

# Synergistic Alignment: Harmonizing Strategic Objectives, Strategies, and Initiatives for Optimal Organizational Success

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**Abstract:** - Strategic alignment is a critical factor in achieving organizational success. It involves aligning an organization's strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives to ensure coherence across different levels and functions. Despite its importance, organizations struggle to achieve and sustain strategic alignment. This literature review paper addresses this issue by examining the drivers and enablers of strategic alignment, as well as the barriers and challenges that organizations commonly face in the alignment process. It provides an overview of the theoretical framework of synergistic alignment for organizational success. It also examines the strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives required for optimizing this alignment, and takes a closer look at the synergistic alignment frameworks and models available to organizations. Additionally, it analyzes the key factors influencing synergistic alignment, including communication, leadership, and culture, and also identifies the benefits and outcomes of synergistic alignment, highlighting the positive effects of achieving organizational agility, which includes enhanced performance. Finally, it provides insights and guidance for practitioners on aligning strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives within their organizations to enhance performance, adaptability, and long-term success. Aligning strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives is important because it allows organizations to effectively use their resources, improve decision-making processes, and enhance overall performance.

**Keywords:** strategic alignment, synergistic alignment, strategic objectives, strategies, initiatives, organizational success.

## I. Introduction

In today's fast-paced and competitive business environment, organizations strive to achieve sustainable success and maintain a competitive edge. Strategic alignment plays a crucial role in ensuring organizational success by aligning strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives (Ghonim et al., 2022). This process involves synchronizing various elements within an organization, including its goals, strategies, processes, and resources, to create a cohesive and integrated approach towards achieving desired outcomes (Merkus et al., 2019). Organizations operate in intricate and rapidly evolving markets and face numerous challenges such as technological advancements, globalization, and changing consumer preferences. In this context, strategic alignment is essential as it enables organizations to adapt and respond effectively to external pressures while aligning internal operations to support overarching goals (Ghonim et al., 2022). When strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives are in alignment, organizations can more efficiently leverage their resources and capabilities, resulting in enhanced performance, increased profitability, and a stronger competitive advantage (Merkus et al., 2019). By aligning strategies and initiatives with the organization's objectives, leaders can prioritize and allocate resources strategically, ensuring optimal utilization and minimizing wastage. This not only improves operational efficiency but also enables organizations to adapt quickly to market changes and seize emerging opportunities (Teece et al., 2016).

Strategic alignment is not a fixed process but a dynamic one that requires continuous adaptation and change. As the strategic choices made by an organization affect the actions of its competitors, the organization needs to respond to them in a timely manner. The alignment may change over time, depending on the internal and external contingencies (Henderson & Venkatraman, 2019). Many organizations face challenges in achieving optimal alignment between their strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives, which are essential elements of the strategic management process that define the desired outcomes and direction, outline the approaches for achieving objectives, and represent specific actions and projects undertaken to implement strategies (Hughes et al., 2021). This misalignment affects an organization's ability to adapt, innovate, and respond to market challenges effectively. The literature seems to lack a comprehensive understanding of the process and practices that can facilitate synergistic alignment between these elements. Most studies focus on individual elements of strategic alignment or offer fragmented insights (Jarzabkowski et al., 2019; Ghonim et al., 2020; Khashan et al., 2021; Mittal et al., 2023). Therefore, there is a need for a holistic view of the alignment process and the factors that influence its success. For this reason, the paper focused on exploring and analyzing the concept of synergistic alignment between strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives in organizations. It sought to gain insights into the theoretical foundations, models, and frameworks of the synergy by investigating the current state of strategic alignment practices; identified key challenges and barriers faced by organizations in achieving optimal alignment; and also, explored the factors that contribute to successful strategic alignment. This research adopted a practice-based view of strategic alignment that examines how individual,

organizational, and system levels are strategically congruent and how knowledge and entrepreneurial capitals are functionally congruent (Audretsch & Belitski, 2022). It focused on strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives as key elements of the strategic management process that define the desired outcomes and direction, outline the approaches for achieving objectives, and represent specific actions and projects undertaken to implement strategies (Hughes et al., 2021).

To achieve these the study adopted the literature review approach, which involved reviewing and synthesizing existing research, theories and perspectives on the topic. This method helped in gaining useful insights and a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Literature sources were selected from books and peer-reviewed journals that were directly related to the topic. The study analyzed the literature carefully and identified and discussed common themes, theoretical perspectives and empirical findings. The review has provided a comprehensive overview of existing research and has offered useful insights into the topic of synergistic alignment and how it affects organizational success. The recommendations and guidelines derived from this research will help organizations enhance their overall performance, drive innovation, and achieve sustained success in today's competitive landscape.

## II. Theoretical Framework

Strategic objectives are the foundation of a company's vision and purpose, serving as long-term goals (Kaplan & Norton, 2001). They form a guide for the organization's decisions and actions, necessitating clarity in definition to ensure consistency and coherence across the organization (Kraus et al., 2019). Kraus, Rigtering, Hughes, and Hosman's research (2019) supports that well-defined strategic objectives positively affect financial performance, like bolstering profitability and return on investment, highlighting its importance in organizational success (Kraus et al., 2019; Kaplan & Norton, 2001; David, 2017). Strategies are vital in achieving an organization's strategic objectives, consisting of plans and techniques for enhancing facets like market position, product development, operation efficiency, and human resource management (David, 2017; Dess et al., 2016). Effective strategy design and execution lead to a competitive advantage and better adaptability in today's ever-changing business environment (Teece et al., 1997; David, 2017; Dess et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2020). Empirical research indicates that organizations' strategies need continuous evaluation and modification to adapt to market changes and seize new opportunities (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997). Initiatives are the actions or projects that drive an organization's strategic objectives and consist of resource allocation, monitoring, and deadlines (Dess et al., 2016). Organizations need to carefully plan and execute these initiatives to achieve their objectives (Smith et al., 2020; Dess et al., 2016; Teece et al., 1997; Kaplan & Norton, 2001). The research by Smith, Grimm, and Gannon (2020) emphasizes the significant role of project management in achieving strategic objectives within the time and resource constraints. Efficient initiative management is therefore critical to realizing desired outcomes (Smith et al., 2020; Dess et al., 2016; Teece et al., 1997; Kraus et al., 2019).

*Importance of synergistic alignment.* Synergistic alignment is an essential organizational management concept that focuses on integrating strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives across the organization's various functions and hierarchies (Kaplan & Norton, 2006). The primary goal of synergistic alignment is to ensure that all facets of an organization are effectively functioning in unison towards a common objective. Proper harmonization promotes better coordination, clarity and efficient utilization of resources, which lead towards organizational effectiveness and success. When these three elements are harmonized and mutually supportive, organizations pursue their goals and achieve optimal outcomes for competitiveness (Cummings & Angwin, 2019). Besides these benefits, synergistic alignment also brings forth superior performance results, including better financial performance, customer satisfaction, and decision-making (Morton & Hu, 2019; Wang et al., 2020). Moreover, it facilitates agile responses to changes within the dynamic business environment (Simons, 2010). Effective synergistic alignment requires comprehensive knowledge of organizational objectives which all members share (Liu et al., 2017). The integration of strategies, initiatives, and objectives aligned with the organization's values, mission, and vision results in improved work satisfaction, job commitment, and motivation.

*Theoretical perspectives and models.* Organizations can achieve maximum success by aligning their strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives, which can be understood through theoretical perspectives and models related to synergistic alignment (O'Cass, Omar, & Siahtiri, 2019). These theoretical frameworks guide organizational practices by offering diverse perspectives. Four significant theoretical perspectives and models associated with synergistic alignment are Resource-Based View (RBV), Dynamic Capabilities Perspective, Strategic Fit Theory, and Strategic Ambidexterity (Luo & Wang, 2021; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2018). The RBV emphasizes that organizational resources and capabilities drive sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). Synergistic alignment enables organizations to effectively utilize their unique resources and capabilities by aligning strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives (Al-Aali & Teece, 2014). By doing so, organizations optimize their resource utilization, achieve superior performance, and attain sustained competitive advantage (Kozlenkova et al., 2014). The Dynamic Capabilities Perspective suggests that an organization's success depends on its ability to adapt and change according to the external environment (Teece et al., 1997). Synergistic alignment helps organizations develop dynamic capabilities by continuously adjusting their strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives to match changing market conditions (Wang & Ahmed, 2007). By aligning all elements, organizations can respond to changes, seize new opportunities, and maintain competitiveness in dynamic and uncertain environments (Denrell &

Powell, 2016). The Strategic Fit Theory argues that organizations achieve superior performance when they match internal resources and capabilities with the external environment (Venkatraman, 1989). Synergistic alignment is crucial for achieving strategic fit by ensuring that the organization's strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives align with the external market dynamics (Chen & Wang, 2012). The alignment improves the organization's ability to use its resources and capabilities in a way that meets market needs and creates value, leading to improved performance outcomes (Teece et al., 2016).

Strategic Ambidexterity is an organization's ability to balance exploration and exploitation activities (March, 1991). Synergistic alignment supports this by enabling organizations to do both innovative and adaptive initiatives while staying efficient (Hansen & Coenen, 2019). By aligning strategic objectives with exploratory initiatives and strategies with exploitative initiatives, organizations can balance innovation and efficiency, leading to sustained performance and competitiveness (O'Reilly III & Tushman, 2013; Voss & Voss, 2013).

Apart from theoretical perspectives, practical frameworks like the Balanced Scorecard and Strategy Execution Diamond offer models for achieving synergistic alignment. The Balanced Scorecard framework aligns objectives and measures across different perspectives and enables organizations to ensure their strategic objectives, strategies, and initiatives are balanced and integrated (Kaplan & Norton, 1992). The alignment leads to comprehensive performance management and strategic alignment (Al Sawalqa & Qtishat, 2014; Niven, 2014; Zelman et al., 2018). The Strategy Execution Diamond illustrates the interdependencies and interactions among strategic elements within the organization and emphasizes aligning these key elements to support effective strategy execution (Hrebiniak, 2006). By aligning the organization's structure, systems, and culture with strategic objectives and strategies, organizations can enhance coordination, communication, and implementation, leading to successful execution and optimal organizational performance (Sinha, 2020; Shao et al., 2021; Lopez-Nicolas et al., 2020).

*Key factors influencing synergistic alignment.* The following are some major factors considered to influence the achievement of synergistic alignment within organizations. Synergistic alignment needs leadership commitment and support. Leaders communicate goals, guide efforts, provide resources, and create alignment culture (Bakir & Palan, 2020; Ren & Chou, 2018; Miao & Buck, 2019). Organizational culture shapes employee behavior and alignment. Values, norms, and beliefs foster communication, collaboration, and purpose. Cultural values must align with goals (Jha et al., 2018; Gupta et al., 2019; Ahmadi et al., 2021). Communication and information sharing are vital for alignment. Clear and timely channels inform stakeholders about objectives, strategies, and initiatives. Transparent communication enables coordination and collaboration (Qin et al., 2017; Foley et al., 2020; Osei-Bryson et al., 2020). Structure and systems support alignment. Shared decision-making, cross-functionality, and flexibility integrate efforts and align objectives. Agile structure enhances alignment and performance (Hrebiniak, 2006; Sloan & Shrader, 2019; Pocatilu & Muraru, 2019). Engagement and empowerment align actions with objectives. Employees who understand and believe in the strategy become motivated. Communication, skill-development, and participation foster engagement and empowerment (Saks, 2006; Kuo & Lin, 2019; Liu et al., 2018). Performance measurement and evaluation systems offer feedback and enhance alignment. Clear metrics and indicators align with objectives (Bilgin, 2021). Monitoring and evaluation identify improvement areas (Hofmann & Morgeson, 2020; Zhang et al., 2020; Hansson & Ekstrand, 2019; Ogbebor & Arodudu, 2018). Change management is essential for alignment in dynamic environments. It manages resistance, support, and communication aligned with objectives (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Borrás & Edquist, 2013). It minimizes resistance, encourages acceptance, and optimizes alignment (Köster & Schlesinger, 2018; Morgan & Banville, 2016; Dinwoodie et al., 2019). External stakeholders need to be synergistically aligned (Russo et al., 2016) so the organization can respond to market demands and stakeholder requirements. Neglecting external stakeholders can cause negative outcomes and missed opportunities (Kilman et al., 2019; Austin & Seitanidi, 2019). Ethical decision-making is also key for stakeholder engagement and support (Palazzo & Basu, 2019). Alignment with external stakeholders enhances performance and social impact (Agostini et al., 2020). Technology and information systems enable better communication, coordination, and information sharing within an organization (Cascio, 2000; Chen & Huang, 2017). It streamlines processes, boosts efficiency (Abbasi, 2019; Dezwart et al., 2019), fosters collaboration, decision-making, knowledge exchange, and increasing productivity (Pie et al., 2016; Sabanovic, 2020). Effective technology use leads to better outcomes (Chen & Huang, 2017; Pie et al., 2016). Organizational success and synergistic alignment depend on institutional factors (Battilana et al., 2017). Organizations must align with the external environment and ensure legitimacy and sustainability. Institutional factors must be taken into account when operationalizing goals and objectives (Battilana et al., 2017; Eisenhardt et al., 2017; Maggi et al., 2020; Suddaby et al., 2017; Garud & Jain, 2019). These elements differ in importance and relevance based on the context and industry. Businesses must assess their circumstances individually and align their efforts accordingly, for better coordination and cohesiveness, improved responsiveness and competitiveness.

### III. Strategic Objectives

Strategic objectives are critical components that provide a clear and concise description of the desired outcomes and goals that the organization aims to achieve (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). They align activities with objectives (Wong et al., 2020). They help manage and prioritize resources (Arlbjørn & Halldórsson, 2019). They improve communication, collaboration, and teamwork (Liao et al.,

2018). Financial objectives emphasize financial performance and outcomes, such as revenue, profitability, cost, and ROI (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). They help allocate resources effectively (Adil et al., 2021). They help prioritize financial goals and decisions (Zhang et al., 2020). They create a roadmap for financial goals (Htar et al., 2021). Customer objectives enhance customer satisfaction, loyalty, retention, and expansion (Bharadwaj et al., 2013). They are important for customer-centric business models (Neslin & Verhoef, 2020). They improve customer experience, loyalty, and retention (Cao et al., 2020). They improve sales and market share (Kumar & Petersen, 2018). Internal process objectives improve efficiency and effectiveness of operations and processes, such as quality, innovation, and optimization (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). They improve effectiveness and productivity (Huang & Wang, 2021). They reduce costs and waste, improve quality and satisfaction (Narimani et al., 2020). They increase motivation and engagement (Kichou et al., 2020). Learning and growth objectives develop human capital, learning culture, innovation and adaptability (Simons, 1999). They improve performance and results (Thomas et al., 2020). They invest in training and development, increasing engagement and satisfaction (Chen et al., 2020). They improve capabilities, decision-making, and competitiveness (Chua et al., 2020).

Clear and measurable strategic objectives are essential for several reasons. They help stakeholders understand and align with the organization's direction and goals (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). They enable smooth communication and coordination within the organization (Hrebiniak, 2018). They provide a way to monitor progress and evaluate performance using specific targets and metrics (De Wit & Meyer, 2020; Müller, 2018). They promote accountability by creating ownership of responsibilities and outcomes (Conger & Xin, 2019). They help organizations prioritize their efforts and resources, resulting in better performance outcomes and competitiveness (Hitt et al., 2017; Simons, 2013). They allow direct evaluation of progress towards goals, leading to improved decision-making and resource allocation (Elbanna, 2018).

*Challenges and best practices.* Aligning strategic objectives with organizational goals is a process that faces several challenges. One challenge is the lack of clarity and understanding of the strategic objectives, which can cause confusion and misalignment among employees and departments (Kaplan & Norton, 2019; Henderson et al., 2019). Another challenge is the conflicting or competing objectives that can limit collaboration and coordination across different levels of the organization (Wu et al., 2018). A third challenge is the organizational culture and resistance to change, which can prevent the adoption of new initiatives, including strategic objectives (Zlotnick, 2017; Holt et al., 2018). A fourth challenge is the inadequate resources, such as financial and human resources, that are needed to implement necessary initiatives, allocate resources effectively, and fully support the achievement of strategic objectives (Liu et al., 2021).

To effectively align strategic objectives with organizational goals, four best practices and strategies have been identified. First, it is crucial to ensure top-down communication and involve all stakeholders in the strategic planning process. This entails communicating strategic objectives consistently and clearly and involving employees at various levels in the goal-setting process. Such measures foster a shared understanding and sense of ownership among employees, thus enhancing alignment. (Kaplan & Norton, 2018; Muir, 2017; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2020). Secondly, it is essential to establish a robust performance measurement and management system that links strategic objectives to key performance indicators (KPIs) and provides regular feedback and reporting mechanisms. This helps organizations monitor their progress against established metrics, assess performance, identify gaps, and make necessary adjustments. (Fehnle & Salomone, 2017; Zhao & Chen, 2016; Belias & Koustelios, 2014). Thirdly, promoting collaboration, teamwork, and knowledge sharing is crucial. This entails creating a culture that encourages the exchange of ideas and best practices, cross-functional collaboration, and providing platforms for sharing knowledge and learning from each other. Collaboration fosters alignment, synergy, and collective efforts towards achieving strategic objectives. (Gupta & Fernandez, 2017; Huang & Huang, 2017; Yasin, Khan, & Kayani, 2019). Lastly, organizations should regularly review and adapt their strategic objectives to ensure alignment with the changing internal and external environments. To stay relevant and agile, strategic objectives should not be static but evolve to respond to market dynamics, emerging trends, and organizational capabilities. Regular review and adjustment enable organizations to pursue their goals effectively. (Coughlan & Coughlan, 2017; Lopes, 2018; Rothaermel, 2016).

#### IV. Strategies

Strategic management and planning are essential for achieving synergistic alignment and organizational success. Strategic management involves formulating and executing strategies that direct the organization towards its long-term goals and objectives (David 2017). Strategic planning is a key part of strategic management as it involves developing plans and actions to realize strategic objectives, including analyzing the external and internal environment and creating strategies to leverage strengths and overcome weaknesses. Recent studies support the importance of strategic management and planning in organizational success (Adebayo et al., 2021; Bashir & Chong, 2021; Ravanavar et al., 2021; Yarmohammadian et al., 2021).

*Identification and selection of appropriate strategies.* The process of achieving synergistic alignment in organizations heavily relies on identifying and selecting appropriate strategies (Hosseini, Niknejad, & Gholipour, 2021). Organizations need to assess various factors, such as market conditions (Brouthers & Tikoo, 2021), stakeholder expectations (Sahu & Gupta, 2018), and internal capabilities (Tubagus & Taramaya, 2019), to choose the most suitable strategies. Different strategic frameworks such as SWOT



analysis (Sahu & Gupta, 2018) and Porter's Five Forces (Haque & Gilani, 2021) assist in this process by evaluating the competitive landscape (Kwag & Lee, 2019) and value chain analysis (Brouthers & Tikoo, 2021) to determine the organization's strengths and weakness. The strategies selected must align with the organization's strategic objectives and goals to provide a clear roadmap towards organizational success while also considering the risks, feasibility, and resource requirements (Habidin, Hamid & Hamzah, 2018).

*Alignment of strategies with strategic objectives and organizational goals.* The alignment of strategies with strategic objectives and organizational goals is pivotal in achieving synergistic alignment (David, 2017). Strategies must be directly linked to predetermined strategic objectives, established earlier in the planning process. Each strategy must also contribute to achieving specific objectives and be consistent with the overall organizational goals. Coordination and integration of strategies across different functional departments and areas of an organization (McKinney & Yoon, 2019) are crucial. Additionally, strategies should complement and mutually reinforce one another (Hitt et al., 2019). This ensures successful coordination of efforts and effective allocation of resources towards overall organizational success. To achieve successful alignment, strategies must be consistent with the organization's objectives and goals (Otsuka & Davies, 2018), and they must also align with employee perceptions (Sharma & Koti, 2020).

*Implementation challenges and success factors for strategic alignment.* Several barriers and complexities, including resistance to change, lack of resources, organizational culture, and communication limitations, need to be overcome (David, 2017) when implementing strategies for synergistic alignment. To address these challenges, success factors such as effective leadership and change management are necessary to provide a clear vision and support the organization's culture for change and collaboration (Hitt et al., 2019; David, 2017). Communication is also an essential component in promoting employee involvement, commitment, and ownership of strategies (Ashleigh et al., 2018; David, 2017). Stakeholder involvement is vital during the formulation process to ensure alignment (Wirtz et al., 2020). Organizations should tailor their structure to facilitate alignment, cross-functional collaboration, and autonomous decision-making (Goodwin & Wofford, 2019). Performance measurement must align with strategic objectives, regularly monitor progress, and adapt to necessary adjustments (Hitt et al., 2019; Wirtz et al., 2020). Finally, organizations must regularly evaluate and adapt their strategies to align with the changing environment (Ashleigh et al., 2018; Wirtz et al., 2020).

## V. Initiatives

Organizational initiatives are activities, projects, and programs undertaken by organizations to achieve their strategic objectives (Reiss, 2018). These initiatives are implemented based on the challenges or opportunities that are identified in the strategic planning process and vary in scope and scale. There are various types of organizational initiatives, including launching new products or services, increasing the market share, enhancing operational efficiencies, and adopting new technological advancements (Reiss, 2018; Abreu & Gama, 2020). These initiatives are essential to support organizational growth and development.

*Role of initiatives.* Strategic objectives and strategies are pivotal to organizations as they help them achieve their goals. Initiatives, on the other hand, play a crucial role in the attainment of these strategic objectives and strategies, as they provide the necessary actionable steps towards translating strategic plans into actual outcomes. By bridging the gap between high-level strategic objectives and daily operations, initiatives guarantee that strategic objectives become actualized. According to Schmidt and Finnegan (2019), proper alignment of initiatives with strategic objectives allows organizations to focus their efforts and resources on specific actions critical to desired outcomes. Alongside prioritizing and sequencing activities, initiatives also assist organizations in efficiently allocating resources, as emphasized by Reiss (2018). Thus, initiatives can facilitate progress monitoring and measurement, which proves beneficial for tracking performance towards strategic goals.

*Challenges in aligning initiatives with strategic objectives and strategies.* The alignment of initiatives with strategic objectives and strategies poses numerous challenges to organizations. One of these is ensuring consistency and coherence across various initiatives. Due to the potential risk of conflict or misalignment, organizations must meticulously manage and coordinate their initiatives, ensuring that each contributes to strategic objective attainment (Schmidt & Finnegan, 2019). In addition, resource allocation and prioritization have proven challenging for many organizations. Dealing with resource constraints requires strategic decision-making regarding the allocation of limited resources to different initiatives, necessitating careful consideration and trade-offs (Reiss, 2018). Cultural barriers and resistance to change could also impede alignment. Employees may resist new initiatives or may not fully grasp their rationale, making alignment difficult. Addressing these challenges requires effective change management strategies and the creation of mechanisms that support an organizational culture accepting of initiatives. Leaders must ensure that employees understand why certain initiatives are launched, and create avenues for constructive feedback and participation (Schmidt & Finnegan, 2019).

*Approaches and frameworks for alignment optimization.* To optimize alignment between initiatives and strategic goals, various approaches and frameworks are available for organizations to leverage. One such framework is the Balanced Scorecard (BSC),

which measures performance metrics across several dimensions such as financial, customer, internal processes, and learning and growth, providing clarity and strategic alignment between initiatives and objectives (Kaplan & Norton, 2016). Another commonly used approach is the Strategy Execution Framework. This system revolves around integrating initiatives within the resource and performance measurement systems of organizations to drive strategic execution. The framework facilitates the identification, prioritization, and alignment of initiatives to the organizational strategic direction (Reiss, 2018). Additionally, integrating project management methodologies such as Agile or Six Sigma may aid in ensuring that initiatives are aligned with strategic objectives. These methodologies provide systematic approaches for the implementation, monitoring, and execution of initiatives, resulting in efficient progress and probability of meeting strategic objectives (Schmidt & Finnegan, 2019).

## VI. Synergistic Alignment Frameworks and Models

Achieving coherence and integration between different aspects of organizational planning and execution is crucial for organizations to attain their strategic objectives. A number of frameworks and models have been proposed to assist organizations in achieving synergistic alignment. One widely recognized framework is the Strategy Execution Framework developed by Kaplan and Norton (2015). This framework emphasizes the alignment of strategic objectives, initiatives, and resources, and it provides a systematic process for translating strategy into action. Another influential model is the McKinsey 7-S Framework, introduced by Waterman, Peters, and Phillips (1980). Although the model does not explicitly focus on synergistic alignment, it accentuates the dependence between different elements of the organization, such as structure, strategy, systems, and shared values. The model further emphasizes the importance of aligning such elements to achieve organizational success (Waterman et al., 1980).

Other frameworks include the Know-Do-Be Framework (Chakrabarti et al., 2018) which stresses the connecting of strategies to capabilities, competencies, and culture. The Alignment Model (Cameron & Quinn, 2014) which emphasizes the compatibility of strategy, culture, and leadership, and the Real Success Framework (Bruch & Walter, 2020), that aims to optimize performance by aligning strategy, culture, and leadership. The Dynamic Capabilities Model (Teece et al., 2016) emphasizes the development of flexible organizational capabilities to respond to the external environment. Lastly, the Resource Dependence Model (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2019) argues that resource availability and distribution are crucial factors in aligning organizational goals, strategy, and initiatives, highlighting dependency factors that originate from external resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2019). The effectiveness and applicability of these models vary. Kaplan and Norton's (2015) Strategy Execution Framework is widely adopted and has demonstrated effectiveness in many organizations. It provides a comprehensive approach to aligning strategic objectives, initiatives, and resources and has been successful in enhancing execution and performance (Kaplan & Norton, 2015). The McKinsey 7-S Framework, although not primarily focused on synergistic alignment, offers valuable insights into the interrelationships between different organizational elements (Waterman et al., 1980). By considering these interdependencies, organizations can identify areas of misalignment and take corrective actions to improve overall alignment and effectiveness. The other models may also offer insightful and systematic approaches to align organizational objectives, strategies, and initiatives. Nonetheless, organizations must carefully assess each model's suitability in specific contexts and the effectiveness of these models when adopting them (Fazli et al., 2020; Bensassi et al., 2018).

Achieving synergistic alignment remains an ongoing challenge, despite the existence of various effective frameworks and models. One of the gaps in achieving synergistic alignment is the necessity for dynamic and adaptable models that can be used in fast-paced business environments (Akintoye, Goulding, & Avraamidou, 2021). Traditional frameworks may not adequately address the difficulty of managing alignment under changing and uncertain circumstances. Besides, current models usually concentrate on aligning strategic objectives, initiatives, and plans at the organizational level (Bakker & Boonstra, 2021). However, exploring how alignment can be coordinated and controlled across different functions and levels within the organization is crucial. It is vital to align strategies and initiatives from different departments, teams, and employees with overall organizational goals (Hannula & Pekkola, 2021).

## VII. Benefits and Outcomes of Synergistic Alignment

Maximizing overall organizational performance and competitive advantage can be achieved by linking all operations and initiatives to strategic objectives (Lin et al., 2017). Synergistic alignment is a beneficial approach that enhances employee engagement and motivation, in addition to the already listed benefits in this paper. This is because it creates a sense of purpose, ownership, and commitment to the organizational objectives (Bridger, 2018). This approach also enables the efficient allocation and utilization of resources by aligning initiatives and strategies with strategic objectives and prioritizing high-impact initiatives (Fitzgerald et al., 2017). Organizations can also foster innovation and adaptability by creating an environment for experimentation, learning, agility, and innovation. This move also helps to identify emerging trends and opportunities (Vorhies et al., 2017). Synergistic alignment improves organizational agility by allowing it to quickly adapt and respond to new market realities (Maaseudun Tulevaisuus, 2020). Synergistic alignment also leads to the improvement of an organization's financial performance and shareholder value. This is attained by focusing resources and efforts on critical and strategic initiatives (Liu et al., 2019). Additionally, corporations can

enhance their corporate social responsibility (CSR) by aligning CSR initiatives closely with strategic objectives to achieve more significant success in CSR implementation (Liu et al., 2019).

### VIII. Conclusion

Synergistic alignment is crucial for organizational success and can be achieved through factors such as top leadership commitment, efficient communication, aligned structure and supporting systems, and employee engagement. Clear and measurable strategic objectives are also important, but barriers such as conflicting objectives and resistance to change can hinder alignment. Effective strategies for achieving alignment include top-down communication and regularly reviewing and adapting strategic objectives. Initiatives can also play a crucial role but must be aligned with strategic objectives. Existing frameworks and models such as the Strategy Execution Framework and McKinsey 7-S Framework can assist organizations in achieving coherence and integration. Organizational culture and leadership, collaboration, effective communication channels, cross-functional collaboration, and performance measurement and evaluation systems are key factors in achieving synergistic alignment. Synergistic alignment enhances organizational performance, employee engagement and motivation, innovation and adaptability, and financial performance. It can also improve the implementation of corporate social responsibility initiatives.

### IX. Implications for Practice

To enhance performance, organizations should establish clear and explicit strategic objectives that provide direction to their workforce. These objectives serve as a roadmap for employees, guiding their actions towards a common goal. However, simply defining objectives is not enough; the strategies and initiatives implemented by the organization must align with these objectives. This alignment ensures that all efforts are focused on achieving the desired outcomes. To ensure ongoing effectiveness and alignment, organizations need to establish a system of evaluation and adjustment. Regular evaluation allows for the assessment of progress and the identification of any gaps or shortcomings. By adjusting goals and strategies accordingly, organizations can maintain alignment and increase the likelihood of successful goal attainment.

Effective communication and collaboration play a critical role in achieving this synergistic alignment. It is important for employees to have a shared understanding of the strategic goals, as well as the means and methods to achieve them. This understanding encourages coordinated efforts, where employees work together towards a common objective. By fostering effective communication and collaboration, organizations can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of their operations. Leadership plays a vital role in facilitating effective communication, collaboration, and coordination. Leaders must communicate their expectations clearly, providing guidance and direction to their employees. They must also motivate and inspire their workforce, fostering a sense of ownership and commitment to the organizational goals. Additionally, leaders should facilitate collaboration, creating an environment where teamwork and cooperation are valued and encouraged.

Measuring performance is crucial in the pursuit of strategic objectives. By evaluating performance, organizations can identify areas of improvement and make necessary adjustments. This ongoing evaluation and realignment ensure that resources and efforts are allocated in the most effective and efficient manner. Goals and strategies can be adjusted based on the insights gained from performance measurement, allowing organizations to stay on track towards goal attainment. Organizations should aim to foster a culture of collaboration that encourages employee engagement, innovation, and adaptability. When employees feel valued and engaged, they are more likely to contribute their best efforts towards achieving the organization's goals. A culture that supports collaboration and innovation fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility, leading to higher levels of motivation and commitment.

Effective communication, coordination, and leadership work together to reinforce and support the achievement of an organization's strategic objectives. By establishing clear objectives, aligning strategies, fostering effective communication and collaboration, measuring performance, and creating a culture of collaboration, organizations can enhance their performance and increase the likelihood of achieving their goals. These practices allow for adaptability and continuous improvement, positioning organizations for long-term success.

*Future research directions.* There is a need for further research to examine the synergistic alignment across various organizational contexts. Future studies can focus on exploring the specific mechanisms and processes that enable alignment, the significance of technology in supporting alignment efforts, and the influence of alignment on long-term organizational results. The role of technology and digital transformation in achieving synergistic alignment is an area that requires further research (Chen & Qiao, 2021). As organizations grow increasingly reliant on digital technologies and platforms, new challenges to digital alignment emerge, and new opportunities emerge that can help organizations succeed in alignment (Zhang et al., 2021). Additionally, research can also investigate the obstacles and strategies for maintaining alignment amidst environmental changes and over time. The study makes significant contributions to the field of organizational management and strategy by providing a thorough comprehension of the concept. With a synthesis and integration of existing literature, the review provides insights into the advantages and results of synergistic alignment, such as improved performance, employee involvement, efficient resource allocation, and adaptability. These

findings offer practitioners with practical guidance on achieving optimal performance by aligning their organizational efforts effectively.

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