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BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT: INTEGRATION WITH ACCOUNTING INFORMATION SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE IN ORGANISATIONS

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ABSTRACT

To mark success in global scenario, there is a need of efficient business processes to be followed by various organisations. In view of the emerging adoption of business process management systems like core, support and network processes, this paper is grounded on theoretical work by using secondary data from available literature on the subject. It also proposes a model depicting interoperability of business process management systems with accounting information systems high-lighting the benefits of adopting business process oriented accounting information systems. The study can be of use to solve future issues of quality in accounting information systems through adoption of better business processes. This paper suggests that organisations should obtain knowledge of appropriate information quality dimensions for accounting information systems adoption to improve work performance as it will help organisations to make profits. Hence Accounting Information Systems has to take a new shape- the shape of Business Process Oriented Accounting.

KEYWORDS

accounting information system, business model, business process.

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INTRODUCTION

Every organisation aim to maximise the efficiency of their business processes as it has become critical to succeed in today's boundary less business scenario. The management always try to perform the activities in the sequence that may help in using resources to create maximum value for their customers. Thus they systematise and formalise in such a way that they regard Accounting Information Systems is not just collection and reporting of financial and non-financial information to organisations but involves economic perspective to each process being followed in their organisation. So they evolve certain control points to provide timely information to decision- makers. Business Process Management researchers and practitioners have pointed out that decision making in Business Process Management lacks an economic perspective (**Von Brocke 2007, Buhl et all 2011)**

EMERGING ADOPTION OF BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN ORGANISATIONS

In simple words, a business process is a complete, dynamically coordinated set of activities or logically related tasks that must be performed to fulfil strategic goals of organisations by delivering value to customers. **Earl (1994)** has classified processes as follows:

- **Core Processes**: They are also called central business operations and directly serve external customers.
- **Support Processes**: These are meant for internal customers and involve supporting activities of core processes.
- **Business Network Processes and Management Processes**: Such processes extend beyond boundaries of organizations which involve customers and other resources that are helpful in company plans.

The definition on Business Process Management by **Van Der Aalst (2003)** stresses more on informational needs of organizations stating that, "supporting business processes using methods, techniques and software to design, enact, control and analyse operational processes involving humans, organizations, applications, documents and other sources of information".

Thus Business Process Management is an integrated management discipline that uses technology to control and operate through clearly defined rules for Business Processes. BPM is a continuous activity that requires agility to be competitively advantageous according to changing market requirements.

ACCOUNTING INFORMATION SYSTEMS

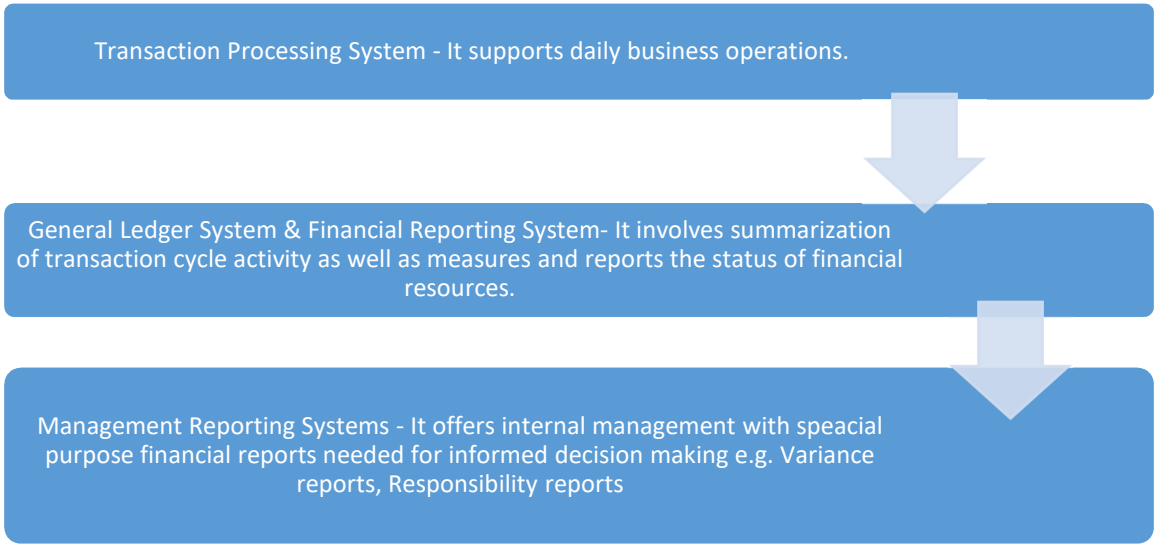
Activities involving converting raw material into finished goods, the financing cycle form part of Accounting Information Systems Database. Apart from this Ac-counting Information Systems (AIS) also fulfil two more basic functions:

1. To provide management with informed decision making
2. To provide adequate internal controls

Accounting Information Systems is a tool used by management in Organizations to provide added value in order to generate a competitive advantage for the organization (**Stair and Reynolds 2006).** Enterprise Resource Planning act as the lifeline for Accounting Information Systems in small and medium enterprises using specific software for accounting. An ERP comprise of several packages which collect data from transactions happening across various functional areas of an organ-ization.

SUBSYSTEMS OF ACCOUNTING INFORMATION SYSTEMS

FIGURE 1: SUBSYSTEMS OF ACCOUNTING INFORMATION SYSTEMS



REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Antonio Trigo, Fernando Belfo (2016) in their paper titled, "Accounting Information Systems: Evolving towards a Business Process Accounting" presents a role of Business Process Management and other related technologies towards evolvement of Accounting Information Systems. According to them Business Process Management adoption as a management practice is being followed widely by today's organisations. The key benefits of this evolution are the flexibility and agility it provides to various business processes and control points further leads to better decision making due to revelation of both financial and non-financial data.

Meiryani, Muhammed Syaifullah (2015) determines in their study titled, "Influence of Business Process on the quality of Accounting Information Systems" the impact of Business Process to the quality of Accounting Information Systems. Their study is theoretical in nature and based on secondary data. The findings clearly indicates that the business process have a significant effect on the quality of accounting information systems.

Manirath Wongsim, Pawornprat Hongsakon (2015) describes in their research titled, "The adoption of process management for accounting information systems in Thailand" an empirical perspective of management of accounting performance during adoption of accounting information systems within organisations. Case studies of 10 organisations of Thailand have been considered to provide useful insights into the nature of information quality issues in Accounting Information system adoption. Their study significantly makes a contribution to existing literature on information systems by providing evidence on the usefulness of accounting information systems adoption in enhancing the quality of accounting performance.

Christian Sonnenberg, Jan Von Brocke (2014) in their study, "Using event data for accounting in process oriented organisations discussed the conceptual level of integration of Business Process Management and accounting. The paper suggests design science research paradigm and adopts a process accounting model (PAM). The PAM is a data structure which leads to integration of process aware information systems. The paper suffers from technical backing of success of PAM in modern accounting practices but it readily supports it relevance in traditional accounting.

Vincent C Yen (2009) research titled, "An integrated model for Business Process Measurement" combines all relevant single measures into one overall measure. A discussion on factors that leads to difficulties in defining an appropriate evaluation has been done. Also the paper proposes a new approach to create a measure of business process based on business process goal leading to final process score. The limitation of this research is that it failed to find its application in real world.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the influence of Business Process on Quality of Accounting Information Systems.
2. To explore benefits of adopting a business process oriented accounting information system
3. To study relevance of Accounting Information Systems on companies' performance and productivity.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a theoretical work to study the influence of Business Process on Quality of Accounting Information Systems. It involves the use of secondary data from available literature on business process in Accounting Information Systems quality. Descriptive Analysis methodology has been adopted in this study.

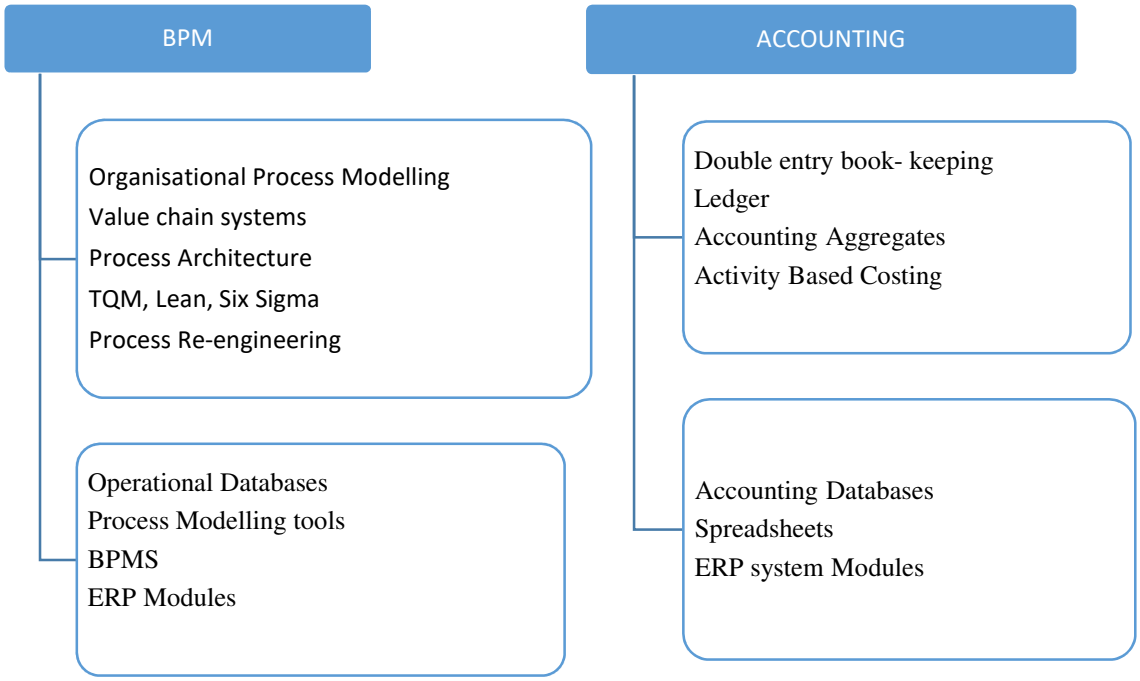
LEVERAGING BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS THROUGH ACCOUNTING

Accounting may involve in order focusing on entire processes and not on single transactions. Technology makes it possible to log all transactions associated with a particular process and report financial and non-financial aspect regarding the process. E.g. If we focus only on financial data, then price setting policy of a product in an organization will only depend on cost. To know how much a product cost better, we should assess the cost associated at each product processing. So to this, an answer could be ABC (Activity Based Costing) that is a process oriented instead of product oriented. So a Business Process System enables to produce appropriate information called decision making. However still accounting information such as resource expenses, current inventory, resource consumption, current sales are not available in a BPMS making it less useful for economic analysis / economic reciprocity i.e. the idea that processes create not only costs but also income. BPMS through event logs records operational information regarding the processes and task performed in the process.

INTEGRATION OF BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTING PRACTICES

The barriers of Integration of Business Process Management and Accounting Practices can be summed as follows:

FIGURE 2: THE BARRIERS OF INTEGRATION OF BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTING PRACTICES

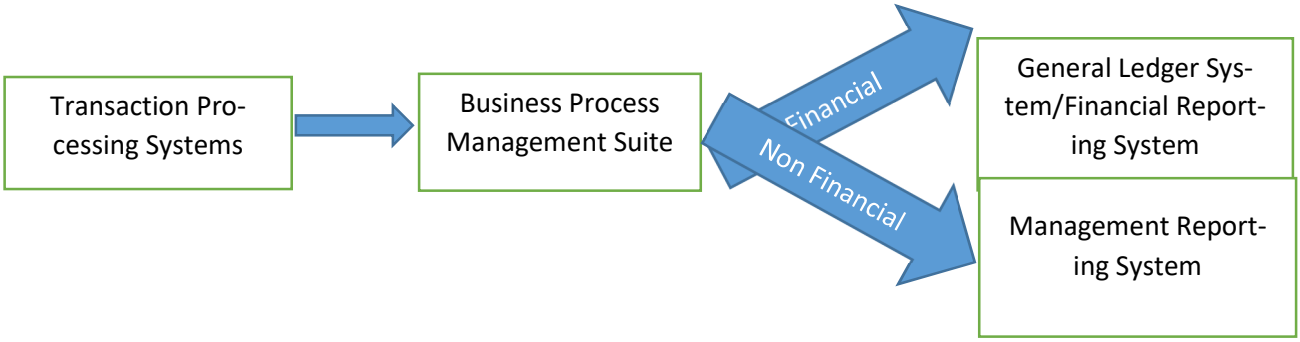


Integration barriers among BPM and accounting on a conceptual level emerge as the two entities differ in understanding of concepts like transactions, activities, process, cost etc. On Information Technology level the main barrier to integration between BPM and accounting is the process aware information systems and AIS are separate entities with weak communication links. Sonnenberg & Brocke (2014) have tried to overcome these barriers through their Process Accounting Model (PAM). Also to overcome the dysfunctional effects, multidimensional approaches to accounting have been proposed which emphasize that accounting should provide disaggregated event data to ensure that the use of accounting data is not limited to only one application. (Mauldin & Ruchala1999)

Sonnenberg & Brocke propose an approach that can be used within BPMS focussed on 'event' concept which is a new event log data structure to satisfy information needs of both accountants and business process managers. The 'event' approach unlike double entry book keeping system aims at producing financial results in a contemporary way where accountants produce information for management guidance and support.

Proposed model on the basis of interoperability where by BPMS supports the new AIS interacting with transaction system in key cycles and filters necessary information to the AIS.

FIGURE 3: PROPOSED MODEL BASED ON INTEROPERABILITY WHERE BY BPMS SUPPORTS THE NEW AIS



BENEFITS OF ADOPTING A BUSINESS PROCESS ORIENTED ACCOUNTING INFORMATION SYSTEM

The study conducted by **Belfo & Trigo (2013)** highlights the most current tendencies and challenges around accountancy and finance. The following table shows the benefits of adopting a business process oriented accounting based on BPMS grouped by the accounting challenges based on above mentioned study.

TABLE 1: BENEFITS OF ADOPTING BUSINESS PROCESS ORIENTED ACCOUNTING BY ORGANISATIONS

Accounting challenge	Benefits
Accounting operations	BPM increases process flexibility and swiftness diminishing redundancy and cost. BPMS empowers knowledge workers to contribute to the redesigning of accounting operations processes
External and compliance reporting	BPMS allows enforcing compliance in reporting since regulations can be formalized and implemented in the BPMS
Management Accounting	BPM allows management to operate business processes more reliably, faster, efficiently and better operational control. BPMS makes it easier to obtain performance key indicators (PKI) from processes and activities. BPMS improves the automatically allocation of costs and revenues to a specific cost or revenue centre.
Management Support	BPM improves the formalization and institutionalization of process-related decision making at various organizational levels. BPMS allows obtaining non-financial information from business operations to management. BPM governance model that embeds technical and managerial capabilities improves organization performance.
Strategic analysis	BPMS event-logs allow optimizing daily business operations through process redesign. BPMS event-logs allow the identification of business needs that can lead to new product ideas.
Forecasting	BPMS provides real-time data, which allows a more targeted and quickly identification of deviations and trends in underlying business operations.
Internal auditing, internal controls and risk management	BPMS allows the establishment of internal controls that enable the automatically generation of alerts or messages to management. Analysis of BPMS event-logs enables management to perform internal auditing and risk management in a more meticulous way. Continuous auditing can be done due to monitoring of Business Activity
Real time reporting	BAM offers the ability to deliver real-time reporting for optimizing business processes.
More non-financial data performance data	BPMS excels when compared to traditional AIS in this function, since they are focused on business processes while traditional AIS are focused on financial transactions and maintenance of ledger.
Tailor-made and interactive reporting	BPMS can contribute to the implementation of functionalities that allow tailor-made and interactive reporting. Knowledge workers may more actively participate on report design.

HOW BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS AND BUSINESS PROCESS COME TOGETHER

To generate financial reports, business transactions can be divided into following business processes:

1. Revenue & return processes, systems and controls: The transactions like large volume of daily sales, returns and cash inflow fall under these business processes.
2. Expenditure & return processes, systems and controls: The business transactions that fall under these business processes are large volume of expenditure, returns and cash flow transactions, payroll and purchase of fixed assets.
3. Conversion processes, systems and controls: It includes raw material and work in progress transactions.
4. Administrative processes, systems and controls: The business transactions that are administrative are investments, borrowing and capital transactions.

KEY FINDINGS

1. Business Processes being followed in organisations have influence on the development of Accounting Information Systems. Thus Accounting Information Systems should be developed in accordance with Business Process Management Systems to gain competitive advantage. This is in sync with the previous findings by **Rama & Jones (2006)** as they confirm that the business processes are regarded as an important factor affecting the success of Accounting Information Systems.
2. The success of Accounting Information Systems should not only be measured in terms of reduction in costs and resource usage information but also be measured that how effective is Accounting Information Systems towards improvement of business or financial strategy and increase in customer value.
3. In today's changing business scenario, Business Process Management Systems affects inter organisational Accounting Information Systems and redefine the relationship of buyers, sellers and even competitors within an industry.
4. Organisations should obtain knowledge of appropriate information quality dimensions for accounting information systems adoption to improve work performance as it will help organisations to make profits.

CONCLUSION

The convergence of Accounting Information Systems and Business Process Management Systems is still an important concern of business and technological managers. Information Technology in relation to Accounting Information Systems has a positive impact on companies' performance and productivity. Thus Accounting Information Systems has to take a new shape- the shape of Business Process Oriented Accounting. The results of theoretical evidence from this study can be used to solve future issues of quality in Accounting Information Systems through good business process.

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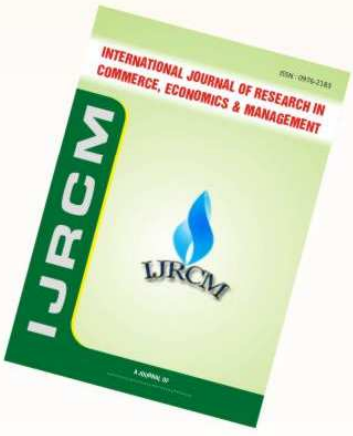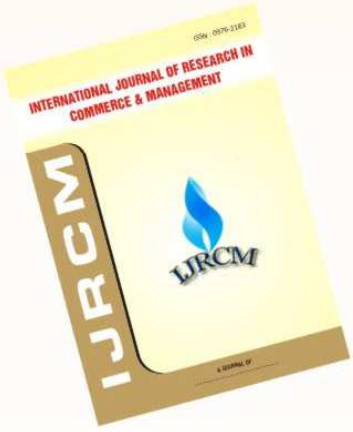
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