

AN INTERPRETIVE APPROACH TO EXAMINE THE IMPACT OF IOS ON ORGANISATIONAL FLEXIBILITY

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Abstract: The ability of an organisation to be flexible is seen as beneficial, since it increases its competitiveness and survivability. A number of studies have shown that although interorganisational information systems (IOS) can contribute significantly to organisational flexibility, they also impose constraints and do not provide equal benefits to all partners. This paper proposes a research framework and an approach to clarify the complex notion of flexibility and to examine the impact of IOS on organisational flexibility. It argues that a better understanding of the phenomenon can result by examining the flexibility from both a business network and individual firm perspective. In this research, flexibility is perceived as a dynamic characteristic changing over time, being embedded in and influenced by the organisational/interorganisational context.

Keywords: Organisational flexibility, Interorganisational systems, Web models, Soft Systems Thinking.

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