

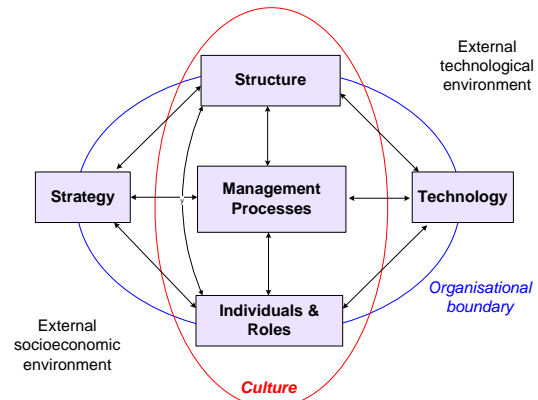
PROJECT SPECIFICATION

Title :- An examination of Scott-Morton's MIT90's framework

Introduction:-

M.S. Scott-Morton led a major IS research project in the late 1980's that investigated a number of management and organisational issues of information systems with some leading researchers. The book 'Corporation of the 90's', published just in time in 1991, was one of the outcomes of the research programme. It published a significant over-arching framework that the authors felt summarised the factors at work in the projects.

The framework has been found useful to theorise about alignment of these general factors, and also as a general structure for investigating socio-technical IS situations. Scott-Morton describes how these factors both influence and are influenced by IT-enabled change, and how they need to be continuously aligned over time. Studies have focused on different aspects, filling the boxes with specific factors for specific topics or situations, looking for gaps or causal effects, or using variations of the model, over a variety of topic areas.



This project is to investigate the different uses of the model, including Scott-Morton's original use, to classify these and identify patterns of factors and forces that pertain to different situations. It can also look at research that did not use the model, to assess whether it might usefully have done so.

Problem / Objectives:-

1. Identify as many research projects as possible that refer to the MIT90's model, classifying the way it is used. For each project, where applicable, classify specific factors that are identified by the research and how they work in each 'box', and also classify the situation, type and purpose of the research. Identify any patterns of use, trends or developments of the model and the extent to which the factors are generic across different topic areas.
2. Evaluate the power of the model, with a particular emphasis on the fit of factors with the boxes, and interactions across the boxes. Assess whether the model can be used for causal relationships or classification of 'success factors' for particular topics.
3. Identify related research on alignment, success or failure issues associated with socio-technical IS topics that does *not* use the MIT90's model, but might have. Assess why the model did not fit, or whether it could have. Identify topics, variables, factors, methods or theories that do not fit with the model.

Tasks:-

1. Identify relevant research in IS, including but not necessarily restricted to alignment/fit, success or good practice, IS development/implementation. Published papers may be used in the main, but books, conference proceedings and the Internet may also provide data. Consult these sources to analyse the use of the framework as indicated above.

2. Identify common cross-topic uses of the model or factors identified by the papers.
3. With respect to the Strategy box, and identify the extent to which 'vision' might be a valid element.
4. With respect to the external environment contingency factors; classify specific factors and the extent to which there are common instances across different situations.
5. Consider three potential factors of Communications, Right people/team, Strong senior management leadership (that occur at least as systems development success factors); to what extent are these factors so generic that they add little explanatory value to the model. Do other models use these factors, and are there other such factors?
6. Consider the extent to which the interactions between factors, suggested by the model, are actually reported in the research papers.
7. Consider other theories of fit, alignment or influence in socio-technical systems and the extent to which other models may be more, or less powerful than the MIT90's model.

Notes:-

This project is not technical; it is more organisational. The student must be proactive and energetic, with good literature research skills or willingness to learn, and an ability to assimilate and organise information efficiently and effectively. They should be comfortable or interested in 'library-based' research that will uncover a relatively large number of relevant articles.