

Does the Organizational Change Induced by the Pre-Implementation of an IS Proceed as a Planned Process?

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INTRODUCTION

The pre-implementation process of an IS is characterized by procedures of selection and evaluation, which is rather in a pattern of change in a planned process. However, the research on organizational change gave rise to several approaches according to which, the change can be explained by other processes (political, interpretative, incremental and complex).

By this research, the authors seek to answer the question: Does the induced change in the context of the GBS pre-implementation process refer to a planned process or may the observed change have other characteristics relating to other explanatory processes of change?

The purpose of this research is to explain the progression of change during the pre-implementation phase of a GBS that is envisaged as a planned process in the literature. Better empirically describing this process allows managers to better target change support actions during this phase. In order to achieve the objective of the research, a qualitative study by case study is conducted in Basic Bank, one of the leading bank establishments in the Tunisian market as part of its project of implementation of a GBS especially during the process of its pre-implementation.

Based on this result, it is recommended to practitioners who wish to lead a change within their organizations to envisage the managerial actions from the outset of the project in order to reduce the potential conflicts of interest between actors.

BACKGROUND

The pre-implementation evaluation of an Information System (IS) is of major importance (Mussi et al. 2018). Indeed, during this phase, it is possible to identify issues which were likely to affect implementation and use of the new system (Mussi et al. 2018). The pre-implementation process, as part of a project to implement integration solutions IS such as Global Banking System (GBS), consists in a study leading to the selection of an ERP software, software developer, and consultant (Hustad and Dag Hakon, 2011; Mourrain and Deltour, 2016). This process is characterized by the specifications preparation, the target and the functional coverage definition, the software developer choice, etc. (Al Mashariand and

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Al- Mudimigh, 2003). Markus and Tanis (2000) claim that failures in the pre-implementation process may escalate the rest of the project. According to Velcu (2010), the failures in this process could lead to an overall unsuccessful implementation. The ERP pre-implementation process has proved to be a particularly critical stage (Markus and Tanis, 2000; Verville et al., 2007; Razmi and Sangari, 2013; Mourrain and Deltour, 2016; Mdimba et al., 2017). Indeed, it's a demanding "*process which required a high level of knowledge and competencies about the system, and tough negotiation processes between project leader, vendor, resellers and consultants*" (Hustad and Dag Hakon, 2011, p.1). This can generate a change in the organization.

This change is characterized by the tracking methods and selection procedures and evaluation of the software package (Kaur and Mahanti, 2008, Kutlu and Akpinar, 2009), which is rather in a pattern of change in a planned process (Kotter, 1995; Soeini and Miri, 2011; Pichault, 2013). However, the research on organizational change gave rise to several approaches sometimes paradoxical. According to these approaches, organizational change can be explained by other processes such as the political process, the interpretive process, the incremental process and the complex process (Vas and Ingham, 2002; Vas and Jaspert, 2010; Pichault, 2013). Organizational change during the pre-implementation process of the ERP is little studied in the literature. According to Hustad and Dag Hakon (2011), the pre-implementation process of the ERP projects need for more empirical studies.

PRE-IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM AND EXPLANATORY PROCESS OF CHANGE

In this section, the authors present the theoretical framework, describe the research methodology and explain the results and their discussion.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this research has been organized into two subsections. In the first, the authors describe the main characteristics of the pre-implementation process of an integrated system. The second is devoted to the presentation of the different explanatory processes of change.

Description of the Pre-implementation Process of an Integrated System

The implementation of integrated systems such as ERP had induced organizational change since the selection of the software until its effective use. During the pre-implementation process, evaluation and selection of the software are an essential element of ERP projects. According to Wei et al. (2005, p.47), "*companies must choose a flexible ERP system and a co-operative vendor that is responsive to customer needs*". The system selection should be made in alignment with the competitive strategies and goals of the enterprise (Wei et al., 2005). These authors apply the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) method of Saaty (1980) for dealing with the ambiguities involved in the assessment of ERP. This method "*synthesize decision makers' tangible and intangible measures with respect to numerous competing objectives inherent in ERP system selection and facilitates the group decision-making process*" (Wei et al., 2005, p.49).

Several authors characterize this process by tracking method and selection and evaluation procedures (Kaur and Mahanti, 2008, Kutlun Akpinar, 2009), which is rather in a pattern of change in a planned

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