-time data processing, IoT devices for cargo tracking, and communication systems to ensure efficient logistics. The IT development process would further emphasize quick deployment of systems for real-time cargo tracking, vessel scheduling, and logistics management to support the port's operations. IT maintenance in the organization would involve proactive monitoring of systems to ensure seamless port operations, and timely updates to optimize logistics processes.

The goal of the investigation was to learn the performance measures that the organization would use to assess the alignment between organizational and IT strategy. It was established that the organization assess the impact of IT initiatives on reducing cargo handling times, vessel turnaround times, and overall port operations efficiency. It would also measure the availability and accuracy of real-time data for tracking vessel movements, cargo status, and logistics optimization. Further it would evaluate the impact of IT services on enhancing customer

experience for shipping companies, freight forwarders, and other port stakeholders. A respondent further opined that:

> *"……Monitoring the reliability and resilience of IT systems to minimize disruptions in port operations……"*
>
> [Q17, interview 16, Banjul]

Finally, the goal of the investigation was to learn however in the interviewees' opinions, the IT management is viewed in organization. It emerged that in the organization, IT management is viewed as a driver of operational efficiency. The organization recognizes the need for real-time data processing, cargo tracking, and logistics optimization to improve port operations. IT managers are seen as facilitators of seamless communication and coordination among different port stakeholders. IT management in the organization is also perceived as innovative, continuously exploring new technologies to optimize port processes, reduce delays, and enhance overall port efficiency.

4.4.3 Case Study Three

The third case is tasked with administering various social security programs aimed at providing financial protection and welfare support to eligible individuals and their dependents. These programs may include old-age pensions, survivor benefits, disability benefits, and other social assistance schemes. One of its key functions is the management of a contributory pension scheme for employed individuals. Employees and employers make regular contributions to the pension fund, which is later used to provide retirement benefits to the contributors. In addition to social security programs, the corporation provides housing finance services to promote affordable housing for Gambian citizens. It offers loans and mortgages to eligible individuals to facilitate the purchase, construction, or renovation of residential properties.

Key informants from the organization were asked to indicate whether the corporation has an organizational IT Strategy. It was discovered that contrary to the foregoing corporations, the present case had an organizational IT strategy. This may be ascribed to the company's involvement in managing financial services, including social security and housing finance. The financial industry relies heavily on IT systems for secure data management, investment tracking, customer service, and digital transactions. An organizational IT strategy would be crucial to ensure efficient operations, data security, and to adapt to digital trends in the financial sector.

Key informants were also asked to indicate how an IT strategy was developed in the organization. It was found that the organization's operations involve managing social security programs and financial services. Developing an IT strategy for the organization is relatively complex due to the need to ensure secure data management, financial transactions, and regulatory compliance. The IT strategy development process involves collaboration between IT experts, finance professionals, legal experts, and customer service representatives. The strategy must align with the organization's financial and social welfare goals. An informant observed that:

> *"……. The IT strategy focuses on data security and compliance with financial regulations and privacy laws. Robust cybersecurity measures and disaster recovery plans are essential……"*
>
> [Q2, interview 23, Banjul]

Key informants were then asked to indicate whether IT Managers in the organization participate in the formulation of the organization's organizational strategy. It was established in this regard that in the organization, IT Managers are highly involved in the organizational strategy formulation as IT is crucial for managing financial operations, data security, and customer service. They collaborate with top management and key stakeholders to align IT initiatives with

the organization's strategic goals. IT Managers play a significant role in ensuring data security, compliance with financial regulations, and protecting sensitive information. Their input is vital in designing robust cybersecurity measures and disaster recovery plans:

> *"…….. IT Managers are expected to explore technological innovations and digital solutions to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the corporation's social security and housing finance services……"*
>
> [Q3, interview 26, Banjul]

When asked on the roles that IT Managers perform in the development of IT strategy, it was found that in the organization, IT Managers actively participate in strategic planning sessions with top management and key stakeholders. They analyze the organization's financial and social welfare goals and align IT initiatives to support these objectives. IT Managers play a crucial role in identifying potential IT-related risks and implementing measures to ensure data security, regulatory compliance, and disaster recovery:

> *"……They focus on leveraging technological innovations to automate processes, improve efficiency, and enhance customer service in the financial and housing services offered by the organization……"*
>
> [Q4, interview 28, Banjul]

After that, responders were requested to say the roles that senior organizational managers perform in the development of IT strategy in the organization. It was discovered that senior managers in the organization lead the effort to align the IT strategy with the organization's financial and social welfare goals. They ensure that IT initiatives support the corporation's mission of providing social security and housing finance services effectively. They be responsible for allocating budgets for IT projects and ensuring that sufficient resources are available to implement critical technology initiative:

"……. Senior managers oversee IT-related risk management, including data security, compliance with financial regulations, and disaster recovery planning……."

[Q5, interview 21, Banjul]

Key informants were further asked to indicate how organizational strategy influences the development of the IT strategy. It emerged that the IT strategy in the organization be closely aligned with the organization's financial services. It focuses on implementing IT systems that support secure financial transactions, investment management, and customer service for social security and housing finance operations. The organizational strategy's emphasis on regulatory compliance and data security influence the IT strategy's development, with a focus on robust cybersecurity measures and disaster recovery planning:

"……. The organizational strategy includes digital transformation goals to improve service delivery and operational efficiency. The IT strategy align with these goals by incorporating technologies that streamline processes and enhance the user experience for customers……"

[Q6, interview 22, Banjul]

After that, responders were requested to say how the organizational strategy has impacted on the IT infrastructure in the organization. It was established that as the organization deals with financial services and sensitive personal data, the organizational strategy's emphasis on data security and compliance impact the IT infrastructure. There be a need for robust security measures, such as encryption, access controls, and data backup systems. The organizational strategy's focus on expanding social security and housing finance services requires a scalable and high-performance IT infrastructure to handle increased transaction volumes and data processing demands:

"……The IT infrastructure are designed to support integration with other financial systems and government agencies to ensure seamless data exchange and collaboration……."

[Q7, interview 22, Banjul]

After that, responders were requested to say how the organizational IT strategy has impacted on the IT infrastructure in the organization. It was found that an organizational IT strategy in the organization, emphasizing data security and compliance, has influenced the IT infrastructure by necessitating strong safety precautions like multi-factor verification, antivirus programs, and encoding. Since the IT strategy focuses on expanding social security and housing finance services, the IT infrastructure is scalable to handle increased user demand and transaction volumes. An IT strategy aimed at modernizing operations impact the infrastructure by requiring the adoption of new technologies, cloud-based solutions, and modern software applications.

Additionally, the investigation tried to determine how much the organization's strategy influences the IT infrastructure, IT applications and IT processes. It emerged that the organization's strategy in the organization have a significant influence on the IT infrastructure, as financial services require robust and secure systems. The strategy drivew investments in data centres, cybersecurity measures, and high-performance servers to handle financial transactions and protect sensitive data. The organization's strategy leads to the development and adoption of specialized applications for managing social security programs, housing finance, and customer interactions. The strategy prioritizew software solutions for financial reporting, risk management, and customer service:

"…. The strategy's emphasis on efficiency and customer service impacts IT processes, driving the implementation of streamlined workflows for loan processing,

claims management, and customer support. Automation and digitalization are key components of the strategy to enhance process efficiency……"

[Q9, interview 27, Banjul]

Key informants were further asked to indicate whether IT strategy influences the organizational strategy in the organization. It was found that the IT strategy in the organization, emphasizing data analytics and business intelligence, influences the organizational strategy by providing valuable insights for informed decision-making. Data-driven strategies help optimize social security programs, housing finance services, and investment decisions. The IT strategy, focused on digital transformation, impacts the organizational strategy by enhancing customer engagement and service delivery. The integration of online services, mobile applications, and self-service portals has led to a customer-centric organizational strategy:

"……The IT strategy drives process automation and efficiency improvement initiatives, which align with the organizational strategy's goal of optimizing operational processes and resource utilization……"

[Q10, interview 23, Banjul]

After that, responders were requested to say how organizational governance influences IT governance in the organization. It emerged from the interview, that in the organization, since the organizational governance follows a centralized approach, it has led to a similar approach in IT governance. A central IT governance committee or department oversees all IT initiatives across the organization, ensuring alignment with the overall strategic objectives and compliance with financial regulations. The organizational governance's focus on compliance and risk management influences IT governance by necessitating robust security measures, data privacy policies, and disaster recovery planning:

"……Our organizational governance encourages stakeholder involvement and transparency; IT governance may involve collaboration with various business units and stakeholders to understand their IT needs and ensure IT projects meet their requirements…."

[Q11, interview 24, Banjul]

Additionally, the investigation tried to determine how much the organizational scope like customers, service, product, customers affect the technology scope in the organization. It was found that the case's organizational scope includes providing social security and housing finance services to citizens and beneficiaries. The technology scope in the organization is influenced by the need to manage a large volume of financial transactions and sensitive personal data. The IT infrastructure require robust security measures and high-performance systems to handle customer accounts, investments, and benefit disbursements:

"……Our focus on serving its customers' financial needs drive the technology scope to include user-friendly online portals, mobile apps, and secure communication channels for efficient customer service……"

[Q12, interview 30, Banjul]

Participants were challenged to describe how organizational distinctive competencies had affected their IT competences. It was established that the organization's distinctive competencies lie in financial management, risk assessment, and customer service in the social security and housing finance sector. To complement the organizational competencies, IT competences in the organization focus on developing robust financial systems, data analytics, and CRM tools. The IT team excels in ensuring data security, accurate financial reporting, and efficient customer service through technology:

"…….IT competences in the organization involves integrating IT systems with financial platforms to streamline processes, ensure compliance, and optimize financial operations…."

[Q13, interview 28, Banjul]

Key informants were asked to indicate whether their organization ever made a joint development venture with another IT organization to enable the organization realizes its IT strategy, to which they only moderately affirmed. The organization may have a moderate likelihood of engaging in a joint development venture, since as a financial institution dealing with sensitive data, they might prioritize data security and risk management, which could lead them to be cautious about partnering with external IT organizations. However, they may still consider collaboration if it aligns with their strategic goals, such as enhancing customer service through innovative IT solutions. It was also found that the organization carefully evaluates potential partners, ensuring their IT capabilities match the organization's security and compliance standards. They might seek collaborations to develop advanced financial analytics tools, data protection solutions, or customer-centric applications.

Respondents were also sked to indicate whether IT strategy affects IT skill development and training in the organization. It was established that the organizational IT strategy, emphasizing data security and compliance, influences the IT infrastructure by requiring multi-factor authorization, antivirus programs, and other strong safety features. Since the IT strategy focuses on expanding social security and housing finance services, the IT infrastructure is scalable to handle increased user demand and transaction volumes.

"……The IT strategy is aimed at modernizing operations impact the infrastructure by requiring the adoption of new technologies, cloud-based solutions, and modern software applications……"]

[Q15, interview 24, Banjul]

The study also sought to determine whether IT strategy affects IT processes like procurement, development and maintenance in their organizations. It was found that the organization's IT strategy prioritizes data security, financial management systems, and customer-centric applications. This influences IT processes to focus on secure procurement of software and hardware, development of financial software, and ongoing maintenance to ensure data integrity. IT procurement in the organization involves rigorous vendor assessments to ensure data security and compliance with financial regulations. The focus is on acquiring software and hardware solutions that meet specific security and performance criteria. The IT development process revolves around building and customizing financial management systems, data analytics tools, and customer service applications tailored to the needs of the organization. IT maintenance in the organization prioritizes continuous monitoring of financial systems, regular updates to enhance security, and frequent customer service application improvements.

The goal of the investigation was also to learn the performance measures that the organization use to assess the alignment between organizational and IT strategy. It was established that the organization uses performance measures such as examining the IT systems' impact on improving customer service and user experience in financial transactions and inquiries; and measuring the effectiveness of IT security measures to protect sensitive financial data and comply with regulations. They also evaluate how IT initiatives contribute to cost savings, operational efficiency, and revenue generation; and monitor the availability and reliability of IT systems critical to financial management.

Finally, the goal of the investigation was to learn however in the interviewees' opinions, the IT management is viewed in organization. It emerged that in the organization, IT management is viewed as a strategic enabler. The organization recognizes the critical role of technology in financial management, customer service, and risk assessment. IT managers are seen as partners in achieving the organization's strategic goals, and IT initiatives are aligned with the overall business objectives. Given the sensitive nature of financial data, IT management in the organization is also perceived as having a crucial role in ensuring data security and compliance with financial regulations. IT managers are expected to maintain robust security measures and implement industry best practices to protect customer information:

> *"…….IT management in the organization are viewed as customer-centric, focusing on developing user-friendly interfaces and applications for better customer engagement and service……"*
>
> [Q18, interview 21, Banjul]

4.4.4 Case Study Four

The fourth case is a government-owned and operated entity responsible for providing public broadcasting services in The Gambia. It is the primary source of radio and television content for the Gambian population. The corporation operates radio stations that broadcast news, educational programs, entertainment content, music, and cultural shows in various languages, including English and local languages. It also operates a television network that offers a mix of news, current affairs, educational programs, documentaries, drama, sports, and entertainment content. The corporation plays a crucial role in disseminating information and education to the Gambian population, keeping them informed about national and international events, government initiatives, and important societal issues. Like many broadcasters worldwide, it is

currently adapting to the digital era, expanding its reach through online streaming platforms and social media to connect with a wider audience.

When asked on whether the corporation has an IT strategy, it emerged that the corporation is undergoing digital transformation, albeit limited to managing content creation, distribution, and broadcasting. An organizational IT strategy enable the corporation modernize its broadcasting infrastructure, enhance content delivery through online platforms, and efficiently manage its digital archives.

Key informants were also asked to indicate how an IT strategy was developed in the organization. It was found that the IT strategy for the organization revolves around content management, including modernizing production, broadcasting, and archiving processes. The organization's strategy emphasizes digital transformation, expanding online content delivery through web streaming platforms and social media:

> *"……. The strategy focuses on enhancing the user experience for viewers, making content accessible and interactive across multiple devices…."*
>
> [Q2, interview 33, Banjul]

Key informants were then asked to indicate whether IT Managers in the organization participate in the formulation of the organization's organizational strategy. It was established in this regard that in the organization, IT Managers contribute to the organizational strategy by providing insights on modern content management systems, digital archives, and media production tools. IT Managers play a role in formulating strategies for expanding the organization's digital distribution platforms, ensuring the availability of content on web streaming services and social media:

"……IT Managers work with content producers and user experience specialists to enhance viewer engagement and accessibility across various digital channels……"

[Q3, interview 37, Banjul]

When asked on the roles that IT Managers perform in the development of IT strategy, it was found that in the organization, IT Managers are responsible for developing and implementing content management systems to handle media assets efficiently, including program archives, broadcasting schedules, and media production tools. They focus on expanding the organization's online presence through web streaming platforms, social media, and mobile applications, making content accessible to a broader audience.

"…….IT Managers be involved in the selection and maintenance of broadcasting technology, ensuring high-quality content delivery to viewers……."

[Q4, interview 35, Banjul]

After that, responders were requested to say the roles that senior organizational managers perform in the development of IT strategy in the organization. It was discovered that senior managers in the organization are responsible for overseeing the development of content management systems to handle media assets efficiently and ensure smooth broadcasting schedules. They lead the organization's digital transformation efforts, including expanding online content distribution platforms, social media presence, and mobile applications:

"……. Senior managers oversee the selection and implementation of broadcasting technology to deliver high-quality content to viewers……"

[Q5, interview 36, Banjul]

Key informants were further asked to indicate how organizational strategy influences the development of the IT strategy. It emerged that the IT strategy in the organization is influenced

by the organizational strategy's focus on content management and broadcasting. It prioritizes the development of IT systems that efficiently manage media assets, broadcasting schedules, and content distribution platforms. Since the organizational strategy includes objectives for digital transformation and expanding online presence, the IT strategy involves leveraging technology to reach a broader audience through web streaming, social media, and mobile applications:

> *"……. The organizational strategy's emphasis on enhancing viewer engagement and accessibility influence the IT strategy's focus on delivering a seamless and interactive user experience across various digital channels……"*
>
> [Q6, interview 38, Banjul]

After that, responders were requested to say how the organizational strategy has impacted on the IT infrastructure in the organization. It was established that the organizational strategy's focus on content creation and broadcasting impact the IT infrastructure by requiring ample storage capacity for media assets, as well as efficient archiving and retrieval mechanisms. To expand the online presence, the IT infrastructure needs to support the deployment and management of various content distribution platforms, including web streaming and social media channels:

> *"……. The IT infrastructure requires software and hardware resources to support media production tools and editing suites used by content creators……"*
>
> [Q7, interview 33, Banjul]

Additionally, the investigation tried to determine how much the organization's strategy influences the IT infrastructure, IT applications and IT processes. It emerged that the organization's strategy in the organization influences the IT infrastructure to support content storage, distribution, and broadcasting. The strategy requires investments in media servers, content management systems, and digital archives. The strategy leads to the adoption of media production and broadcasting applications for content creation, editing, and scheduling. Web

streaming platforms, mobile apps, and social media integrations be part of the strategy to expand audience reach. The strategy's emphasis on digital transformation and user engagement impact IT processes, leading to streamlined content delivery workflows, real-time audience feedback mechanisms, and efficient media archiving.

Key informants were further asked to indicate whether IT strategy influences the organizational strategy in the organization. It was found that the IT strategy in the organization is focused on expanding online content distribution and interactive features influence the organizational strategy by enhancing audience engagement and reach. The IT strategy's emphasis on efficient content management and archival support the organizational strategy's goal of maintaining a diverse and relevant content library:

> *"……. An IT strategy geared towards digital innovation and modern broadcasting technologies align with the organizational strategy's objective of being a leading media service provider……"*
>
> [Q9, interview 32, Banjul]

After that, responders were requested to say how organizational governance influences IT governance in the organization. It emerged from the interview, that as a national public broadcaster, the organization may have a specific governance framework designed for public broadcasting organizations. This governance structure influences IT governance, ensuring that IT initiatives align with the organization's mandate to serve the public interest. Organizational governance in the organization involves content oversight committees or boards. This could extend to IT governance, with a focus on ensuring responsible content distribution and compliance with broadcasting standards:

"……If the organizational governance values innovation and creativity, it likely influence IT governance by encouraging the adoption of modern broadcasting technologies and interactive content delivery platforms……."

[Q10, interview 31, Banjul]

Additionally, the investigation tried to determine how much the organizational scope like customers, service, product, customers affect the technology scope in the organization. It was found that the organizational scope involves managing seaports and facilitating international trade and logistics. The technology scope in the organization is influenced by the need for real-time tracking and monitoring of vessels, cargo, and customs clearance processes. IT infrastructure include advanced communication systems and IoT devices to facilitate seamless port operations. The organization's organizational scope drives the technology scope to focus on integrating various port operations and connecting with global shipping networks to enhance communication and coordination.

Participants were challenged to describe how organizational distinctive competencies had affected their IT competences. It was established that the organization's distinctive competencies revolve around media content creation, broadcasting, and public communication. IT competences in organization centre on media management systems, content distribution platforms, and digital broadcasting technology. The IT team excels in handling large media archives, ensuring smooth broadcasting, and managing online content delivery:

"…….IT competences in the organization involve staying at the forefront of digital media innovations, such as web streaming technologies, social media integration, and interactive content delivery……."

[Q12, interview 38, Banjul]

Key informants were asked to indicate whether their organization ever made a joint development venture with another IT organization to enable the organization realizes its IT strategy, to which they only moderately affirmed. As a media organization, they might seek collaborations to stay at the forefront of digital broadcasting technologies and expand their online presence. The organization partners with IT organizations to develop content management systems, online streaming platforms, or interactive media solutions that enhance viewer engagement and reach new audiences through social media integration.

After that, responders were requested to say how in the organization, the IT strategy influences the IT infrastructure. It was found that the organizational IT strategy in the organization, aiming to improve media storage and management, influence the IT infrastructure by requiring significant storage capacity and content management systems. Since the IT strategy focuses on expanding online content distribution, the IT infrastructure need to accommodate web streaming platforms, social media channels, and content delivery networks.

> *"……Our IT strategy is aimed at enhancing content production capabilities impact the infrastructure by requiring powerful workstations and software tools for media editing and production……"*
>
> [Q14, interview 35, Banjul]

Respondents were also sked to indicate whether IT strategy affects IT skill development and training in the organization. It was established that the organization's IT strategy may emphasize digital content distribution, online media platforms, and interactive broadcasting. This strategy drives the need for IT skill development in areas such as web streaming, multimedia production, and social media management. The organization invest in training programs to enhance IT staff's abilities in multimedia editing software, content management systems, and social media

marketing tools. The IT strategy's focus on innovation might lead to creative workshops and seminars to foster a culture of continuous learning and exploration of cutting-edge technologies.

The study also sought to determine whether IT strategy affects IT processes like procurement, development and maintenance in their organizations. It was found that the organization's IT strategy may focus on digital content distribution, online media platforms, and interactive broadcasting. This influences IT processes to prioritize procurement of multimedia tools, agile development of content management systems, and regular maintenance to keep broadcasting channels updated. IT procurement in the organization involve acquiring multimedia editing software, content management systems, and technologies for digital content distribution. The IT development process revolve around building and customizing content management systems, web streaming platforms, and social media integrations to expand the organization's online presence. IT maintenance in the organization involve regular updates to multimedia content, content delivery platforms, and social media channels to ensure a dynamic and engaging media presence.

The goal of the investigation was to learn the performance measures that the organization use to assess the alignment between organizational and IT strategy. It was established that the organization uses performance measures such as evaluating the impact of digital content distribution and online platforms on reaching a wider audience; measuring audience interaction and engagement with the organization content on social media platforms and web streaming channels; assessing the variety and quality of media content produced and distributed across different platforms; and monitoring the successful integration and utilization of innovative broadcasting technologies.

Finally, the goal of the investigation was to learn however in the interviewees' opinions, the IT management is viewed in organization. It emerged that in the organization, IT management is viewed as essential for content delivery and audience engagement. The organization recognizes the importance of digital platforms, web streaming, and social media in reaching a broader audience and enhancing content distribution. IT management in the organization is perceived as creative and innovative, driving the adoption of modern broadcasting technologies and interactive media solutions:

> *"……. The organization views IT management as a key enabler of digital transformation, helping the organization evolve from traditional broadcasting to a more agile and digitally connected media service provider……'*
>
> [Q18, interview 40, Banjul]

4.5 Extent of IT-Organisational Strategy Alignment

The study sought to evaluate the extent and challenges of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia which happens to be the objective two and three. Seven attributes of IT-Organisational strategy alignment were thus analysed, including communications, measurement of IT business value, IT governance, business-it partnership, IT scope and architecture, business and IT skills, external environment. This was on a "5-point Likert scale", from which means and standard deviations were computed.

4.5.1 Communications

In this section, the study analyzed communications as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. In the present study, communications as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations refers to the integration and synchronization of communication efforts with the overall strategy of the organization. It involves leveraging information technology (IT) systems and tools to facilitate effective

communication both internally among employees and externally with stakeholders, such as citizens, partners, and other government entities. Figure 4.4 presents the results.

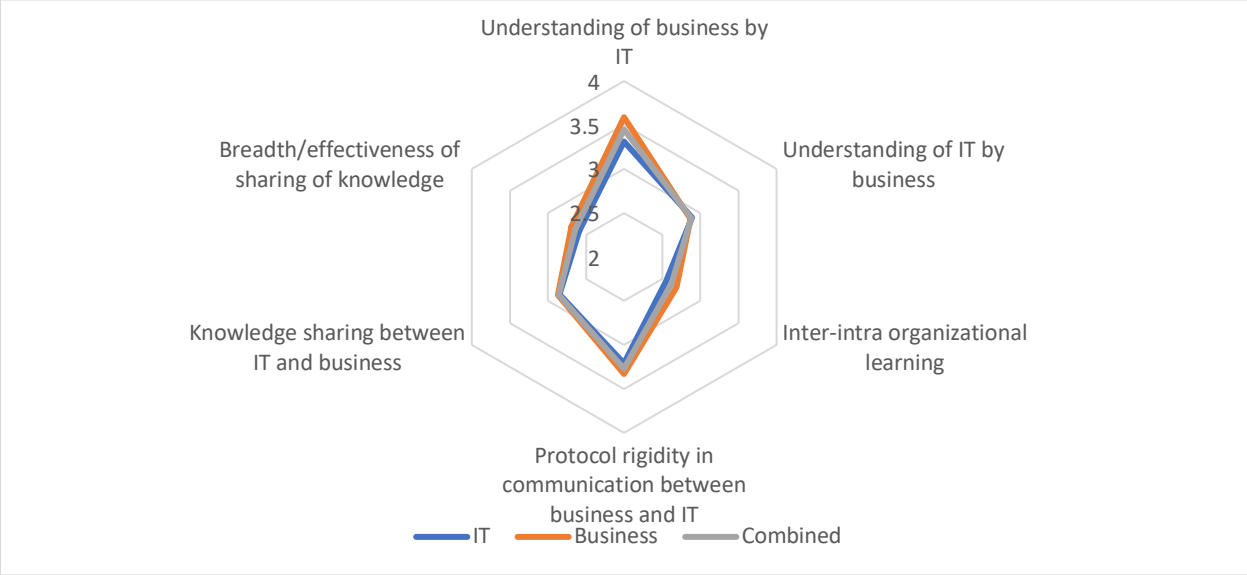


Figure 4.4: Communications

Source: Survey Data (2023)

As presented in Figure 4.4, the combined score indicates that most people who responded affirmed that in their respective organizations, there is understanding of IT by business, business awareness of IT is emerging (3.45). Further, inter-intra organizational learning/education (continuous process of sharing knowledge within an organization or between organizations) is regular and clear (2.62). Protocol rigidity in communication between business and IT is emerging and relaxed (3.27); while Knowledge sharing between IT and business is Structured around key processes (2.86). The Breadth/effectiveness of sharing of knowledge and ideas by liaisons/consultants/facilitators with business and IT are formalized and in regular meetings (2.64). Higher scores were recorded among respondents from the business division with regard to understanding at senior and middle IT management levels (3.59); and protocol rigidity in communication between business and IT is emerging and relaxed (3.33).

4.5.2 Measurement of IT Business Value

In this section, the study analyzed measurement of IT business value as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. In the present study, measurement of IT business value as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations refers to the process of evaluating and quantifying the impact and contribution of information technology (IT) investments and initiatives to the organization's strategic objectives. Figure 4.5 presents the results.

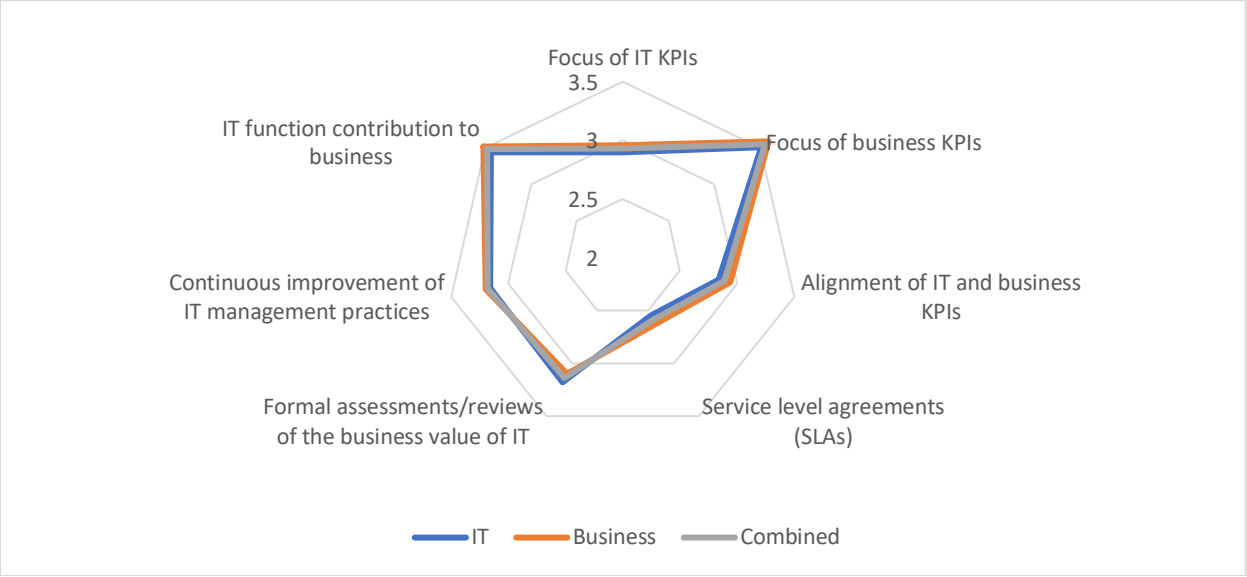


Figure 4.5: Measurement of IT Business Value

Source: Survey Data (2023)

As presented in Figure 4.5, the combined score indicates that there is a focus on traditional financial KPIs (2.93); and Customer-based business KPIs (3.55). it is also learnt from the Table, that emerging business & IT metrics aligned (2.89); and that SLAs are emerging across the enterprise (2.59). Formal assessments/reviews of the business value of IT are frequently carried out (3.14); and continuous improvement of IT management practices is emerging (3.18). IT function contribution to business is average (3.48). Higher scores were recorded in the business

division, with regard to focus on traditional financial KPIs (3.59); IT function contribution to business (3.52); and alignment of IT and business KPIs (2.94). IT however recorded higher scores with regard to formal assessments/reviews of the business value of IT (3.2).

4.5.3 IT Governance

In this section, the study analyzed IT governance as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. In the present study, IT governance, as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations refers to the framework and processes in place to ensure that IT activities, resources, and investments are aligned with and support the overall organizational strategy. It encompasses the structures, policies, procedures, and decision-making mechanisms that guide the planning, implementation, and management of IT initiatives in public organizations. Figure 4.6 presents the results.

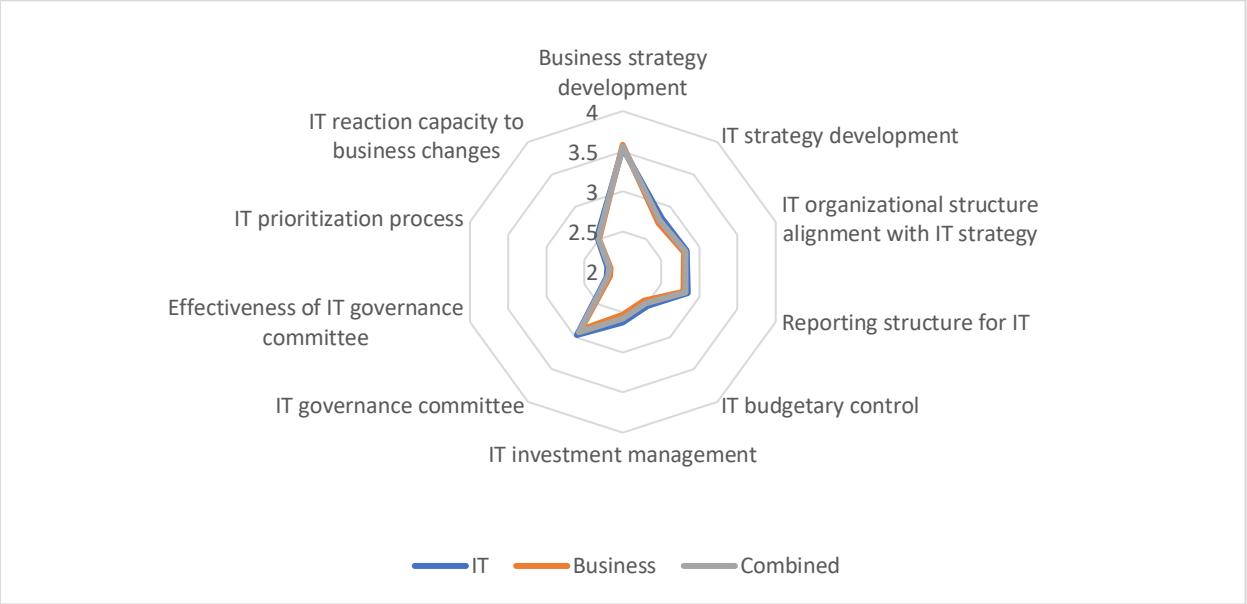


Figure 4.6: IT Governance
Source: Survey Data (2023)

Combined results on Figure 4.6 shows that in a majority of the organizations, business strategy development is managed across the organization (3.56). IT organizational structure alignment

with IT strategy is emerging (2.82); and reporting structure for IT is centralized/ decentralized; some federation; CIO reports to COO (2.82); and IT strategy development (2.79). IT budgetary control is cost centered by functional organization (2.48); while IT investment management is largely Traditional and a Process enabler (2.58). IT governance committee is characterized by Regular clear communication (2.93). on the effectiveness of IT governance committee in business-IT alignment, the IT committee develops IT strategy and projects with limited reference to business strategy (2.19). The IT prioritization process is occasionally responsive; by IT and business managers (2.18); while the IT reaction capacity to business changes is emerging (2.52). IT division recorded higher scores with regard to business strategy development management across the organization (3.6); while IT recorded higher scores with regard to IT governance committee being characterized by regular clear communication (2.97); and reporting structure of IT (2.85).

4.5.4 Business-IT Partnership

In this section, the study analyzed Business-IT Partnership as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. In the present study, business-IT partnership as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations, refers to the collaborative relationship and integration between the business functions and the IT department. It involves close cooperation, mutual understanding, and shared responsibility between business leaders and IT professionals to ensure that IT initiatives and investments are closely aligned with the overall organizational strategy. Figure 4.7 presents the results.

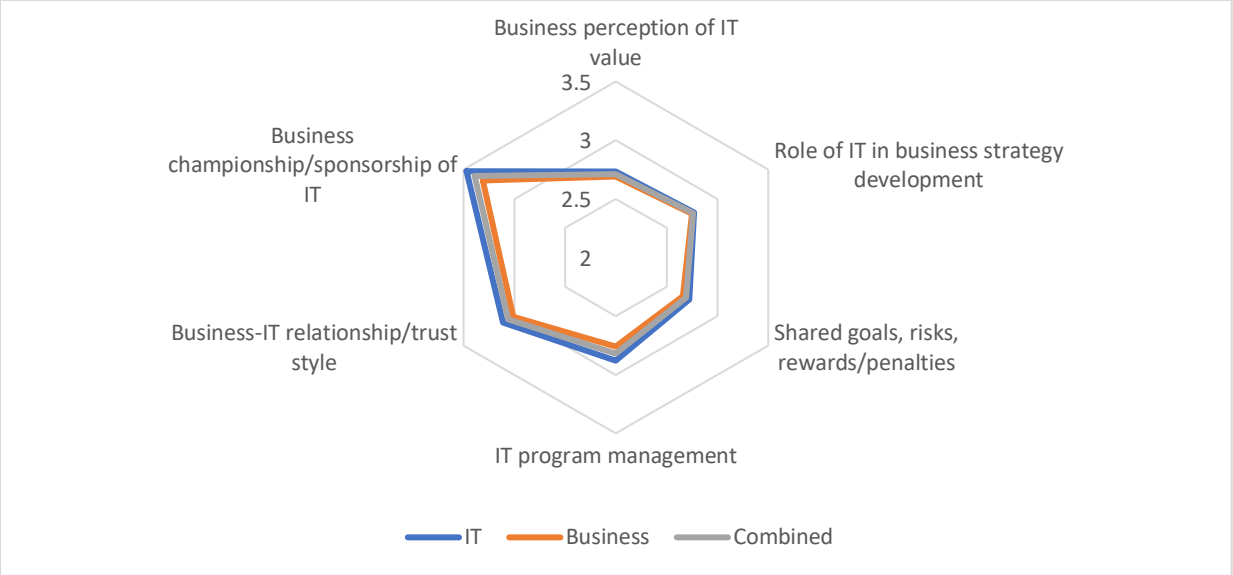


Figure 4.7: Business-IT Partnership

Source: Survey Data (2023)

Combined findings on Figure 4.7 show that in a majority of the organizations, and the role of IT in business strategy development is a business process driver (2.76). On shared goals, risks, rewards/penalties, business is more tolerant to risk and willing to share risks with IT; some reward for IT (2.76); while IT program management complied with standards (2.82). On business-IT relationship/trust style, IT is viewed as an emerging valued service provider (3.06). Business championship/sponsorship of IT is at the functional organization (3.39). IT however recorded greater scores in business championship/sponsorship of IT (3.47); business-IT relationship/trust style (3.11); and IT program management (2.9).

4.5.5 IT Scope and Architecture

In this section, the study analyzed IT scope and architecture as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. In the present study, IT scope and architecture as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations, refers to the defined boundaries and structure of IT initiatives and systems within the organization. It

involves determining the extent of IT activities, defining the technology landscape, and establishing the architectural principles and frameworks that guide the design and implementation of IT solutions in alignment with the organizational strategy. Figure 4.8 presents the results.

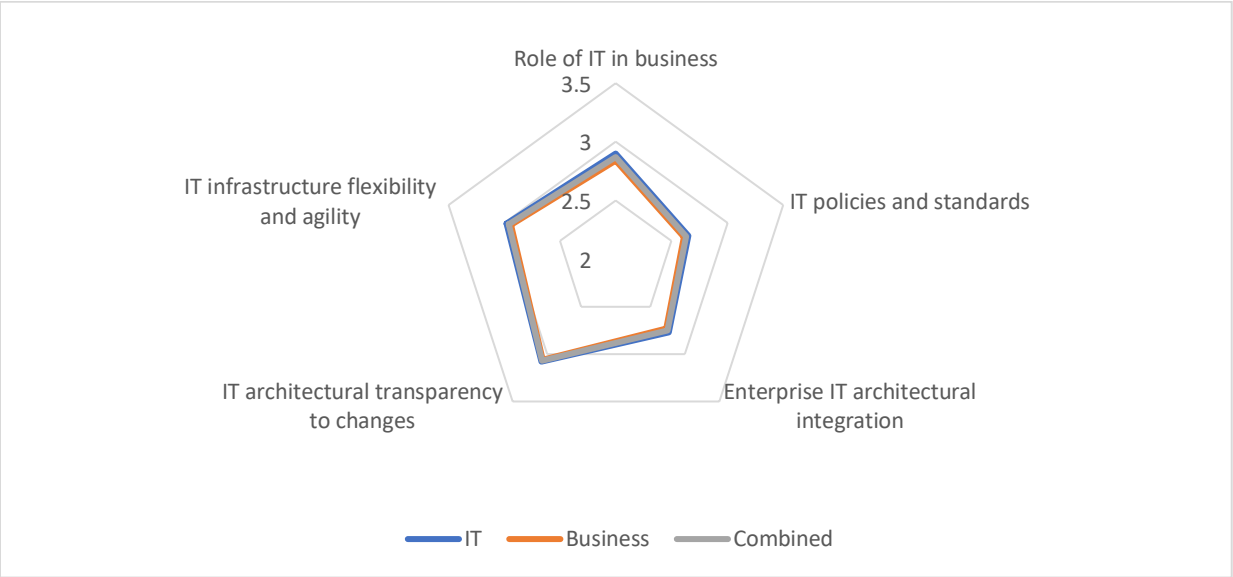


Figure 4.8: IT Scope and Architecture

Source: Survey Data (2023)

Combined results presented on Figure 4.8 show that the role of IT in business is that of a business process enabler (2.87); and organizational IT policies and standards are emerging (2.63). Enterprise IT architectural integration (the process of designing and implementing a cohesive and unified IT architecture that supports an organization's business objectives) is standard with no silos (2.75). there is transparency to changes emerging, with increasing training of users as regards IT architectural transparency to changes (degree to which the underlying IT infrastructure is visible, accessible, and understandable to the people who use it) (3.07). IT infrastructure flexibility and agility are emerging (2.96). IT however recorded higher scores in role of IT in business (2.9); IT infrastructure flexibility and agility (2.98); and enterprise IT architectural integration (2.8).

4.5.6 Business and IT Skills

In this section, the study analyzed business and IT Skills as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. In the present study, business and IT skills as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations refer to the competencies and capabilities required by both business professionals and IT professionals to effectively collaborate and execute IT initiatives in support of the organizational strategy. It involves a combination of business acumen and technical expertise that enables seamless alignment between business needs and IT solutions. Figure 4.9 presents the results.

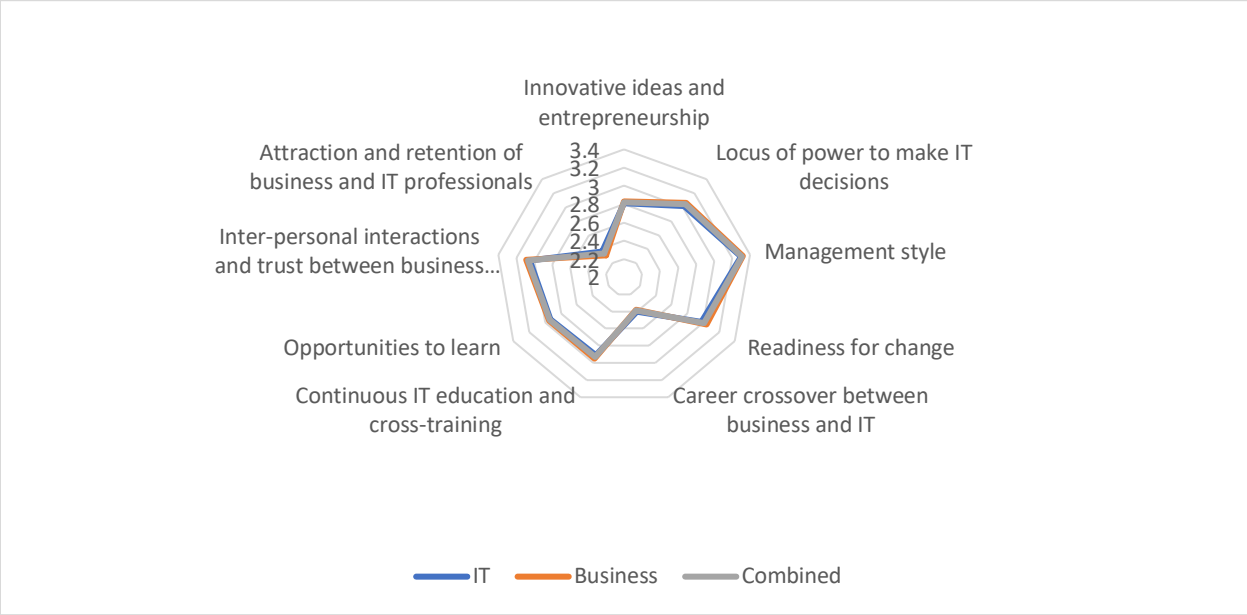


Figure 4.9: Business and IT Skills

Source: Survey Data (2023)

As presented on Figure 4.9, combined results show that most organizations are risk tolerant; and innovative ideas and entrepreneurship are moderately encouraged/ promoted (2.82); and the Locus of power to make IT decisions is emerging across the organization (3.04). The management style is results-based (3.31); and there is a recognized need for change (3.01). Career crossover between business and IT is manual (2.39); and there is continuous IT cross-

teaching as well as schooling that rely upon operational structure (2.93). On opportunities to learn most organizations evaluate and learn only when there are major changes that affect the IT strategy (2.94). Inter-personal interactions are emerging as trust between business and IT is also emerging (3.07). Business and IT functions attract managers with business and technical skills, respectively; high turnover (2.34). greater scores were recorded in the business division, with regard to management style (3.3); readiness of change (3.04); interpersonal interactions and trust (3.09); and continuous IT education and cross-training (2.95).

4.5.7 External Environment

In this section, the study analyzed external environment as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. In the present study, external environment as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations refers to the factors and conditions outside of the organization that influence its strategic decisions and the alignment of IT initiatives with the organizational strategy. It includes elements such as technological advancements, market trends, regulatory requirements, social and cultural factors, and competitive landscape. Figure 4.10 presents the results.

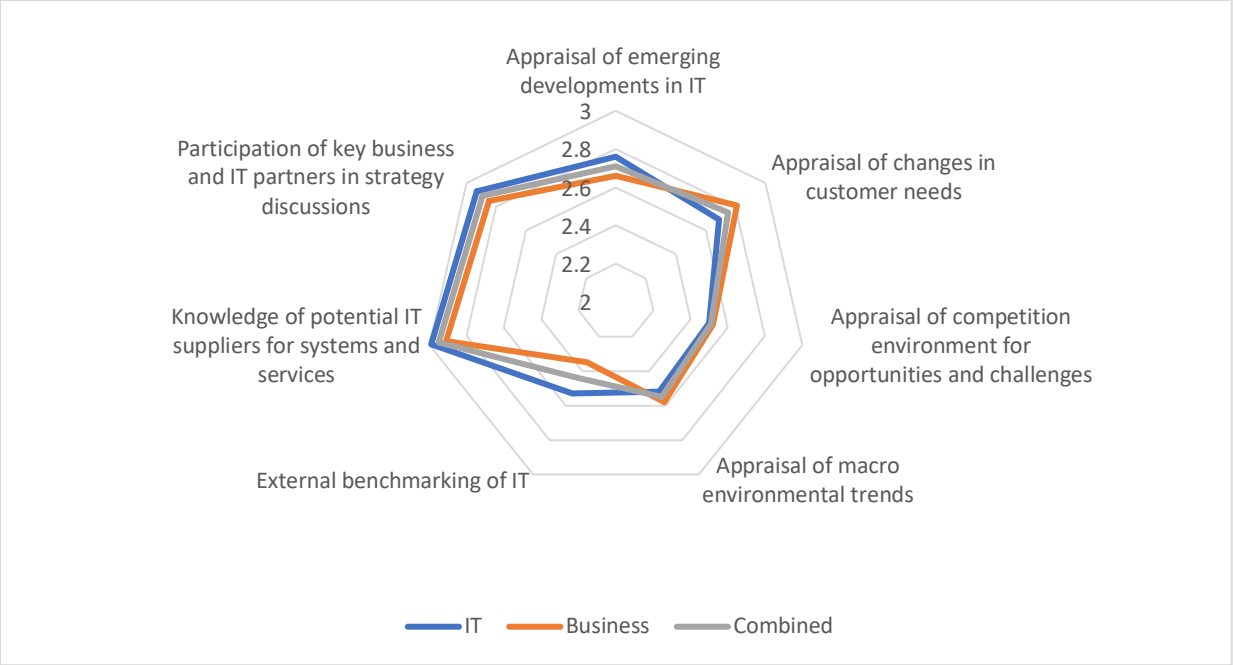


Figure 4.10: External Environment

Source: Survey Data (2023)

It was established as shown on Figure 4.10, that according to the combined results, appraisal of emerging developments in IT for opportunities and challenges is emerging (2.71); as is the case with appraisal of changes in customer needs and preferences for opportunities and challenges (2.75). Appraisal of competition environment for opportunities and challenges is also emerging; as is appraisal of macro environmental trends (political, economic, social, legal, etc.) for opportunities and challenges (2.51). External benchmarking of It is informal (2.44). Knowledge of potential IT suppliers for systems and services is emerging (2.95). Participation of key business and IT partners in strategy discussions on planned IT systems and services is limited (2.89). Greater scores were recorded in the business division, with regard to appraisal of changes in customer needs (2.8); and appraisal of macro-environmental trends (2.6); while IT recorded greater scores in knowledge of potential IT suppliers for systems and services (3.0); appraisal of emerging developments in IT (2.8); Participation of key business and IT partners in strategy

discussions on planned IT systems and services is limited (2.9); and external benchmarking of IT (2.6).

The foregoing findiings can be summarized in the radar digram (Figure 4.11). As illustrated in the Figure, the highest combined scores were established in measurement of IT business value (3.109), communications (2.953), business-IT partnetship (2.905) and business and IT skills (2.872). Respondents from Strategy departments recorded higher scores in measurement of IT business value (3.159), business and IT skills (3.303) and communications (3.041). Respondents from IT department on the toher hand recorded higher scores in IT governance (2.919), business-IT partnerships (3.006) and IT scope and architecture (2.991).

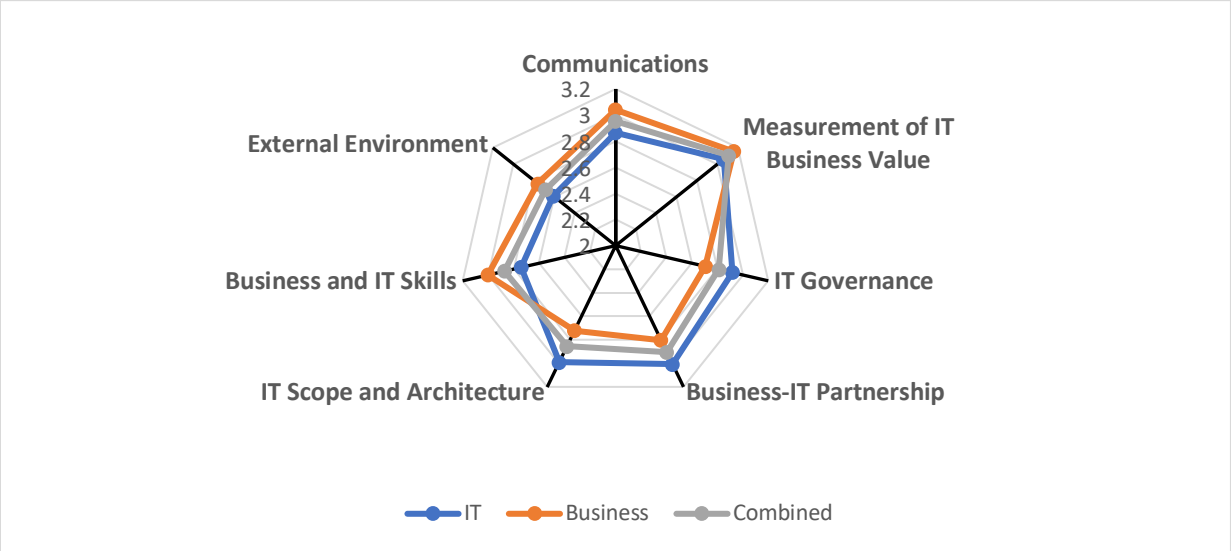


Figure 4.11: Evaluate Extent of IT-Organisational Strategy Alignment

4.6 Assessing Challenges of IT-Organisational Strategy Alignment in Public Organisations

Aligning IT strategy with the organizational strategy is crucial for public organizations to effectively leverage technology to achieve their goals and deliver public services efficiently. Against this backdrop, the study sought to determine the challenges public organisations in the Gambia face in their IT-Organisational strategy alignment. Results are presented in Figure 4.12.

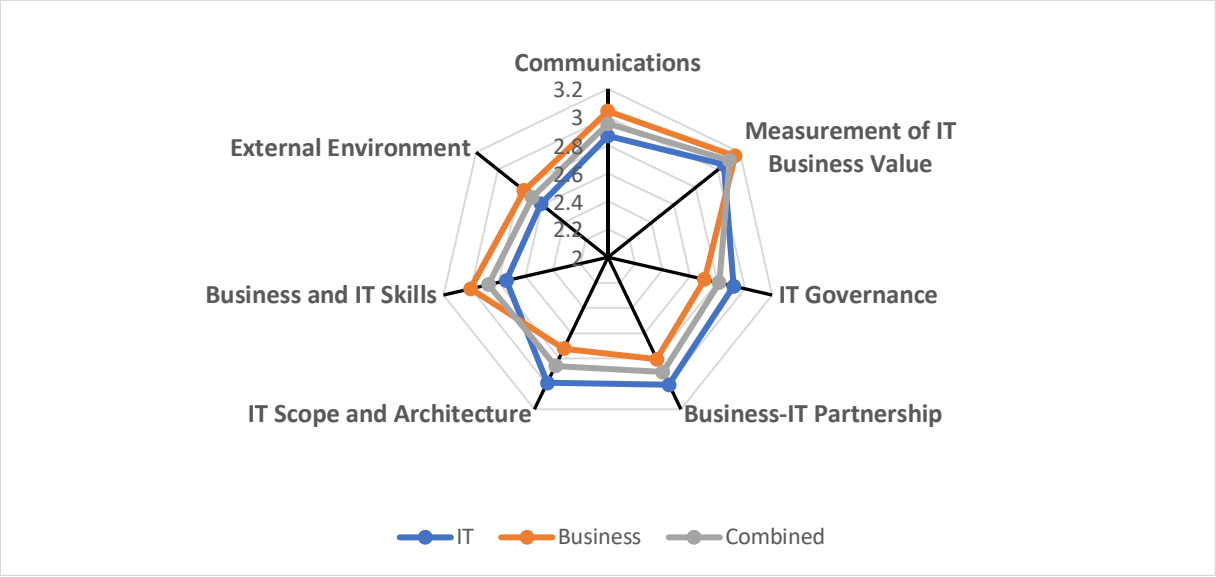


Figure 4.12: Assessment of Challenges of IT-Organisational Strategy Alignment
Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results from the above diagram clearly shows the areas or dimensions that are facing more challenges than the other measured dimensions. From the diagram, IT division recorded lower than average scores in business and IT skills (2.7); external environment (2.6); communications (2.9); and measurement of IT business value (3.0). Business division on the other hand recorded lower than average scores in IT scope and architecture (2.7); business-IT partnership (2.8); and IT governance (2.7). These point to domain-specific challenges between the IT and business divisions among the organizations surveyed.

4.7 Discussion

It was established that most public organizations in the Gambia do not have an Organizational IT Strategy. This can be attributed to the fact that public organizations in the Gambia often face resource constraints, including financial limitations and a lack of skilled IT professionals. These constraints can make it challenging to allocate sufficient resources for developing and implementing an IT strategy. Public organizations in the Gambia may also be accustomed to traditional ways of doing things and may not fully appreciate the transformative potential of

technology. There can be resistance to change and a preference for maintaining the status quo, resulting in a lack of emphasis on IT strategy development. It is also deducible from the findings that organizational strategy plays a significant role in influencing the development of the IT strategy, IT infrastructure, IT applications and IT processes. The organizational strategy provides the guiding principles and priorities that shape the IT strategy. It outlines the vision, mission, and goals of the organization, and the IT strategy should be designed to enable and support those objectives. The organizational strategy helps determine the required IT infrastructure to support the organization's operations. It influences decisions regarding hardware, software, networks, and data centers. The organizational strategy identifies the key functional areas and processes that need to be supported by IT applications. It guides the selection and development of applications that align with the organization's needs.

After that, responders were requested to say whether the IT Managers participate in the formulation of the organization’s organizational strategy. Contrary to expectation, it was found that some IT Managers do not participate actively. It was expected that senior organizational managers play key roles in the development of IT strategy. It was found that organizational strategy plays a significant role in influencing the development of the IT strategy. It is deducible from the response that the organizational strategy may involve initiatives to enhance collaboration, streamline processes, and improve the flow of information within the organization. Participants were given the opportunity to describe how much the organization’s strategy influence the IT infrastructure, IT applications and IT processes many participants responded yes to a greater extent. It can be inferred from the finding that IT strategy plays a crucial role in enabling the achievement of organizational objectives. It was found that in most organizations, the nature and scope of services offered by an organization directly influence the technology

required to support those services. The IT strategy is developed in alignment with the overall business objectives and goals of the organization.

It can be deduced from the foregoing findings that communication as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment is practiced in public organisations in the Gambia to a moderate extent. Overall, there is understanding at senior and middle IT management levels and business awareness of IT is emerging. It is also inferable from the findings, that inter-intra organizational learning/education is regular and clear; and protocol rigidity in communication between business and IT is emerging and relaxed. In the context of IT-Organizational strategy alignment, communications play a crucial role in achieving strategic objectives by ensuring that information flows seamlessly across the organization. Communication systems and tools facilitate collaboration and knowledge sharing among employees. They enable efficient communication of strategic objectives, project updates, and important information across departments and teams, fostering a shared understanding and alignment towards organizational goals.

The study also draws the inference that measurement of IT Business Value as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment is also practiced in public organisations in the Gambia to a moderate extent. There is a particularly common focus on traditional financial KPIs and customer-based business KPIs.

In respect to IT governance, it is inferred that in a majority of the public organisations in the Gambia, business strategy development is managed across the organization. IT - Organizational structure alignment with IT strategy is emerging and reporting structure for IT is either centralized or decentralized. In the context of IT-Organizational strategy alignment, the measurement of IT business value is essential to ensure that IT investments are aligned with the

organization's goals and are delivering tangible benefits. Developing and tracking relevant KPIs is crucial for measuring IT business value. KPIs should be defined based on the strategic objectives and should focus on the specific outcomes that IT investments are expected to deliver. For example, KPIs could include metrics such as cost savings, productivity improvements, citizen satisfaction, service quality, or process efficiency. Regular monitoring of these KPIs provides insights into the effectiveness of IT initiatives and their impact on organizational performance.

The study further deduces that business-IT Partnership as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment is also practiced in public organisations in the Gambia to a moderate extent. In most of the organizations, business perception of IT value is seen as an asset and the role of IT in business strategy development is a business process driver. In the context of IT-organizational strategy alignment, measuring IT governance helps public organizations ensure that IT decisions, investments, and operations are in line with the broader organizational goals and priorities. Effective IT governance relies on well-defined decision-making processes. Measuring IT governance involves evaluating the decision-making structures, frameworks, and procedures in place. It includes assessing the clarity, transparency, and efficiency of decision-making related to IT investments, resource allocation, and strategic initiatives. Evaluating decision-making processes helps in identifying bottlenecks, improving accountability, and streamlining the alignment of IT decisions with organizational strategy.

With regard to IT Scope and Architecture, it is deduced that the role of IT in business is that of a business process enabler and organizational IT policies and standards are emerging. The process of designing and implementing a cohesive and unified IT architecture that supports an organization's business objectives is also standard with no silos. In the context of IT-

Organizational strategy alignment, IT scope and architecture play a crucial role in ensuring that IT initiatives are in line with the operational goals and goals of the public organization. IT scope and architecture should be aligned with the overarching organizational strategy. It involves understanding the strategic goals and priorities of the organization and ensuring that IT initiatives and systems are designed and implemented in helping as well as facilitate accomplishments of such objectives. Such coordination makes sure the technology skills and assets are concentrated on sectors that add the highest benefit. directly to the organizational strategy.

In regard to business and IT Skills in public organisations in the Gambia is practiced to a moderate extent. Most organizations are risk tolerant and innovative ideas and entrepreneurship are moderately encouraged/ promoted. In the context of IT-Organizational strategy alignment, business-IT partnership is crucial for public organizations to leverage technology effectively and achieve their strategic objectives. Effective business-IT partnership emphasizes open and continuous communication between business leaders and IT professionals. Regular dialogue and collaboration enable a deep understanding of business requirements, challenges, and opportunities. Through ongoing communication, both parties can identify potential IT solutions, align expectations, and jointly develop strategies to address organizational needs.

On the external Environment, the study infers that appraisal of emerging developments in IT for opportunities and challenges is emerging, as is the case with appraisal of changes in customer needs and preferences for opportunities and challenges. Appraisal of competition environment and macro environmental trends for opportunities and challenges are also emerging. In the context of IT-Organizational strategy alignment, the external environment plays a crucial role in shaping the direction and priorities of IT initiatives in public organizations. The rapid pace of

technological advancements impacts the way public organizations operate and deliver services. IT professionals need to stay updated with emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, blockchain, or data analytics, and assess their potential impact on the organization. Public organizations need to be aware of market trends and changing customer expectations. IT initiatives should be aligned with these trends and expectations to ensure that the organization can meet the evolving needs of its stakeholders.

The findings agree with Kitsios and Kamariotou (2019) who evaluated information systems and digital organizational strategy. IT strategy has evolved into a functional-level strategy that must be in line with the organization's overall goals. The old company strategy has changed as a result of these technological developments, prompting CIOs to reevaluate the importance of IT strategy and create a new plan into an exhaustive phenomenon known as virtual organizational approach.

The findings also agree with Leganza (2003), that organizational strategy in short term is easy and adequate through specially designed process but achieving the same success and adequacy is much more challenging. The study findings are further consistent with Hu and Huang (2006) who report that the Long-term synchronization is known to be beneficial but difficult to attain factor. Hence, according to attain a comprehensive strategy that integrates and strikes a balance amongst both long- and short-term perspectives is necessary for long-term technological and business synchronization. It is evident that well-tailored training programs and awareness building are required to address the challenge of inadequate skills in the public organization.

It can further be deduced from the findings, that IT and business divisions across the case studies face challenges in different dimensions within the IT-organizational alignment context. Under the IT governance dimension for instance, the organizations face challenges in the effectiveness of IT governance committee and IT budgetary control. IT governance committees play a crucial

role in ensuring that IT decisions align with the strategic objectives of the organization. However, in many cases, challenges can arise that hinder the effectiveness of these committees. Effective IT governance requires representation from both IT and business units, ensuring that decisions are well-rounded and aligned with the overall business strategy. If these committees lack diverse representation, decisions may not adequately address the needs of all stakeholders. Without clearly defined roles and responsibilities within the IT governance committees, decision-making processes can become convoluted. This can lead to conflicts, delays, and even decisions that are not fully aligned with the organization's goals.

Controlling and managing IT budgets is essential for allocating resources effectively and ensuring that IT initiatives contribute to the organization's strategic goals. Challenges in this area can also hinder optimal resource allocation and alignment. Without clear visibility into IT spending, decision-makers may struggle to understand how resources are being allocated and whether they are being used efficiently. This lack of transparency can hinder informed decision-making. Balancing the allocation of IT budgets among various projects and departments can be challenging, especially when different divisions have competing priorities. This can result in resources being allocated to projects that do not align well with the organization's overall strategy. The dynamic nature of technology can make it difficult to predict the exact budgetary needs for various IT initiatives. Organizations may face challenges in estimating costs accurately and adjusting budgets accordingly.

Under business and IT skills, the organizations face challenges in attraction and retention of business and IT professionals and career cross-over between business and IT. Attracting and retaining skilled professionals in both business and IT fields can be challenging due to intense competition. Top talent often has multiple opportunities, making it crucial for organizations to

offer attractive compensation, benefits, and growth opportunities. Business and IT professionals might have different needs and expectations from their roles. IT professionals might seek opportunities to work with cutting-edge technologies, while business professionals might prioritize roles that align with their specific industry interests. Misalignment between the organization's expectations and what employees seek can lead to dissatisfaction and turnover. For instance, if IT professionals are expected to focus solely on technical tasks without contributing to strategic discussions, they might seek roles elsewhere.

Transitioning from business to IT or vice versa can require acquiring new skills. While business professionals might lack technical expertise, IT professionals might need to develop a deep understanding of business operations. Bridging this gap can be time-consuming and challenging. Employees might perceive transitioning between business and IT domains as difficult due to perceived barriers or stereotypes. This can discourage individuals from pursuing cross-over opportunities, even if they have transferable skills. Organizations must actively support career cross-over initiatives by offering training, mentorship, and opportunities to gain hands-on experience in the new domain. Lack of such support can hinder employees' willingness to explore new career paths.

Under external environment, the organizations face challenges in appraisal of competition environment for opportunities and challenges, appraisal of macro environmental trends and external benchmarking of IT. The digital age has led to an overwhelming amount of data available, making it challenging for organizations to extract meaningful insights from the vast pool of information. Accurately identifying emerging competitors, their strategies, and market positioning requires advanced analytical capabilities. The competitive landscape can change swiftly due to technological advancements, market disruptions, and shifting consumer

preferences. Organizations must continuously monitor and adapt to these changes to identify opportunities and mitigate threats.

Assessing macro environmental trends involves considering various factors, such as economic conditions, regulatory changes, social dynamics, and technological advancements. It's challenging to comprehensively analyze all these factors and predict their combined impact. Some trends can emerge unexpectedly, disrupting industries and markets. Organizations might struggle to anticipate and prepare for such unforeseen trends. Macro environmental trends are often interconnected and can have cascading effects. Analyzing the implications of these interconnections requires a holistic understanding that spans multiple domains.

Finding relevant and comparable data for benchmarking IT performance against industry standards can be difficult. Different organizations might define and measure IT metrics differently, making true apples-to-apples comparisons challenging. In some cases, industry-specific IT benchmarks might not exist, leading organizations to rely on broader benchmarks that might not accurately reflect their industry's nuances. Benchmarking might reveal gaps or inefficiencies in an organization's IT practices. There can be resistance to change and a reluctance to adopt new strategies, even if benchmarks suggest potential improvements.

The findings agree with Hayles (2007) who found that one of the rate inhibitor or challenges in aligning IT-Organizational strategy is communication among the business domain and the IT domain which is supported by renowned researchers like Luftman and others. It is challenging for IT executives to present business challenges that are comprehensible from an IT viewpoint since they are plagued by imprecise and obscure business needs. Similarly, Luftman et al. (1999) found that many organizations fail in harmonizing the capabilities of IT for the organization’s long-term value, as a result of certain identified inhibitors and enablers. Further, Hayles (2007)

report that IT investment have been experiencing a lot of downsides in IT related projects without releasing the value or investment return in many developing public organizations. A contentious discussion about whether "IT matters" to enterprises any longer began more than 10 years ago as a result of the increasing difficulty in controlling and obtaining value from IT.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The study's major findings are summarized in this chapter, along with the logical conclusion reached and suggestions for lawmakers, professionals, and academics. The chapter's purpose is to draw conclusions based on the study outcomes and link the investigation's goals to the conclusions. The section concludes with recommendations for future study to show how the observed knowledge shortfalls and constraints might be filled in and resolved.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

This research work sought to investigate IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. It was established in this regard that most public organizations in the Gambia do not have an Organizational IT Strategy. The lack of an organizational IT strategy in most public organizations in The Gambia can be attributed to several factors. After that, responders were requested to say whether the IT Managers participate in the formulation of the organization’s organizational strategy. Contrary to expectation, it was found that some IT Managers do not participate actively. When asked on the roles the IT Managers perform in the development of IT strategy, it was discovered that clear roles are non-existent in most public organizations, as IT strategies do not exist. It was expected that senior organizational managers play key roles in the development of IT strategy. Their involvement is critical for aligning the IT strategy with the overall organizational strategy, ensuring executive support, and driving its successful implementation. Key informants were also asked to describe how IT strategy is developed in their respective organizations. It was revealed that in the absence of an organizational IT strategy, IT initiatives in public organizations can still be developed through

alternative approaches. The organizational strategy provides the overarching direction and goals for the organization, and the IT strategy is designed to support and align with those objectives. The study therefore, established that many public organizations in the Gambia are inclined to the strategic execution perspective alignment as described SAM.

The study analyzed communications as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. A majority of respondents affirmed that in their respective organizations, there is understanding at senior and middle IT management levels (3.45); while on understanding of IT by business, business awareness of IT is emerging (2.88). Further, inter-intra organizational learning/education (continuous process of sharing knowledge within an organization or between organizations) is regular and clear (2.62). Protocol rigidity in communication between business and IT is emerging and relaxed (3.27); while Knowledge sharing between IT and business is Structured around key processes (2.86).

The study analyzed measurement of IT business value as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. results indicate that there is a focus on traditional financial KPIs (2.93); and Customer-based business KPIs (3.55). It is also learnt from the Table, that emerging business & IT metrics aligned (2.89); and that SLAs are emerging across the enterprise (2.59). Formal assessments/reviews of the business value of IT are frequently carried out (3.14); and continuous improvement of IT management practices is emerging (3.18). IT function contribution to business is average (3.48).

The study analyzed IT governance as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. a majority of the organizations, business strategy development is managed across the organization (3.56). IT organizational structure alignment with IT strategy is emerging (2.82); and reporting structure for IT is centralized/ decentralized;

some federation; CIO reports to COO (2.82). IT budgetary control is cost centered by functional organization (2.48); while IT investment management is largely Traditional and a Process enabler (2.58); similar to IT strategy development (2.79). IT governance committee is characterized by Regular clear communication (2.93). on the effectiveness of IT governance committee in business-IT alignment, the IT committee develops IT strategy and projects with limited reference to business strategy (2.19). IT prioritization process is done occasionally by IT and Business managers (2.18) while IT reaction capacity to business changes is fairly emerging (2.52)

The study analyzed Business-IT Partnership as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. in a majority of the organizations, business perception of IT value is seen as an asset (2.71); and the role of IT in business strategy development is a business process driver (2.76). On shared goals, risks, rewards/penalties, business is more tolerant to risk and willing to share risks with IT; some reward for IT (2.76); while IT program management complied with standards (2.82). On business-IT relationship/trust style, IT is viewed as an emerging valued service provider (3.06). Business championship/sponsorship of IT is at the functional organization (3.39).

The study analyzed IT scope and architecture as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. the role of IT in business is that of a business process enabler (2.87); and organizational IT policies and standards are emerging (2.63). Enterprise IT architectural integration (the process of designing and implementing a cohesive and unified IT architecture that supports an organization's business objectives) is standard with no silos (2.75). There is transparency to changes emerging, with increasing training of users as regards IT architectural transparency to changes (degree to which the underlying IT

infrastructure is visible, accessible, and understandable to the people who use it) (3.07). IT infrastructure flexibility and agility are emerging (2.96).

The study analyzed business and IT Skills as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. most organizations are risk tolerant; and innovative ideas and entrepreneurship are moderately encouraged/ promoted (2.82); and the Locus of power to make IT decisions is emerging across the organization (3.04). The management style is results-based (3.31); and there is a recognized need for change (3.01). Career crossover between business and IT is manual (2.39); and there is continuous IT education and cross-training which is dependent on functional organization (2.93). On opportunities to learn most organizations evaluate and learn only when there are major changes that affect the IT strategy (2.94).

The study analyzed external environment as an attribute of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. It was established as shown on Table 4.8, that appraisal of emerging developments in IT for opportunities and challenges is emerging (2.71); as is the case with appraisal of changes in customer needs and preferences for opportunities and challenges (2.75). Appraisal of competition environment for opportunities and challenges is also emerging; as is appraisal of macro environmental trends (political, economic, social, legal, etc.) for opportunities and challenges (2.51). External benchmarking of It is informal (2.44). Knowledge of potential IT suppliers for systems and services is emerging (2.95). Participation of key business and IT partners in strategy discussions on planned IT systems and services is limited (2.89).

5.3 Conclusion

5.3.1 Practices of IT-Organisational Strategy Alignment in Public Organisations

The study set out to investigate practices of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. From the corresponding findings, the study concludes that while most public organisations in the Gambia do not have an IT strategy, the organizational strategy in public organizations with an IT strategy plays a significant role in influencing the development of the IT strategy, IT infrastructure, IT applications and IT processes. The organizational strategy provides the overarching goals, objectives, and priorities that shape the IT strategy. It outlines the vision and mission of the organization, and the IT strategy should align with and support those objectives. The organizational strategy helps determine the required IT infrastructure to support the organization's operations. It influences decisions regarding hardware, software, networks, and data centers. The organizational strategy identifies the key functional areas and processes that need to be supported by IT applications. It guides decisions on the selection, development, and deployment of applications that align with the organization's needs. By aligning the IT strategy, infrastructure, applications, and processes with the organizational strategy, public organizations can ensure that technology initiatives effectively support the organization's objectives. This alignment also facilitates better resource allocation, risk management, and decision-making, leading to improved efficiency, productivity, and overall organizational performance.

5.3.2 Extent of IT-Organisational Strategy Alignment in Public Organisations

The study also sought to evaluate the extent of IT-Organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. From the respective findings, the study concludes that most public organisations in the Gambia practice communications as an attribute of IT-Organizational

strategy alignment to a moderate extent. Overall, communications as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations helps ensure that the right information is delivered to the right stakeholders at the right time, enabling effective collaboration, transparency, and accountability, while also supporting the achievement of strategic objectives.

It is also concluded that a majority of public organisations in the Gambia practice measure IT business value as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment to a moderate extent. Overall, the measurement of IT business value as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations is essential for demonstrating the effectiveness of IT investments, optimizing resource allocation, and ensuring that IT initiatives contribute to the achievement of strategic objectives.

The study further concludes that most public organisations in the Gambia practice IT governance as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment to a slightly moderate extent. Overall, IT governance as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations ensures that IT investments, activities, and decisions are in line with the organizational strategy, promote accountability, manage risks, measure performance, and engage stakeholders effectively. It provides a structured approach to managing IT resources and leveraging technology to achieve the desired outcomes of the organization.

It is further concluded that public organisations in the Gambia practice business-IT partnership as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment to a moderate extent. Overall, business-IT partnership as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations ensures that technology is viewed as an enabler and driver of business success. It fosters collaboration, communication, and joint decision-making between business leaders and IT

professionals, ultimately leading to effective IT investments, innovative solutions, and the successful realization of organizational goals.

The study also concludes that most public organisations in the Gambia practice IT scope and architecture as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment to a moderate extent. Overall, IT scope and architecture as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations provide a structured approach to defining the boundaries, principles, and structure of IT initiatives. It ensures that IT investments, systems, and activities are aligned with the organizational strategy, enabling efficient implementation, integration, and utilization of technology to achieve the desired outcomes.

The study concludes that business and IT skills as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations enable effective collaboration, communication, and execution of IT initiatives. The combination of business understanding, IT expertise, communication skills, problem-solving abilities, adaptability, and continuous learning ensures that both business and IT professionals work together seamlessly to drive the successful alignment of IT with the organizational strategy. Conversely, this is practiced at a slightly moderate extent

The external environment as an attribute of IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations requires IT professionals to have a keen awareness of the technological, market, regulatory, social, and competitive factors that influence their strategic decisions. By understanding and proactively responding to the external environment, public organizations can align their IT initiatives with the dynamic landscape and position themselves for success in the digital age.

5.3.3 Challenges of IT-Organisational Strategy Alignment in Public Organisations

The insights gleaned from the findings highlight a common thread of challenges faced by IT and business divisions across the case studies within the realm of IT-organizational alignment. The focal point of these challenges often lies within the IT governance dimension, where organizations contend with intricate issues related to the efficacy of their IT governance committees and the meticulous control of IT budgets. This dimension represents a critical juncture where the convergence of technology and business strategies occurs, and its challenges underscore the necessity for meticulous planning, cross-functional collaboration, and adaptive decision-making. By addressing these challenges head-on and fortifying the IT governance framework, organizations can navigate the complexities of IT-organizational alignment more effectively, fostering an environment of cohesive and strategic integration between the IT and business divisions to achieve enduring success.

To encapsulate, the challenges encountered within the domain of business and IT skills shed light on a crucial aspect of IT-organizational alignment. The difficulties surrounding the attraction and retention of skilled professionals in both business and IT disciplines, alongside the intricacies of facilitating career cross-over between these domains, emphasize the significance of fostering a versatile and adaptable workforce. Navigating these challenges necessitates a proactive approach, where organizations cultivate an environment that not only values technical expertise but also encourages a cross-functional understanding. By addressing these challenges head-on and nurturing a culture of continuous learning and collaboration, organizations can bridge the gap between business and IT divisions, ensuring a workforce that seamlessly integrates these domains to drive innovation, efficiency, and holistic growth.

The challenges within the external environment dimension underscore the critical role of staying attuned to the broader landscape in achieving effective IT-organizational alignment. The hurdles encountered in assessing the competitive landscape, understanding macro environmental trends, and engaging in external benchmarking of IT practices emphasize the need for a dynamic and responsive organizational approach. Successfully navigating these challenges requires a combination of strategic foresight, robust data analysis, and a willingness to embrace change. By proactively addressing these challenges, organizations can position themselves to not only identify opportunities and mitigate risks but also align their IT strategies closely with the evolving external factors. This alignment enhances adaptability, innovation, and resilience in the face of a constantly shifting business landscape.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Policy Makers

i. The Gambia policy makers should create a comprehensive national IT strategy that aligns with the country's overall development goals. This strategy should involve input from various stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector representatives, and civil society, to ensure a holistic approach. To oversee the implementation of the national IT strategy, a dedicated IT governance body should be established. This body should consist of experts in technology and representatives from different sectors, ensuring effective coordination and decision-making. There is need for policy makers to encourage collaboration between the public and private sectors to leverage each other's strengths and resources in advancing IT infrastructure and services. PPPs can lead to more efficient and cost-effective initiatives, driving progress in IT development aligned with national goals.

ii. Invest in IT education and training programs to build a skilled IT workforce within the country. This includes both technical and managerial skills, as effective IT-organizational alignment requires competent professionals who understand both domains. IT-organizational alignment must address cybersecurity concerns. Establishing robust cybersecurity policies and practices will protect critical infrastructure and sensitive data, bolstering public trust in technology adoption.

iii. Encourage research and innovation in the IT sector through grants, incentives, and partnerships with academic institutions. This will drive technological advancements that can be leveraged to address national challenges. Ensure that IT initiatives consider the needs of all citizens, including those in rural or underserved areas. Promote digital inclusion by expanding internet access, providing digital literacy programs, and making IT services accessible to all. Engage with regional and international organizations to share best practices, experiences, and resources. This collaboration can provide valuable insights and support in addressing common IT challenges.

5.4.2 Government Officers

i. Enhancing IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations in the Gambia is crucial for leveraging technology effectively to achieve strategic objectives. Based on the foregoing findings, the study makes the following recommendations to improve IT-Organizational strategy alignment in public organizations.

ii. In the realm of IT governance, it is imperative for public corporations in The Gambia to establish a robust governance structure that embodies cross-functional representation and communication. Clear roles and responsibilities should be defined within IT governance committees, while regular reviews and adjustments should ensure alignment with

evolving business objectives. This approach will foster informed decision-making and efficient resource allocation.

iii. To address the challenges related to business and IT skills, organizations should prioritize skills development programs that encourage the acquisition of complementary competencies across these domains. Creating flexible career paths that facilitate lateral movement between business and IT roles is essential, accompanied by hands-on cross-functional projects that nurture understanding and collaboration. By formulating talent retention strategies centered around growth opportunities, work-life balance, and continuous learning, organizations can retain skilled professionals and foster a versatile workforce prepared to navigate the evolving business landscape.

iv. In the context of the external environment, corporations should adopt a proactive stance by implementing a competitive intelligence framework to gather insights about competitors, industry trends, and emerging opportunities. Scenario planning exercises enable organizations to anticipate and prepare for macro environmental changes, while forging partnerships with external entities enhances collective insights and benchmarking practices. Leveraging advanced data analytics to make data-driven decisions based on accurate external information empowers organizations to align their strategies with the dynamic external landscape. By integrating these comprehensive recommendations into policy and practice, public corporations in The Gambia can effectively overcome challenges, leading to enhanced IT-organizational alignment and sustained growth

v. Clearly defined strategic goals are the foundation for IT-Organizational strategy alignment. Public organizations in the Gambia should develop strategic plans that outline their vision, mission, and objectives. These goals should be communicated throughout the organization, emphasizing the importance of aligning IT initiatives with the broader

strategy. Clear goals provide a framework for IT professionals to develop and prioritize initiatives that directly contribute to the organization's success.

vi. Effective communication and collaboration between business leaders and IT professionals are essential for IT-Organizational strategy alignment. Public organizations in the Gambia should create platforms and channels for regular interaction and information sharing. This could include cross-functional teams, steering committees, or project management offices. Open and transparent communication fosters a shared understanding of goals, facilitates feedback, and ensures that IT initiatives are aligned with business needs.

vii. Implementing a robust IT governance framework helps align IT initiatives with the organizational strategy. Public organizations in the Gambia should establish governance structures and processes that define decision-making authority, roles, and responsibilities related to IT. This framework should include mechanisms for evaluating and prioritizing IT projects, monitoring performance, managing risks, and ensuring compliance. An effective IT governance framework ensures that IT investments and initiatives are aligned with strategic objectives and provide value to the organization.

viii. Public organizations in the Gambia should invest in the continuous learning and development of both business and IT professionals. This includes providing training and educational opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge. Business professionals should gain a better understanding of IT concepts and capabilities, while IT professionals should stay updated with business trends and requirements. Continuous learning and development enable both sides to speak the same language, understand each other's perspectives, and effectively collaborate towards IT-Organizational strategy alignment.

Addressing the identifies challenges requires collaborative efforts and clear communication between IT and business divisions. Here are some steps to improve IT-organizational alignment:

i. Develop a clear IT strategy that aligns with the overall corporate strategy. Involve both IT and business leaders in the strategic planning process to ensure shared goals and priorities.
ii. Create cross-functional teams that include representatives from both IT and business divisions. This fosters better understanding and collaboration, leading to more effective solutions.
iii. Regular Communication: Establish open and ongoing communication channels between IT and business divisions. Regular meetings, joint planning sessions, and status updates can bridge the communication gap.
iv. Implement an IT governance framework that involves key stakeholders from both IT and business. This ensures that IT projects are prioritized based on business needs and deliver measurable value.
v. Training and Skill Development: Provide training and skill development programs for both IT and business teams. This helps bridge the skills gap and enables employees to better understand each other's domains.
vi. Define and measure KPIs that assess the impact of IT projects on the business's bottom line. Demonstrating the value of IT initiatives can strengthen the alignment.

5.4.3 Researchers

i. The purpose of this study was to gain deeper understanding of the information technology organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia. Based on the contributed knowledge gain in this paper can assist researchers to conduct

future research by replicating this study into other sectors including the private and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to see if there are any parallels or discrepancies with the current study's findings. Future studies could also explore other variables and methodologies, including probability sampling.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Letter of Introduction

Dear Participant,

I am a student at the University of Nairobi pursuing a Degree of Master of Science in Information Technology Management. I am undertaking a research project on, "***information technology organisational strategy alignment in public organisations in the Gambia***" Kindly be a participant in the study. The findings of this study will assist in formulating policies to better deal with IT Organizational alignment in Gambia's public organizations. The study's recommendations would be resourceful to policy makers in enhancing IT Organizational alignment and service delivery in the country. Kindly respond to all questions appropriately.

Thank you.

Momodou Sabally

Appendix II: Interview Guide for Chief Executive Officers

Section A: Background Information

1. **Organization**
2. **Department**
3. **Designation**
4. **Level of Management**

Section B: Practices of Information Technology Organisational Strategy Alignment

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR MANAGERS

1. Do your organization have an organizational IT Strategy? If yes, kindly explain what is it?

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2. How is IT strategy developed in your organization?

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3. Do the IT Managers participate in the formulation of the organization's organizational strategy?

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4. What roles do IT Managers perform in the development of IT strategy?

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5. What roles do senior organizational managers perform in the development of IT strategy?

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6. How does organizational strategy influence the development of the IT strategy?

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7. How does the organizational strategy impact on the IT infrastructure in your organization?

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8. To what extent does the organization's strategy influence the IT infrastructure, IT applications and IT processes?

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9. Does IT strategy influence the organizational strategy in your organization? If yes, explain how?

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10. How does the organizational governance influence the IT governance in your organization?

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11. To what extend does the organizational scope like customers, service, product, customers affect the technology scope?

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12. How have organizational distinctive competencies affected your IT competences?

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13. Have your organization ever made a joint development venture with another IT organization to enable the organization realizes its IT strategy? If yes, explain how it impacted on your IT infrastructure.

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14. How does the IT strategy influence the IT infrastructure?

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15. Does IT strategy affect IT skill development and training in your organization? If yes explain

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16. Does IT strategy affect IT processes like procurement, development and maintenance in your organization? If yes explain.

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17. What are the performance measures that you use to assess the alignment between organizational and IT strategy?

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18. In your opinion, how is the IT management viewed in your organization?

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THANK YOU

Appendix III Survey questionnaires for Employees

Extent and Challenge Of IT-Organizational Strategy Alignment In Public Organizations In The Gambia

In this section, and the subsequent two sections, use the below scale and tick (√) the score that you agree with most scale: ***where 1 represents the lowest and 5 the highest level. The scale will vary from question to question.***

A. Communications

1) Understanding of business by IT

1. IT management not aware	2. Limited IT awareness	3. Understanding at senior and middle IT management levels	4. Understanding of business is pushed down most IT management levels	5. Understanding of business is pervasive at all IT management levels

2) Understanding of IT by business

1. Business management not aware	2. Limited business awareness	3. Business awareness of IT is emerging	4. Understanding of IT and its potential is common in most business management levels	5. Understanding of IT and its potential is pervasive at all business management levels

3) Inter-intra organizational learning/education (continuous process of sharing knowledge within an organization or between organizations)

1. 1. Informal, impromptu	2. Casual	3.Standard, distinct	3. Bound and united	5. dependable, organized, using organized, clear procedures

4) Protocol rigidity in communication between business and IT

1. Command and control	2. Limited, relaxed	3. Emerging, relaxed	4. Relaxed, informal	5. Informal and flexible

5) Knowledge sharing between IT and business

1. Ad-hoc	2. Semi-structured	3. Structured around key processes	4. Institutionalized	5. Extra-enterprise (goes beyond the organization)

6) Breadth/effectiveness of sharing of knowledge and ideas by liaisons/consultants/facilitators with business and IT

1. None or ad-hoc	2. Limited, tactical, and technology based	3. Formalized, regular meetings	4. Bonded, effective at all internal levels	5. Extra-enterprise (goes beyond the organization)

B. Measurement of IT Business Value

7) Focus of IT KPIs

1. Technical KPIs; Not related to business	2. Cost efficiency focused KPIs	3. Traditional financial KPIs	4. Cost effectiveness focused KPIs	5. KPIs extended to external partners

8) Focus of business KPIs

1. Ad-hoc; Not related to IT	2. KPIs at the functional organization	3. Traditional financial KPIs	4. Customer-based KPIs	5. KPIs extended to external partners (Balanced score card)

9) Alignment of IT and business KPIs

1. Ad-hoc KPIs unaligned	2. Business and IT KPIs unaligned	3. Emerging business & IT metrics aligned	4. Business & IT KPIs aligned	5. Business, partners and IT KPIs aligned

10) Service level agreements (SLAs)

1. Ad-hoc, sporadically present	2. Technical SLAs at the functional level	3. SLAs emerging across the enterprise	4. SLAs are enterprise wide	5. SLAs extended to external partners

11) Formal assessments/reviews of the business value of IT

1. None	2. Some; Typically for problematic cases	3. Emerging formally	4. Formally performed	5. Routinely performed

12) Continuous improvement of IT management practices

1. None	2. Minimum	3. Emerging	4. Frequently carried out	5. Routinely performed

13) IT function contribution to business

1. Very low	2. Low	3. Average	4. High	5. Very high

C. IT Governance

14) Business strategy development

1. Ad-hoc	2. Basic business strategy development at the functional level	3. Some inter-organizational business strategy development	4. Managed across the organization	5. Integrated across and outside the organization

15) IT strategy development

1. Ad-hoc	2. Functional and tactical IT strategy development	3. Focused IT strategy development, some inter-organizational	4. Managed across the organization	5. Integrated across and outside the organization

16) IT organizational structure alignment with IT strategy

1. Not aligned	2. Ad-hoc alignment	3. Alignment emerging	4. Aligned	5. Effectively aligned

17) Reporting structure for IT

1. Centralized/ Decentralized ; CIO reports to CFO	2. Centralized/ Decentralized; Some co-location; CIO reports to CFO	3. Centralized/ Decentralized ; Some federation; CIO reports to COO	4. Federated; CIO reports to COO or CEO	5. Federated; CIO reports to CEO and sits in the Board

18) IT budgetary control

1. Cost center; Erratic spending	2. Cost centre by functional organization	3. Cost center; Some investments	4. Investment center	5. Investment center; Profit center

19) IT investment management

1. Cost-based; Erratic spending	2. Cost-based; Operations and maintenance focused	3. Traditional; Process enabler	4. Cost effectiveness; Process driver	5. Business value; Extended to business partners

20) IT governance committee

1. Not formal/ regular	2. Periodic organized communication	3. Regular clear communication	4. Formal effective IT governance committee	5. Partnership between IT governance committee and management

21) Effectiveness of IT governance committee in business-IT alignment

1. None	2. IT committee develops IT strategy and projects with limited reference to business strategy	3. User-level IT steering committee ensures alignment of IT and business at project level	4. IT management committee reviews IT priorities, and ensures alignment of IT and	5. IT Board committee reviews IT priorities, ensures alignment of IT and business strategy, and

			business strategy	ensures realization of IT business value

22) IT prioritization process

1. Reactive; By IT managers	2. Occasionally responsive; By IT and business managers	3. Mostly responsive; Jointly by IT and business managers	4. Value adding, responsive; Organization-based joint prioritization	5. Value adding partnership; Formal and institutionalized process

23) IT reaction capacity to business changes

1. Minimal	2. Limited	3. Reaction capacity is emerging	4. Reaction capacity exists	5. Capacity is enterprise-wide and is continuously enhanced

B. Business-IT Partnership

24) Business perception of IT value

1. IT perceived as a cost of business	2. IT emerging as an asset	3. IT is seen as an asset	4. IT is part of the business strategy	5. IT and business are co-adaptive

25) Role of IT in business strategy development

1. No seat at the business table	2. Business process enabler	3. Business process driver	4. Business strategy enabler/driver	5. IT and business are co-adaptive

26) Shared goals, risks, rewards/penalties

1. IT takes some of the risk with little reward	2. IT takes most of the risk with little reward	3. Business more tolerant to risk and willing to share risks with IT; Some reward for IT	4. Business accepts risk and rewards/ penalties shared (IT & business)	5. Goals, risks, and rewards/penalties shared (IT & business)

27) IT program management

1. Ad hoc	2. Standards defined	3. Standards complied with	4. Standards evolved	5. Continuous improvement in IT management

28) Business-IT relationship/trust style

1. Conflict/Minimum	2. Primarily transactional	3. IT an emerging valued service provider	4. IT a valued service provider	5. IT a valued partner

29) Business championship/sponsorship of IT

1. None ; Ad hoc	2. Limited at the functional organization	3. At the functional organization	4. At the HQ level	5. At the CEO level

C. IT Scope and Architecture

30) Role of IT in business

1. Traditional (e.g. finance systems)	2. Transactional (e.g. MIS)	3. Business process enabler	4. Business process driver	5. Business strategy driver/enabler

31) IT policies and standards

1. None or Ad hoc	2. IT policies and standards defined	3. Emerging organizational IT policies and standards	4. Organizational IT policies and standards	5. Inter-organizational IT policies and standards

32) Enterprise IT architectural integration (the process of designing and implementing a cohesive and unified IT architecture that supports an organization's business objectives)

1. No formal integration	2. Early attempts at integration	3. Standard enterprise architecture, no silos	4. IT architecture integrated with that of key partners	5. Unified IT architecture evolved with all partners

33) IT architectural transparency to changes (degree to which the underlying IT infrastructure is visible, accessible, and understandable to the people who use it)

1. None	2. Limited transparency to	3. Transparency to changes emerging,	4. Transparency to changes is widespread	5. Transparency to changes is across the entire IT

	changes	with increasing training of users		infrastructure – essential for businesses success

34) IT infrastructure flexibility and agility (the ability of an organization's technology systems to adapt quickly to changing business requirements and respond to new challenges and opportunities)

1. None	2. Limited	3. Infrastructure flexibility and agility emerging	4. Effective emerging technology management	5. Effective technology management across the infrastructure for rapid response to business requirements

D. Business and IT Skills

35) Innovative ideas and entrepreneurship

1. Discouraged	2. Dependent on functional organization	3. Risk tolerant; Moderately encouraged/ promoted	4. Enterprise, partners, and IT managers are risk tolerant	5. Strongly encouraged - Innovation and entrepreneurship is the norm

36) Locus of power to make IT decisions

1. In the IT function	2. In the functional organizations	3. Emerging across the organization	4. Across the organization	5. With all executives, including CIO and partners

37) Management style

1. Command and control	2. Consensus-based	3. Results-based	4. Profit/value-based	5. Relationship-based

38) Readiness for change

1. Resistance to change	2. Dependent on functional organization	3. Recognized need for change	4. High, focused	5. Change is the norm

39) Career crossover between business and IT

1. None	2. Minimal	3. Career crossover dependent on functional organization	4. Career crossover in both directions across the functional organization	5. Career crossover in both directions across the organization

40) Continuous IT education and cross-training

1. None	2. Minimum opportunities	3. Dependent on functional organization	4. At the functional level	5. Across the organization

41) Opportunities to learn

1. None; Ad hoc	2. Limited opportunities	3. Evaluate and learn only when there are major changes that affect the IT strategy	4. Frequently evaluate the IT strategy process and learn from new insights	5. Consistently evaluate the IT strategy process and learn from new insights

42) Inter-personal interactions and trust between business and IT

1. Minimal	2. Primarily transactional interactions	3. Inter-personal interactions emerging; Trust between business and IT emerging	4. Widespread inter-personal interactions; IT a valued service provider; Trust between business and IT established	5. Continuous inter-personal interactions; Valued partnership; Trust between business and IT achieved

43) Attraction and retention of business and IT professionals

1. Ad hoc; Do not know	2. Business and IT functions attract managers with business and technical skills, respectively; High turnover	3. Business is appreciating the need for technical skills while IT is appreciating the need for business skills; High turnover	4. Both business and technical skills are required of both business and IT managers; Reduced turnover	5. Policies in place to ensure retention of professionals with both business and IT expertise

E. External Environment

44) Appraisal of emerging developments in IT for opportunities and challenges

1. None	2. Limited appraisal	3. Emerging appraisal	4. Effective appraisal	5. Appraisal formally integrated into IT strategy development

45) Appraisal of changes in customer needs and preferences for opportunities and challenges

1. None	2. Limited appraisal	3. Emerging appraisal	4. Effective appraisal	5. Appraisal formally integrated into IT strategy development

46) Appraisal of competition environment for opportunities and challenges

1. None	2. Limited appraisal	3. Emerging appraisal	4. Effective appraisal	5. Appraisal formally integrated into IT

				strategy development

47) Appraisal of macro environmental trends (political, economic, social, legal, etc.) for opportunities and challenges

1. None	2. Limited appraisal	3. Emerging appraisal	4. Effective appraisal	5. Appraisal formally integrated into IT strategy development

48) External benchmarking of IT

1. Not generally practised	2. Informal	3. Focused on specific processes	4. Routinely performed	5. Routinely performed with partners

49) Knowledge of potential IT suppliers for systems and services

1. Ad-hoc	2. Limited knowledge	3. Knowledge is emerging	4. Complete knowledge	5. Knowledge is dynamic

50) Participation of key business and IT partners in strategy discussions on planned IT systems and services

1. Ad-hoc	2. Limited participation	3. Participation is emerging	4. Continuous participation	5. Business partners are partners in IT