

The mechanisms through which ERP influence organisational agility: a systematic review of the literature

Hayat ILAHYANE ¹, Aziz DOUARI ²

1. PhD student, Research Laboratory in Economics, Administration and Business Management (LAREGMA), Faculty of Economics and Management, Hassan I University of Settat, Morocco, hayatilahyane@gmail.com , 00212661293317
2. Professor, Research Laboratory in Economics, Administration and Business Management (LAREGMA), Faculty of Economics and Management, Hassan I University of Settat, Morocco, aziz.douari@gmail.com , 00212661578797

Abstract

The contribution of ERP systems to organisational agility raises questions regarding the mechanisms through which their use enhances companies' ability to adapt. This article aims to identify these mechanisms and examine the conditions that may reinforce or limit their effects. A systematic review of the literature, conducted in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, covered a corpus of 13 scientific studies available up to 30 June 2022, drawn from Scopus, Web of Science and supplementary literature searches. The narrative and thematic analysis highlights three complementary mechanisms: information integration, process coordination and reconfiguration, and the use of information in organisational decision-making. The results show that their contribution to agility depends on users' skills, managerial practices and the adaptability of the integrated systems. The scientific contribution of this research lies in the proposal of an integrative conceptual framework linking the use of ERP systems to mechanisms of influence and the conditions for their effectiveness, whilst distinguishing between operational agility and overall organisational agility.

Keywords: ERP; Organisational agility; Mechanisms of influence; Dynamic capabilities; Systematic literature review.

Introduction

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems play a significant role in the functioning of organisations by ensuring data integration, the coordination of activities and the standardisation of processes. Beyond their operational functions, their use raises questions regarding their contribution to organisational agility, particularly in environments characterised by rapid change and increasing demands for adaptability. Whilst the integration of information systems promotes consistency in activities and the flow of information, the standardisation that accompanies it can also introduce certain organisational rigidities (Davenport, 1998; Seethamraju and Diatha, 2013). This duality prompts an examination of the mechanisms through which ERP systems influence organisations' ability to adapt.

Organisational agility refers to a company's ability to detect changes in its environment and respond rapidly by adjusting its resources and activities (Overby et al., 2006). Several studies have examined the relationship between ERP use and this capacity, highlighting in particular the role of information integration, organisational practices and users (Aburub, 2015; Almahamid, 2019). However, the available findings reveal varying influences depending on the contexts studied and the dimensions of agility considered. This diversity calls for an in-depth analysis of the explanatory mechanisms, going beyond

the simple observation of a relationship between ERP use and organisational agility.

With this in mind, the present research centres on the following research question: through which mechanisms do ERP systems influence organisational agility, and under what conditions does their use enhance or limit organisations' ability to adapt? To address this, the article adopts a systematic review of the literature in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021), considering studies published no later than 30 June 2022. Its scientific contribution lies in identifying and linking the informational, organisational and decision-making mechanisms through which the use of ERP systems can affect organisational agility. Beyond synthesising existing findings, this research aims to clarify the conditions that explain the beneficial or limiting effects of ERP systems, to distinguish between the different manifestations of agility examined in the literature, and to propose an integrative conceptual framework designed to guide future research.

1. Conceptual foundations of the relationship between ERP systems and organisational agility

1.1. The use of ERP systems in organisational operations

The implementation of an ERP system does not guarantee that the organisation will make full use of its functionalities or that it will derive the expected benefits. It is primarily through users' day-to-day practices that its contribution to the organisation's operations is realised. The use of ERP systems notably encompasses the mobilisation of shared information, the coordination of operations and the utilisation of integrated functionalities in the performance of activities. Gattiker and Goodhue (2005) demonstrate that the organisational effects of ERP systems depend on the characteristics of the units concerned, particularly their interdependence and their need for differentiation. This observation highlights that the benefits of an integrated system do not stem solely from its technical properties, but also from its alignment with organisational requirements.

The distinction between technological availability and actual usage is therefore a key factor in understanding the organisational value of ERP systems. DeLone and McLean (2003) regard the use of information systems as a dimension of their success, in relation to system quality, user satisfaction and the benefits achieved. In the case of ERP systems, this approach leads us to examine how users utilise information resources to organise their work and meet operational needs. Almahamid (2019) emphasises, in particular, the importance of users' psychological empowerment in the relationship between ERP usage and agile capabilities. Analysing this

relationship therefore requires consideration of usage practices and how stakeholders adopt them, rather than merely the presence of an integrated system.

1.2. Organisational agility: dimensions and adaptive capacities

An organisation may have efficient processes without necessarily being able to react quickly to new situations. Organisational agility implies an ability to recognise changes, adjust decisions and reorganise activities when internal or external conditions so require. Overby et al. (2006) identify two fundamental components of this capacity: the detection of changes in the environment and the organisation's response to them. This concept goes beyond mere operational flexibility, as it encompasses the speed of reaction, the appropriateness of adjustments and the coordinated mobilisation of resources.

However, the manifestations of agility vary depending on the activities and objectives pursued. Lu and Ramamurthy (2011) distinguish between agility linked to capitalising on market opportunities and , that relating to the adjustment of internal operations. This distinction is of particular interest for the study of ERP systems, whose functionalities play a direct role in process management, but whose effects on the organisation's overall adaptive capabilities may be more indirect. Process agility is therefore a relevant dimension of the analysis, without being systematically equated with organisational agility as a whole. This conceptual distinction is necessary to properly assess the scope of the relationships examined in scientific studies.

1.3. Theoretical perspectives explaining the relationship between ERP and organisational agility

An understanding of the influence of ERP systems on organisational agility is primarily grounded in resource-based theory, according to which organisational advantages rest on the mobilisation of complementary resources and capabilities (Barney, 1991). When applied to the model under study, this approach leads us to regard ERP systems as technological resources capable of contributing to the development of organisational agility, although this contribution is not systematic. Wade and Hulland (2004) emphasise that the value of information systems depends on how they are linked to the organisation's resources and management capabilities. In line with this reasoning, the effective use of ERP systems constitutes the starting point for the relationship under study, whilst information integration, knowledge sharing and the coordination of activities represent mechanisms capable of translating technological resources into organisational capabilities. Resource-based theory therefore provides an

initial insight into why firms with comparable ERP systems may exhibit different levels of agility.

The dynamic capabilities approach explores this relationship in greater depth by explaining how technological resources can be mobilised to respond to changes in the environment. Teece et al. (1997) emphasise the capabilities for integrating, developing and reconfiguring organisational competencies, whilst Sambamurthy et al. (2003) highlight the role of information technology in creating digital options that promote agility. In the model under study, this perspective sheds light on the mechanisms linking ERP usage to the two fundamental dimensions of agility identified by Overby et al. (2006), namely the detection of changes and the capacity to respond. The integration and availability of information can support the identification of internal and external changes, whilst the coordination of processes and the use of data in decision-making are likely to facilitate organisational adjustments. Agility thus appears to be a capability built upon the use of information resources, rather than a direct consequence of using an ERP system.

Bringing these theoretical perspectives together leads us to envisage a relationship in which the use of ERP systems influences organisational agility through informational, organisational and decision-making mechanisms. However, the extent and nature of this influence may vary depending on the conditions under which the system is used and the characteristics of the organisation. Seethamraju and Diatha (2013) show that the standardisation associated with ERP systems can either support or constrain the agility of business processes, whilst Almahamid (2019) highlights the role of users' psychological empowerment in the development of agile capabilities. This research suggests that the adoption of functionalities, coordination practices and opportunities for process adaptation constitute important conditions for the relationship under study. The theoretical framework adopted therefore rests on three complementary components: the use of ERP systems as an explanatory factor; informational, organisational and decision-making mechanisms as potential channels of influence; and organisational agility as an explanatory capacity. This theoretical framework constitutes a provisional analytical framework designed to guide the examination of the selected studies. The systematic review will aim to assess the relevance of the mechanisms identified in the literature, to compare empirical findings and to clarify the conditions under which the use of ERP systems contributes to organisational agility or, conversely, may limit its development.

2. Methodology of the systematic literature review

2.1. General approach and protocol for the systematic review

This study is based on a systematic literature review aimed at examining the mechanisms through which the use of ERP systems influences organisational agility. This approach was chosen to synthesise the results of research conducted in different organisational contexts and to identify the mechanisms likely to explain the effects of these systems on organisations' ability to adapt. Tranfield et al. (2003) highlight the value of systematic reviews for consolidating knowledge in management science, whilst Snyder (2019) emphasises their contribution to identifying scientific convergences, divergences and gaps. The methodological approach was structured in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021), distinguishing between the stages of identification, deduplication, screening, eligibility assessment and inclusion of studies. The eligibility criteria were defined in accordance with the research question, prioritising publications that explicitly examined the relationships between ERP systems and organisational agility, including its operational manifestations where these were directly linked to the use of such systems. The literature search covered scientific publications available up to 30 June 2022, with no lower chronological limit, in order to include seminal contributions and relevant empirical studies.

Bibliographic references were identified using two separate RIS files from Scopus and the Web of Science Core Collection, totalling 258 records. Duplicate removal, carried out using DOIs and standardised titles, resulted in the removal of 47 duplicates, leaving 211 unique records. After excluding one editorial correction, 210 records were screened on the basis of their titles and abstracts. This process resulted in the provisional exclusion of 199 references that did not meet the relevance criteria, notably due to an exclusively technical focus, the absence of an identifiable link between ERP systems and agility, or a research topic that was far removed from the issue at hand. Eleven publications were shortlisted for an in-depth review of their eligibility, to which were added three references identified through further research, bringing the total number of publications under consideration for inclusion to fourteen. Confirmation of their eligibility was distinguished from this shortlisting stage, given the documentary and methodological checks that remained necessary. A data extraction grid was developed to identify the characteristics of the studies, the contexts examined, the methodological approaches, the explanatory mechanisms and the main findings. The synthesis method adopted is based on a narrative analysis with thematic coding, adapted to the

heterogeneity of the studies and designed to examine informational, organisational and decision-making mechanisms, as well as the conditions likely to reinforce or limit their effects on organisational agility. This approach distinguishes empirical findings from conceptual propositions and does not presuppose the existence of uniform causal relationships between ERP systems and agility.

2.2. Literature sources and search strategy

The literature review was conducted using two international databases, Scopus and Web of Science Core Collection, selected for their coverage of scientific publications in information systems, management and organisational sciences. Their combined use aimed to diversify the sources consulted and reduce the risk of omitting relevant work, given the differences in coverage identified by Mongeon and Paul-Hus (2016). This approach was supplemented by a targeted review of bibliographic references, publishing platforms and university repositories, in order to identify additional contributions of direct relevance to the research question. The scope of the research focused on studies devoted to ERP systems and their relationship with organisational adaptability, prioritising a management science approach rather than an exclusively technical interpretation of integrated systems.

The database searches were based on a combination of terms representative of the two concepts under study, linked using Boolean operators and adapted to the specific search functions of each platform. The searches targeted the titles, abstracts and keywords of the publications, in order to identify studies likely to provide insights into the relationship between ERP use and organisational agility. The references identified were exported in RIS format and then consolidated into a single database to facilitate their processing. A verification of bibliographic information — including titles, authors, DOI identifiers and publication dates — was carried out prior to deduplication and selection. This approach is in line with the PRISMA-S recommendations of Rethlefsen et al. (2021), which emphasise the importance of traceability in literature reviews. The search terms and eligibility criteria are set out in the following section, which deals with the definition of the scientific corpus.

2.3. Search queries and eligibility criteria

The search strategy was defined on the basis of two sets of terms corresponding to the study's central concepts. The first set comprised terms relating to ERP, notably 'Enterprise Resource Planning', 'ERP Systems' and 'Enterprise Systems', whilst the second concerned organisational agility and its

manifestations, through the terms 'Organisational Agility', 'Organisational Agility', 'Business Agility', 'Business Process Agility', 'Organisational Responsiveness' and 'Organisational Adaptability'. The Boolean operators OR and AND were used to link related terms and cross-reference the two research dimensions. The combination of terms was designed to target titles, abstracts and keywords, using the TITLE-ABS-KEY fields in Scopus and the TS field in Web of Science. The concepts of coordination, information integration and decision-making were not included as mandatory conditions in the main search query, so as not to restrict the search solely to studies explicitly using these terms. They were taken into account during the extraction and thematic coding of the studies.

Eligibility criteria were established based on the relevance of the publications to explaining the relationship between the use of ERP systems and organisational agility. Peer-reviewed scientific articles and full conference papers were considered, selecting quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods studies, as well as conceptual contributions presenting an explicit analysis of this relationship. The selection focused on publications written in English or French, available by 30 June 2022 at the latest, with no lower chronological restriction. Studies dealing with business process agility were also taken into consideration where their results provided direct insight into the organisational effects of ERP systems. Conversely, studies devoted exclusively to IT architecture, software development, agile implementation methods or digital technologies without a specific contribution from ERP systems were excluded. Bibliometric analyses, secondary reviews and documents lacking any usable original contribution were not included in the main synthesis.

The application of these criteria prioritised the scientific relevance of the studies, regardless of the direction of the observed relationships. Publications reporting positive, negative or non-significant effects were all considered in order to ensure a balanced interpretation of the results. The distinction between operational and organisational manifestations of agility also guided the review of publications, to avoid generalising conclusions drawn at the level of a specific process to the entire organisation. This approach is in line with the recommendations of Page et al. (2021) and Rethlefsen et al. (2021), who emphasise the importance of explicit eligibility criteria and a sufficiently detailed search strategy to ensure the transparency of the systematic review.

2.4. Study selection process

The selection of publications followed a step-by-step procedure based on the PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021), distinguishing between the stages of identification, deduplication, screening and eligibility assessment. The three bibliographic datasets from Scopus and the Web of Science Core Collection initially comprised 258 records. Matching these records, carried out using DOI identifiers and standardised titles, identified 47 duplicates, reducing the total to 211 distinct references. After removing an editorial correction that did not constitute an original study, 210 records were screened on the basis of their titles and abstracts. This initial stage focused on identifying studies that directly examined the relationship between the use of ERP systems and organisational agility, taking into account the explanatory mechanisms, organisational contexts and the various manifestations of agility studied in the literature.

The screening of titles and abstracts led to the exclusion of 199 references that did not meet the relevance criteria defined for the review. The main reasons for exclusion were the absence of an identifiable relationship between ERP systems and organisational agility, the exclusively technical focus of certain publications, and the predominance of studies devoted to software development or agile methods for system implementation. In total, 11 publications from the databases were shortlisted for eligibility assessment. Furthermore, through a , three additional contributions, identified from complementary scientific sources, were added to this set, bringing the number of candidate publications to 14. Their ranking took into account the nature of the relationships examined, the methodological approaches employed, and the informational, organisational and decision-making mechanisms addressed. A verification of bibliographic information and dates of first availability was also incorporated into the process to ensure compliance with the documentation cut-off date of 30 June 2022. Following the eligibility assessment, one publication was excluded due to its non-compliance with the selected criteria, resulting in a final corpus of 13 studies included in the systematic review. The various selection steps were organised in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 flowchart, which serves as a traceability tool for references that were identified, reviewed and selected (Page et al., 2021).

Table 1: Process for identifying and selecting studies according to PRISMA 2020.

PRISMA step	Description	Number
Identification	References selected in Scopus after applying filters	168
Identification	References selected in Web of Science after applying filters	90
Identification	Total number of references identified	258
Duplicate removal	Duplicates identified and removed	47
Screening	References reviewed on the basis of title and abstract	210
Screening	References excluded after reviewing the title and abstract	199
Eligibility	Studies selected for in-depth review	14
Eligibility	Studies excluded following eligibility checks	1
Inclusion	Studies ultimately included in the systematic review	13

Source: Compiled from data from the literature selection process, in accordance with PRISMA 2020 (Page et al., 2021).

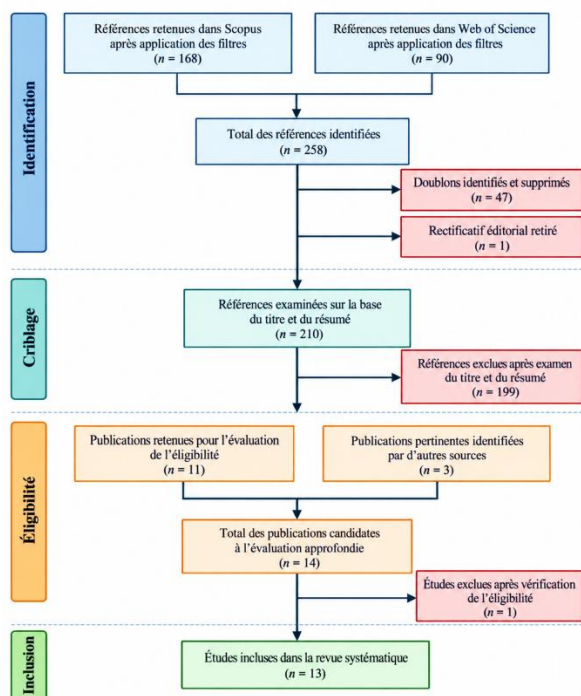


Figure 1: PRISMA 2020 flow diagram of the study selection process.

Source: adapted from Page et al. (2021), PRISMA 2020.

2.5. Data extraction and coding

Data extraction was organised using a standardised template designed to ensure a consistent analysis of the 13 selected studies. For each publication, the information collected covered the authors, year of publication, organisational context, methodological approach, how ERP systems were used, and the main findings relating to organisational agility. Thematic coding was structured around three main categories: informational, organisational and decision-making mechanisms. Factors likely to enhance or limit the influence of ERP systems were also considered in order to account for the diversity of results. A distinction was maintained between conceptual contributions and empirical observations, in line with the objective of a structured synthesis of scientific knowledge (Snyder, 2019).

2.6. Assessment of the methodological quality of the studies

The assessment of the methodological quality of the 13 selected studies was structured according to the diversity of the scientific approaches employed. Quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods studies were examined according to criteria tailored to their design, with reference to the principles of the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT) by Hong et

al. (2018) and the recommendations of the Joanna Briggs Institute (Aromataris and Munn, 2020). The review focused on the clarity of objectives, the appropriateness of methods, the description of samples and organisational contexts, the reliability of data, the rigour of analyses, and the consistency between results and conclusions. For conceptual contributions, greater emphasis was placed on the strength of the argument, the use of theoretical foundations and the relevance of the proposed explanatory mechanisms. This distinction was intended to assess the publications according to their scientific nature, without applying a uniform framework to different methodological approaches.

The critical evaluation was conceived as a tool for assessing the significance of the results rather than as a ranking based on an overall score. The available methodological information was taken into account to distinguish empirical results from theoretical propositions and to identify elements requiring cautious interpretation. No uniform assessment of robustness was assigned to the 13 studies in the absence of a fully documented evaluation for each of them. The corpus of 13 publications was retained on the basis of the eligibility criteria, with the methodological assessments serving to qualify the conclusions of the synthesis.

2.7. Methodology for synthesising and analysing results

The diversity of methodological approaches, organisational contexts and dimensions of agility examined in the 13 selected studies led to a preference for a narrative and thematic synthesis rather than a statistical meta-analysis. This approach aimed to bring the research findings together whilst taking into account their conceptual and empirical specificities (Popay et al., 2006; Snyder, 2019). The analysis was organised across two complementary levels. The first concerned the general characteristics of the publications, notably the year, geographical context, sector of activity and research method employed. The second focused on the mechanisms explaining the relationship between the use of ERP systems and organisational agility, distinguishing between the effects observed on operational processes and those concerning the adaptive capacities of the organisation as a whole.

Thematic coding was based on three main categories: informational mechanisms, associated with the integration and flow of data; organisational mechanisms, relating to the coordination, standardisation and reconfiguration of processes; and decision-making mechanisms, concerning the use of information, responsiveness and the adjustment of decisions. The conditions likely to reinforce or limit these mechanisms were analysed across the board, notably user

skills, managerial practices and organisational constraints. The results were compared to identify convergences, divergences and under-documented relationships, whilst distinguishing between empirical findings and conceptual proposals. A single article could contribute to several categories, though the frequency of such occurrences should not be interpreted as a measure of the importance or intensity of the mechanisms under study. This approach, inspired by the principles of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), was geared towards an integrated understanding of the relationship between ERP and organisational agility.

2.8. Methodological limitations of the review

The scope of this review's findings must be assessed in light of the methodological choices that guided the compilation and analysis of the corpus. The use of Scopus and the Web of Science Core Collection prioritised recognised academic sources in the fields of information systems and management sciences, although their coverage is not exhaustive (Mongeon and Paul-Hus, 2016). The selection of publications in English and French, available by 30 June 2022 at the latest, also defined the documentary scope of the research. The corpus of 13 studies presents a diversity of organisational contexts, sectors of activity and methodological approaches, which requires a degree of caution when generalising the results. Differences in the conceptualisation and measurement of agility — particularly between its operational and organisational dimensions — rendered a statistical aggregation of the results of little value. A narrative and thematic synthesis was therefore favoured to examine the mechanisms through which ERP systems exert influence, whilst distinguishing between conceptual contributions and empirical observations (Snyder, 2019). Finally, the categorisation of publications according to informational, organisational and decision-making mechanisms was structured around a common framework, taking into account the specific characteristics of each study and the available methodological information. These limitations suggest that the conclusions should be interpreted within the scope of the knowledge examined, without detracting from the review's value in understanding the relationships between ERP use and organisational agility.

3. Results of the systematic review

3.1. Methodological and contextual characteristics of the selected studies

Analysis of the 13 selected studies highlights a diversity of methodological approaches and organisational contexts in which the relationship between ERP systems and agility has

been examined. Quantitative research features prominently in this body of work, notably through surveys designed to measure the relationships between ERP usage, organisational capabilities and user practices. Kharabe and Lyytinen (2012) focused on ERP adoption and its effects on organisational agility, whilst Aburub (2015) studied this relationship within the banking sector. Almahamid (2019) extended this perspective by examining the role of users' psychological empowerment in the development of agile capabilities. Other studies have focused on the analysis of organisational processes and practices, notably the work of Goodhue et al. (2009) and Seethamraju and Diatha (2013), which shed light on the adaptability of integrated systems and the effects of their use on the agility of business processes. Case studies and qualitative approaches complement these analyses by paying greater attention to the practical conditions in which ERP systems are deployed. This methodological diversity offers a complementary perspective on the mechanisms under study, whilst highlighting the differences between statistically measured relationships and the transformations observed in organisational practices.

The research contexts are also characterised by a certain degree of heterogeneity, with studies covering, in particular, banking, industrial, manufacturing and logistics activities. The research by Aburub (2015) and Almahamid (2019) examines agility in banking environments where the flow of information, the coordination of services and responsiveness are key organisational challenges. In manufacturing firms, Koh and Simpson (2005) and Mathrani (2022) focus more on the ability to adjust operations and the use of information resources to respond to fluctuations in activity. Falagara Sigala et al. (2020), for their part, examine the relationships between ERP systems and agile capabilities in a humanitarian logistics context. This diversity of research areas is accompanied by differences in how agility is defined and assessed. Some studies consider adaptive capabilities at the organisational level, whilst others focus on process flexibility, operational responsiveness or the coordination of activities. Taken together, these contributions show that the influence of ERP systems must be examined whilst taking into account the characteristics of the organisations and the dimensions of agility actually studied; this provides a basis for analysing the explanatory mechanisms presented in the following sections.

3.2. Information mechanisms: data integration and organisational visibility

The informational contribution of ERP systems to organisational agility is primarily manifested in companies' ability to detect changes and rapidly mobilise the information required for adaptation. The integration of data from different

functions reduces information fragmentation and promotes a shared view of activities, which is essential for identifying internal and external developments. Seethamraju (2014), in a study on demand management, shows that the integration, standardisation and visibility of information supported by enterprise systems help to better anticipate customer needs and enhance the responsiveness of decision-making processes. This relationship aligns with the concept of organisational agility proposed by Overby et al. (2006), which is based on the detection of changes and the capacity to respond. ERP systems can therefore play a role in developing these two dimensions by facilitating the identification of discrepancies, the flow of relevant information and the coordination of necessary adjustments. Goodhue et al. (2009) also show that organisations can utilise integrated data and the existing functionalities of their systems to meet new organisational needs, without systematically modifying their IT architecture.

The influence of these mechanisms becomes particularly evident when integrated information is directly utilised in adapting business activities. Mathrani (2022), drawing on three case studies conducted in New Zealand manufacturing firms, highlights the role of enterprise systems in providing access to real-time operational data, adjusting production schedules and optimising available capacity. These practices enhance the responsiveness of operations to fluctuations in demand and contribute to the company's ability to meet customer needs within appropriate timeframes. Operational agility is, in this context, a concrete manifestation of organisational adaptability, though it does not encompass all its dimensions. The findings suggest that ERP systems support agility when the availability of information facilitates its transformation into decisions and coordinated actions. Information integration is therefore not merely a means of improving process efficiency, but also a resource that can be harnessed to adapt activities to changes in the environment.

However, this benefit does not automatically result from the centralisation of data. Almahamid and Hourani (2015), in a study on supply chain agility, found that the use of ERP systems does not have a significant direct effect on intra-organisational or inter-organisational collaboration, unlike e-commerce technologies. These findings highlight that the availability of a shared information infrastructure does not, in itself, guarantee the effective flow of knowledge or its collective utilisation. The relationship between ERP and organisational agility also depends on sharing practices, coordination between stakeholders and the ability of organisations to convert available information into operational responses. A comparison of these studies reveals a mechanism of influence centred on data integration, the visibility of

changes and the mobilisation of information into action. The contribution of ERP systems to organisational agility therefore appears to be determined by their ability to simultaneously support an understanding of changes in the environment and the adjustment of activities, rather than by the mere centralisation of information resources.

3.3. Organisational mechanisms: coordination, optimisation and reconfiguration of processes

The influence of ERP systems on organisational agility is also evident through the transformations they bring about in the coordination of activities and the organisation of business processes. By bringing together several functions within an integrated system, ERP systems facilitate the coordination of operations and the management of interdependencies between organisational units. This coordination constitutes an important mechanism for agility, insofar as a company's ability to respond to change depends on the coherent mobilisation of its resources and the adjustment of its activities. Tan et al. (2017) show that enterprise systems can support operational agility when their use is accompanied by managerial practices suited to managing interdependencies and coordinating stakeholders. Their contribution therefore stems not only from technological integration, but also from the organisational capabilities developed around the system. From this perspective, the use of ERP systems can enhance agility by facilitating cooperation between departments and the collective adaptation of operations, provided that management practices promote sufficiently responsive coordination in the face of changes in the environment.

Process standardisation and optimisation constitute a second mechanism whose effects on agility appear to be more nuanced. The harmonisation of procedures associated with ERP systems can improve the consistency of operations, reduce certain redundant tasks and facilitate the coordinated execution of activities. However, this structuring can also limit the scope for adjustment when processes become heavily dependent on predefined configurations. Seethamraju and Diatha (2013) highlight this duality by showing that the influence of standardisation on process agility depends on the extent to which it is applied and on whether a prior simplification and optimisation process has taken place. Difficulties in adaptation therefore do not necessarily stem from the characteristics of ERP systems, but may result from processes that have not been sufficiently re-engineered prior to their integration. These findings emphasise that the contribution of ERP systems to organisational agility rests on a balance between the stability required for the coordination of activities and the flexibility essential for their transformation. In this respect, process optimisation is a key

prerequisite for reconciling the demands of organisational integration with the need for responsiveness.

Finally, the capacity for reconfiguration is an essential aspect of this relationship, as an agile organisation must be able to modify its operating methods when business conditions change. Goodhue et al. (2009), drawing on interviews conducted in 15 companies, identify several ways in which integrated systems can be adapted, notably by utilising existing functionalities, using complementary applications and implementing updates provided by suppliers. These observations show that the constraints associated with ERP systems do not necessarily preclude the possibility of organisational transformation. From a complementary perspective, Kharabe and Lyytinen (2012) note that ERP assimilation has a positive influence on organisational agility and that this relationship is reinforced by the agility of information systems. A comparison of these contributions highlights the combined role of ERP adoption, process coordination and reconfiguration capabilities in organisational adaptation. Organisational agility therefore depends not only on the level of structuring of activities, but also on the organisation's ability to evolve its practices and processes without compromising their operational coherence.

3.4. Decision-making mechanisms: responsiveness and adaptation to change

The speed of decision-making is an important aspect of organisational agility, but its effectiveness also depends on organisations' ability to interpret situations and make the appropriate adjustments. ERP systems play a part in this process by supporting the use of operational information and its application in management decisions. Seethamraju and Diatha (2013) show that the integration of systems at different hierarchical levels helps to improve the visibility of activities and decision- processes, whilst cross-functional integration promotes speed of execution and the reconfiguration of business processes. Mathrani (2022) provides further insight based on manufacturing firms, highlighting the role of integrated systems and analytical tools in adjusting production schedules, issuing production orders and utilising available capacity. These findings highlight a decision-making mechanism through which ERP systems can contribute to agility: the transformation of operational information into decisions that are sufficiently rapid and coordinated to respond to fluctuations in activity. Their contribution thus goes beyond the mere availability of data to encompass its use in driving organisational change.

This contribution must, however, be assessed according to the nature of the situations faced by companies. Koh and Simpson

(2005), in a study of manufacturing SMEs, found that ERP systems can improve responsiveness to identifiable changes, but have limitations when it comes to managing unforeseeable uncertainties. This distinction highlights that the decision-making capacity supported by integrated systems depends in part on the ability to anticipate events and to have actionable information at one's disposal. When faced with new or insufficiently structured situations, organisations must supplement the functionalities of ERP systems with appropriate analytical, judgemental and adaptive capabilities. Organisational agility therefore does not rest solely on speeding up routine decisions, but also on the ability to modify planned responses when initial conditions change. The findings of Koh and Simpson (2005) suggest, in this regard, that a distinction should be made between operational responsiveness to predictable changes and the more general capacity to cope with uncertainty.

Decision-making mechanisms also depend on how users and managers take ownership of the possibilities offered by ERP systems. Kharabe and Lyytinen (2012) highlight a positive relationship between ERP adoption and organisational agility, the strength of which is reinforced by the agility of information systems. In the banking sector, Almahamid (2019) also observes a positive influence of ERP use on agile capabilities and on users' psychological empowerment. However, the mediating role of the latter is not confirmed for the dimension of responsiveness, which highlights the diversity of mechanisms involved in the various forms of agility. A comparison of these studies suggests that ERP systems contribute to organisational adaptation when their use is accompanied by decision-making and technological capabilities capable of supporting action in the face of change. The mechanism studied therefore rests on the interplay between the use of information, decision-making and the implementation of adjustments, without assuming that improved operational responsiveness automatically translates into increased agility at the organisational level.

3.5. The conditions and limitations of ERP's influence on organisational agility

The effects of ERP systems on organisational agility depend largely on the conditions under which these technologies are used and integrated into management practices. The availability of an integrated system is not sufficient to enhance adaptability when users lack the necessary skills or autonomy to utilise its functionalities. Almahamid (2019) highlights the role of users' psychological empowerment in the relationship between ERP use and the development of agile capabilities within Jordanian commercial banks. However, this mediating effect is not confirmed for the dimension of responsiveness,

suggesting that human factors do not play an identical role in all manifestations of agility. From a complementary perspective, Kharabe and Lyytinen (2012) show that ERP adoption has a positive influence on organisational agility and that this relationship is reinforced by the agility of information systems. These findings underscore the importance of technological adoption, the systems' adaptability, and their effective deployment in organisational activities. Agility therefore appears to be less closely linked to the mere presence of ERP systems than to companies' ability to develop skills and practices suited to their use.

Organisational characteristics and the methods used to integrate ERP systems are also key determinants. Seethamraju and Diatha (2013) show that the effects of standardisation on process agility vary depending on its intensity and the optimisation efforts undertaken prior to system implementation. Excessive structuring of procedures can restrict opportunities for reconfiguration, particularly when operational requirements change rapidly. Goodhue et al. (2009) nevertheless emphasise that organisations have several options available to meet the need for change, including utilising existing functionalities, using complementary applications and adopting adaptations offered by suppliers. In the context of humanitarian supply chains, Falagara Sigala et al. (2020) highlight the need to design ERP systems compatible with the specific characteristics of missions, resources and operational practices. These contributions show that alignment between the system's functionalities and organisational requirements is a key condition for agility, as the constraints observed may stem as much from the technological configuration as from management decisions and the organisation of processes.

The limits of this influence become more apparent when organisations are faced with uncertain environments or adaptation needs that exceed the usual capabilities of their systems. Koh and Simpson (2005) note that ERP systems can support the response of manufacturing SMEs to certain identifiable changes, whilst having limitations when it comes to managing unpredictable uncertainties. Aburub (2015), in a study of 90 bank branches, observed a statistically significant relationship between the use of ERP systems and organisational agility, but noted a low proportion of explained variance, suggesting the involvement of other organisational factors. These findings call for a more nuanced view of the idea that ERP systems make a consistently positive contribution. Their influence varies according to sector-specific characteristics, the available technological and human resources, and the nature of the changes to which firms must respond. The synthesis of the studies therefore highlights a conditional relationship between the use of ERP systems and

organisational agility, in which the adoption of the system, its suitability for processes and internal adaptive capacities play a decisive role. This interpretation also highlights the need to distinguish between one-off improvements in operational responsiveness and the development of a more comprehensive form of organisational agility.

4. Discussion of the results

4.1. Putting the identified mechanisms of influence into perspective

Bringing together the selected academic contributions reveals several complementary lines of inquiry in the study of the relationship between ERP systems and organisational agility. Early research focused primarily on the adaptability of integrated systems in the face of operational changes and the uncertainties encountered by organisations, particularly in manufacturing environments (Koh and Simpson, 2005). Subsequent research has progressively explored this relationship in greater depth by examining ERP adoption, process integration and their implications for organisational agility (Kharabe and Lyytinen, 2012; Seethamraju and Diatha, 2013). This line of research has been extended by empirical studies focusing on the effects of ERP use in specific sectoral contexts, notably the banking sector (Aburub, 2015; Almahamid, 2019). A comparison of these contributions highlights a broadening of explanatory perspectives, moving from the characteristics of integrated systems towards the organisational and human capabilities associated with their use. The informational, organisational and decision-making mechanisms identified in the review form part of this complementarity of approaches, whilst referring to distinct dimensions of agility.

The interpretation of these mechanisms also benefits from being considered in relation to the theoretical foundations drawn upon in the literature. Resource-based theory leads us to view ERP systems as technological resources whose contribution depends on how they are integrated with organisational capabilities and practices (Barney, 1991; Wade and Hulland, 2004). The dynamic capabilities approach complements this interpretation by emphasising firms' ability to integrate, mobilise and reconfigure their resources in response to changes in the environment (Teece et al., 1997). The findings of Kharabe and Lyytinen (2012) align with this perspective by highlighting the role of ERP assimilation and the agility of information systems, whilst Seethamraju and Diatha (2013) demonstrate that the effects of integration and standardisation depend on process management practices. The mechanisms identified in the review should therefore not be regarded as isolated effects. The integration of information

supports the detection of changes, organisational coordination facilitates the mobilisation of resources, and decision-making capabilities contribute to the adjustment of activities. Their interplay aligns with the concept of agility based on detection and response capabilities developed by Overby et al. (2006), without presupposing that each of these relationships is equally strong in all contexts.

Finally, this cross-cutting analysis highlights the importance of organisational conditions in explaining the observed results. Aburub (2015) highlights a significant relationship between the use of ERP systems and organisational agility, whilst noting that the explanatory power of this usage remains limited. Almahamid (2019) explores this issue further by identifying the mediating role of users' psychological empowerment, the influence of which varies depending on the agile capabilities under consideration. In manufacturing environments, Mathrani (2022) also emphasises the contribution of integrated systems, combined with knowledge management practices, to the adaptation of production operations. These findings indicate that the effects of ERP systems cannot be assessed in isolation from human capabilities, managerial practices and the characteristics of the activities under study. The contribution of this review therefore lies in bringing these different perspectives together to understand how technological resources translate, under certain conditions, into organisational adaptability. This interpretation moves beyond the dichotomy between ERP systems viewed as instruments of standardisation and their potential role in fostering agility, favouring instead an explanation grounded in the mechanisms and conditions under which they are utilised.

4.2. Convergences and divergences in the literature's findings

The studies reviewed agree on the ability of ERP systems to support certain forms of agility, whilst showing significant differences regarding the extent and conditions of this contribution. Kharabe and Lyytinen (2012) highlight a positive relationship between ERP adoption and organisational agility, reinforced by the agility of information systems. In the banking sector, Aburub (2015) also confirms the existence of a statistically significant relationship between the use of ERP systems and agility, but emphasises that the proportion of variance explained remains low. These findings are not necessarily contradictory: they suggest that the contribution of ERP systems depends on the complementary capabilities developed by organisations and on how their use is integrated into management practices. The work of Mathrani (2022) supports this interpretation by showing that integrated systems, combined with knowledge management,

support the responsiveness of manufacturing operations. There is therefore a growing consensus regarding the beneficial role of ERP systems in the utilisation of organisational resources, although this influence cannot be considered sufficient to guarantee overall agility.

Disagreements relate more to the effects of standardisation and the ability of integrated systems to respond to different forms of change. Seethamraju and Diatha (2013) show that process standardisation can have favourable or constraining effects depending on its intensity and the optimisation efforts undertaken prior to ERP implementation. This observation is consistent with the findings of Koh and Simpson (2005), who distinguish between ERP systems' ability to support responsiveness to identifiable changes and their limitations in managing unpredictable uncertainties. The differences observed also relate to the dimensions of agility under study. Some research focuses on the speed of execution and the adaptation of processes, whilst others examine broader capacities for organisational transformation. In the humanitarian sector, Falagara Sigala et al. (2020) highlight in particular the need to adapt ERP design to the specific characteristics of missions and operational practices. These contributions indicate that standardisation is neither a systematic obstacle nor a guarantee of agility: its effects depend on its suitability to organisational requirements and the nature of the changes encountered.

The emphasis placed on human factors and collaborative practices is another point of differentiation between the studies. Almahamid (2019) establishes that the psychological empowerment of users plays a role in the relationship between ERP use and several agile capabilities, without confirming this mediating effect for responsiveness. Almahamid and Hourani (2015) observe, in a pharmaceutical context, that the use of ERP systems does not, a, have a significant effect on internal or inter-organisational collaboration, unlike e-commerce technologies. These results show that the expected benefits of ERP systems depend on how they are integrated with collective practices and complementary resources. Discrepancies between the findings must also be interpreted in light of differences in sectors, samples and methods, as quantitative surveys primarily measure relationships between variables, whilst case studies provide a more contextualised understanding of practices. A comparison of the research ultimately leads us to view the influence of ERP systems on organisational agility as a multidimensional and conditional relationship. Their contribution becomes clearer when technological resources are accompanied by appropriate human, organisational and decision-making capabilities, whilst the absence of such complementarities may limit the expected benefits.

4.3. Proposal for an integrative conceptual framework for the ERP–organisational agility relationship

A synthesis of the review’s findings leads to the proposal of an integrative conceptual framework designed to explain the contribution of ERP systems to organisational agility. This framework is based on a distinction between the technological resources deployed, the resulting organisational mechanisms, and the adaptive capacities that may develop. Resource-based theory (Barney, 1991; Wade and Hulland, 2004) forms a key foundation for this framework, emphasising that the value of information systems depends on their combination with the organisation’s complementary skills and resources. The dynamic capabilities approach (Teece et al., 1997) provides an additional explanatory dimension by linking this mobilisation to the ability to reconfigure activities in response to changes in the environment. Within the proposed framework, the use of ERP systems constitutes the initial technological factor, whose influence on organisational agility is potentially exerted through three complementary mechanisms: information integration, the coordination and reconfiguration of processes, and the use of information in decision-making. This framework builds on the findings of Kharabe and Lyytinen (2012) regarding ERP adoption and those of Seethamraju and Diatha (2013) concerning the effects of integration and standardisation on process agility.

Organisational agility represents the resulting capacity of this framework, understood in terms of the detection of changes and the speed of organisational responses, in line with the conceptualisation by Overby et al. (2006). Informational mechanisms are primarily involved in identifying changes and understanding situations, while organisational mechanisms support the coordinated adjustment of resources and activities. Decision-making mechanisms ensure the articulation between these dimensions by helping to transform available information into appropriate actions. However, these relationships should not be interpreted as a strictly linear sequence, as the mechanisms may operate simultaneously and reinforce one another. Their contribution is also conditioned by several factors, notably users’ skills, their autonomy, the agility of information systems and the methods used to standardise processes. In this regard, the findings of Almahamid (2019) highlight the distinct role of psychological empowerment in agile capabilities, whilst Seethamraju and Diatha (2013) highlight the ambivalent effects of standardisation. The proposed framework therefore incorporates these factors as conditions that may either enhance or limit the transformation of ERP resources into organisational adaptability.

The originality of this proposal lies in the articulation of mechanisms that are generally examined separately in studies, by distinguishing between technological resources, channels of influence and the conditions for their mobilisation. It leads us to view organisational agility not as an automatic result of ERP use, but as a capability that may emerge from their interaction with management practices and organisational competencies. This interpretation is consistent with the findings of Aburub (2015), according to which the use of ERP systems accounts for only a limited proportion of variations in agility, suggesting the involvement of other factors. The integrative framework therefore constitutes a theoretical proposal derived from a synthesis of existing knowledge, rather than a causal model that has been empirically validated in its entirety. Its contribution lies in clarifying the potential relationships between the dimensions studied and in establishing a conceptual basis for future empirical research into the direct, indirect and conditional effects of ERP use on organisational agility.

4.4. Theoretical contributions, managerial implications and research prospects

From a theoretical perspective, this systematic review contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationships between the use of ERP systems and organisational agility, moving beyond approaches that focus solely on the direct effects of technology on adaptive capabilities. Its main contribution lies in the identification of three complementary mechanisms—informational, organisational and decision-making—whose interplay sheds light on the conditions under which technological resources can support organisational agility. This interpretation enriches Barney’s (1991) resource-based theory and Teece et al.’s (1997) dynamic capabilities approach, (1997), by specifying the organisational processes capable of transforming the use of ERP systems into capabilities for detecting and responding to change. It also helps to clarify the distinction between process agility and overall organisational agility, which are often addressed through different indicators and levels of analysis. The synthesis of the findings of Kharabe and Lyytinen (2012), Seethamraju and Diatha (2013) and Almahamid (2019) highlights, in particular, the importance of complementary capabilities, management practices and system adoption in explaining this relationship. The scientific contribution of this review therefore lies in formulating an integrated and conditional interpretation of the mechanisms studied, rather than establishing a uniform causal relationship between ERP systems and agility.

From a managerial perspective, the findings encourage organisations to view ERP systems as organisational

resources whose contribution depends on how they are used and how they are integrated with internal practices. Improving agility requires, in particular, a focus on the flow of information, coordination between functions, and the ability to modify processes without compromising the coherence of activities. Managers must also strike a balance between the standardisation of procedures and the scope for adaptation required by different organisational units, in line with the observations of Seethamraju and Diatha (2013). The development of digital skills, user autonomy and change management are other important dimensions for making the most of the functionalities of integrated systems (Almahamid, 2019). From this perspective, the evaluation of ERP systems should not be limited to efficiency gains or the reliability of operations, but should incorporate indicators relating to responsiveness, the time taken to adjust processes, and the capacity for coordination in the face of change. These guidelines emphasise that agility relies on management decisions and collective practices that go beyond the mere technological characteristics of the systems.

Research avenues stem primarily from the differences observed between organisational contexts and the dimensions of agility studied. Future research would benefit from simultaneously examining informational, organisational and decision-making mechanisms within empirical models that incorporate their indirect effects and interactions. Longitudinal studies would be particularly useful for understanding how the contribution of ERP systems evolves following their implementation, as users develop their skills and organisations adjust their practices. Comparisons across industry sectors, company sizes and levels of digital maturity could also clarify the conditions under which ERP systems facilitate adaptation or reinforce certain rigidities. Further attention should be paid to the distinction between the 's ability to detect changes and its capacity for organisational response, in line with the conceptualisation by Overby et al. (2006), in order to determine whether the mechanisms identified have different effects on these dimensions. Such further research would help to empirically test the proposed conceptual framework and to better understand how organisations can reconcile the requirements of integration, coordination and agility.

General conclusion

The relationship between the use of ERP systems and organisational agility cannot be understood solely through the technological performance of integrated systems. A systematic review of 13 scientific studies, covering the available literature up to 30 June 2022, highlights an influence that is based on the interplay of three complementary

mechanisms. Informational integration contributes to the visibility of activities and the detection of changes; the coordination and reconfiguration of processes support the adjustment of organisational resources; whilst decision-making mechanisms play a role in transforming information into appropriate responses. These findings build on the concept of agility based on detection and reaction capabilities developed by Overby et al. (2006), whilst emphasising that the contribution of ERP systems depends on the conditions under which these mechanisms are mobilised. The divergences observed in the literature show, in particular, that standardisation, system adoption and management practices can either enhance or limit adaptive capacities, depending on the characteristics of organisations and the demands of their environment.

The scientific contribution of this research lies in the shift from an approach centred on the effects of ERP systems to a structured understanding of the mechanisms explaining their potential contribution to organisational agility. By bringing together findings previously examined from different perspectives – notably ERP assimilation, process agility and user empowerment (Kharabe and Lyytinen, 2012; Seethamraju and Diatha, 2013; Almahamid, 2019), this review proposes an integrative conceptual framework distinguishing between technological resources, mechanisms of influence and the conditions likely to modify their effects. This framework helps to clarify the explanatory scope of resource-based theory (Barney, 1991) and the dynamic capabilities approach (Teece et al., 1997) in the study of integrated systems. It also provides an important distinction between the improvement of operational agility and the development of genuine organisational adaptability. The theoretical contribution therefore does not consist in asserting a systematically positive influence of ERP systems, but in showing why this influence varies and how different organisational capabilities may play a part in shaping it.

From a managerial perspective, the findings emphasise that the pursuit of agility should not lead companies to prioritise technological investment alone, but to attach comparable importance to user skills, the coordination of functions and the adaptability of processes. The diversity of the contexts and methods examined nevertheless limits the generalisability of the conclusions and justifies the development of further empirical research. In particular, longitudinal and cross-sectoral studies could assess the direct and indirect effects of the mechanisms identified, clarify their interactions and examine the role of organisational capabilities in different environments. In this regard, the proposed conceptual framework provides a theoretical basis that could be subjected to further empirical validation. Ultimately, this research

highlights that organisational agility is not an intrinsic property of ERP systems, but a capability that is built through their interaction with human resources, managerial practices and organisational processes. It is in this interplay between technological integration and the capacity for transformation that the true challenge of ERP systems' contribution to business agility lies.

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