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## IT Governance and crisis-driven organizational realignment

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## IT Governance and crisis-driven organizational realignment

### A Longitudinal Study

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Prior literature suggests that traditional IT departments are bureaucratic and not innovative and that business managers do not find them helpful (Haffke et al., 2017). Nevertheless, most employees' and businesses' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic indicated that IT departments stepped up and quickly helped firms survive the early stages of the crisis (Mandviwalla et al., 2021). IT departments helped firms transition their workforces to home, served customers remotely, and developed innovative, entrepreneurial business models. Our qualitative research aims to understand why IT departments, often seen as a burden to managers of business units, could step up during the COVID-19 crisis. Furthermore, we aim to uncover the changes to IT governance and their long-term implications.

Our longitudinal study, spanning ten years, will study the evolving role of the IT department of a US organization. We will investigate how strategies, power, structure, and systems are modified to form a new organizational alignment (Tushman & Romanelli, 1985). As a theoretical lens, we will use the punctuated equilibrium theory to look at the organization's deep structure, convergent period, crisis impact, reorientation, and recreation period (Eldredge & Gould, 1971). Convergent periods are relatively long-time spans made of incremental changes punctuated by crisis-driven reorientations. Given the nature of our data, we will be able to leverage the punctuated equilibrium theory to gain insights into these incremental changes and crisis-driven reorientations. Our research will investigate the IT department's changes for more than seven years before the crisis, the impact of the pandemic and how the IT governance altered, and finally, the reorientation and recreation periods of how the organization went through a realignment process.

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