IS Performance Management Systems: an Action Research Perspective
Abstract
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Although IS Performance Management Systems seem to be the right solution for the CIO and IS department's problems, they are not so widespread in companies and they do not cover all the dimensions of IS Performance evaluation.

This thesis attempts to address this issue by investigating what factors affect the design and implementation of IS Performance Management Systems and how these factors influence their shape.

Therefore we have built a theoretical framework that has two aims: (1) to provide a wide set of IS Performance dimensions and measures which can support companies in the design of their IS Performance Management Systems and (2) to identify the factors which affect the choice of IS Performance dimensions and measures.

In order to reach the first objective, we built a model organized into four Measurement Areas according to the Balanced Scorecard concept. But in these areas we attempted to gather all the measures and dimensions that we found in the literature. The four Measurement Areas are as follows: (1) Business Contribution and Value, (2) Customer Orientation, (3) IS Processes and (4) Change and Innovation.

Whereas, in order to achieve the second aim the Research Framework also identifies three types of variables that affect the shape of IS Performance Management Systems. They are: (1) contingency variables; (2) IS variables; (3) relational variables.

The research methodology was defined considering two aspect: (1) the nature of the variables included in the Research Framework that requires a long period of observation in order to be investigated and (2) the companies necessity of help to face problems and of framework to use as guide in the design and development process of IS Performance Management Systems in order to improve the rate of

successfully delivering these Systems. Therefore action research methodology was chosen to undertake this research.

The evidence from the analysis of the four action research projects shows that some variables, e.g. Strategy, Environment and Technology, only affect one or two Measurement Areas, whereas other variables have an impact on the whole IS Performance Measures set, e.g. Maturity level of IS department, Power balance and Individual. The analysis also points out that these variables affect each other, e.g. IS department size and Maturity level of IS department.

We believe that this research has some relevant managerial implications and can contribute to the establishment of a robust and complete model with which to evaluate IS Business Value that practitioners can apply in their companies.