Chapter 3

# Evaluation of IT Governance in Middle East and North African Large Organizations

## ABSTRACT

*This chapter provides a deeper understanding of IT governance frameworks and their adoption, drawing on established information systems theories. A mixed two-stage approach using quantitative and qualitative studies is used to examine the feasibility of developing an IT governance assessment framework based on COBIT to assess IT governance in a specific context. The first step seeks to identify key COBIT best practices within organizations. A survey of 20 large organizations in the MENA region was adopted. In the second phase, a case study used to explore the factors that influence the adoption of the adapted IT governance assessment framework.*

## INTRODUCTION

Strategic Information technology IT has become an indispensable element for success in the contemporary business world as the dependency on IT by many organizations today to support, sustain and drive organizational growth increases (Shaun Posthumus & von Solms, 2004). Business and IT (information technology) alignment are considered one of the main issues in the management of the company's IS (information system). However, alignment is described as an object that can never be completely achieved

and must be adjusted frequently within the organization (Baker & Jones, 2008). To maximize alignment facilitators and minimize inhibitors, various frameworks are developed for IT Governance (ITG), which is an important concept for IT organizations in enterprises (Joshi, Bollen, Hassink, De Haes, & Van Grembergen, 2018).

Many professionals and researchers believe that Information System Governance is a complex subject. The words that immediately come to mind are "Arid, Boring, Wave, Unrealistic". This is mainly due to the intensive use of jargon such as "strategic alignment, organizational transformation, value creation, synergy creation", complicated vision and mission statements, which the average person finds difficult to understand (Peterson, 2001). The result is that IT governance is as poorly adopted as corporate governance because of the lack of understanding of its role within an organization (Turel & Bart, 2014).

The purpose of this chapter is to determine how to effectively adopt frameworks, best practices and standards as organizations face significant challenges in meeting their IT governance obligations. Despite the potentially costly consequences of IT and business alignment failure, there is little direct guidance to organizations on how to provide, demonstrate and maintain adequate IT governance (Renaud, Walsh, & Kalika, 2016).

A key aspect of this problem is twofold. The finding is that there is a lack of theoretical knowledge on examining the adoption and adaptation of IT governance frameworks. Although the topic of IT governance has gained popularity, there is little academic research on the subject (Marrone & Kolbe, 2011). On the other hand, IT governance concerns are very present in professional journals and reports, which advocate the need to deploy frameworks and standards to address governance challenges. Thus, several different models and standards have been developed for IT governance, of which COBIT is most often used. Research shows that efforts devoted to these models and standards can help create value, improve productivity, optimize resources, increase compliance, reduce costs and improve lead times (Beloglazov, Banerjee, Hartman, & Buyya, 2014).

The adoption of best practice frameworks by IT departments is aimed at providing IT services to business entities more effectively and efficiently according to their demand. When IT begins its journey to better support business, a chain of events will begin that requires adopting standards and best practices that meet business service needs (Ryan Peterson, Parker, Ribbers,

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