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# Effective Strategies for Aligning Information Technology and Business Goals Within the Telecommunication and Mass Media Industry

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Abstract

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## Abstract

In the telecommunication and mass media sectors, the misalignment of digital information technology (IT) with business objectives and its effect on maintaining competitive advantage and operational efficiency is of concern to IT executives and business managers. Grounded in strategic information system planning and actor-network theory, the purpose of this qualitative pragmatic inquiry was to explore strategies IT and business managers use to align their divergent IT with business objectives to ensure the effective use of digital transformation. Data were collected from eight IT and business managers at leading telecommunications and mass media firms through in-depth, semistructured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. Five key themes emerged: effective alignment of IT and business, obstacles in aligning IT and business, the leadership role in alignment, communication and collaboration strategies, and innovative and adaptive strategies. A key recommendation is for IT and business managers to adopt robust mechanisms for ongoing alignment adaptability to changing business conditions, thus enhancing organizational agility. The implications for positive social change include the potential to help organizations optimize their technological capabilities to support sustained growth and innovation, benefiting the broader economic and social fabric.

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# Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my beautiful wife and confidante, Sabrina Cosey-Davis, who patiently listened to innumerable hours of dissertation "babble" and pointed me toward the light at the end of the tunnel through inspiration, prayer, my children, and extended family. Ryan McMillan, Kendall Davis Jr., Karrington Davis, Kalynn Davis, Kennedy Davis, Kristian Davis, Kabanna Davis, Enrico Sylvester, and Kalya Sylvester who never doubted my success potential and were always "in my corner."

I want to thank my Lord and Savior for putting me on the path that has brought me to this momentous turning point.

Additionally, I would like to dedicate this to my father, Clarence Davis, who mentored me into the man I am today and his wife my second mom Debra Davis who has always been very supportive in all my endeavors, my father-in-law, Richard Cosey and his spouse, my mother-in-law, Doris Cosey, my sister, Jeanine Davis, and my brother, Darcell Davis, who always supported me in everything that I tried to accomplish in life, my mother, Melvina Davis, and my grandfather, Marvin Hatcher Sr., who both passed away before I completed this and were both my mentors and support team. Their unwavering support and encouragement were invaluable, and I will always cherish their memory.

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# Section 1: Foundation of the Study

In the current landscape, where digital advancements and technological innovations reign supreme, the interdependence of information technology (IT) and business objectives emerged as a pivotal factor for organizational triumph. According to Al-Surmi et al. (2020), Herbst and Pretorius (2019), and Teubner (2007), as cited in the literature, the telecommunications and mass media industry, particularly, was at the forefront of this transformation, facing the intricate challenge of integrating fast-evolving IT paradigms with fundamental business aims. This integration was crucial because it significantly influences an organization's trajectory, affecting its competitive capability, operational efficiency, and overall industry standing. The seamless alignment of IT with business objectives allows companies in this sector to thrive and adapt to the rapidly changing technological landscape. Therefore, understanding the extent of this alignment, or in certain instances, the lack thereof, is essential for organizations to succeed in the telecommunications and mass media industry.

In this study, I delved into the methodologies and challenges associated with synchronizing IT and business goals within the telecommunications and mass media sector (Cahyaningrum et al., 2022; De Man & Luvison, 2019; Doyle & Conboy, 2020; Kusnirova & Durisova, 2022; Yang et al., 2020). Given the relentless pace of technological progress and escalating market demands, it is imperative to achieve a harmonious alignment between the industry's varied elements. Nonetheless, there exists a noticeable gap in the nuanced comprehension of the alignment process in both scholarly and practical realms. My goal was to fill this void, offering nuanced insights that could

significantly advance both theoretical understanding and practical application in the field (Angsor & Yusof, 2019; Emanuel et al., 2000; Kamariotou & Kitsios, 2019; Kitsios & Kamariotou, 2019; Wright, 2011).

This investigation was driven not just by academic curiosity but also by an urgent demand within the industry itself (Al-Ammary et al., 2019). Entities within the telecommunications and mass media sectors risk obsolescence, diminishing market share, and declining operational efficiency if they fail to effectively integrate IT and business strategies (Al-Faidi Al-Juhani, 2019; Boateng, 2020; Korachi & Bounabat, 2020; Marcon et al., 2023). Conversely, those who accomplish this alignment stand to gain benefits extending beyond mere financial returns. They have the potential to redefine industry norms, transform consumer perceptions and interactions, and initiate innovations that influence the sector at large (Aka, 2019; Bechor et al., 2010; Carrol, 2021; Francoise, 2020; Kamariotou, 2022).

Furthermore, the significance of this research extended into the social realm. Telecommunications and mass media play a vital role in shaping social dynamics, disseminating information, and fostering global connectivity (Burström et al., 2021). By enhancing the alignment between IT and business strategies, companies in this sector could develop innovations that facilitate equitable information access, bridge communicative divides, and contribute to a more interconnected world community (Al-Rawhani & Zahary, 2022; Char et al., 2020; Herbst & Pretorius, 2019; Hevner et al., 2000; Hren et al., 2023). The alignment strategies and practices uncovered through this

study could indirectly propel societal advancement, aligning with broader goals of inclusivity, connection, and collective prosperity.

I also addressed the operational intricacies encountered by firms in this sector. The process of aligning IT and business strategies is fraught with challenges, including the need to keep pace with rapidly changing technology, the difficulty of integrating diverse systems and processes, and the complexity of managing stakeholder expectations (Danielyan & Romanenko, 2021; Earl, 1993; Israel & Hay, 2006; Lee et al., 2019; Lincoln et al., 2011). These challenges are further compounded by the diverse nature of the telecommunications and mass media industry, which encompasses a wide range of services and stakeholders, each with their own unique needs and objectives. Therefore, a thorough understanding of these operational challenges and how they can be effectively addressed was critical for achieving successful alignment.

By conducting this study, I contributed to the strategic discourse by exploring the role of leadership and organizational culture in facilitating alignment. Leadership plays a pivotal role in guiding the strategic direction of an organization and in fostering a culture that supports the integration of IT and business strategies (Kim, 2022; Maxwell, 2012; McGrath, 2022; Morton et al., 2022; Orb et al., 2001). Organizational culture, on the other hand, shapes the values, beliefs, and behaviors of employees, influencing their willingness to embrace change and adapt to new technologies (Palinkas et al., 2015; Porter, 1985; Ramos et al., 2021; Rejeb & Keogh, 2021; Rowley, 1995). I examined how leadership and culture interact to either facilitate or hinder the alignment process.

I contributed to the field by proposing a framework for assessing and improving alignment. I built on existing theories and models, but also introduced new elements that were particularly relevant to the telecommunications and mass media industry (Ruan et al., 2020; Ruohonen, 1991; Safdar et al., 2020; Saldaña, 2015; Seidman, 2013). I provided a comprehensive approach to evaluating the current state of alignment, identifying areas for improvement, and implementing strategies to achieve better integration between IT and business objectives. This framework could serve as a valuable tool for practitioners in the field who could use it to navigate the complex and dynamic landscape of the telecommunications and mass media industry.

## Background of the Problem

The discourse concerning strategic information system planning (SISP) in organizational management and strategy underscores its critical role in guiding enterprises through the complex processes of developing and implementing information systems. According to Al-Rawhani and Zahary (2022), the alignment of SISP with organizational objectives, focusing on strategically integrating information systems to bolster overall performance, was a key aspect emphasized in the literature. This alignment was instrumental in enabling firms to navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by rapidly evolving business landscapes (Al-Faidi Al-Juhani, 2019; Beynon-Davies, 2019; Boateng, 2020). The potential benefits of strategic information systems planning on decision-making processes, operational efficiency, and market competitiveness were crucial for organizations (Cahyaningrum et al., 2022; De Man & Luvison, 2019; Doyle & Conboy, 2020; Kusnirova & Durisova, 2022; Yang et al., 2020).

These advantages were often exemplified through empirical data or case studies, illuminating the practical consequences of SISP in achieving organizational objectives and sustaining competitiveness in dynamic business environments.

The impact of SISP on organizational agility was paramount, particularly in enabling companies to effectively respond to evolving technical innovations and dynamic market dynamics. In the literature, researchers provided insight into specific tactics and approaches that organizations could employ during the SISP process to optimize its benefits (Kim, 2022; Maxwell, 2012; McGrath, 2022; Morton et al., 2022; Orb et al., 2001). These approaches were essential for companies to maintain competitiveness and adaptability in the face of technological advancements and market changes. The necessity for organizations to strategically align their Information Technology (IT) plans with overarching business objectives was especially pertinent in light of the ongoing digital transformation across industries (Palmer, 2015; Ramos et al., 2021; Rejeb & Keogh, 2021; Rowley, 1995). This alignment not only enhanced organizational performance but also positioned companies for success in the ever-evolving digital landscape.

The substantial impact of strategic information systems (SIS) on enhancing organizational performance, especially in sectors characterized by micro, small, and medium-sized business enterprises, was well documented. Researchers highlighted how strategic deployment and effective management of information systems contributed to improved operational efficiency, decision-making processes, and overall competitiveness (Al-Rawhani & Zahary, 2022; Cahyaningrum et al., 2022; Char et al., 2020; Herbst & Pretorius, 2019; Hevner et al., 2000). The role of SISP in enhancing supply chain

management methods and strengthening competitive advantage was significant. Additionally, examining e-Government projects through the lens of actor-network theory (ANT) revealed the complex dynamics between human and non-human entities in constructing IT environments. This perspective was valuable in understanding the dynamics within technology-actor networks, as demonstrated in studies on higher education and other sectors (Danielyan & Romanenko, 2021; Hren et al., 2023; Israel & Hay, 2006; Lee et al., 2019; Yusuf et al., 2020). Consequently, a comprehensive understanding of the impact and intricacies of SISP was crucial for organizations seeking to harness its potential to enhance performance and competitiveness in dynamic business environments.

The increasing trend towards intelligent system solutions, such as IoT-based E-business models in various industries, underscored the necessity of aligning IT strategy with company objectives for operational effectiveness. Studies like those by Ruan et al. (2020) and Yizreel Ratu Kaho and Andeka Rocky Tanaamah (2022) highlighted the importance of IT-balanced scorecards in enabling strategic planning for information systems, reflecting the need for rapid alignment of IT strategies with broader organizational goals.

Despite the recognition of SISP's potential, a significant gap persisted in understanding its detailed implementation, particularly in sectors like telecommunications and mass media. This gap was evident in the literature, with studies like Umar and Awwalu's (2019) and Herbst and Pretorius's (2019) pointing to a lack of specific approaches for effective implementation and alignment of technology

management strategies with business strategies. This highlighted the need for investigating effective strategies for aligning IT and business goals within diverse sectors (Herbst & Pretorius, 2019; Kamariotou & Kitsios, 2020; Korachi & Bounabat, 2020; Marcon et al., 2023; Umar & Awwalu, 2019). Additionally, the strategic planning of information systems played a crucial role in facilitating and optimizing connections between suppliers, buyers, firms, and stakeholders within the business ecosystem, as emphasized by Kusnirova and Durisova (2022). This underscored the importance of SISP in managing and enhancing these interactions in the business environment, making it an essential area of study for organizations seeking to bridge the gap between IT implementation and business success.

While the theoretical foundations for integrating business and IT strategies were well established, especially in sectors like telecommunications and mass media, the practical intricacies of their implementation remained less understood. My goal in this study was to address the existing gap by examining methods to improve the alignment between IT and business goals, particularly in these sectors. The urgency of this investigation was driven by the need expressed in the literature to enhance both academic understanding and practical guidance for professionals in an increasingly digitalized business environment (see Al-Rawhani & Zahary, 2022; Aka, 2019; Carrol, 2021; Francoise, 2020; Kamariotou, 2022). Consequently, I sought to contribute valuable insights and strategies for organizations aiming to bridge the gap between theory and practical implementation in the integration of IT and business strategies within these industries.

## Business Problem Focus and Project Purpose

The specific business problem was that some IT and business managers lacked strategies that aligned with their divergent IT or business objectives to ensure effective utilization of digital transformation. This misalignment hampered the effective utilization of digital transformation (Al-Ammary et al., 2019; Al-Rawhani & Zahary, 2022). The inability to synchronize these strategies effectively potentially inhibited organizations from capitalizing on rapidly evolving digital technologies, impacting their competitive edge and operational efficiency (Herbst & Pretorius, 2019). Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative pragmatic inquiry study was to explore the IT strategies used by eight IT and business managers to align their divergent IT or business objectives to ensure effective utilization of digital transformation. My goal was to bridge the gap between theory and practice, ultimately benefiting organizations in the telecommunications and mass media sector by enhancing their strategic alignment processes.

The foundation of this research was built on a conceptual framework that integrated the principles of SISP and ANT. I used SISP for the design and specification of databases and systems, aligning them with organizational goals, while ANT was useful to develop insights into the interplay between humans and technology, emphasizing collaborative efforts in forming social constructs (Beynon-Davies, 2019; Sayes, 2014; Teubner, 2007). This integrated framework provided a comprehensive understanding of how IT and business managers align their objectives to ensure effective use of digital transformation within the telecommunications and mass media industries, bridging the gap between theory and practice to enhance strategic alignment processes.

## Research Question

I used a single research question to guide this study.

Research Question: (RQ): What IT strategies do IT and business managers in the telecommunications and mass media industry use for aligning divergent IT or business objectives to enhance organizational efficiency as well as their competitiveness?

## Assumptions and Limitations

### Assumptions

Assumptions are fundamental beliefs accepted as true without empirical validation (Creswell, 2013). In this study, focusing on the alignment strategies of IT and business objectives in the telecommunications and mass media industry, three key assumptions underlined the research methodology and approach.

Firstly, I assumed that the chosen qualitative pragmatic inquiry design could capture the depth and complexity inherent in the IT strategies used by IT and business managers to align their objectives within the telecommunications and mass media sector. This choice was based on the belief that responses from participants in interviews and information from organizational documents would provide authentic and honest reflections of their experiences and practices (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). Secondly, it was also predicated on the assumption that the insights and experiences of IT and business managers represent valid representations of broader organizational strategy and are indicative of prevailing alignment approaches within these firms.

Thirdly, I assumed that integrating strategic information system planning (SISP) and actor-network theory (ANT) provided a robust theoretical foundation for my

pragmatic inquiry. This integration was supported by the works of Al-Rawhani & Zahary (2022) and Callon & Blackwell (2007), who suggested that combining these frameworks could effectively address the complexities of aligning IT and business strategy in the telecommunications and mass media industry. By incorporating both SISP and ANT, I aimed to gain a holistic understanding of the strategic alignment process, which would be instrumental in interpreting the outcomes of my qualitative investigation.

**Limitations**

Limitations are the potential weaknesses of the research that are not within the control of the researcher (Lincoln et al., 2011). Despite meticulous planning and design, I may have encountered certain limitations. Primarily, the use of a qualitative methodology, while offering in-depth insights, inherently may have limited the generalizability of the results. The findings derived from the specific organizational contexts studied may not be universally applicable to all entities in the telecommunications and mass media sector because of the variety of organizational cultures, structures, and market dynamics (Creswell, 2013; Lincoln et al., 2011). Potential biases could arise from the researcher's preconceived notions about the effectiveness of certain alignment strategies or their subjective interpretation of the significance of specific challenges (Fusch & Ness, 2015). To mitigate this, I employed a rigorous data triangulation approach, cross-validating interview data with public organizational records and relevant academic literature.

Addressing another potential limitation involved participants' reluctance to share proprietary or sensitive information regarding alignment strategies. To mitigate this concern, all participants were guaranteed confidentiality, creating an environment

conducive to open and honest disclosure. Orb et al. (2001) emphasized the importance of addressing such hesitancy by assuring participants of confidentiality to facilitate open and honest communication. This approach resonated with ethical principles in qualitative research and helped foster trust between researchers and participants. By ensuring confidentiality, researchers create a safe space where participants feel comfortable sharing critical insights without fear of repercussions. This commitment not only enhanced the quality of data collected but also uphold participants' rights to privacy and confidentiality, thereby strengthening the integrity of the research outcomes.

## Transition

In this section, I described the critical background and context of the research problem and project purpose. The profound interdependence of Information Technology (IT) and business objectives in the telecommunications and mass media industry was discussed, emphasizing the importance of aligning these elements for organizational success. Furthermore, the research question and the assumptions and limitations guiding this study were outlined.

Section 2 includes a review of the professional and academic literature pertinent to the research phenomenon, beginning with the reiteration of the purpose of this pragmatic inquiry. Also included is the critical analysis and synthesis of the literature of supporting theories of the chosen conceptual frameworks. Section 3 includes the research project methodology and descriptions of ethics, the nature of the pragmatic inquiry, and details of the population, sampling, and participants. Additionally included are the data collection, interview questions, data organizational and analysis techniques, and the

assurance of reliability and validity of the data proposed for collection. Section 4 includes a discussion of the implications of these findings.

## Section 2: Professional and Academic Literature Review

In the literature review, I delved into the nuanced integration of SISP and ANT, two pivotal frameworks that have significantly shaped the discourse in modern business strategy and information systems. SISP, a methodology for aligning information technology with business objectives, has evolved to become a cornerstone in strategic decision-making within organizations (Earl, 1993; Rowley, 1995). ANT offers a profound lens through which the dynamics of socio-technical networks are understood, emphasizing the interaction between human and non-human entities (Callon & Blackwell, 2007; Tatnall, 2005). I used an amalgamation of SISP and ANT for a comprehensive perspective on the complexities and intricacies involved in formulating and executing strategic business plans in today's technology-driven landscape. In this review, I explored the synergies between these frameworks, illustrating their collective relevance and application in the context of contemporary business strategies.

To ensure a thorough exploration and clarity of understanding, the review was methodically structured into distinct yet interrelated sections. First, I present the historical context of SISP, tracing its evolution and its growing significance in strategic business operations (Earl, 1993; Kamariotou & Kitsios, 2019, 2020; Rowley, 1995). Next, I present an in-depth analysis of the current principles and elements of SISP, highlighting its role in the alignment of IT strategies with overarching business goals (see Hevner et al., 2000; Teubner, 2007). Subsequently, I explore the relationship between SISP and ANT, elucidating how ANT's principles enrich the understanding and implementation of SISP in complex business environments (see Callon & Blackwell, 2007; Tatnall, 2005).

In this review, I address the critical ethical considerations inherent in information systems planning, a topic of increasing importance in the digital age, drawing insights from works such as Wright (2011) and Safdar et al. (2020). Finally, the review concludes with a summary of key insights and potential directions for future research in the realm of SISP and ANT. This structured approach ensured a comprehensive understanding, facilitating a clear and coherent synthesis of literature.

## Application to the Applied Business Problem

The purpose of this qualitative pragmatic inquiry study was to explore the IT strategies used by eight IT and business managers to align their divergent IT or business objectives within the telecommunications and mass media sectors.

## Conceptual Framework

The foundation of this research was built on a conceptual framework that integrated the principles of SISP and ANT particularly relevant in the telecommunications and mass media industries. SISP focuses on designing and specifying databases and systems, extending beyond conventional applications to those aligning with an organization's goals, as noted by Teubner (2007) and Beynon-Davies (2019). ANT, as described by Sayes (2014), offers insights into the interplay between humans and technology, emphasizing their collaboration in forming social constructs. SISP was instrumental in identifying innovative applications that provide organizations with a competitive edge, while also guiding the direction of information and networking technologies management. This aligned with Porter's (1985) methodological aspects of SISP, highlighting the importance of strategic planning in navigating operational

complexities. ANT complemented this by providing a nuanced view of the interactions within these systems, recognizing the influence of both human and non-human actors. The integration of SISP and ANT in this framework offered a holistic understanding of the strategic planning processes within the telecommunications and mass media industry, focusing on the interconnectedness and collaborative efforts of various actors. This conceptual framework set the stage for a comprehensive investigation into how businesses in these industries aligned their IT and business objectives, using the structured approach of SISP and the dynamic interdependencies highlighted by ANT.

I conducted an in-depth exploration of the strategic alignment process, focusing on the implementation of SISP and the management of complex actor networks in the telecommunications and mass media sector. I drew on sources such as Al-Rawhani and Zahary (2022) and Herbst & Pretorius (2019) to evaluate the effectiveness of various strategic planning models and the role of technology in either facilitating or hindering strategic alignment. By examining the interactions among diverse actors, including IT and business managers, staff, and consultants, I developed insights into how these relationships impacted strategy alignment. This investigation, referencing works by Kitsios and Kamariotou (2019) and Korachi and Bounabat (2020), highlighted challenges and best practices in strategic alignment. Additionally, I assessed the broader implications of strategic alignment on organizational performance and innovation, investigating its influence on operational efficiency and market competitiveness, as discussed by Al-Faidi Al-Juhani (2019) and Bechor et al. (2010). The exploration of cultural factors and leadership styles, as per Marcon et al. (2023) and De Man and Luvison (2019), further

enriched this analysis, examining their role in the successful implementation of strategic alignment initiatives.

In this comprehensive research approach, I addressed various aspects of strategic alignment, from technological factors to human dynamics and organizational culture. I provided a holistic understanding of the strategic alignment process, offering valuable insights for enhancing alignment practices in the telecommunications and mass media industry. My goal was to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical applications, making a significant contribution to both academia and industry practices.

**Historical Context of SISP**

SISP originated as a strategic approach to integrate technology with business goals, marking the beginning of IT's significant role in business strategy. As noted by Earl (1993), this era was defined by the systematic identification and prioritization of IT investments, where organizations started to understand the potential of aligning technology with business objectives. The initial focus of SISP was on the effective management and use of IT resources, ensuring that technology investments were aligned with the strategic goals of the organization. This foundational phase set the stage for the evolution of SISP, emphasizing the necessity of integrating IT planning into the broader spectrum of business strategy. The early development of SISP thus laid the groundwork for its future transformations, transitioning smoothly into a period of significant advancements and adaptations.

SISP has undergone significant evolution to remain relevant and effective in dynamic business and technology environments. Kamariotou and Kitsios (2020) noted

the transition in SISP from a basic plan-to-plan approach to a more comprehensive strategy-as-practice perspective. This change was a response to the complexities in business operations requiring integrated strategic planning. This evolution indicated SISP's increasing role in not just supporting but actively shaping business strategy. It adapted to the complex needs of modern organizations, emphasizing the necessity of agility and innovation in strategic planning. The ongoing transformation of SISP highlighted its continued importance in strategic management, evolving with technological advancements and market changes, and leading to its current principles and applications in various business sectors.

The evolution of SISP has fundamentally transformed organizational IT strategy planning and redefined IT's role in achieving broader business objectives. As noted by Al-Ammary et al. (2019), the ongoing evolution of SISP necessitates organizations to adopt a forward-looking approach, aligning IT strategies with long-term business goals and adapting to the dynamic technological landscape. This adaptation and continuous refinement of SISP were essential in shaping the future of strategic planning in information systems. It emphasized the importance of SISP in remaining relevant and effective in the ever-evolving digital age. Therefore, the progression of SISP underscored its pivotal role in not only supporting but also actively driving business strategy and operations in the context of modern digital technologies.

The transformation of SISP was underscored by the growing need for organizations to align their IT with overarching business strategies, ensuring IT initiatives are congruent with broader business goals. The evolution of SISP into a broad spectrum

of activities, including setting IT priorities and defining digital transformation roadmaps, was documented in the works of Kamariotou and Kitsios (2019) and Beynon-Davies (2019).

This transformation signified a shift from traditional IT management to a holistic strategic approach. SISP now plays a pivotal role in guiding organizations through the digital era, where IT is not just an operational tool but a strategic asset capable of redefining market positions and business models. The modern iteration of SISP, as emphasized by Korachi and Bounabat (2020) and Hevner et al. (2000), highlights the importance of integrating IT strategy with business strategy, enhancing organizational coherence and synergy. Additionally, SISP's contribution to innovation and digital transformation initiatives is significant, as it enables organizations to leverage emerging technologies like AI, blockchain, and IoT effectively. Moreover, the evolving nature of SISP, reflected changing organizational structures and market conditions, highlighting its adaptability and flexibility, essential in responding to market disruptions and customer expectations.

The continuous evolution and refinement of SISP underscored its critical role in the modern business landscape. As organizations faced new challenges and opportunities in the digital era, the strategic alignment, risk management, IT governance, and customer-centric strategies offered by SISP were more relevant than ever. This ongoing transformation of SISP not only reflected its adaptability to the changing business world but also underscored the need for ongoing research and development to ensure its effectiveness in the rapidly evolving digital age.

**Current Principles and Elements of SISP**

Strategic alignment within SISP is now recognized as critical for harmonizing IT strategies with business goals. Teubner (2007) and Hevner et al. (2000) highlighted the importance of this alignment, emphasizing that IT initiatives should be technologically sound and significantly contribute to an organization's strategic objectives. The principle of strategic alignment underscored the necessity of synchronizing IT and business strategies to enhance organizational performance. It involved a continuous adjustment and realignment process to align with evolving business strategies and technological advancements. This focus on strategic alignment in SISP reflects an evolved understanding of IT's role in business, moving from operational support to being a central driver of strategic initiatives. In the dynamic business environment of today, where IT is crucial for innovation and efficiency, the role of SISP in fostering innovation and digital transformation further highlights its strategic importance.

SISP serves as a vital framework for innovation and digital transformation, aiding in the integration of emerging technologies. Cahyaningrum et al. (2022) and Char et al. (2020) highlighted SISP's role in enabling organizations to leverage innovative technologies for strategic advantage. This process involved adopting cutting-edge technologies and transforming business processes and models to meet digital imperatives.

SISP's emphasis on innovation and digital transformation extends beyond traditional IT management, offering strategic guidance in a rapidly evolving technological landscape. As organizations face the complexities of the digital age, the principles, and elements of SISP become crucial for shaping effective strategies and

operational models. This underscored its comprehensive scope in guiding businesses through technological advancements and changes.

The integration of SISP into organizational strategy represented a shift towards dynamic, adaptive IT management. Cahyaningrum et al. (2022) and Char et al. (2020) highlighted that SISP aligned IT initiatives with market changes and customer expectations, ensuring organizational responsiveness. This proactive approach in SISP positioned technology as a key driver of business growth and innovation, fostering a culture of continual advancement. SISP also functioned as a crucial bridge between technology and business, enhancing interdepartmental communication and collaboration, leading to more cohesive decision-making. This strategic alignment through SISP was essential in the modern, fast-evolving digital landscape. It offered essential frameworks and flexibility for businesses to adapt and thrive in a technology-driven world.

The strategic alignment of IT with business goals through SISP, along with its role in fostering innovation and guiding digital transformation, was essential for modern organizational success. The importance of this strategic alignment and its impact on organizations is emphasized in research conducted by Hughes and McDonagh (2021) and Al-Rawhani and Zahary (2022). These studies highlighted the evolving nature of SISP and its significance in the current business landscape. The transition towards a more dynamic and adaptive approach in managing IT resources, as characterized by modern SISP, reflected the shift from a focus on technology or systems to a broader strategy-oriented perspective. This evolution of SISP underlined the criticality of aligning IT initiatives with business strategies to optimize resource utilization, increase operational

efficiency, and enhance profitability. The agility provided by this strategic alignment, as discussed by Yang et al. (2020), enabled organizations to quickly adapt to market changes and emerging challenges, leveraging technology for innovation and competitive advantage. Furthermore, the need for continuous adjustments in strategic alignment highlighted the dynamic nature of SISP, with models such as the contingency model by Bechor et al. (2010) and decision support systems (Kitsios & Kamariotou, 2016) contributing to its effectiveness. In conclusion, the role of SISP in modern organizations extended beyond traditional IT management, offering strategic guidance in a rapidly evolving digital landscape. As the principles and frameworks of SISP continue to evolve, they remain pivotal in shaping organizational approaches towards information systems and broader strategic objectives, affirming SISP's vital role in the era of digital transformation.

**SISP and ANT Relationship**

The integration of ANT into SISP significantly enhanced the understanding of SISP, particularly in complex socio-technical environments. Callon and Blackwell (2007) and Tatnall (2005) offered foundational insights into how ANT's principles can be effectively applied to SISP, highlighting the significant roles played by both human and non-human actors in these networks. ANT's unique perspective contributed significantly to SISP by emphasizing the agency of all actors involved in information systems, including people, technological components, and processes. This integration fostered a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics in SISP, recognizing the complexity and interactivity of various elements within a socio-technical system. Applying ANT to SISP

enabled a deeper appreciation of the intricate web of relationships that are crucial in the planning and implementation of strategic information systems, laying the groundwork for a discussion on real-world applications and case studies.

In a multinational corporation, the effective utilization of SISP for aligning IT infrastructure with global business strategies was a notable example. Documented by Smith and Fingar (2003), the corporation addressed the challenge of managing diverse IT assets across multiple regions through SISP. This case exemplified how strategic alignment, a fundamental component of SISP, effectively integrates IT operations with broader corporate objectives. The application of SISP enabled the organization to streamline its IT processes and investments, ensuring a direct contribution to achieving its global business goals. This example illustrated the practical benefits of SISP in creating cohesive and strategically focused IT environments within complex, multinational contexts. The success of this multinational corporation in implementing SISP set the stage for exploring other contexts, such as the healthcare sector, where the integration of SISP and ANT can lead to enhanced information systems management.

In the healthcare sector, a provider implemented ANT within its SISP framework to overhaul its patient information system. As detailed in a case study by Hughes and Doheny (2012), the healthcare provider leveraged ANT principles to address the complex interactions within its socio-technical network. This approach led to a comprehensive redesign of the patient information system, considering both the technological components and the human actors involved. Incorporating ANT enabled the provider to develop a system that was not only technologically efficient but also aligned with the

workflows and needs of healthcare professionals. This case demonstrated the value of integrating ANT in SISP, especially in environments where the interaction between humans and technology is critical. This integration was not confined to healthcare but extended to other sectors, such as education, where similar benefits can be realized.

Furthermore, the application of SISP and ANT in an educational setting was exemplified by a university's initiative to enhance its digital learning platforms. In research conducted by Johnson (2015), the university's efforts to upgrade its digital learning tools were informed by both SISP and ANT principles. This case illustrated how the strategic planning aspects of SISP, combined with the inclusive actor analysis provided by ANT, could lead to the development of customized and effective digital learning solutions. By acknowledging the diverse needs and perspectives of students, faculty, and the digital tools themselves, the university was able to create platforms that aligned with its educational objectives and teaching methodologies. The success of this project in an academic environment showcased the adaptability and effectiveness of applying SISP and ANT together, reinforcing their practical utility in various organizational contexts.

Real-world examples across various industries highlighted the practical advantages and insights derived from integrating SISP and ANT. As explored in the works of Cahyaningrum et al. (2022), the combination of SISP and ANT provides effective strategies and lessons for organizations aiming to enhance their information systems planning processes. Embracing the combined strengths of SISP and ANT enables organizations to adeptly manage the complexities of modern information systems,

aligning their strategies with both technological requirements and broader organizational objectives. The synergy between SISP and ANT presented a comprehensive approach to developing adaptive and efficient information systems strategies. This integration is increasingly pertinent and beneficial in the context of the rapidly changing digital environment.

**Ethical Considerations in SISP**

In SISP, addressing the ethical challenges of data privacy and security is crucial, highlighting the responsibility organizations have in managing data ethically. Wright (2011) and Safdar et al. (2020) emphasized the growing concerns and ethical implications associated with data management in the digital era. The integration of ethical considerations in SISP is essential in today's data-driven business environment. With the increasing reliance on digital information systems, organizations must prioritize the protection of personal and sensitive data. This involves not only adhering to legal standards but also upholding ethical principles in data handling. Ethical management of data under SISP ensures that privacy and security are not afterthoughts but integral components of system planning and execution. This ethical approach helped in building trust with stakeholders and maintaining the organization's reputation.

The integration of ethical considerations in SISP was essential for responsible and sustainable management of information systems. Ethical concerns in SISP extended beyond data privacy and security to include issues of data accuracy, accessibility, and fair use of information, as discussed in research by Safdar et al. (2020). It was imperative for organizations to ensure their information systems do not perpetuate biases or inequalities,

and that they provided equitable access to information for all stakeholders. This necessitates a well-developed ethical framework guiding decision-making in information systems planning and execution. Such a framework not only addressed immediate ethical concerns but also reinforced the broader role of ethical considerations in SISP.

Ethical management of data in SISP necessitated transparency about data collection, usage, and sharing practices. Organizations are required to clearly inform stakeholders about data utilization, protection measures, and individuals' rights concerning their personal information (Safdar et al., 2020). Such transparency was not only ethically sound but also crucial in building trust and confidence among users and stakeholders. With the continuous evolution of technology, including artificial intelligence and machine learning, new ethical challenges arise, particularly regarding autonomy, consent, and potential algorithmic bias. Consequently, SISP must be dynamic and adaptable to address these emerging ethical issues proactively and thoughtfully.

In short, integrating ethical considerations into SISP involves more than just legal compliance; it includes a commitment to fairness, transparency, and responsibility in data management. Ethical integration in SISP goes beyond legal requirements, focusing on equitable and transparent practices in handling data (Safdar et al., 2020). Prioritizing ethics in SISP enabled organizations to avoid legal issues and foster stronger, more trustworthy relationships with stakeholders. This focuses on ethics and positions organizations as responsible and ethical leaders in the digital era, highlighting the multifaceted nature of ethical integration in SISP.

**Strategies for Aligning IT to Improve Organizational Efficiency**

Effective alignment of IT with business strategies is essential for enhancing organizational efficiency. As Bechor et al. (2010) explained, the alignment process involves matching IT capabilities with business goals to optimize performance and efficiency. This strategic alignment ensured that IT resources were utilized in ways that directly supported and enhanced the business's operational and strategic objectives. The significance of this alignment was not just in technology adoption, but in its integration with business processes, ensuring that IT serves as a catalyst for efficiency and growth.

Continuous assessment and adaptation of IT strategies are crucial for maintaining alignment with evolving business needs. Hevner et al. (2000) emphasized the importance of regular reviews and updates to IT strategies to keep pace with changes in business environments and technologies. This dynamic approach to strategic IT planning allowed for flexibility and responsiveness, enabling organizations to quickly adapt to market shifts and emerging opportunities. The ability to swiftly adjust IT strategies in response to business changes was a key driver of organizational agility and long-term efficiency.

Collaborative planning between IT and business units was a strategic approach to enhance organizational efficiency. Al-Surmi et al. (2020) have shown that collaboration between IT departments and other business units leads to more effective and efficient use of IT resources. This collaboration ensured that IT strategies are closely aligned with actual business needs and goals, leading to better decision-making and optimized resource utilization. Encouraging regular communication and joint planning sessions

between IT and other departments could bridge gaps in understanding and ensure that IT initiatives are both relevant and supportive of business objectives.

Leveraging advanced technologies, such as AI and machine learning, could significantly improve organizational efficiency through better alignment of IT and business strategies. Char et al. (2020) discussed how emerging technologies like AI could be integrated into strategic planning to enhance efficiency and innovation. These technologies offered new capabilities for data analysis, automation, and predictive insights, which, when aligned with business strategies, could drive significant improvements in efficiency and competitiveness. The strategic integration of advanced technologies requires careful planning and alignment with business goals, ensuring that these powerful tools are used effectively to support and enhance the organization.

Fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptability within the IT and business teams was key to aligning IT for organizational efficiency. According to Kamariotou and Kitsios (2020), an organizational culture that encourages ongoing learning and flexibility is essential for effective IT-business alignment. This culture promoted an environment where both IT and business units were open to recent technologies, methodologies, and changes in business processes, facilitating smoother integration and alignment. Cultivating this culture required leadership commitment and continuous investment in training and development, ensuring that the organization remains agile and responsive to technological and market changes.

Implementing a governance framework that supports strategic IT alignment was crucial for organizational efficiency. As highlighted by Yang et al. (2020), an effective

governance framework establishes clear policies, roles, and responsibilities, which are critical for aligning IT and business strategies. Governance structures facilitate coordination and communication between IT and business units, ensuring that IT investments and initiatives are in line with business objectives and deliver value. The development and implementation of such a governance framework should be a strategic priority for organizations seeking to optimize the alignment between IT and business strategies, enhancing overall efficiency and effectiveness.

Regularly evaluating and measuring the impact of IT on business performance was fundamental for effective alignment and organizational efficiency. Earl (1993) suggested that continuous evaluation of IT's contribution to business performance was necessary to understand and improve alignment. This evaluation helped identify areas where IT is successfully supporting business goals and areas where adjustments were needed, allowing for more targeted and effective IT strategy development. Implementing metrics and performance indicators for IT's impact on business outcomes was essential in this process, providing tangible evidence of the benefits of strategic IT alignment.

In sum, the alignment of IT with business strategies was a multifaceted and dynamic process essential for enhancing organizational efficiency. As evidenced by the insights from Al-Surmi et al. (2020), Bechor et al. (2010), Char et al. (2020), Hevner et al. (2000), Kamariotou and Kitsios (2020), and Yang et al. (2020), strategies such as collaborative planning, continuous learning, governance frameworks, and regular impact evaluation are key to effective alignment. These strategies, when implemented effectively, ensured that IT resources were not only utilized optimally but also

contributed to the broader strategic goals of the organization, fostering innovation, agility, and competitiveness. Therefore, organizations must continuously adapt and refine their IT alignment strategies to remain relevant and efficient in the rapidly evolving digital landscape, leveraging IT as a pivotal driver for business success and growth.

## Summary of Literature Review

The literature review presented an in-depth exploration of the integration of SISP and ANT as pivotal frameworks in modern business strategy and information systems. The review traced the evolution of SISP, initially a tool for aligning IT with business goals, evolving into a comprehensive strategy for addressing complex business operations (Earl, 1993; Kamariotou & Kitsios, 2020). Concurrently, ANT's role in understanding socio-technical networks, particularly the interactions between human and non-human entities, complemented this evolution (Callon & Blackwell, 2007; Tatnall, 2005). This integration provided a holistic perspective crucial for navigating the technology-driven business landscape, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive approach in strategic business planning. Thus, the combined insights from SISP and ANT were presented as essential for understanding the intricacies of strategic planning in the modern business context.

The review emphasized the importance of ethical considerations in SISP, reflecting the growing need for responsible data management in the digital era. Highlighting works by Wright (2011) and Safdar et al. (2020), the review underscored the ethical challenges in data privacy, security, and management that SISP must address, beyond mere legal compliance. This focus on ethical considerations ensured that SISP not

only aligned IT with business strategies but also adhered to ethical principles in data handling, reinforcing the role of ethics in information systems planning. This aspect of the review stressed the importance of incorporating ethical frameworks in SISP for building trust with stakeholders and maintaining organizational integrity.

Strategic alignment and efficiency enhancement through IT were central themes, with various strategies for aligning IT with business goals to improve organizational performance. The review drew upon insights from Bechor et al. (2010), Hevner et al. (2000), and others, emphasizing strategies such as continuous assessment, collaborative planning, and leveraging advanced technologies for strategic IT alignment. These strategies highlighted the dynamic nature of SISP in enhancing business efficiency, demonstrating how continuous adaptation and strategic alignment are key drivers of organizational success. The summary consolidates these strategies as crucial components of SISP, essential for organizations to remain agile and competitive in the rapidly evolving digital landscape.

## Transition

In the review of literature in Section 2, I have provided comprehensive insights into the integration and application of SISP and ANT in various organizational contexts. I highlighted the significance of aligning IT strategies with business goals, the critical role of both human and non-human actors in these processes, and the importance of addressing ethical considerations in information systems planning. These key findings underscored the necessity for continuous adaptation and innovation in SISP practices and the importance of a holistic approach that considers a range of actors and factors. The

exploration of case studies further reinforced the practical applications and benefits of integrating SISP and ANT in addressing complex challenges in information systems management.

The next sections build upon these foundations. In section 3 the focus was on the methodology of the study, outlining the research design, data collection methods, and analytical techniques used to investigate the application of SISP and ANT in organizational settings. This section provided the foundational framework for how the study was conducted, offering insights into the research process and the rationale behind the chosen methods.

In section 4 the researcher presented the results and findings of the study, providing a detailed analysis of the data collected. This section explored how the theoretical concepts of SISP and ANT were applied in real-world scenarios, examining the outcomes and implications of these applications. The results aimed to offer a deeper understanding of the practicalities and impacts of SISP and ANT in strategic information system planning, drawing conclusions based on the data analysis and contributing to the broader discourse in the field.

# Section 3: Research Project Methodology

This section includes a discussion of the methodology framework that I used to address the study's purpose comprehensively. This includes an overview of project ethics, the chosen methodology and its design, considerations for population and sampling, the data collection, techniques for data organization and analysis, and the measures implemented to ensure the trustworthiness, reliability, and validity of the study.

## Project Ethics

For this pragmatic qualitative inquiry study, my responsibilities as the researcher included the development, design, and implementation of a comprehensive plan to conduct the study. As a researcher, I gathered the participants' interview responses, analyzed the data meticulously, and presented the results in an unbiased manner. The primary mode of data collection was through interviews, employing a set of carefully selected qualitative questions designed to answer the research question without introducing bias.

In data collection, I played a vital dual role as the instrument for acquiring data and guardian of ethical principles. Raheim et al. (2016) highlighted the ethical concern of bias in a researcher's conclusions, emphasizing the importance of researchers actively avoiding this issue. Respect for the participants' well-being was shown in all contact with them to maintain the integrity of this function. I ensured that all their affiliations—personal, academic, and professional—were openly acknowledged to reduce the possibility of biases or conflicts of interest and to protect the study's ethical integrity and conclusions.

Berry (2016) highlighted the importance of the researcher comprehending the dynamics of the relationship with participants, the nuances of the interview question responses, and the imperative to collect data impartially. As a professional actively engaged in the telecommunications and mass media industry, my relationship with the topic is deeply intertwined with my day-to-day experiences and expertise in the field. Having worked extensively in various capacities within these industries, including roles in strategy, implementation, and management, I brought firsthand knowledge and insights that enriched my understanding of the research subject. Moreover, my engagement with participants was informed by my professional background, allowing me to establish rapport more effectively and navigate the intricacies of industry-specific discussions with sensitivity and insight. By leveraging my industry experience, I fostered productive dialogue and gather meaningful data that accurately reflects the realities and challenges faced by industry practitioners. I adhered to the principles outlined in the *Belmont Report*. The study conducted by Brothers et al. (2019) included a wide range of ethical norms, concepts, and theories for safeguarding the participants' well-being during the research study interview process. The fundamental regulations, in conjunction with the overarching principles of the *Belmont Report*, provided a strong framework for conducting ethical and accountable research. Palmas (2018) further articulated that the *Belmont Report* establishes a moral framework for researchers to follow when involving human participants in their studies. Reid et al. (2018), additionally asserted that the *Belmont Report* guidelines provide respect for others and ensure that all human participants chance to make independent judgments.

Participants were invited to participate in the study following Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines, which included informed consent. The informed consent process exemplified the value of respect for individuals, guaranteeing that participants possess a comprehensive understanding of the study's extent, their role in it, and any potential dangers or advantages associated with their participation. For accountability and openness, this procedure was well documented, within the informed consent form. In ensuring data security and confidentiality, rigorous measures were implemented following best practices outlined in the literature. Participants were assured that their information remained protected throughout the research process. The informed consent process, as described by Colosi et al. (2019), was meticulously followed, guaranteeing participants understood the extent of the study and their role within it. The withdrawal process involved participants contacting me directly to inform me of their decision, following protocols outlined by Kamanzi and Romania (2019) and Lin (2009). At that point, I promptly removed the participant's data from the study and securely destroyed any captured data, as per the confidentiality agreement. I did not offer incentives to participants in this study.

To further ensure confidentiality, participants were assigned pseudonyms (e.g., P1, P2, P3, etc.), as suggested by Morse (2015), to protect their identities. This practice aligned with the ethical principles of anonymity and confidentiality outlined in the literature. Additionally, all data will be securely stored for 5 years post-study, as recommended by Pope et al. (2000), to safeguard participant confidentiality and comply with ethical standards. I used these measures to uphold the ethical integrity of the

research and protect the privacy of participants, as supported by the literature on qualitative research ethics.

## Nature of the Project

In a qualitative pragmatic inquiry study, researchers strive to reveal the significance and interpretations individuals assign to their experiences within certain circumstances (Alase, 2017). The focus is on examining how humans navigate and comprehend their surroundings, considering the practical consequences of their actions and choices. The approach employed in this study was meticulously crafted to elucidate the complex processes and strategies that enable the integration of IT with overarching business objectives in the telecommunication and mass media industry. The nature of this research required a systematic methodology that enabled a thorough investigation of the intricate and context-specific phenomena involved. This section includes the reasoning behind the methodological decisions, particularly the selection of a qualitative approach and a pragmatic inquiry design and illustrates how these choices are ideally congruent with the study goals.

I selected a qualitative method because the study's purpose which was to explore the IT strategies used by eight IT and business managers to align with their business objectives. According to Ludo (2019), a quantitative research study method is employed to measure data and gather information using polls, surveys, and multiple-choice questions. Qualitative research is particularly well-suited for this undertaking because of its emphasis on exploring the subtleties and complexities of human experiences and organizational processes. Researchers use this tool to gather intricate and in-depth

insights that are essential for a thorough comprehension of the tactics used by IT and business managers. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), this method becomes especially useful when negotiating and resolving the usually conflicting goals of IT and business activities. The qualitative approach included a nuanced examination of participants' subjective experiences, interpretations, and the meanings they attribute to their professional practices and strategic decisions. I used this method to develop a profound understanding of the studied phenomena by delving into the intricate details of participants' perspectives.

I chose a qualitative pragmatic inquiry design for this research, not only because it reinforces the methodological alignment with its objectives but also highlights the practical orientation and real-world applicability of the study's findings, as emphasized by Morgan (2014). Specifically tailored for the capstone research project, I adeptly leveraged the strengths of both positivist and constructivist paradigms, exploring the issue beyond rigid confines. I used this approach to delve into the intricate details of participants' perspectives, fostering a profound understanding of the studied phenomena (see Teubner, 2007).

## Population, Sampling, and Participants

Within qualitative research, the meticulous selection of participants plays a crucial role, serving as the fundamental basis for ensuring the authenticity and depth of the study. In this project, I focused on a targeted population comprising IT and business managers employed by large, national-scale organizations within the United States telecommunications and mass media industry. Using a purposive sampling method, my

focus was on managers actively involved in alignment projects within the past 2 years, with a limited sample size ranging from six to 10 participants. This size was determined by the principle of data saturation, ensuring comprehensive data collection until no new information or insights emerged. Key eligibility criteria included recent involvement in alignment projects. Participant access was facilitated through direct contact with individuals in the selected industry, using industry contacts through LinkedIn. The geographic scope was limited to the Midwest region of the United States, concentrating on organizations and managers within this specific area. These participants directly aligned with the project's business problem and purpose, being key stakeholders responsible for addressing the challenge of IT and business alignment in the U.S. telecommunications and mass media industry.

The participant eligibility criteria were meticulously crafted to guarantee the creation of a robust and pertinent data corpus. To be eligible, participants had to occupy a position of strategic significance in IT or business planning, backed by a minimum of 5 years of sector-specific experience, and had aligned their IT strategies with their business objectives for effective digital transformation. This criterion ensured that participants possessed a profound depth of insight and experience in aligning IT and business strategies. Beyond merely enriching the data pool, this experience threshold facilitated a nuanced exploration of alignment strategies across diverse organizational contexts and varying stages of IT integration evolution.

To access this specialized cohort, I employed a strategic blend of purposive and snowball sampling methods. Participant access was facilitated through direct contact with

relevant organizations and individuals in the selected industry, using industry contacts through LinkedIn. During the initial recruitment phase, purposive sampling was skillfully employed to meticulously identify and engage participants who precisely met the eligibility criteria, thereby ensuring both the relevance and depth of the collected data. Following the IRB-approved protocol, potential participants were provided with detailed information about the study objectives, their role in the research, and the procedures involved. I established a working relationship with each participant by introducing myself and following the ethical principles established in the *Belmont Report*.

Informed consent was obtained from each participant prior to their involvement, emphasizing the voluntary nature of their participation and their right to withdraw at any stage without repercussions. This methodological choice aligned with the insights of Etikan et al. (2016), who emphasized the efficacy of purposive sampling in targeting a specific subset of the population possessing the necessary knowledge or experiences for the research question at hand. The precision of purposeful sampling was underscored by Etikan et al.'s (2016) support, enhancing the method's credibility in ensuring a focused and pertinent participant selection process. Following the establishment of the initial participant base, a complementary strategy was implemented through snowball sampling. I used this approach to expand the research network by leveraging the professional connections of the initial participants, thus accessing a more extensive spectrum of eligible individuals. The rationale behind this methodological choice found validation in the work of Biernacki and Waldorf (1981), who advocated for snowball sampling as an effective strategy for reaching hard-to-access populations—a particularly pertinent

consideration in the context of engaging high-level professionals within the telecommunication and mass media industry. The acknowledgment of the challenge in reaching such professionals and the strategic leveraging of existing connections was integral to the choice of snowball sampling, reinforced by Biernacki and Waldorf's (1981) endorsement. This two-pronged sampling strategy was carefully crafted to guarantee a thorough participant selection procedure, which was an essential component for capturing the complex dynamics within the intended cohort.

## Data Collection Activities

I was the primary data collection instrument for this research study. Cutland et al. (2017) outlined that data collection instruments encompass various elements, such as the researcher's interview questions, participant report forms, or diary card information. Additionally, they elaborated on the diverse nature of collected data, ranging from basic details like a participant's name and contact information to more specific information like interview dates, participant job responsibilities, or customer support interactions with application system users. The orchestration of data collection activities forms the backbone of a study's methodological integrity and the richness of its findings. The methodology of this research, aimed at exploring the alignment of IT with overarching business goals within the telecommunication and mass media industry, was characterized by a comprehensive and ethically grounded approach to data collection. This methodology incorporated interviews, augmented by observational techniques, and rigorous screening processes to ensure participant eligibility, thereby facilitating a nuanced understanding of SISP.

Interviews were the primary source of study data. I used a well-organized yet adaptable framework for extracting profound insights from participants. I used an interview protocol to guide these interviews (Appendix A), and sent an invitation letter (Appendix B). I used both of these documents to create a comprehensive guide for conducting the interviews. This format was chosen for its established efficacy in qualitative research, enabling the examination of intricate phenomena while maintaining consistency across interviews (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). I explored strategic, operational, and tactical aspects of IT-business alignment, covering topics such as alignment plan development, execution challenges, and achievements. I used audio recording and verbatim transcription for precise data collection, facilitating meticulous analysis and a comprehensive understanding of participants' viewpoints and experiences.

The rationale for employing an interview protocol in qualitative research was underscored by its pivotal role in ensuring the collection of high-quality and consistent data. As highlighted by Yeong et al. (2018), a well-defined protocol was essential for this purpose. DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) emphasized that an interview, guided by such a protocol, fosters meaningful conversations, allowing flexibility while ensuring coverage of relevant topics. Additionally, modifying interview questions to an open-ended format, as suggested by Roberts (2020), enhanced the exploration of participants' perspectives. Open-ended questions encouraged detailed responses, enriching collected data and offering valuable insights into the research topic. By utilizing an interview protocol and documenting it transparently, as demonstrated by the student's approach, alongside

referring to the invitation letter in Appendix B, the study's credibility and replicability were enhanced, contributing to the overall rigor of the research endeavor.

Observational data collection was a crucial addition to interview insights since it offered a contextual understanding of the professional environments where IT and business alignment occur. Conducted covertly in appropriate settings for participants, these observations sought to document behaviors, interactions, and contextual factors that impacted strategic alignment initiatives. Thorough and immediately elaborated field notes maintained the freshness and depth of observed events, providing a tangible understanding of the organizational and cultural factors that influence strategic decision-making processes.

To maintain the study's integrity and ensure the relevance and applicability of its findings, screening instruments were deployed to ascertain participants' eligibility efficiently. This step was crucial for selecting individuals whose experiences and roles aligned with the study's focus, thereby ensuring a participant cohort capable of providing informed and contextually rich insights into the phenomenon under investigation. Utilizing member checking techniques, as recommended by Creswell and Miller (2000), were employed to augment the reliability and validity of the data collection process. Member checking is a methodological approach utilized to enhance the reliability and validity of qualitative research data collection. As recommended by Creswell and Miller (2000), member checking involved participants reviewing and confirming the accuracy of their interview transcripts or the researcher’s interpretations. This process served to validate the data collected during the interviews by ensuring that participants recognized

and endorsed the representation of their perspectives and experiences as captured in the transcripts. Additionally, member checking allowed participants the opportunity to provide clarifications or additional insights, thereby enriching the data and enhancing its trustworthiness. Transcription review, on the other hand, involved a thorough examination of the interview transcripts by me, as the person conducting the study. This review process ensured the accuracy and fidelity of the transcribed data by verifying that the recorded interviews had been faithfully transcribed without omitting or distorting any information. Transcription review contributed to the reliability of the data collection process by minimizing errors and discrepancies in the transcription, thereby maintaining the integrity of the qualitative data analysis.

The data collection activities of this study were carefully planned with an emphasis on methodological accuracy, active involvement of participants, and strict respect for ethical guidelines. The combination of interviews and observational data created a thorough and detailed dataset that could reveal the strategies for aligning IT and business within the telecommunication and mass media industry (Creswell & Miller, 2000). The careful and systematic design and implementation of these operations, following established methodological principles, guaranteed the production of comprehensive, trustworthy, and accurate data. This contributed valuable insights to the area and promoted a more profound comprehension of the intricate processes being studied. Engaging in this data collection process served two purposes: validating the data and enriching the findings. This was achieved by allowing participants to provide further

explanation or elaboration on their comments. As a result, the analysis became more accurate in representing their experiences and viewpoints.

**Interview Questions**

1. What general strategies are used in the telecommunications and mass media industry to align IT with business objectives for enhancing organizational efficiency and competitiveness?
2. What are some common obstacles faced when trying to align IT and business objectives in the telecommunications and mass media industry?
3. How do professionals typically navigate the strategic planning process to align IT initiatives with business objectives in the telecommunications and mass media industry?
4. From your experience, what role does leadership generally play in fostering alignment between IT and business strategies within the industry?
5. How has recent advancements in technology influenced strategies for aligning IT or business objectives in your industry?
6. What types of performance metrics or indicators are commonly used to evaluate efforts in aligning IT and business objectives in the telecommunications and mass media industry?
7. What are some effective communication and collaboration strategies generally used to ensure alignment between IT and business objectives in the industry?
8. What are some best practices or success stories from the industry related to aligning IT and business objectives?

9. How are change processes managed when implementing new strategies to align IT and business objectives in this sector?
10. In the face of evolving business landscapes, how do leaders generally ensure that their strategies remain innovative and adaptable in the telecommunications and mass media industry?
11. What approaches are employed to engage stakeholders in the process of aligning IT and business objectives in the telecommunications and mass media industry?
12. How is ongoing training and development typically supported to enhance alignment between IT and business objectives in the industry?
13. Looking ahead, what emerging trends do you foresee that could influence the alignment of IT and business objectives within the telecommunications and mass media industry?
14. Based on your experiences, what advice would you offer to fellow IT and business managers in the industry to enhance alignment between their objectives?

## Data Organization and Analysis Techniques

Systematic data organization was a crucial factor that assisted the researcher in efficiently handling participant interview data and other information collected from organizational records. Broman and Woo (2018) emphasized the significance of preserving consistency in the process of organizing data, highlighting its function in allowing the simpler management of interview data in later phases. To improve the reliability and validity of my research study, I employed a comprehensive methodology that involved analyzing data gathered from interviews and observations.

The appropriate data analysis process for this research design was thematic analysis, utilizing Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework. Thematic analysis is a systematic method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within qualitative data. This process involved identifying recurring themes and patterns across the dataset, which were then systematically coded and analyzed to uncover underlying meanings and interpretations. Template analysis (King, 2012) was also considered as a supplementary analysis technique, particularly if specific themes or patterns emerged that required a more structured approach.

The data analysis process followed a logical and sequential approach, beginning with the initial familiarization with the data, followed by systematic coding and theme development. NVivo software was utilized for coding, mind-mapping, and identifying themes (Maher et al., 2018). The process involved importing data into NVivo, coding segments of text based on predetermined themes or emergent patterns and organizing coded segments into meaningful clusters. This allowed for the exploration of relationships between themes and the generation of insights into the research question.

The focus was on identifying key themes that emerged from the data and correlating them with existing literature and the conceptual framework. Key themes were systematically compared and contrasted with relevant literature to draw connections and deepen understanding (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Additionally, any new studies published since writing the proposal were reviewed to ensure that the analysis remained current and aligned with the latest research in the field.

All raw data was securely stored for a minimum of 5 years following the completion of the study. This ensured compliance with ethical standards and allowed for the verification of findings and replication of the study if necessary (Broman & Woo, 2018). Raw data was stored in password-protected electronic files on a secure server, with access restricted to me. Additionally, data was anonymized to protect the confidentiality of participants' information and minimize the risk of data breaches.

## Reliability and Validity

It is of utmost importance to ensure the credibility of the study's procedures and outcomes. Fusch et al. (2018) highlighted the widespread adoption of the methodological triangulation approach among researchers to strengthen the dependability, validity, and verifiability of a research study. These fundamental components not only enhanced the integrity of the research but also amplified its influence within the academic community and beyond. Dependability was addressed through several measures in this study. Firstly, member checking was conducted to validate the interpretation of the data obtained from interviews and observations (Maxwell, 2013). This process involved sharing the analyzed data or interpretations with the participants and seeking their feedback to ensure accuracy and alignment with their experiences. Additionally, a transcript review was employed to verify the accuracy of transcribed data, ensuring that no critical information was omitted or misrepresented. Supporting claims and decisions with multiple scholarly peer-reviewed or seminal sources was integral to maintaining the academic rigor of this study. By referencing established literature and previous research findings, the study's assertions

and conclusions were grounded in a robust theoretical framework and empirical evidence, enhancing their credibility and persuasiveness (Patton, 2015).

Credibility was ensured through various strategies, including member checking, triangulation, and participant transcript review (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Member checking involved seeking feedback from participants to validate the accuracy and relevance of the data interpretation, thereby enhancing the credibility of the study's findings. Triangulation, which involves using multiple data sources and methods to corroborate findings, also contributes to credibility by reducing the risk of bias or misinterpretation. Additionally, participant transcript reviews allowed participants to verify the accuracy of their contributions, further bolstering the credibility of the data.

Transferability was addressed by providing rich descriptions of the research context, methods, and findings, allowing readers to assess the applicability of the study's results to other settings or populations (Yin, 2018). By clearly documenting the research process and contextual factors, this study aimed to facilitate the reader's understanding of how the findings may be relevant or transferable to their own context. Additionally, future research may build upon this study's findings by exploring similar phenomena in different contexts or populations, further enhancing transferability.

Confirmability was ensured through rigorous data collection and analysis procedures aimed at minimizing researcher bias and ensuring objectivity (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). By employing systematic data organization techniques and precise coding methods this study-maintained transparency and accuracy in the interpretation of the data. Additionally, reflexivity was practiced by acknowledging and addressing any

potential biases or preconceptions that may influence the research process or findings, further enhancing confirmability.

Data saturation was ensured through thorough data collection and analysis procedures aimed at reaching a point where no new information or insights emerged (Guest et al., 2012). By conducting interviews and observations until redundancy was achieved and themes became repetitive, this study ensured that a comprehensive understanding of the research topic was attained. Additionally, the use of multiple data sources and methods, such as interviews and observations contributed to data saturation by providing diverse perspectives and insights on the phenomenon under investigation.

This study was dedicated to following these principles and conducting a thorough and thoughtful research process. The goal was not only to clarify the phenomena being studied but also to contribute to the ongoing discussion in the field. This study aimed to generate reliable and influential findings by carefully documenting and analyzing the research process. It employed techniques such as member checking and triangulation to enhance the credibility of the results. Ultimately, the study sought to deepen the comprehension of the intricate realities it investigates.

## Transition and Summary

A rigorous and sophisticated scientific approach was required to investigate successful ways of coordinating IT with business objectives in the mass media and telecommunications sectors. This study utilized a qualitative and pragmatic approach to investigate the strategic alignment phenomena. It employed a case study methodology to get detailed and contextual perspectives from IT and business management. The research

used purposive sampling to specifically target professionals who have played a leading role in alignment initiatives. This approach ensured that the collected data was both relevant and powerful in understanding the intricacies of strategic alignment. The methodology chapter provided a clear explanation of the research design, data collection methodologies, and analysis methods. These were supported by careful ethical considerations to maintain the integrity and validity of the research process. The following Section 4 presents the findings of the study described in this chapter, followed by a discussion section that discusses the findings in the context of the broader literature and the practical recommendations proceeding from the insights gleaned in this study.

Section 4: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

## Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative pragmatic inquiry study was to explore the IT strategies used by IT and business managers to align their divergent IT or business objectives to ensure effective utilization of digital transformation. The overarching research question was used to identify the strategies that IT and business managers in the telecommunications and mass media industry employ to align their divergent objectives and enhance organizational efficiency and competitiveness. Analysis of the interviews and supporting data revealed five significant themes: effective alignment between IT and business, obstacles in aligning IT and business, the leadership role in mitigating obstacles, effective communication and collaboration strategies, and innovative and adaptive strategies. This section includes discussion of each theme, comparing the findings with previous literature to highlight how they confirm, challenge, or expand existing knowledge. Furthermore, the findings will be critically analyzed in relation to the conceptual framework, specifically SISP and ANT to reveal deeper insights into how these frameworks shape and are shaped by IT-business alignment practices in the telecommunications and mass media industry.

## Presentation of the Findings

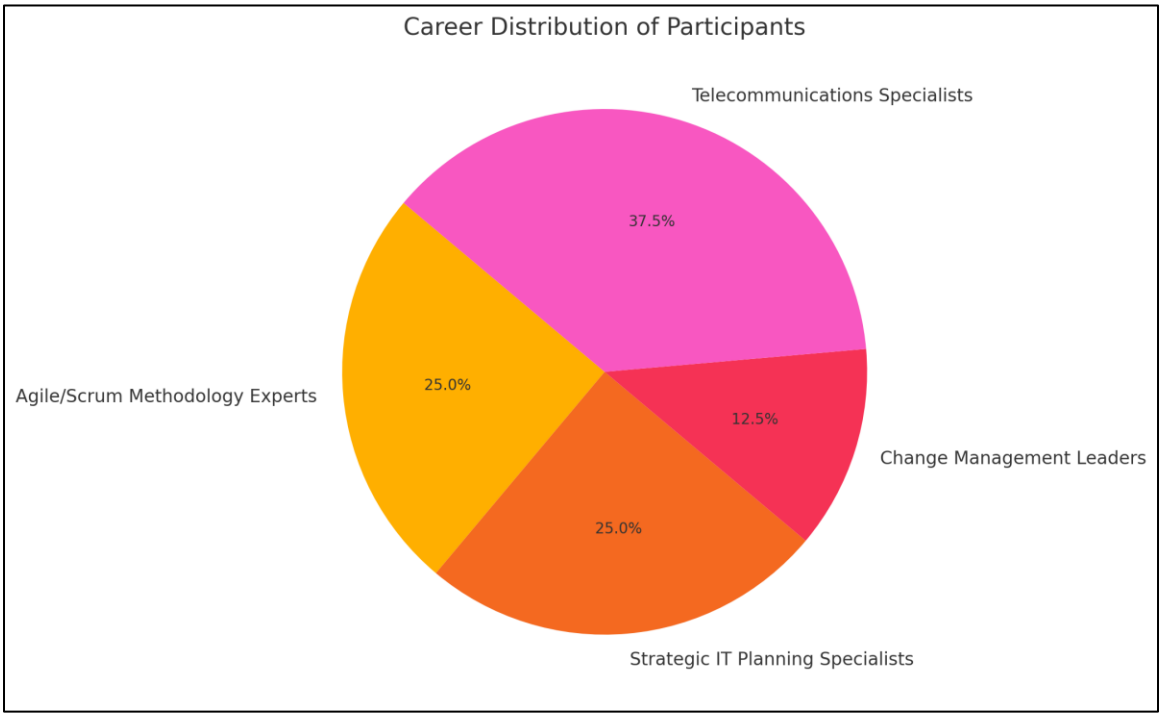
The study included a total of eight participants, each with a diverse and complementary background in telecommunications and mass media (see Figure 1), which delineates the percentages in participant career distribution by specialty. These individuals brought valuable expertise in strategic IT-business alignment to the research.

Among them were specialists in Agile and Scrum methodologies who emphasized the importance of project scope, communication, and collaboration in aligning IT strategies with overarching business goals. Their proficiency in managing complex IT projects allowed them to streamline initiatives and ensure seamless alignment between technology and organizational objectives.

Additionally, the participants included experts in strategic IT planning, who applied Agile frameworks to navigate obstacles and foster a collaborative environment. A participant focused on change management brought a strong leadership background, ensuring organizational competitiveness by implementing IT projects aligned with broader business strategies. Collectively, this diverse group of eight participants showcased a rich mix of skills in leadership, communication, and strategic planning, highlighting the importance of adaptability and methodological rigor in successfully aligning IT with business strategies across the telecommunications and mass media industries.

**Figure 1**

*Career Demographics*




To analyze the data collected from the interviews, NVivo analysis software was employed to identify, categorize, and synthesize recurring themes. The analysis began with the verbatim transcription of each interview, which ensured accurate data interpretation as emphasized by DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019). Transcripts were then imported into NVivo for systematic exploration. In accordance with King (2012), the initial phase involved meticulously examining each transcript through repeated readings to familiarize oneself with the content and identify recurring patterns or potential themes.

Next, the coding process involved highlighting segments of text relevant to emerging themes and grouping them into initial codes that reflected specific aspects of IT-business alignment strategies and challenges discussed by participants. This approach

aligned with the qualitative methodologies advocated by Creswell and Creswell (2018). I used systematic coding to categorize data into meaningful groups, such as strategic planning, leadership roles, communication practices, and obstacles to alignment.

After coding, the themes were refined and organized into broader categories using NVivo's visualization tools, to explore relationships between the categories. I adhered to Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis framework and created a comprehensive thematic map. Significant relationships were noted between strategic planning and cross-department collaboration, as well as between effective communication and leadership prioritization of IT initiatives.

Each theme was critically analyzed in relation to theoretical frameworks, specifically SISP and ANT This comparative analysis ensured each theme aligned with theoretical underpinnings. The thematic analysis revealed five key themes: effective alignment of IT and business, obstacles in aligning IT and business, the leadership role in alignment, communication and collaboration strategies, and innovative and adaptive strategies. Adhering to established thematic analysis techniques by Patton (2015) and Creswell and Miller (2000), the application of NVivo's features ensured a rigorous and comprehensive analysis of the data.

**Effective Alignment of IT and Business**

The first theme, effective alignment of it and business, as articulated by participants emerged as fundamental to enhancing organizational efficiency and competitiveness. Participants emphasized that aligning IT initiatives with broader business goals is crucial, a concept reinforced by the literature on SISP (Hevner et al.,

2000; Teubner, 2007) Participant 1 noted that "meeting with business stakeholders to understand the budget, time frames, dependencies, and subject matter experts (SMEs) is crucial to ensuring IT projects align with overall business priorities." This collaborative approach helps integrate IT strategies into the strategic framework, demonstrating that IT and business teams must work together closely to identify dependencies, set expectations, and achieve alignment. This aligns with studies by Yang et al. (2020), which emphasized the importance of regular collaboration to keep projects on track.

Participant 2 emphasized the value of "developing a strategic plan that aligns business priorities with IT architecture and capabilities," a practice consistent with the principles outlined by Bechor et al. (2010). This supports the findings by Herbst and Pretorius (2019) and Marcon et al. (2023), who asserted that strategic planning must effectively integrate IT capabilities with overarching business strategies to ensure IT investments substantively bolster business objectives. Participant 4 highlighted the significance of "setting up regular meetings between IT and business teams to review project progress and ensure expectations are met." This practice aligns with the ANT framework, which emphasizes the importance of collaborative relationships among stakeholders for effective alignment (Callon & Blackwell, 2007). Regular feedback mechanisms foster accountability and prompt adjustments when discrepancies arise, ensuring IT projects stay relevant and effective. Moreover, Participant 3 elaborated on the value of engaging business stakeholders in "planning sessions and aligning on clear goals for IT to support," which is fundamental to securing stakeholder buy-in and embedding IT within the broader organizational strategy.

These findings confirm the crucial role of effective alignment, as highlighted by Bechor et al. (2010), in ensuring that IT strategies are both relevant and supportive of business outcomes. They also extend the current knowledge by providing actionable insights into how regular communication and planning sessions between IT and business stakeholders are vital for maintaining alignment. Furthermore, these practices align with SISP principles and the collaborative aspects of ANT, illustrating how theoretical frameworks can guide practical implementation.

In contrast to studies by Yang et al. (2020), who viewed IT as a separate entity that occasionally contributes to business success, this study confirms that IT must be integrated into the core strategic planning process. The findings of this theme reinforce the significance of collaboration and regular review sessions in aligning IT architecture with business goals. Table 1, featuring insights from participants, illustrates effective practices for achieving this alignment. Participants highlight the necessity of developing strategic plans that closely integrate IT capabilities with business priorities, ensuring that IT supports and drives business objectives. They stress regular engagement with business stakeholders, which fosters a deeper understanding of business needs and ensures IT initiatives are well-aligned. Furthermore, participants advocate for ongoing alignment through structured review sessions, which are useful for adjusting IT strategies to evolving business requirements, thereby enhancing organizational agility and competitiveness. These practices, as detailed in Table 1, are essential for maintaining a dynamic and responsive IT-business alignment. This holistic integration enables

organizations to minimize the risk of project delays and inefficiencies while promoting a culture where IT is seen as an indispensable part of the overall business strategy.

**Table 1**

*Effective Alignment of IT and Business*

| Participants | Quotes |
|---|---|
| Participant 1 | "Meet with the business stakeholders, understand the budget, time frames, dependencies, and who the SMEs are." |
| | "Marry the business side of things to the customer's requirements on the IT side." |
| Participant 2 | "Develop a strategic plan that aligns business priorities with IT architecture and capabilities." |
| | "Engage business teams early in project planning to align technical capabilities with their objectives." |
| Participant 3 | "Engage business stakeholders in planning sessions and align on clear goals for IT to support." |
| | "Meet regularly to monitor progress and adjust strategies to meet evolving business requirements." |
| Participant 4 | "Set up regular meetings between IT and business teams to review project progress and ensure expectations are met." |
| | "Identify dependencies early to resolve potential conflicts between IT and business expectations." |
| Participant 5 | "Create a collaborative environment that incorporates input from both IT and business perspectives." |
| | "Facilitate open communication between technical and non-technical teams to ensure a shared understanding of goals." |
| Participant 6 | "Ensure the technical requirements align with business objectives to avoid missing key deadlines." |
| | "Involve both IT and business teams in project discussions to create realistic timelines that balance technical and business needs." |
| Participant 7 | "Work out between the IT team and the business what date they expect for project delivery, versus how long IT estimates it'll take." |
| | "Collaborate with stakeholders on user story prioritization and technical dependencies to establish achievable timelines." |
| Participant 8 | "Align IT development and deployment with business marketing goals through coordinated planning and communication." |
| | "Foster ongoing alignment through collaborative planning sessions that consider business goals and IT capacity." |

**Obstacles in Aligning IT and Business**

The second theme, obstacles in aligning it and business, as seen in Table 2 and articulated by participants, highlighted several barriers that obstruct effective IT-business alignment, such as budget constraints, departmental misalignment, scope creep, and poor communication channels. Participant 1 stated, "Business stakeholders often have fixed budgets and vague requirements, making it difficult to align IT initiatives with business expectations." This reflects a lack of alignment at the strategic planning level, confirming findings by Bechor et al. (2010), which indicated that ill-defined objectives often hinder IT-business alignment.

Participant 5 expanded on this challenge, noting that "conflicts over deadlines and resources occur when IT and business teams don't have a shared vision." The absence of a unified vision leads to delays and unmet expectations, which resonates with Al-Ammary et al. (2019). They emphasized that conflicting departmental goals often result in resource constraints and misaligned strategies. Participant 3 offered further insight into the communication barriers between IT and business teams, stating, "Stakeholders sometimes struggle to express their needs in ways that IT can understand, leading to misaligned expectations." This struggle in translating business needs into technical specifications reflects Asmussen and Moller (2020), who stressed the importance of establishing a shared understanding between departments to prevent miscommunication and misalignment.

Participant 7 highlighted the problem of scope creep, remarking, "If you don't define the scope, the project keeps going over and over. The business keeps adding, and

without a defined scope, you miss deadlines." This aligns with Bechor et al. (2010), who noted that unplanned changes to project scope often result in delayed timelines and budget overruns. Additionally, Participant 8 elaborated on the communication issues, emphasizing that "departments often fail to communicate project changes effectively, leading to missed expectations." This aligns with Al-Faidi Al-Juhani (2019) and Kamariotou and Kitsios (2020), who both pointed out that poor coordination between IT and business teams can cause unmet project goals and overall misalignment.

These findings confirm and extend the existing literature by revealing how poor communication, conflicting priorities, and scope creep undermine IT-business alignment (Al-Ammary et al., 2019; Asmussen & Moller, 2020; Bechor et al., 2010). These obstacles underscore the importance of strategic planning and collaboration to ensure that IT initiatives remain aligned with business objectives (Teubner, 2007). The SISP framework, as outlined by Teubner (2007), calls for organizations to align IT with business goals through clear strategic planning and communication, ensuring that expectations are realistic and attainable.

The ANT adds valuable perspective, emphasizing the importance of managing relationships between various stakeholders (Callon & Blackwell, 2007). Conflicting priorities must be resolved through effective leadership that fosters a unified vision and a collaborative approach to project execution. Leaders must facilitate communication and coordination to build a shared understanding, establish clear project scope, and prevent misalignment. To ensure effective IT-business alignment, organizations should develop shared goals and frameworks that transcend departmental boundaries, create consistent

communication channels, and clearly define project scope. Such strategic alignment will help organizations deliver projects on time and within budget, ultimately enhancing efficiency and competitiveness in the telecommunications and mass media industry.

**Table 2**

*Obstacles in Aligning IT and Business*

| Participants | Quotes |
|---|---|
| Participant 1 | "The business often comes to us not knowing the technology side...business always has a fixed budget and vague requirements." |
| | "Coaching the business side is crucial to bridge the knowledge gap and ensure smooth collaboration." |
| Participant 2 | "Some departments have different objectives and miscommunication arises due to unclear IT requirements." |
| | "Technical limitations or unrealistic deadlines from business stakeholders can impede IT progress." |
| Participant 3 | "Stakeholders sometimes struggle to express their needs in terms that IT can understand, leading to misaligned expectations." |
| | "Business stakeholders must recognize the limitations of legacy systems that might constrain IT capabilities." |
| Participant 4 | "Scope creep is a challenge when business adds requirements beyond the initial plan, delaying IT timelines." |
| | "Balancing competing priorities from different departments can lead to resource conflicts that slow IT progress." |
| Participant 5 | "Conflicts over deadlines and resources occur when IT and business teams don't have a shared vision." |
| | "Organizational silos make it difficult for IT and business teams to align on strategic objectives." |
| Participant 6 | "Without strong communication channels, projects can easily fall behind due to changing priorities." |
| | "Changes in leadership often lead to shifting priorities, affecting IT projects and increasing uncertainty." |
| Participant 7 | "If you don't define the scope, the project keeps going over and over. The business continues adding, and without a defined scope, you miss deadlines." |
| | "Vague or changing requirements create project delays, leading to friction between IT and business teams." |
| Participant 8 | "Departments often fail to communicate project changes effectively, leading to missed expectations." |
| | "Stakeholders sometimes expect IT to deliver functionality quickly without understanding technical constraints." |

**Leadership Role in Alignment**

The third theme, leadership role in alignment, derived from the participants and seen in Table 3, emphasized the critical role that leadership plays in fostering effective IT-business alignment. Participant 2 articulated that "leaders must foster open communication and create a culture of collaboration to ensure that IT and business objectives align." This observation aligns with the findings of Al-Faidi Al-Juhani (2019) and Kamariotou and Kitsios (2020), who stressed the significance of leadership in facilitating collaboration and prioritizing initiatives across IT and business teams. Without leadership support and guidance, alignment can falter as teams operate in silos and struggle to coordinate their efforts.

Participant 4 elaborated on this by noting, "Leaders should establish clear goals and ensure that every team member understands the broader vision". This approach ensures a shared purpose that prevents conflicting priorities and project delays. Bechor et al. (2010) also emphasized that clearly defined objectives and effective communication are fundamental to establishing strategic alignment. Without well-defined goals and shared understanding, IT initiatives can easily diverge from business objectives.

Participant 6 emphasized the importance of trust and communication: "Leadership should focus on building trust between departments and eliminating communication barriers". This observation resonates with the findings of Asmussen and Moller (2020), who highlighted that trust-building fosters collaboration by creating an environment where IT and business teams can work together toward shared goals. Transparent

leadership practices that encourage open communication and inclusivity can promote a cohesive organizational culture, ensuring IT strategies align with business priorities.

Participant 7 highlighted that "leaders must prioritize projects based on business goals and communicate these priorities clearly across all departments". Char et al. (2020) similarly emphasized that translating business needs into actionable IT strategies requires clear communication channels and a shared understanding of priorities. This ensures that technical initiatives are aligned with the overall strategic direction of the business.

Participant 8 observed that "leaders should involve business stakeholders in IT project planning from the beginning, ensuring that their input helps shape project scope". Early involvement prevents misalignment between IT and business objectives by incorporating diverse perspectives and identifying potential challenges before they escalate. Kamariotou and Kitsios (2020) also highlighted the importance of early stakeholder engagement in preventing conflicts and fostering collaboration.

These insights confirmed and extended existing literature by emphasizing that effective leadership is crucial for aligning IT and business objectives. They support the principles of SISP, as outlined by Teubner (2007), which emphasized that leadership ensures IT strategies align with business goals through prioritization, communication, and collaborative strategic planning. ANT complements this by emphasizing the need to manage relationships between various stakeholders to achieve effective IT-business alignment (Callon & Blackwell, 2007). By fostering trust, establishing clear goals, and involving stakeholders in IT planning from the outset, leaders can build a cohesive organizational culture that aligns IT strategies with business goals. This proactive

approach strengthens the organization's competitiveness and adaptability within the telecommunications and mass media industry.

**Table 3**

*Leadership Role in Alignment*

| Participants | Quotes |
|---|---|
| Participant 1 | "Leadership is the conduit of communication, making sure IT is aware of any issues, delays, or good news." |
| | "Leaders align on the budget and allocate appropriate resources to ensure the right team is in place." |
| Participant 2 | "Leaders should prioritize IT initiatives based on strategic goals and provide the right resources to ensure success." |
| | "Effective leaders establish a clear vision and ensure ongoing communication to keep teams motivated." |
| Participant 3 | "Effective leadership keeps IT and business teams focused on shared objectives by facilitating ongoing collaboration." |
| | "Strategic leaders empower their teams to make decisions while providing guidance and support when needed." |
| Participant 4 | "Leaders must foster a culture of transparency to identify obstacles early and realign teams as needed." |
| | "Build trust between IT and business by promoting open dialogue and prioritizing the collective goals." |
| Participant 5 | "Strong leadership ensures clear communication and creates an inclusive environment where everyone can contribute." |
| | "Provide consistent feedback and recognition to motivate IT and business teams toward continuous improvement." |
| Participant 6 | "Managers need to establish strong project management practices and clearly outline expectations to all teams." |
| | "Encourage cross-department collaboration to help align technical and business priorities and foster innovation." |
| Participant 7 | "Leaders need to know the company vision and align resources and funding to prepare for what's coming up in technology." |
| | "Strategic leaders communicate their expectations and timelines clearly to empower teams to meet objectives." |
| Participant 8 | "Strategic leadership involves setting clear goals and building effective feedback mechanisms to monitor progress." |
| | "Develop leaders who can navigate the complexities of business and technology to facilitate alignment." |

**Communication and Collaboration**

The fourth theme, effective communication and collaboration strategies, derived from participants and seen in Table 4 below, underscored the significant role that structured communication and teamwork play in aligning IT with business objectives. Participant 3 highlighted that "regular meetings between IT and business teams to discuss goals, progress, and challenges ensure that everyone is on the same page." Such meetings foster collaboration, ensuring clarity of goals and alignment across departments. This observation aligns with Asmussen and Moller (2020), who emphasized that structured communication builds a shared understanding, enabling teams to coordinate project goals and timelines effectively.

Similarly, Participant 2 emphasized the critical role of business analysts, remarking that "business analysts serve as translators, converting business needs into technical specifications that the IT team can implement." By bridging the gap between technical and non-technical teams, business analysts minimize misinterpretation, enabling a more accurate alignment of IT deliverables with business expectations. This aligns with Cahyaningrum et al. (2022), who also emphasized that business analysts serve as a vital link between business needs and technical specifications.

Participant 1 underscored the value of collaborative tools, saying, "Shared dashboards and project management systems allow teams to monitor progress and address issues in real-time, preventing scope creep and misaligned priorities." Such tools create transparency, providing a unified view that helps departments align their expectations and monitor deliverables. Char et al. (2020) further emphasized that agile

methodologies and project management systems enable teams to respond quickly to changes, ensuring that project scope remains consistent with business objectives.

Likewise, Participant 7 noted, "Daily scrums and agile frameworks help teams quickly identify potential challenges and adjust priorities, ensuring that projects stay aligned with business goals." Char et al. (2020) similarly highlighted that agile frameworks offer iterative feedback cycles that keep projects aligned, ensuring continuous improvement and adaptability to evolving requirements. Additionally, Participant 6 shared that "cross-department meetings are crucial for building relationships, fostering trust, and ensuring that IT and business teams collaborate effectively." Al-Faidi Al-Juhani (2019) similarly emphasized that trust and open communication build a solid foundation for collaborative relationships, leading to better strategic alignment. Cross-department meetings foster a shared understanding and create the opportunity to eliminate potential misunderstandings.

These findings validate the importance of structured communication and collaboration in aligning IT strategies with business goals. They offer practical strategies, such as shared dashboards, daily scrums, and business analysts, to bridge communication gaps and strengthen relationships between departments. This approach aligns with SISP principles, where regular feedback loops and iterative planning ensure that IT initiatives remain aligned with strategic business goals (Teubner, 2007). In addition, ANT underscores the importance of managing stakeholder interactions, ensuring that diverse perspectives shape IT strategies in line with business goals (Callon & Blackwell, 2007). By fostering effective communication channels and collaborative relationships,

organizations can achieve successful IT-business alignment, equipping them to navigate evolving priorities and challenges in the telecommunications and mass media industry.

**Table 4**

*Communication and Collaboration*

| Participants | Quotes |
|---|---|
| Participant 1 | "A sprint review demo enables businesses to see delivered functionality in real-time, allowing them to provide immediate feedback." |
| | "Daily scrum meetings ensure alignment and address blockers early to keep teams moving forward." |
| Participant 2 | "Cross-department meetings improve communication and help teams collaborate on solutions." |
| | "Build trust through transparency and by encouraging a culture of shared learning across departments." |
| Participant 3 | "Having business analysts translate business needs into technical terms helps smooth communication." |
| | "Regular status updates keep stakeholders informed about project progress and allow them to adjust expectations." |
| Participant 4 | "Joint retrospectives after project milestones identify what's working and where improvements are needed." |
| | "Engage stakeholders in setting realistic timelines to improve collaboration and increase satisfaction with results." |
| Participant 5 | "Incorporate a daily scrum meeting to ensure alignment and address any emerging challenges promptly." |
| | "Use collaboration tools like shared dashboards to maintain transparency and improve productivity." |
| Participant 6 | "Establish collaborative tools like shared dashboards to keep both business and IT teams updated." |
| | "Facilitate continuous communication through regular meetings, informal check-ins, and shared documentation." |
| Participant 7 | "You need an ongoing relationship with the business, ensuring clarity on scope and expectations for each user story." |
| | "Regular status meetings keep IT and business teams aligned and help identify potential blockers early." |
| Participant 8 | "Maintain regular feedback loops between IT and business to ensure everyone remains on the same page throughout the project." |
| | "Encourage an open-door policy for stakeholders to share their concerns and ideas with IT teams." |

**Innovative and Adaptive Strategies**

The fifth theme, innovative and adaptive strategies, as derived from participant responses and seen in Table 5, underscored the essential role of agile methodologies and emerging technologies in ensuring competitiveness and responsiveness in IT-business alignment. Participant 4 emphasized, "Incorporating agile frameworks allows us to pivot quickly based on customer feedback and market trends, ensuring that our IT projects align with business needs." This observation resonates with Char et al. (2020), who emphasized that agile methodologies empower teams to iterate quickly and refine strategies in response to changing business requirements. By focusing on adaptability, organizations can remain aligned with market trends and evolving customer demands.

Similarly, Participant 7 expanded on the importance of emerging technologies: "leveraging emerging technologies like AI and machine learning is crucial for staying competitive. These tools provide predictive analytics that help identify future opportunities and risks." This aligns with Al-Ammary et al. (2019), who highlighted that emerging technologies like AI provide real-time insights that enable organizations to foresee market shifts and take proactive measures.

Participant 2 stressed the importance of continual learning and adaptability: "Training programs and workshops help our teams stay updated on industry trends and new technologies, ensuring that we can integrate them into our existing IT infrastructure effectively." Asmussen and Moller (2020) also emphasized that continual training is necessary to ensure teams are proficient in new tools and frameworks, allowing IT teams to adapt their work quickly and maintain alignment with broader business goals.

Participant 1 underscored the value of collaborative brainstorming sessions, stating, "collaborative brainstorming sessions help IT, and business teams explore new approaches together and develop innovative solutions that are aligned with strategic priorities." This practice aligns with Bechor et al. (2010), who highlighted that collaborative problem-solving between IT and business teams leads to more creative strategies while ensuring alignment with strategic objectives. Encouraging cross-team collaboration enables IT projects to adapt swiftly to market changes.

Additionally, Participant 8 emphasized the importance of regular project reviews: "we regularly review project progress and adapt our strategies based on real-time feedback, ensuring that our IT initiatives remain relevant and effective." Cahyaningrum et al. (2022) also emphasized that iterative reviews and real-time data provide a continuous improvement framework that keeps IT projects aligned with business goals and market trends. Such regular assessments ensure responsiveness and allow for adjustments that maintain strategic alignment.

These findings underscore the importance of adopting innovative and adaptive strategies to align IT projects with broader business goals. They support prior research that agile frameworks, predictive analytics, and continuous learning are necessary to maintain competitiveness in dynamic markets. The principles of Strategic Information System Planning (SISP) provide a useful framework, emphasizing that organizations should strategically adopt new methodologies and tools in line with their business objectives (Teubner, 2007). In addition, Actor-Network Theory (ANT) emphasizes the significance of managing stakeholder interactions to promote creative problem-solving

and integrating emerging technologies (Callon & Blackwell, 2007). Fostering collaboration and proactively pursuing innovative solutions help organizations align their IT strategies with business needs, ensuring sustained adaptability and competitiveness in the telecommunications and mass media industry.

Table 5

*Innovative and Adaptive Strategies*

| Participants | Quotes |
|---|---|
| Participant 1 | "Leaders must look outward, talk to customers, keep an eye on competitors, and stay ahead by bringing new technology to market before competitors."<br>"Integrate agile practices to quickly respond to evolving market demands and adjust strategies as needed." |
| Participant 2 | "Stay updated on industry trends and adjust strategies accordingly to anticipate market demands."<br>"Identify emerging technologies that could improve efficiency or create new business opportunities." |
| Participant 3 | "Conduct regular market research and be prepared to pivot strategies to stay ahead of competitors."<br>"Experiment with innovative technologies and methodologies to find what best aligns with evolving customer needs." |
| Participant 4 | "Use agile frameworks to quickly respond to evolving business landscapes and maintain adaptability."<br>"Balance new technology adoption with existing processes to ensure a smooth transition." |
| Participant 5 | "Incorporate innovative technologies to optimize resource usage and improve customer satisfaction."<br>"Facilitate continuous improvement through retrospective reviews and experimentation with new approaches." |
| Participant 6 | "Integrate emerging technologies like AI and machine learning to gain new insights and refine strategies."<br>"Use predictive analytics to anticipate market trends and align business strategies accordingly." |
| Participant 7 | "Stay aware of technological advancements that could help package code and facilitate faster testing automation."<br>"Monitor technological trends to identify emerging opportunities that can improve competitiveness." |

| | |
|---|---|
| Participant 8 | "Monitor global trends and incorporate flexible planning techniques to adapt business strategies on the go."<br>"Experiment with agile practices to balance efficiency with adaptability in responding to market shifts." |

These five themes collectively addressed the overarching research question regarding the strategies that IT and business managers in the telecommunications and mass media industry use to align their divergent objectives and enhance organizational efficiency and competitiveness. “Effective Alignment of IT and Business” highlighted the importance of strategic planning sessions, cross-department collaboration, and regular progress reviews in synchronizing IT initiatives with business goals. As Teubner (2007) emphasized, strategic alignment requires intentional planning and systematic coordination, especially to address dependencies and ensure synchronization.

“Obstacles in Aligning IT and Business” uncovered significant challenges like scope creep, budget constraints, and conflicting priorities. Bechor et al. (2010) and Al-Ammary et al. (2019) identified these challenges as major obstacles to alignment, emphasizing that overcoming them requires strategic resource management, prioritization, and improved communication to reduce delays and manage expectations. “Leadership Role in Alignment” showcased the pivotal influence of leaders in fostering a culture of collaboration and trust. According to Al-Faidi Al-Juhani (2019) and Kamariotou and Kitsios (2020), effective leaders who establish a clear vision and cultivate transparent communication channels are essential for overcoming alignment obstacles.

"Effective Communication and Collaboration Strategies" provided actionable insights into how structured communication frameworks, daily scrums, and shared dashboards help manage priorities and ensure continuous alignment. The role of business analysts in bridging the technical-business divide is critical, as highlighted by Asmussen and Møller (2020), to create a continuous feedback loop that aligns IT strategies with business goals. "Innovative and Adaptive Strategies" emphasized that agile frameworks, predictive analytics, and continual learning foster creativity and adaptability. Al-Ammary et al. (2019) and Char et al. (2020) stressed that emerging technologies and continuous training are crucial to maintaining competitiveness and pivoting IT strategies effectively to meet evolving market needs.

Collectively, these themes reinforce that aligning IT and business requires a holistic strategy involving leadership, structured communication, innovative frameworks, and adaptive learning. By combining these strategies, IT and business managers can ensure that their divergent objectives align, ultimately enhancing efficiency and competitiveness within the telecommunications and mass media industry, consistent with the principles outlined in the SISP framework (Teubner, 2007). Further supported by ANT (Callon & Blackwell, 2007), this alignment requires managing stakeholder relationships and fostering an environment that leverages creative problem-solving for IT-business collaboration.

## Applications to Professional Practice

The findings of this study provide valuable insights for business and organization leaders aiming to enhance strategic alignment between IT and business strategies within

their organizations. Comprehensively understanding and implementing the recommendations derived from this research can help leaders cultivate a more cohesive and efficient organizational environment. By aligning IT and business strategies, organizations can achieve improved performance and competitiveness in today's dynamic business landscape (Broman & Woo, 2018). Thus, integrating the insights from this study into business practices can lead to tangible benefits for organizational success and sustainability.

Strategic alignment between IT and business is essential for organizational success (Hevner et al., 2000; Teubner, 2007). This alignment ensures that IT initiatives contribute significantly to long-term strategic planning and operational execution while remaining consistent with overarching business goals. By emphasizing cross-department collaboration, strategic planning, and regular progress reviews, business leaders can guarantee that IT projects deliver value and sustain strategic intent. Al-Faidi Al-Juhani (2019) and Kamariotou and Kitsios (2020) noted that strategic alignment is crucial in navigating complex market demands and ensuring that organizational priorities are consistently met.

Structured collaboration across departments improves strategic alignment, creating a shared understanding of business requirements and technical capabilities (Bechor et al., 2010). Engaging both IT and business teams in strategic planning helps technical teams understand business priorities while ensuring that business teams are aware of IT capabilities and constraints (Cahyaningrum et al., 2022). Cross-department collaboration allows for a realistic assessment of resource requirements, risk factors, and

project timelines, collectively aligning IT projects with strategic objectives (Al-Ammary et al., 2019).

Strategic planning requires IT leaders to proactively participate in broader organizational planning sessions to maintain synchronization of objectives and address emerging dependencies (Asmussen & Moller, 2020). Through regular progress reviews and iterative feedback loops, leaders can identify misalignments and adjust priorities, ensuring IT projects remain relevant and aligned with evolving business needs (Char et al., 2020). Teubner (2007) noted that this approach enables IT teams to stay agile and responsive, pivoting quickly to meet new strategic goals.

Leaders should prioritize ongoing engagement with IT teams to identify critical dependencies and develop comprehensive resource management strategies (Bechor et al., 2010). Active communication, coupled with consistent progress reviews, ensures that both business and IT teams can anticipate potential challenges and implement corrective measures early in the project lifecycle (Asmussen & Møller, 2020). Hevner et al. (2000) emphasized that strategic planning must include contingency and risk management plans to ensure IT initiatives can withstand market fluctuations and changes in business priorities.

Moreover, strategic alignment relies heavily on a shared vision cultivated by leadership. Al-Faidi Al-Juhani (2019) emphasized that leaders must actively foster a culture of collaboration and shared goals to keep IT strategies aligned with business priorities. A clear strategic vision allows departments to identify their roles in achieving organizational goals and align their initiatives accordingly (Kamariotou & Kitsios, 2020).

Leaders should champion this vision and engage all departments consistently to ensure IT remains a strategic partner capable of delivering a competitive advantage.

Addressing obstacles like scope creep, budget constraints, and conflicting priorities requires strategic resource management, prioritization, and communication (Al-Ammary et al., 2019). Leaders must establish clear project scopes, regularly communicate with IT and business stakeholders, and align expectations with achievable goals. Asmussen and Moller (2020) emphasized that communication is crucial to preventing project delays and confusion. Fostering a culture of transparency, defining clear objectives, and refining resource allocation practices will enable leaders to effectively manage challenges. Integrating agile methodologies and predictive analytics allows organizations to proactively identify risks and adjust priorities, ultimately aligning projects with business goals.

Effective leadership is fundamental to overcoming obstacles to IT-business alignment (Al-Faidi Al-Juhani, 2019; Kamariotou & Kitsios, 2020). Business and IT leaders must cultivate a culture of collaboration and facilitate transparent communication across departments. Char et al. (2020) emphasized that leadership is essential in promoting alignment by translating business needs into actionable IT strategies. Leaders should involve stakeholders in strategic planning, ensuring IT and business teams understand shared priorities and the overarching vision. This fosters trust and allows leaders to guide project execution in line with strategic goals.

Structured communication and collaboration strategies are essential for ensuring that IT initiatives align with business objectives (Asmussen & Moller, 2020). Business

analysts act as translators between IT and non-technical teams, bridging communication gaps and fostering shared understanding. Collaborative tools like shared dashboards and project management systems provide real-time insights that promote transparency and coordination (Cahyaningrum et al., 2022). Prioritizing daily scrums, agile frameworks, and other structured collaboration tools is crucial to maintaining effective feedback loops and continuously monitoring strategic alignment.

Agile frameworks, predictive analytics, and continuous learning enable organizations to remain competitive and responsive (Char et al., 2020). Emerging technologies like AI provide predictive insights that help leaders anticipate market shifts and respond proactively (Al-Ammary et al., 2019). Business leaders should prioritize training programs and workshops to ensure their teams remain proficient in new tools and technologies. Collaborative brainstorming sessions help generate creative solutions aligned with strategic priorities (Bechor et al., 2010).

These findings present a comprehensive framework for enhancing strategic alignment between IT and business goals. Prioritizing clear communication, effective leadership, innovative strategies, and structured collaboration enables organizations to significantly improve their adaptability and competitiveness. Teubner (2007) highlighted that strategic alignment requires continuous feedback, strategic planning, and a unified organizational culture. These principles align with Actor-Network Theory (ANT), which emphasizes managing stakeholder interactions for creative problem-solving (Callon & Blackwell, 2007).

The findings also have implications for the research-scholar community. They confirm and extend existing literature by offering practical strategies that emphasize agile methodologies, predictive analytics, and effective collaboration tools. Future research should further explore the impact of emerging technologies like AI and machine learning on IT-business alignment. Studies focusing on the role of emotional intelligence in leadership can offer insights into how leaders navigate conflicting priorities and foster collaborative cultures. Integrating these approaches will help the research community provide comprehensive frameworks that reinforce IT-business alignment in an evolving digital landscape.

## Implications for Social Change

The findings from this study have significant implications for social change, particularly in the realms of business and organizational leadership, as well as for the broader research-scholar community. By addressing alignment challenges and providing strategic frameworks for IT and business integration, this research can lead to tangible improvements in individuals, communities, organizations, and societies. Moreover, these strategies hold the potential to redefine how organizations engage with their employees and customers, inspiring a broader movement toward sustainable practices and innovative leadership that can profoundly benefit society as a whole.

By enhancing IT-business alignment, organizations can improve workplace satisfaction and employee engagement, fostering an environment where individuals feel more valued and better understood in their roles (Hevner et al., 2000). When IT initiatives align with business goals, employees across departments work cohesively toward

common objectives, reducing internal conflicts and promoting job satisfaction (Al-Faidi Al-Juhani, 2019). Moreover, this strategic alignment allows for clear communication, reducing uncertainties and stress associated with mismanaged projects (Asmussen & Møller, 2020). Leaders who foster a collaborative culture create an environment where creativity and innovation can thrive, promoting career growth and fulfillment for their employees (Kamariotou & Kitsios, 2020).

Enhanced IT-business alignment also benefits communities and cultures. By implementing efficient and effective IT strategies, organizations can deliver higher-quality products and services, improving customer satisfaction and community well-being (Char et al., 2020). Improved service quality and responsiveness can elevate trust in institutions, leading to greater civic engagement and strengthened social bonds (Al-Ammary et al., 2019). Furthermore, organizations prioritizing social responsibility and aligning IT strategies with sustainability goals can significantly reduce their environmental impact, contributing to broader cultural shifts toward sustainability (Broman & Woo, 2018). These organizations set an example for other entities to follow, driving change across industries.

On a larger scale, organizations and institutions that adopt these strategic alignment frameworks can contribute to economic growth and societal well-being. As efficient IT-business alignment drives productivity and innovation, it enables organizations to offer competitive products and services that spur economic activity and job creation (Teubner, 2007). This promotes a robust job market and supports local economies, leading to improved standards of living and greater societal stability.

Furthermore, institutions that prioritize data security and ethical IT practices strengthen the trust between society and technology, helping societies adapt to an increasingly digital landscape (Bechor et al., 2010).

The implications for the research-scholar community are equally significant. By exploring the strategic alignment of IT and business, researchers can further investigate how agile methodologies and collaborative frameworks impact organizational performance and employee well-being (Asmussen & Møller, 2020). Future studies can focus on the intersection of emotional intelligence and leadership, contributing to the understanding of how empathetic and adaptive leadership styles can shape collaborative organizational cultures (Al-Faidi Al-Juhani, 2019). Moreover, researchers should investigate how emerging technologies like AI and machine learning influence IT-business alignment, particularly in improving societal trust and accessibility. Ultimately, the frameworks and strategies derived from this research can serve as a foundation for further exploration, helping both practitioners and scholars understand how to create organizations that thrive in diverse, dynamic environments while promoting positive social change.

## Recommendations for Further Research

The themes identified in this study offer valuable insights into IT-business alignment while highlighting several areas where future research could further refine business practices. By focusing on emerging technologies, cross-cultural influences, emotional intelligence in leadership, and communication frameworks, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of how these factors impact strategic alignment. Moreover,

addressing the study's geographic and methodological limitations can lead to more comprehensive and generalizable findings. The following recommendations outline key areas for further research to enhance business practices and improve organizational outcomes.

According to Al-Ammary et al. (2019) and Char et al. (2020) found emerging technologies like AI, machine learning, and blockchain on IT-business alignment will have an impact on business practices thus these things should be directed toward future research. Longitudinal studies and experimental designs could offer robust data on their influence over time and across diverse organizational contexts. Understanding how these technologies affect the IT-business relationship could uncover new best practices for technological adoption and strategic planning.

This study's geographic focus was limited, calling for further research across diverse cultural contexts to analyze how strategic alignment strategies vary globally. Kamariotou and Kitsios (2020) and Al-Faidi Al-Juhani (2019) noted that societal norms significantly impact organizational structures, communication, and strategic planning. Comparative studies would provide insight into cross-cultural collaboration practices and how they affect IT-business alignment.

Leadership emerged as a key factor influencing IT-business alignment. Future research should focus on how leaders with high emotional intelligence foster collaboration and overcome alignment challenges (Asmussen & Moller, 2020). Case studies and experimental research would yield practical frameworks for leadership development and training. Surveys that measure team dynamics and alignment processes,

when correlated with emotional intelligence assessments, could reveal the specific leadership traits that are most impactful.

The effectiveness of various communication tools and frameworks in enhancing strategic alignment deserves further exploration. Business analysts bridge the gap between IT and non-technical teams, yet their tools and frameworks could vary significantly. Assessing agile frameworks, scrums, dashboards, and other structured collaboration tools would deepen our understanding of which approaches yield the most significant results (Cahyaningrum et al., 2022). Experimental research comparing different tools within various contexts would shed light on their relative strengths and weaknesses.

This study's limitations, particularly regarding geographic scope and participant bias, should be addressed in future research. Expanding to a wider range of regions and industries would provide more generalizable insights into strategic alignment. Additionally, employing mixed-methods research would help balance qualitative insights with quantitative data to mitigate participant bias. Surveys, field studies, and experimental designs would complement each other, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the strategies that lead to successful IT-business alignment (Hevner et al., 2000; Teubner, 2007). By following these recommendations, future research could expand the current knowledge base and provide business leaders and researchers with deeper insights into effective IT-business alignment, driving improved organizational practices and outcomes.

## Conclusion

This qualitative pragmatic inquiry study investigated the IT strategies used by managers in the telecommunications and mass media industry to align divergent objectives and ensure effective digital transformation. Through in-depth interviews with stakeholders, five core themes emerged: effective alignment between IT and business, obstacles to alignment, the role of leadership in overcoming challenges, effective communication and collaboration strategies, and innovative adaptive strategies. These findings offer a comprehensive framework that business and IT leaders can leverage to drive digital transformation and ensure strategic alignment in their organizations.

The data collection process utilized comprehensive interviews with key participants to explore their strategic approaches. Analysis of the interview transcripts was conducted using NVivo software, which facilitated thematic analysis and uncovered the patterns in how strategic alignment was managed, achieved, and hindered. This approach enabled a nuanced understanding of the interplay between strategic frameworks and organizational culture.

The findings revealed that strategic planning sessions, cross-department collaboration, and regular progress reviews are essential for maintaining alignment between IT and business. This aligns with the work of Teubner (2007) and Hevner et al. (2000), who emphasized that structured frameworks guide and strengthen alignment efforts. However, significant challenges emerged, such as budget constraints, scope creep, misaligned expectations, and communication breakdowns. These obstacles often led to

project delays and miscommunication, echoing prior research that highlighted similar challenges (Al-Ammary et al., 2019; Bechor et al., 2010).

Leadership emerged as a crucial element in prioritizing initiatives, fostering communication, and bridging gaps between IT and business teams. Leaders who fostered collaboration, provided clarity, and aligned their teams around shared goals ensured better strategic alignment. These findings are consistent with those of Al-Faidi Al-Juhani (2019) and Kamariotou and Kitsios (2020), who emphasized the importance of leadership in promoting alignment.

Effective communication and collaboration strategies such as daily scrums, cross-department meetings, and shared dashboards were identified as valuable tools for enhancing coordination and aligning objectives. Business analysts served as crucial translators between technical and non-technical teams, helping bridge communication gaps and foster a shared understanding (Asmussen & Moller, 2020; Cahyaningrum et al., 2022). Lastly, incorporating innovative strategies such as agile frameworks, predictive analytics, and emerging technologies helped organizations remain responsive and competitive. Char et al. (2020) underscored the importance of these methodologies in ensuring that organizations can adapt quickly to market shifts.

This study provided a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and strategies related to aligning IT and business objectives in the telecommunications and mass media industry. The key message is clear: a strategic framework that incorporates strong leadership, innovative strategies, and effective communication can help organizations achieve alignment between IT and business goals. Implementing these strategies will

foster an environment where organizations can navigate evolving technological landscapes, address obstacles effectively, and drive competitive growth through digital transformation.

## Reflections

Throughout the DBA Doctoral Study process, I embarked on a journey of discovery and growth, confronting personal biases and preconceived notions while refining my understanding of strategic alignment in organizations. Reflecting on my experience, I recognize that my background and experiences might have influenced my perspectives and interpretations during the study.

As a researcher, I approached the study with a foundation shaped by my professional background in business management. This background may have predisposed me to certain assumptions about effective strategic alignment practices, potentially impacting the way I framed research questions and interpreted findings. Additionally, my personal values and beliefs about leadership and organizational dynamics could have influenced my interactions with participants and the way I interpreted their responses.

These biases and preconceived ideas might have subtly influenced the research process and the conclusions drawn from the study. For instance, I may have been more inclined to interpret participant responses in a way that aligns with my existing beliefs about effective leadership and stakeholder engagement. Moreover, my personal values could have influenced the way I prioritized certain aspects of strategic alignment over others.

However, as I delved deeper into the research process and engaged with participants, I became increasingly aware of the need to remain open-minded and critically evaluate my assumptions. Through rigorous data analysis and reflexivity, I sought to mitigate the impact of my biases on the research findings. Additionally, seeking feedback from peers and faculty members helped me challenge my perspectives and consider alternative interpretations of the data.

Completing the study has led to significant changes in my thinking about strategic alignment and leadership within organizations. By critically examining my own biases and assumptions, I have developed a more nuanced understanding of the complexities involved in achieving strategic alignment. I now recognize the importance of remaining vigilant against personal biases and actively seeking diverse perspectives to inform research and decision-making processes.

Overall, my experience in the DBA Doctoral Study process has been transformative, challenging me to confront my biases and preconceptions while deepening my understanding of organizational dynamics. Moving forward, I am committed to approaching research with humility, reflexivity, and a willingness to embrace diverse viewpoints, recognizing that this is essential for producing meaningful insights and driving positive change within organizations.

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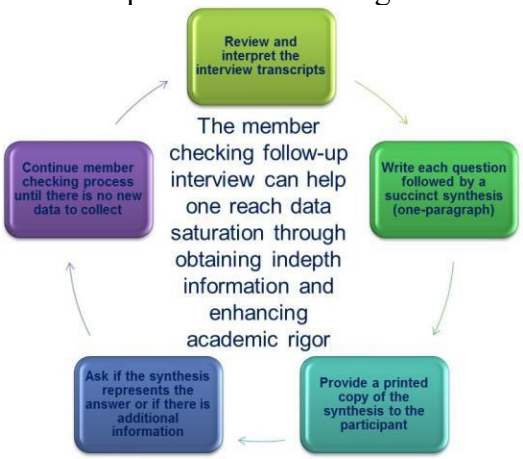
Appendix A: Interview Protocol

**Exemplar Interview Protocol for Qualitative Pragmatic inquiry Research Project**

| Interview Protocol | |
|---|---|
| Introduce the interview and set the stage.<br>Introduce myself and the purpose of the interview thereby setting the stage. | Hello, my name is (First/Last Name). I am a Doctoral Candidate with Walden University. The purpose of this interview is to identify and explore the effective fiscal strategies used by municipal administrators to attain their annual operations targets. I am going to ask you fourteen questions to which I would like your responses to. Then, I will conclude the interview. Do you have any questions? |
| Watch for nonverbal cues.<br>Paraphrase the participant response.<br>Ask follow-up probing questions to get more in depth | 1. What general strategies are used in the telecommunications and mass media industry to align IT with business objectives for enhancing organizational efficiency and competitiveness?<br>2. What are some common obstacles faced when trying to align IT and business objectives in the telecommunications and mass media industry?<br>3. How do professionals typically navigate the strategic planning process to align IT initiatives with business objectives in the telecommunications and mass media industry?<br>4. From your experience, what role does leadership generally play in fostering alignment between IT and business strategies within the industry?<br>5. How has recent advancements in technology influenced strategies for aligning IT or business objectives in your industry?<br>6. What types of performance metrics or indicators are commonly used to evaluate efforts in aligning IT and business objectives in the |

| | |
|---|---|
| | telecommunications and mass media industry?<br>7. What are some effective communication and collaboration strategies generally used to ensure alignment between IT and business objectives in the industry?<br>8. What are some best practices or success stories from the industry related to aligning IT and business objectives?<br>9. How are change processes managed when implementing new strategies to align IT and business objectives in this sector?<br>10. In the face of evolving business landscapes, how do leaders generally ensure that their strategies remain innovative and adaptable in the telecommunications and mass media industry?<br>11. What approaches are employed to engage stakeholders in the process of aligning IT and business objectives in the telecommunications and mass media industry?<br>12. How is ongoing training and development typically supported to enhance alignment between IT and business objectives in the industry?<br>13. Looking ahead, what emerging trends do you foresee that could influence the alignment of IT and business objectives within the telecommunications and mass media industry?<br>14. Based on your experiences, what advice would you offer to fellow IT and business managers in the industry to enhance alignment between their objectives? |
| Wrap up the interview thanking participant. | Thank you for participating in the interview, an integral part of my research project. |

<table>
<tr><td>Schedule a follow-up interview to perform member checking with the participant.</td><td>I will contact you in a week to schedule a time for us to review the accuracy of my interpretations of your interview responses.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Follow-up Member Checking Interview<br> 

<br>Graphic adopted from DBA Qualitative Pragmatic Inquiry Research handbook (2023). Not needed in proposal or research project. A visual reminder during proposal stage when creating interview protocol</td></tr>
<tr><td>Introduce myself and purpose of the follow-up interview to set the stage.</td><td>Hello Interviewee,<br><br>Thank you for taking this time to meet with me again to review the accuracy of my interpretations of your interview responses.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Share a copy of the succinct synthesis for each individual questions.<br>Bring in probing questions related to other information that I found – note the information must be related so that you are I am probing and adhering to the IRB approval.<br>Walk through each question, read the interpretation, and ask: Is my interpretation correct? Did I miss anything? Or would you like to add anything?</td><td>I will read the questions one at a time and my interpretations of your responses to them and ask you if my interpretation is correct.</td></tr>
<tr><td>1. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed</td></tr>
<tr><td>2. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed</td></tr>
<tr><td>3. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed</td></tr>
<tr><td>4. Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed</td></tr>
</table>

# Appendix B: IRB Invitation Letter

There is a new study about aligning Information Technology and business goals that could help business leaders better understand complex processes and strategies that enable the integration of information technology (IT) with overarching business objectives in the telecommunication and mass media industry. For this study, you are invited to describe your experiences as a manager who is actively involved in alignment projects within the IT or business planning objectives for effective digital transformation.

**About the study:**

- One 30 – 60 minute phone interview that will be audio recorded (no videorecording)
- To protect your privacy, the published study will not share any names or details that identify you.

**Volunteers must meet these requirements:**

- An Information Technology (IT) or Business Manager.
- Involved in alignment projects within the past two years.
- Minimum of 5 years of sector-specific experience in digital transformation
- Employed by a large, national-scale organization in the Midwest region of the United States

This interview is part of the doctoral study for Kendall L. Davis, a DBA student at Walden University. Interviews will take place during April 24, 2024, through April 23, 2025.

Please reach out to Kendall.Davis@Waldenu.edu to let the researcher know of your interest. You are welcome to forward it to others who might be interested.