Chapter 18
An Exploratory Study on the Influencers of the Perceived Relevance of CIO's Activities and Skills:
An Update

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the results of an exploratory study developed to identify the current CIO's main activities, to verify whether CIO's demographics and CIO's business context influence the perception of the importance of CIO activities and to identify CIO's main skills. The results show that managing projects, interacting with top management teams, optimizing business processes and making strategic decisions are main CIO's activities; and that the importance recognized to these activities is influenced by characteristics such as the CIO's age or the hierarchical structure of the organization. Regarding CIO's skills, understanding business processes and operations, and strategic thinking and planning, are the ones CIOs identified as being the most important.

INTRODUCTION

Information Technology (IT) has come to assume many different roles in organizations since it began to be commercially available in the mid-twentieth century. Initially, its use was restricted practically to the operational level. But over time, with the development of new features and capabilities, companies found applications at various managerial levels and, currently, information technologies are embedded in Information Systems (IS) and in virtually all organizational activities (Varajão et al., 2009a; Varajão, 2005).

The Information Systems Function (ISF), as main responsible for IT/IS adoption and management, must ensure that organizations are adequately supported by IT. In this context, the Chief Information Officer (CIO) plays a central role as Head of the ISF, taking responsibility for the planning, organization, direction and control of the processes that are required to ensure the existence of an Information System (IS) that suits the organization's informational needs (Varajão et al., 2012b).

In fulfilling her/his role, the CIO needs to perform a rich and diversified set of activities. For several years, studies (Carvalho et al., 2009; Larson & Adams, 2010; Luftman & Ben-Zvi, 2010; Rusu et al., 2009; Trigo et al., 2009) have been developed aiming at identifying and ranking the activities performed by CIOs according to its relative importance. One of the aspects that stand out in these results is the fact that it is difficult to find two studies with similar rankings of activities, which is due, on one hand, to the evolving role of the CIO, and on the other hand to the characteristics of CIOs (Sobol & Klein, 2009) and of organizations.

The study presented in this paper is an extended version of the study previously published on International Journal of Enterprise Information Systems titled "An Exploratory Study on the Influencers of the Perceived Relevance of CIO's Activities" (Varajão et al., 2016), developed with two main objectives: 1) to identify the main activities currently carried out by CIOs in large enterprises; 2) identify whether certain variables related to the characteristics of the CIO and certain variables related to the business characteristics are influencers of the importance assigned to activities. This extended version presents also a list of the skills considered as the most important for a CIO good performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review was conducted from two major sources of information: the community of practitioners, including the CIO Magazine in its yearly study "The state of the CIO" and Gartner in the yearly study "The CIO Agenda Report"; and the academic community, including Web of Science, Scopus and ScienceDirect. The main search expressions used were "CIO activities", "IS managers activities", "CIO skills", "IS managers roles", "CIO roles", "IS managers roles", "CIO characteristics", "IS manager characteristics", "CIO profile" and "IS manager profile".

Chief Information Officer

The CIO position emerged in the early 1980s as a result of increased importance placed on IS. Since its inception, the CIO position has gradually become more important as IT has been increasingly playing a more central role in the firm's daily operations, business processes, and overall business strategy. The most significant change in the role of the CIOs is their paradigm shift from technology to business. The

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