Asian Journal of Research in Business and Management
e-ISSN: 2682-8510 | Vol. 7, No. 1 ,107-119, 2025
https://asianscholarsnetwork.com/asnet-journals

Advancing IT-Business Relationship Management: A Case Study of a Multi-National Company in Indonesia Using Soft Systems Methodology

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Received: 4 January 2025 | Accepted: 30 March 2025 | Published: 15 April 2025

DOI: https://doi.org/10.55057/ajrbm.2025.7.1.11

Abstract: *Strategic IT management is critical for achieving organizational success, especially through the alignment of IT capabilities with business objectives. This study examines the Business Relationship Management (BRM) maturity at PT NID, an Indonesian subsidiary of a multinational corporation, which underwent significant organizational transformation under Project Tigo. Using Soft Systems Methodology (SSM), known for addressing unstructured challenges, the research identifies key gaps in governance, communication, and partnership maturity that hinder IT's integration as a strategic partner. The study uses the combined methods of qualitative and quantitative research, to evaluate BRM maturity across six factors of the Strategic Alignment Maturity Model (SAMM). The study reveals challenges at PT NID after transforming into BRM such as fragmented IT governance, cultural resistance from both the IT and business, and insufficient communication mechanisms that limit IT to act as a strategic partner to achieve business objectives. By applying SSM, the study develops actionable insights to bridge these gaps, emphasizing cultural transformation, robust governance, and proactive communication strategies. These findings offer valuable lessons for organizations striving to enhance IT-business alignment and contribute to the literature on BRM and systemic methodologies in complex organizational contexts.*

Keywords: IT-Business Alignment, Business Relationship Management, IT Maturity, Soft Systems Methodology, Governance, Organizational Transformation, Strategic IT Management

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1. Introduction

IT investments play a critical role in improving organizational agility and performance (Mithas et al, 2016) so it is crucial to manage it efficiently. Additionally, Sebastian et al (2017) emphasize that a good strategic IT management is essentials in achieving business objectives by enabling a timely and accurate adaptation of useful emerging technologies. Effective IT management can be achieved by an organization if it is aligned with the business strategy. The alignment of IT capabilities with business strategies is recognized as a cornerstone of organizational success, fostering innovation, operational efficiency, and competitive advantage (Pesce & Neirotti, 2023). However, achieving IT-business alignment in complex environments such as multinational company is challenging (Luftman, 2000). Strategic frameworks such as the Strategic Alignment Maturity Model (SAMM) proposed that alignment requires not only structural adjustments but also cultural and relational changes such as communication and partnership maturity (Luftman, 2000; Aryee & Hansen, 2021).

These challenges are exemplified by PT NID's ongoing transformation, which underscores the critical need for systemic approaches to IT-business alignment. PT NID, an Indonesian subsidiary of a major multinational company, faced significant challenges. Under Project Tigo, PT NID restructured to position IT as a strategic partner. This shift transformed the IT Department from a technical support role to an IT relationship management model using the Business Relationship Management (BRM) methodology. Now, PT NID relies on its parent company's technology hubs and vendors for technical tasks, while its local IT department manages IT-Business relations, ensuring coordination and navigation with business functions. Despite high effort and investment made for these structural advancements and changes in IT job roles within the organization, persistent gaps in governance, communication, and partnership maturity continue to impede IT's integration into strategic decision-making. The issues are indicated by the low net promoter score (NPS) of IT from the perspective of the IT service receivers, which signifies a low capability of navigating IT business demand. Additionally, the increasing IT incident backlog suggests that IT management lacks maturity in orchestrating and connecting IT service receivers with IT service providers. Addressing these gaps is crucial for PT NID to maximize IT as a driver of organizational success. This research aims to explore the soft aspects of this change by implementing the Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) to tackle these challenges while also filling the research gaps in implementing SSM in addressing strategic IT alignment problem.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Strategic IT-Business Alignment

The concept of Strategic IT Alignment (SITA), also referred to as Business IT Alignment (BITA), describes the degree to which an organization's IT strategy aligns with its business strategy. Effective IT alignment ensures that IT resources are allocated towards investments that support business objectives, thereby improving overall firm performance. The relationship between IT investments and firm performance is significantly influenced by how well these investments align with the business strategy (Mithas & Rust, 2016; Ilmudeen & Safeena, 2021). In today's dynamic business environment, continuous alignment between IT changes and business changes is necessary for maintaining organizational agility and responsiveness. Rapid changes in the business environment and technologies can create discrepancies between business requirements and available technologies. Organizations that can swiftly manage change and adapt their IT capabilities to meet evolving business needs are better positioned to exploit new opportunities and mitigate risks (Mithas & Lee, 2013).

Extensive research has been conducted to develop methods for assessing the level of IT and business alignment. These assessments aim not only to evaluate alignment but also to identify factors that promote the convergence of IT and business, thereby improving business performance through technological excellence. Njanka et al. (2021) conducted a systematic literature review of various frameworks used for assessing alignment. One frequently referenced model is the strategic alignment model. According to Luftman (2000), strategic alignment involves activities undertaken by management to create cohesion of goals across IT and other functional areas such as sales, finance, marketing, human resources, and manufacturing. This process is dynamic, requiring strong senior management support, effective relationships, strong leadership, mutual trust, and effective communication. A crucial aspect of this process is effective communication, with the IT relationship manager or IT liaison playing a pivotal role (Luftman, 2000). The SAM model identifies six factors to measure maturity levels:

- Communication maturity involves liaison effectiveness, IT's understanding of business, intra/inter-organizational learning, protocol flexibility, and knowledge sharing.
- Skills maturity encompasses cultural power dynamics, change readiness, innovation, management style, career crossover, training, and hiring/retention.
- Partnership maturity focuses on IT's perceived value, its role in strategic planning, shared goals, risks/rewards, program management, and trust relationships with business sponsors.
- IT value measurement maturity includes IT/business metrics, balanced metrics, SLAs, benchmarking, formal reviews, and continuous improvement.
- Scope and architecture maturity covers traditional enabler/driver roles, external standards, integration, transparency, agility, and emerging tech management.
- Governance maturity pertains to business/IT strategic planning, budget control, steering committees, and prioritization processes.
- Maturity levels span five stages: initial/ad-hoc, committed, established/focused, managed, and optimized process.

2.2 Business Relationship Management (BRM)

Effective Strategic IT Alignment (SITA) is achieved through good IT governance, which involves methodologies like Business Relationship Management (BRM). BRM fosters strong relationships between business units and IT, promoting collaboration, innovation, and shared ownership. Unlike traditional IT roles, BRM emphasizes relationship management, with Business Relationship Managers bridging business needs and technology implementation. BRM uses three metaphors:

- Connector: Connect IT service providers with business partners to stimulate demand and ensure quality services.
- Orchestrator: Coordinates roles and resources to deliver solutions.
- Navigator: Guides both IT and business towards achieving business value through joint technology planning.

Similar with SAMM, the maturity of BRM implementation is assessed at five levels but with different point of view emphasizing on the relation aspect of IT with its receiver:

i. Ad Hoc: Reactive interactions with minimal alignment to solve immediate IT incident.
ii. Order Taker: Systematic request handling without proactivity.
iii. Service Provider: Reliable service delivery with improved alignment and shared service level agreement.
iv. Trusted Advisor: Proactive collaboration to meet business goals by involving not only in IT technical discussions but also strategic discussion.
v. Strategic Partner: Full integration into business strategy, driving innovation.

These levels help organizations gauge their current IT maturity from ad-hoc service providers to strategic partners involved in decision-making processes.

2.3 Soft Systems Methodology (SSM)

Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) is a fundamental framework for addressing complex, unstructured problems in IT management and organizational transformations. Originally developed by Peter Checkland, SSM is widely acknowledged for its capacity to facilitate stakeholder engagement and iterative learning across various contexts, including IT management.

Recent research underscores the ongoing significance of SSM. Hardman (2022) employs SSM to assess Managed Learning Environments, highlighting its applicability in contemporary IT systems. This study demonstrates the methodology's effectiveness in navigating the complexities of IT environments, especially those involving diverse stakeholder needs and dynamic operational challenges. Mingers (2000) provides a historical overview of SSM, detailing its development and various applications, including those in IT and organizational change.

2.4 Research Gap

Though extensively researched, IT-business alignment lacks empirical investigation within large organizations using the BRM approach. This study provides evidence of Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) enhancing BRM maturity in a multinational corporation. It bridges SAMM's structural focus with BRM's relational emphasis, addressing socio-cultural aspects of IT-business alignment.

3. Research Methods

3.1 Research Design

The study adopts a qualitative case study approach, supplemented by quantitative methods, to assess BRM maturity at PT NID. Integrating qualitative method and quantitative method serves two objectives (Kelle, 2006): it provides mutual validation of data and findings and produces a more coherent and comprehensive picture of the research domain.

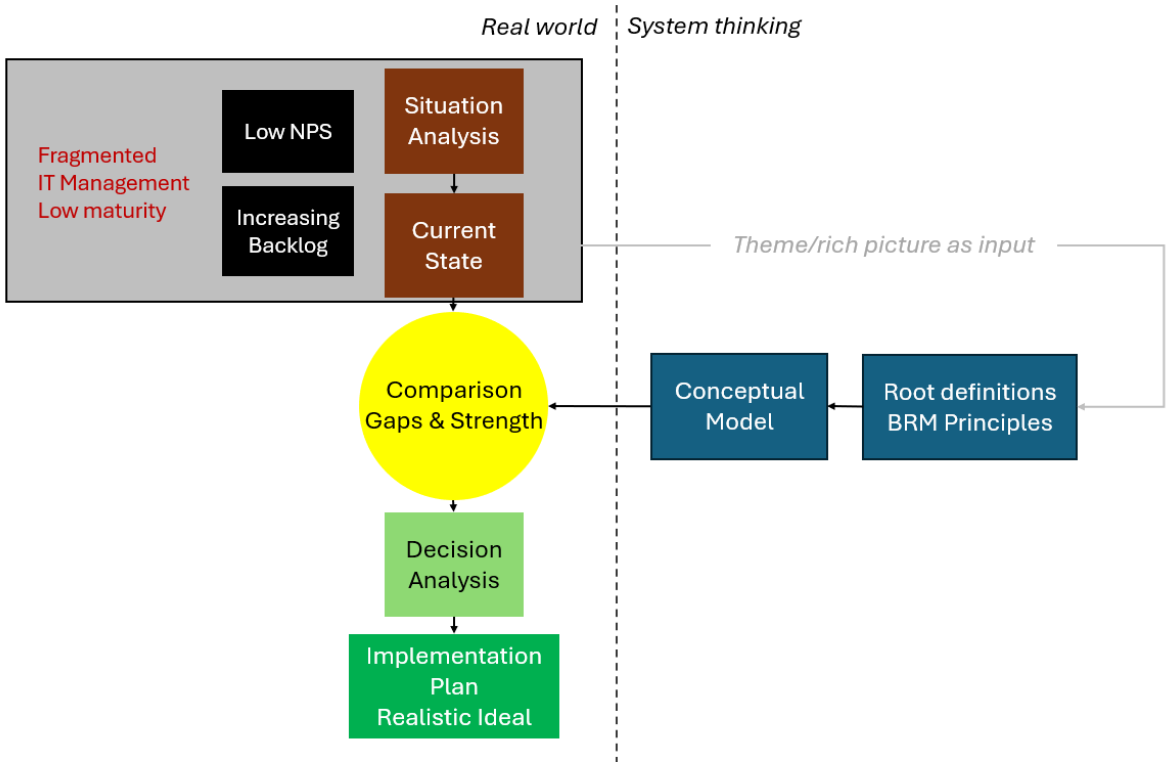

Figure 1: SSM adaptation to the research

To uncover the soft aspect of IT Management, the analysis used the 7 stages of Soft Systems Methodology (SSM). The analysis begins with a comprehensive situation analysis, gathering data on current IT management practices and identifying challenges in organizational transformation through surveys. The current state is then summarized to capture the complexities and perspectives of various stakeholders. Root definitions are formulated to

describe the purpose and function of relevant systems within IT management, followed by the construction of conceptual models representing the ideal IT management. These models are compared with the actual situation to identify gaps and strengths. Stakeholders then debate these gaps and propose feasible changes to align the IT management system with the conceptual model, ensuring strategic decisions. Finally, a realistic action plan is proposed based on the agreed-upon changes.

3.2 Data Collection

Data collection methods included:

a) Surveys**:** Assessing BRM maturity using six factors established by SAMM (Luftman, 2000), including communication maturity, skills maturity, partnership maturity, value measurement maturity, scope and architecture maturity, and governance maturity as shown in Figure 2. The authors employed a survey utilizing a five-level Likert scale corresponding with the five levels of maturity in SAMM.

b) The authors determined the survey sample using the Slovin formula with a margin of error of 0.08 at a 95% confidence level. Sapra (2021) noted that the precision in setting the margin of error is subjective, depending on the research nature. For this study assessing IT management maturity, the researcher set an 0.08 margin of error, meaning results on a 1 to 5 scale will have an ±8% approximation, considered fairly accurate. The Slovin yield sample of 125 respondents form 603 population of employees.

Attributes	Factor					
	CO - Communication	**SK - Skills**	**PT - Partnership**	**VA - Value**	**SC - Scope Architecture**	**GV - Governance**
Attribute 1	Frequent and collaborative communication	Business intimancy	Effective vendor management	Value convergence	Reliable IT system	Product visioning
Attribute 2	Talk like a business	Accumulating new knowledge together	Strategic trust from top level	KPI alignment	Easy integration of system	Strategic IT-Business governance
Attribute 3	Insightful communication	Demand shaping skills	Close partnership	Consumer centricity	Documentation and KB of system	High quality joint technology plan
Attribute 4	Way of working socialization	Agility	Offshore team management	Continuous improvement	Effective project and change management	Innovation process transparency

Figure 2: Factors of BITA Maturity

c) Interviews: To formulate the root definitions, in-depth interviews are conducted with key stakeholders. The list of interview participants is as depicted in Table 1. The interview format is in-depth interview with guiding questions to allow for a flexible exploration of participants' experiences and perceptions while keeping the discussion aligned with the research objectives (Rutledge and Hogg, 2020). It corresponds with the second research question that aims to uncover what are the ideal BRM implementation that could be aligned with business objectives to act as business enabler as shown in table 2.

Table 1: The list of interview participants

Position	Level	Cust/Actor
Chief Financial Officer	Director	Customer
HR Director	Director	Customer
Head of HR Remuneration	VP	Customer
Head of Finance Planning & Analysis	VP	Customer
Head of Accounting	Manager	Customer
Head of General Sales	Manager	Customer
Costumer Service Lead	Manager	Customer
Supply Chain Specialist	Staff	Customer
Demand Supply Planner Executive	Staff	Customer
Group IT Relationship Manager	Global VP	Actors
Group IT Architecture Manager	Global VP	Actors
Head of IT	VP	Actors

Table 2: The list of guiding questions

CATWOE		Guiding Questions
Worldview	Customer	Who is IT key customers?
Worldview	Customer	What is their desire?
Worldview	Customer	What is their pain point?
Worldview	Customer	How they see IT?
Worldview	Customer	How they think IT can help them?
Worldview	Customer	What is actually they want?
Worldview	Customer	Are they willing to cocreate value IT?
Worldview	Actors	Who is involved in this system?
Worldview	Actors	What is their role?
Worldview	Actors	How they help IT?
Worldview	Actors	Who/which function need to be involved?
Worldview	Transformation	How value is created by IT
Worldview	Transformation	What process required to unlock value?
Worldview	Transformation	How we categorize our activities?
Worldview	Transformation	How IT need to operate?
Worldview	Environment	What constrains that do we have?

4. Results

4.1 Current maturity level

The results shown in table 3 indicate that improvements are necessary for PT NID's IT Management to achieve level 4. This research will focus on three factors with the lowest scores: communication maturity, governance maturity, and partnership maturity. This selection corresponds with the roles of business relationship managers as connectors (communication), navigators (partnership), and orchestrators (governance).

The communication maturity factor scored the lowest at 3.01, highlighting PT NID's challenges in effective IT-business communication. Key issues include IT management's ability to explain its operations (2.88), the frequency of communication (2.92), and IT's use of business language (2.98). Effective communication is crucial for IT-business alignment. Luftman (2000)

emphasizes its role in fostering shared understanding and reducing silos, while Jorfi et al. (2011) highlight its benefits for teamwork, decision-making, and reducing misunderstandings.

Table 3: Average of response Maturity Assessment all respondent

	Factor						
Attribute	**CO**	**GV**	**PT**	**SC**	**SK**	**VA**	
Attribute 1	2.92	3.11	2.96	3.53	3.40	3.17	
Attribute 2	2.98	3.21	3.14	3.13	3.22	3.25	
Attribute 3	3.26	2.98	3.09	3.44	3.56	3.29	
Attribute 4	2.88	3.24	3.22	3.31	3.39	3.23	
Average	**3.01**	**3.13**	**3.10**	**3.35**	**3.39**	**3.24**	**3.21**
							Overall

The partnership maturity score is 3.10, indicating moderate trust and collaboration between IT and business. IT is not yet seen as a trusted advisor or strategic navigator but is recognized as a reliable service partner. Improvement is needed in partnering with local IT vendors and proactive engagement. Pesce and Neirotti (2023) highlight that mutual trust, shared goals, and proactive engagement drive success, while Luftman (2000) stresses the role of BRMs in fostering alignment through collaboration and trust.

Governance maturity averaged 3.13, indicating intermediate IT Management capabilities in orchestrating IT operations. Governance is crucial for aligning IT with business strategies and ensuring accountability and transparency. Strengths include BRM involvement in strategic discussions and clear decision-making processes, though BRMs are often passive in these forums. Transparency needs improvement in frequency and clarity, hindering co-creation of technology plans. Effective governance frameworks ensure IT supports organizational strategies (Henderson & Venkatraman, 1993), and integrating IT governance into strategic planning drives alignment and accountability (Perez et al., 2021).

4.2 System thinking

Based on the thematic analysis from the interview, we can synthesize the ideal state of IT into CATWOE framework as shown in table 4.

The root definition of IT Management process derived from this analysis is:
"A system where IT acts as a strategic partner to the business, delivering scalable and innovative solutions through proactive governance, integrated workflows, and collaborative relationships, while addressing operational inefficiencies and aligning with global and local priorities."

Table 4: CATWOE Element

CATWOE	Description
Customers	Internal stakeholders such as HR, finance, supply chain, sales, and local/zone IT.
Actors	IT teams, FRMs, BAMs, superusers, IT overseas technical team, and operational leaders.
Transformation	Transitioning IT into a proactive, collaborative, and strategic partner.
Worldview	IT as a vital enabler of innovation and operational excellence.
Owner	IT leadership, including zone-level and global teams.
Environmental Constraints	Resource limitations, fragmented systems, knowledge gaps, resistance to change.

Meanwhile, the gaps between the ideal state and the current state are presented in table 5.

Table 5: Gaps Comparison

CATWOE		*Current State*	*Ideal State*	*Key Gap*
Customers	CO	Business units lack understanding of IT's strategic contributions.	Business units actively engage and understand IT's role in enabling business strategies.	Limited understanding creates misalignment between business and IT.
Actors	CO	BRMs/FRMs lack tools and training for effective communication.	BRMs/FRMs act as connectors with robust communication capabilities.	BRMs/FRMs are unable to facilitate collaborative discussions effectively.
Transformation	GV	Fragmented governance processes and limited co-creation of technology plans.	Governance is integrated with strategic planning and co-created with stakeholders.	Processes do not align IT initiatives with organizational goals.
Worldview	PT	IT is perceived as operational rather than strategic.	IT is viewed as a strategic partner integral to business success.	Cultural barriers restrict IT's transition to a strategic role.
Owners	PT	Limited top management involvement in IT initiatives.	Top management provides strong strategic guidance and support for IT.	Insufficient strategic involvement weakens IT's credibility.
Environment	GV	Governance frameworks lack standardization and flexibility.	Governance frameworks are adaptive, standardized, and transparent.	Existing frameworks do not accommodate complexity or drive alignment.

4.3 Findings

The application of Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) illuminated several underlying causes contributing to these challenges:

- Cultural Resistance: A deep-rooted perception of IT as a support function impedes collaborative efforts, making cultural transformation an essential focus. This cultural resistance especially happened in the top management level and IT management itself.
- Structural Fragmentation: Decentralized decision-making authority results in governance inconsistencies, reducing the efficiency and alignment of IT initiatives.
- Skill Gaps: The limited ability of BRMs and FRMs to communicate IT's strategic value effectively hinders relationship-building and collaboration.

Furthermore**,** stakeholders consistently emphasized the need for proactive IT engagement in strategic planning. They advocated for clearer ownership of IT initiatives to reduce ambiguity and enhance accountability. Moreover, stakeholders highlighted the importance of training programs tailored to build the business acumen of IT personnel, ensuring they can bridge the gap between technical expertise and strategic imperatives.

4.4 Governance Gaps and Implications

The study finds that fragmented governance at PT NID hinders IT's alignment with business goals, aligning with Henderson and Venkatraman's (1993) Strategic Alignment Model. It also highlights that structural changes alone are insufficient; leadership-level cultural barriers must be addressed for effective governance.

Luftman's (2000) Strategic Alignment Maturity Model emphasizes governance maturity for alignment. This study shows governance maturity is tied to communication and cultural readiness. Lack of transparent communication and cultural transformation prevents IT's strategic integration, suggesting a need for a dynamic approach to governance focusing on socio-cultural factors.

4.5 Communication and Partnership Maturity

Communication barriers significantly hinder BRM maturity at PT NID, with a low score of 3.01. This supports Luftman's (2000) view that effective communication is essential for aligning IT and business strategies, and Jorfi et al.'s (2011) claim that collaborative communication builds trust and reduces silos. This study highlights the necessity of business acumen within IT teams for improving communication maturity, aligning with the BRM Institute's (2020) model.

Partnership maturity scored similarly at 3.10. While Pesce and Neirotti (2023) emphasize mutual trust in IT-business partnerships, this research shows trust depends on proactive engagement and alignment of IT initiatives with business priorities. By analyzing communication and partnership, this study provides a holistic view of the factors enabling IT to serve as a strategic partner.

4.6 Lessons Learned for Advancing IT-Business Relationship Management

The transformation journey at PT NID offers valuable lessons for organizations aiming to enhance IT-business alignment. These insights, grounded in systemic analysis and practical experience, are broadly applicable to similar contexts:

a) **Governance**: Building a Strong Foundation
   A key lesson from PT NID is the importance of robust governance after transformation. Clear, standardized decision-making that includes IT receivers is essential to align with business priorities. PT NID's challenges show the risks of fragmented governance leading to inefficiencies and misaligned initiatives. A centralized governance model with localized flexibility ensures effective oversight.
b) **Communication**: Proactive and Transparent Engagement
   Effective communication bridged the gap between IT and business units at PT NID. Previously, poor communication led to silos and limited collaboration. Introducing regular forums and informal touchpoints like IT Days and cross-functional workshops fostered trust and transparency. These practices show the importance of IT leaders developing business acumen and strategic communication skills to articulate IT's value.
c) **Cultural Transformation**: Shifting Mindsets and Behaviours
   Cultural resistance to IT transformation is a common issue. PT NID highlights the need to view IT as a strategic enabler, not just a cost. Leadership advocacy, collaborative goal setting, and empowering change agents are crucial for driving cultural shifts.

The application of SSM proved effective in addressing unstructured organizational problems. By involving stakeholders across various functions and visualizing ideal processes through conceptual models, this research was able to identify root causes and develop solutions collaboratively for PT NID. Organizations can use systemic thinking to manage the complexities of IT-business alignment, ensuring interventions are tailored to specific contexts and adaptable.

Although these insights are based on PT NID's transformation experience, they can also serve as a guide for organizations in different industries or regions facing similar IT-business alignment challenges. By summarizing the key actions and strategies used in this case, we provide practical implications that can be customized to various organizational contexts.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

The transformation journey at PT NID illustrates the critical role of governance, communication, and cultural alignment in advancing IT maturity. By leveraging SSM, the organization successfully identified systemic challenges and developed targeted interventions to reposition IT as a strategic enabler. The findings underscore the importance of structured governance, proactive communication, and cultural transformation in achieving IT-business alignment.

Organizations seeking to replicate PT NID's success should focus on developing and implementing standardized frameworks to ensure alignment and accountability. Furthermore, organizations must establish structured forums and informal touchpoints to foster collaboration. Organizations may use methodologies like SSM to diagnose and address unstructured challenges effectively. By adopting these strategies, organizations can navigate the complexities of IT-business alignment and achieve sustainable success.

5.1 Contributions to BRM Maturity Frameworks

This study builds on the BRM Institute's maturity model, which defines five levels of relationship management maturity: ad hoc, order taker, service provider, trusted advisor, and strategic partner. The findings suggest that organizations often plateau at the "service provider" level due to insufficient investment in communication and proactive relationship-building. PT NID's case illustrates that advancing to the "trusted advisor" or "strategic partner" levels requires an integrated approach that addresses governance, communication, and cultural gaps simultaneously.

Moreover, while existing BRM frameworks often focus on technical competencies, this study underscores the importance of relational and cultural competencies. This insight is particularly relevant for organizations undergoing structural transformation, where IT must actively rebuild trust and establish its strategic relevance.

5.2 Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) in IT-Business Alignment

The implementation of Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) presents an innovative addition to the literature on IT-business alignment. Originally developed by Checkland (1981) as a tool for addressing unstructured problems, SSM's application in this study underscores its flexibility in evaluating systemic gaps in IT governance and Business Relationship Management (BRM) maturity. While previous research, such as Hardman (2022), has showcased SSM's effectiveness in complex IT environments, few have explored its specific utility within the context of IT-business alignment in large, multinational corporations.

By leveraging SSM to identify root causes and collaboratively develop solutions, this study broadens its relevance to the domain of IT maturity assessment. The results indicate that SSM is particularly proficient in managing the "soft" aspects of alignment, including stakeholder perceptions, trust, and communication—areas that are often neglected in technical frameworks like SAMM. This integration of SSM with IT alignment models introduces a promising avenue for future research and practice.

5.3 Broader Practical Implications and Transferability

The findings from this study reveal actionable strategies that extend beyond PT NID's organizational context, offering valuable guidance for organizations aiming to enhance IT-

business alignment. These implications are particularly relevant for industries grappling with complex IT environments, such as manufacturing, financial services, healthcare, and retail.

a) **Regular Training for Business Relationship Managers (BRMs)**:
Investing in tailored training programs can improve BRMs' ability to bridge IT and business priorities. These programs should emphasize strategic communication and business acumen to enhance relationship-building capabilities.

b) **Structured Governance Frameworks**:
Adopting standardized governance frameworks ensures alignment between IT initiatives and business priorities. These frameworks should integrate IT into strategic planning discussions and create transparent decision-making mechanisms.

c) **Proactive Communication Mechanisms**:
Organizations can foster collaboration by implementing structured forums, such as cross-functional workshops and informal engagement initiatives. These practices reduce silos and enhance mutual trust.

d) **Change Management for Cultural Transformation**:
To position IT as a strategic enabler, organizations must address cultural resistance. This requires active leadership advocacy, collaborative goal-setting, and empowering change agents to drive transformation.

e) **Applying Systemic Approaches Like SSM**:
Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) offers a replicable framework for diagnosing and resolving systemic challenges. Organizations can leverage SSM to involve stakeholders, co-create solutions, and align IT with business objectives.

5.4 Suggestion for future research

While this study offers valuable insights into IT-business alignment through the lens of BRM maturity and SSM, it also highlights several areas where further research is needed. Exploring these areas could expand the understanding of systemic approaches to IT governance and their application in diverse organizational contexts.

a) Testing SSM in Other Contexts
The application of SSM in this study is both innovative and context-specific, focusing on a multinational corporation undergoing structural transformation. Future research could investigate how SSM can be adapted and applied in other industries where IT-business alignment presents unique challenges.

b) Integration of SSM with Other Frameworks
This study highlights the potential of SSM to address unstructured challenges in IT-business alignment. However, its integration with structured frameworks like the Strategic Alignment Maturity Model (SAMM) or COBIT could offer new insights. Testing how systemic problem-solving complements structured governance models could provide a more robust approach to achieving alignment.

c) Studies on Cultural Transformation in IT Management
One of the critical findings of this study is that cultural resistance remains a significant barrier to advancing BRM maturity. However, cultural shifts are inherently long-term and require sustained effort. Given the observed cultural resistance at PT NID, longitudinal studies on cultural transformation could provide deeper insights into strategies for shifting IT's role from a support function to a strategic enabler. Future research could employ longitudinal methods to track the evolution of cultural alignment initiatives, providing deeper insights into the key milestones and interventions that drive successful transformation.

By addressing these areas, future research can build on this study's findings to further refine and enhance the theoretical and practical frameworks for IT-business alignment. Such studies would deepen our understanding of systemic methodologies and relational dynamics, contributing to more effective alignment strategies across diverse organizational settings.

Acknowledgement
The authors would like to thank the School of Business Management Institut Teknologi Bandung for providing the supports and guidance for this study.

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