

Determining the Impact of System Alignment and Agile Methods on Agile Management

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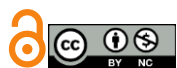
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ABSTRACT

Objective: The objective of this study is to examine the impact of system alignment and agile methods on agile management within the organizational context of Fidar Steel Company.

Methodology: The study employed a descriptive-survey research design, collecting data from all 41 managers and employees of Fidar Steel Company using a standardized Organizational Agility questionnaire developed by Zhang and Sharifi (2000). The questionnaire included subscales for system alignment and agile methods, with responses measured on a five-point Likert scale. Data analysis was conducted using multiple regression analysis with SmartPLS software to test the relationships between the variables and assess the research model's fit.

Findings: The results indicated that both system alignment and agile methods have significant positive effects on agile management. System alignment exhibited a strong path coefficient, suggesting that well-aligned organizational systems facilitate agile management. Similarly, agile methods showed a significant positive impact, demonstrating that adopting adaptive and iterative practices enhances organizational responsiveness. The model fit indices confirmed the robustness of the research model, and correlation analysis revealed strong interrelationships among the variables. These findings align with previous studies highlighting the importance of strategic alignment and agile practices in promoting organizational agility.

Conclusion: The study concludes that system alignment and agile methods are critical drivers of agile management, enabling organizations to remain adaptable and competitive. Organizations should focus on strategically aligning their systems and integrating agile practices to foster an environment that supports rapid response to change. These insights contribute to the broader understanding of organizational agility and offer practical recommendations for enhancing agile management.

Keywords: System Alignment, Agile Methods, Agile Management, Organizational Agility, Strategic Alignment, Organizational Adaptability, Fidar Steel Company.

1 Introduction

Organizational agility has become a critical capability for businesses striving to remain competitive in rapidly evolving markets. Defined as the ability to quickly respond to changes and adapt to new conditions, agility has implications across strategic, operational, and human resource management domains (Rashidi et al., 2021). The concept is rooted in dynamic capabilities, allowing organizations to harness their resources effectively and maintain a strategic edge (Elgamel, 2018). Recent research highlights the growing importance of agile management systems, which integrate flexibility, innovation, and strategic responsiveness to enhance organizational performance (Zastempowski & Cyfert, 2023).

The theoretical foundation of organizational agility is deeply intertwined with strategic management and organizational learning. According to Abbasi and Fattahian (2018), strategic learning enables organizations to foster agility, improving performance outcomes by promoting continuous adaptation and innovation. Their study on sports and youth departments demonstrated how strategic agility can mediate the relationship between strategic learning and performance, emphasizing the value of agility in turbulent environments (Abbasi & Fattahian, 2018). This aligns with the findings of Atkinson et al. (2020), who argued that attaining organizational agility involves leveraging competitive intelligence and fostering strategic flexibility. Together, these elements form a comprehensive framework for understanding how agile organizations operate successfully (Atkinson et al., 2020).

One key area of exploration in organizational agility is human resource management (HRM). Scholars have recognized that HR agility is crucial for developing responsive and adaptable workforces (Amiri et al., 2021). In particular, the Ministry of Petroleum's case study revealed that agile HR practices, such as flexible work arrangements and rapid talent deployment, are pivotal for organizational success. Ahang et al. (2020) further emphasized the role of human resource agility in military organizations, highlighting that specific drivers, including training and adaptive leadership, contribute to an agile workforce capable of responding to unforeseen challenges (Ahang et al., 2020).

Moreover, digital transformation has revolutionized how organizations approach agility. Boudelayi et al. (2021) discussed digital HR management in the public sector, demonstrating how digital tools facilitate rapid decision-making and adaptability (Boudelayi et al., 2021). This digital

approach is increasingly relevant in the era of the digital economy, where agility can determine an organization's ability to innovate and compete. Gonçalves et al. (2020) explored the cultural aspects of organizational agility affecting digital innovation, identifying a need for organizations to balance traditional structures with agile practices to foster creativity and responsiveness (Gonçalves et al., 2020).

The impact of organizational agility on overall performance has also been explored extensively. Malmir and Norouzzadeh (2021) illustrated the mediating role of agility between knowledge management and organizational development. Their findings suggest that agility serves as a catalyst for transforming knowledge into actionable strategies that promote growth (Malmir & Norouzzadeh, 2021). This view is supported by Norouzi Ali (2021), who examined the relationship between organizational learning, knowledge management, and agility. The study concluded that continuous learning and knowledge-sharing practices are fundamental to developing a nimble organizational culture (Norouzi Ali, 2021).

In addition to HRM and digital transformation, social capital and strategic intelligence have emerged as essential components of organizational agility. Aldiabat (2022) investigated the role of strategic intelligence in the relationship between organizational agility and excellence in Jordanian telecommunications companies, demonstrating that strategic insights enable organizations to anticipate and swiftly respond to market shifts (Aldiabat, 2022). Similarly, Chandra (2021) emphasized the importance of social capital in managing human resources in agile entrepreneurial organizations. By leveraging social networks and collaborative practices, organizations can foster a culture of shared knowledge and mutual support, driving agility and innovation (Chandra, 2021).

Another critical area of focus in the literature is the influence of organizational architecture on performance management. Shokri et al. (2020) examined how organizational architecture impacts performance, with agility acting as a mediator. Their research in the physical education departments of medical sciences universities highlighted the significance of designing structures that facilitate rapid decision-making and adaptability (Shokri et al., 2020). This structural approach is echoed in the work of Mesri et al. (2021), who explored the effect of leadership agility on reducing the phenomenon of invisible employees through knowledge sharing, reinforcing the idea that agile

leadership is essential for effective organizational management (Mesri et al., 2021).

The strategic alignment of organizational systems also plays a pivotal role in achieving agility. Rowzan (2018) proposed a hybrid system dynamic model for analyzing the impact of strategic alignment on project portfolio selection. This model underscores the importance of aligning strategic goals with agile practices to optimize resource allocation and enhance project outcomes (Rowzan, 2018). Ganji Bidmeshk and Hosseini Seno (2016) further tested a model of aligning marketing information security policies with strategic information systems, emphasizing the need for integrated approaches to agility (Ganji Bidmeshk & Hosseini Seno, 2016).

In competitive industries, agility can significantly influence a firm's performance and market position. Khan et al. (2022) examined the impact of business analytics capabilities on innovation, information quality, agility, and firm performance, highlighting the moderating effect of industry dynamism (Khan et al., 2022). Their study revealed that agile organizations are better equipped to leverage data-driven insights for strategic decision-making, thereby enhancing their innovation and competitiveness. Ribeiro (2024) compared procurement outsourcing strategies and organizational agility in pharmaceutical companies, demonstrating that strategic outsourcing can enhance agility and operational efficiency (Ribeiro, 2024).

Sadeghimoghaddam et al. (2021) explored the correlation between e-government and organizational agility, with social responsibility serving as a mediator. Their research indicated that digital governance practices could enhance agility by streamlining processes and improving stakeholder engagement (Sadeghimoghaddam et al., 2021). Piran et al. (2022) examined the role of social capital and collective knowledge on business intelligence and agility in Melli Bank branches, finding that strong social networks and collaborative knowledge-sharing practices contribute significantly to organizational agility (Piran et al., 2022).

Finally, the development of strategic talent management ecosystems is critical for sustaining organizational agility. Rožman et al. (2023) discussed how competitiveness can be enhanced through the strategic development of agile management systems, emphasizing the importance of talent management in fostering a responsive and innovative workforce. The integration of strategic talent management and agile practices creates an environment where employees can adapt to new challenges, contributing to the organization's overall success (Rožman et al., 2023). In

summary, the literature on organizational agility reveals a complex interplay of strategic, human, and technological factors that contribute to agile performance. The present study aims to examine the impact of system alignment and agile methods on agile management.

2 Methods and Materials

2.1 Study Design and Participants

This research is categorized as applied based on its objectives and employs a descriptive-survey methodology for data collection and analysis. The study was conducted to explore the impact of system alignment and agile methods on agile management within the organizational context of Fidar Steel Company.

The research was designed as a descriptive-survey study involving all managers and employees working at Fidar Steel Company. According to the statistics provided by the organization, the total population for this study was 41 individuals. Given the manageable size of the entire population, the study included all 41 participants without sampling. This census approach ensured comprehensive coverage of perspectives and minimized the risk of selection bias, providing a full understanding of how agile practices and system alignment influence the organization's agility.

2.2 Measure

To evaluate the research variables, the study used the standardized Organizational Agility questionnaire developed by Zhang and Sharifi (2000). This instrument comprises 19 items measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The questionnaire has been previously validated in multiple Iranian studies, establishing its reliability and applicability in similar contexts. Specifically, a study by Ghanbari et al. (2014) reported a high reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha of 0.90), demonstrating the instrument's robustness. For this research, two specific subscales from the questionnaire were utilized: system alignment and agile methods. These subscales provided a focused measurement of the constructs relevant to the hypotheses under investigation (Aghaei Ghaleche, 2023; Shabani Bahar et al., 2018).

2.3 Data Analysis

The study employed multiple regression analysis to test the hypotheses and examine the relationships between

system alignment, agile methods, and agile management. The statistical analysis was conducted using version four of the SmartPLS software, which is well-suited for partial least squares structural equation modeling. This method allowed for an effective assessment of the research model, enabling the evaluation of direct and indirect relationships among the studied variables. The choice of SmartPLS ensured robust and comprehensive analysis, accommodating the complexity of the data and providing insights into the effects of system alignment and agile methods on overall organizational agility.

3 Findings and Results

The demographic profile of the study's 41 participants reveals a majority of male respondents, comprising 78% of

the sample. Age distribution indicates that 27% are under 30 years old, 29% fall within the 31-40 range, 32% are aged between 41 and 50, and the remaining 12% are over 51 years old. In terms of educational attainment, 22% hold a high school diploma or below, 44% have a bachelor's degree, 27% possess a master's degree, and 7% have attained a doctoral level of education. Regarding work experience, 27% of the respondents have five years or less of service, 20% have six to ten years, another 20% fall within the 11 to 15 years range, and 34% have over 15 years of experience. This demographic spread provides a well-rounded representation of perspectives across various age groups, educational levels, and years of service, enriching the study's analysis on agile management practices within the organization.

Table 1

Key Indicators in the Study

Indicator	System Alignment	Agile Methods	Agile Management
Mean \pm SE	3.37 \pm 0.149	3.33 \pm 0.152	3.34 \pm 0.137
Trimmed Mean	3.39	3.36	3.37
Median	3.25	3.33	3.33
Variance	0.91	0.94	0.76
Standard Deviation	0.96	0.97	0.87
Minimum	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5
Range	4	4	4
Interquartile Range	1.13	1.33	1.17
Skewness	-0.14	-0.29	-0.32
Kurtosis	-0.01	0.02	0.65

The study's analysis of the key indicators, as presented in [Table 1](#), provides a detailed statistical summary for the variables system alignment, agile methods, and agile management. The average scores for these indicators were 3.37, 3.33, and 3.34, respectively, with standard errors of 0.149, 0.152, and 0.137. Trimmed means were consistent with the overall averages, suggesting stable central tendencies. The medians for all variables were similar, around 3.33, while the variances were 0.91 for system

alignment, 0.94 for agile methods, and 0.76 for agile management, indicating moderate variability. Standard deviations of approximately 0.96, 0.97, and 0.87 support the observed variances. The range of values for all indicators was 4, spanning from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 5, with interquartile ranges between 1.13 and 1.33. Skewness values were slightly negative, indicating a minor leftward skew, while kurtosis ranged from -0.01 to 0.65, indicating distributions close to normality.

Table 2

Correlation Matrix Between Variables

	System Alignment	Agile Methods	Agile Management
System Alignment	1	-	-
Agile Methods	0.734	1	-
Agile Management	0.684	0.769	1

The correlation matrix highlights significant relationships between the variables. System alignment showed a strong positive correlation with agile methods ($r = 0.734$) and agile management ($r = 0.684$), while agile methods were also positively correlated with agile management ($r = 0.769$). These results suggest robust interconnectedness among the variables, indicating that improvements in system alignment and agile methods are likely associated with enhancements in agile management.

The study assessed the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. Cronbach's alpha values for agile management, system alignment, and agile methods were 0.873, 0.835, and 0.865, respectively, indicating high internal consistency for all variables. Composite reliability

coefficients were also satisfactory, with values of 0.726 for agile management, 0.733 for system alignment, and 0.786 for agile methods, confirming the robustness of the constructs. Regarding model fit, the fit indices demonstrated that the structural model was well-specified: the chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio (χ^2/df) was 1.994, which is less than the threshold of 3, and the goodness of fit index (GFI) was 0.911, exceeding the recommended 0.9. Additionally, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was 0.016, well below the acceptable limit of 0.08, while both the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) and the comparative fit index (CFI) were 0.93 and 0.91, respectively, further supporting the model's adequacy. These results collectively confirm the reliability, validity, and strong fit of the research model.

Table 3

Hypothesis Testing Results

No.	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	t-value	Impact Direction	Result
1	System alignment significantly affects agile management	0.957	2.421	+	Supported
2	Agile methods significantly affect agile management	0.068	3.216	+	Supported

Hypothesis testing results confirm the significant impact of both system alignment and agile methods on agile management. The path coefficient for the effect of system alignment on agile management was 0.957, with a t-value of 2.421, demonstrating a strong and statistically significant positive effect. Similarly, agile methods had a positive and significant effect on agile management, with a path coefficient of 0.068 and a t-value of 3.216. Both hypotheses were supported, affirming that system alignment and agile methods are critical drivers of agile management within the organizational context of Fidar Steel Company.

4 Discussion and Conclusion

The results of this study have shed light on the significant impact of system alignment and agile methods on agile management within the organizational context of Fidar Steel Company. The first major finding revealed that system alignment positively and significantly influences agile management, with a strong path coefficient and a high t-value. This suggests that when an organization's systems and processes are strategically aligned, it becomes more agile and capable of responding to changes efficiently. These findings align with previous research by Rowzan (2018), who proposed that strategic alignment of organizational systems is crucial for effective project management and

portfolio selection, leading to enhanced agility. The hybrid system dynamic model developed by Rowzan emphasized that aligning goals and resources enables organizations to optimize performance and adapt quickly to environmental shifts (Rowzan, 2018). Similarly, Ganji Bidmeshk and Hosseini Seno (2016) confirmed that integrating marketing information security policies with strategic systems planning fosters an agile environment, reinforcing the importance of strategic coherence (Ganji Bidmeshk & Hosseini Seno, 2016).

The second key finding of this research highlighted the positive and significant effect of agile methods on agile management. This result demonstrates that employing agile methodologies, such as adaptive planning and rapid prototyping, enhances the organization's ability to manage change and remain flexible. The study by Amiri et al. (2021) supports this conclusion, as their investigation into human resource management agility in the Ministry of Petroleum revealed that adopting agile practices significantly improved organizational responsiveness (Amiri et al., 2021). Furthermore, Aldiabat (2022) emphasized the role of strategic intelligence as a mediating factor between organizational agility and excellence, showing that agile methods integrated with strategic intelligence contribute to superior performance (Aldiabat, 2022). These studies collectively illustrate that agile methods are instrumental in

enabling organizations to anticipate and adapt to market dynamics effectively.

Our findings also echo the research of Chandra (2021), who highlighted the importance of social capital in managing human resources within agile entrepreneurial organizations (Chandra, 2021). The positive impact of agile methods on agile management observed in our study is consistent with Chandra's assertion that agile practices, supported by strong social networks, lead to enhanced collaboration and knowledge sharing, thereby fostering organizational agility. Additionally, Gonçalves et al. (2020) emphasized cultural aspects affecting digital innovation, noting that organizational cultures that embrace agility are better positioned to leverage digital tools for innovation (Gonçalves et al., 2020). This cultural perspective supports our findings by illustrating the necessity of agile methods in cultivating an innovative and adaptable workforce.

The positive relationships between system alignment, agile methods, and agile management are further corroborated by research into strategic learning and organizational development. Abbasi and Fattahian (2018) demonstrated that strategic learning significantly enhances organizational performance when mediated by strategic agility (Abbasi & Fattahian, 2018). Their work underlines the importance of continuous learning and adaptive strategies in developing an agile organization, which is consistent with our finding that strategic system alignment and agile methods are essential for fostering agile management. Moreover, the work of Malmir and Norouzzadeh (2021) on knowledge management and organizational development revealed that agility acts as a catalyst for growth, emphasizing the transformative power of agile practices in organizational contexts (Malmir & Norouzzadeh, 2021).

The strong correlations observed between system alignment, agile methods, and agile management also align with the findings of Atkinson et al. (2020). Their study on competitive intelligence and strategic flexibility demonstrated that organizations must integrate agile practices into their strategic planning to remain innovative and competitive. This integration of agility with strategic management practices has been shown to enhance organizational performance, supporting the central thesis of our research. Furthermore, Sadeghimoghaddam et al. (2021) explored the correlation between e-government practices and organizational agility, revealing that digital governance frameworks can streamline processes and promote agile management. Our findings are consistent with this study, as

they emphasize the critical role of strategic alignment and agile methods in facilitating organizational responsiveness and adaptability.

Our research also contributes to the growing body of literature on the role of human resources in promoting agility. Ahang et al. (2020) highlighted drivers of human resource agility in military organizations, emphasizing the need for adaptive leadership and training programs to foster a responsive workforce (Ahang et al., 2020). The emphasis on human resource agility in our study aligns with the findings of Ahang et al., as it underscores the importance of strategic HR practices in promoting agile management. Additionally, Mesri et al. (2021) found that agile leadership can reduce the phenomenon of invisible employees by encouraging knowledge sharing and collaboration (Mesri et al., 2021). This supports our findings, suggesting that agile methods, when effectively implemented, can promote a cohesive and agile organizational culture.

Moreover, our study's results align with the findings of Shokri et al. (2020), who demonstrated the mediating role of organizational agility in the relationship between organizational architecture and performance management (Shokri et al., 2020). Our research confirms that system alignment and agile methods are vital for developing agile management practices that improve organizational outcomes. The work of Rožman et al. (2023) further supports this perspective, showing that strategic talent management ecosystems can enhance competitiveness through the development of agile management systems (Rožman et al., 2023). These studies collectively reinforce the practical significance of our research findings, emphasizing the need for integrated and agile approaches to organizational management.

This study is not without limitations. First, the research was conducted in a single organizational context, Fidar Steel Company, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other industries or cultural settings. Second, the sample size of 41 participants, while comprehensive for the organization studied, may not be representative of larger or more diverse organizations. Third, the reliance on self-reported measures in the form of questionnaires could introduce response bias, as participants may have provided socially desirable answers. Finally, the study's cross-sectional design limits the ability to infer causal relationships between system alignment, agile methods, and agile management.

Future research should consider expanding the scope of the study to include multiple organizations across different

industries and cultural contexts to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Longitudinal studies could be conducted to establish causal relationships and observe the long-term effects of system alignment and agile methods on agile management. Additionally, future research could incorporate qualitative methods, such as interviews or case studies, to gain deeper insights into how agile practices are implemented and perceived within organizations. Exploring the moderating effects of organizational culture or external environmental factors on the relationship between system alignment, agile methods, and agile management could also provide valuable insights.

Organizations looking to enhance their agility should prioritize aligning their systems and processes with strategic goals. This alignment ensures that all organizational components work cohesively to respond effectively to changes. Implementing agile methods, such as adaptive planning and iterative development, can further enhance organizational responsiveness and innovation. Leaders should foster a culture that supports collaboration, continuous learning, and knowledge sharing, as these elements are crucial for sustaining agility. Investing in digital tools and training programs that promote agility and strategic intelligence can also help organizations stay ahead in competitive markets. Finally, organizations should regularly evaluate and adjust their strategies to maintain alignment and ensure continued agility.

Authors' Contributions

All authors have contributed significantly to the research process and the development of the manuscript.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

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