The Role of Information Technology in Business Agility: Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the effect of information technology on business agility, in addition to what factors influence it, what parties are involved, and why information technology is needed in a company. Business agility is an ability that companies can use to see and analyze changes to make decisions in an uncertain environment, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and in facing the challenges of industrial revolution 4.0. The research question is how can information technology affect business agility? who plays a role?, and why IT is needed in a company, and identify the influence of IT on business agility. The method used is a systematic literature review and through a review of 401 related journals, several factors have been identified that affect business agility. From several factors found, Information Technology has been identified as one of the factors that affect business agility. The results showed that Business Agility is an important aspect for the company. Business Agility is influenced by technology involvement, the role of top management, and employees of Human Resource, operations, and Information Technology divisions. With Information Technology, companies can identify and deal with business opportunities, customers and resources more effectively. It is emphasized in this paper that in the era of the Covid pandemic, the companies that can survive are those that understand technology/Technological literacy.

Keywords: Business Agility, Industry 4.0 Developments, Information Technology, Systematic Literature Review

1. Introduction

Business Agility is a capability that companies can use to see and analyze changes to make decisions in an uncertain environment, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the face of industrial development 4.0. Companies must be able to adapt and innovate continuously to survive in an unstable environment and must act quickly and efficiently to take advantage of several resources, especially those related to the growing use of information technology. By knowing and mastering technology, companies can anticipate future needs and can respond quickly and efficiently. The agility ability of a company not only allows the company to survive in an uncertain environment but also can have a tremendous impact on the company.

Business agility is the main capability that allows companies to be able to see environmental changes and act effectively to maintain and improve sustainable performance (Marhraoui et al., 2019). That is, they must have the necessary skills to analyze current and future situations to be able to make the right decisions to manage uncertain future events (Hajevar & Kharazian, 2016). The impact of agility on a company not only allows the company to survive in an uncertain environment but can also have an even greater impact on the company (Hajevar & Kharazian, 2016). Several agility drivers in companies force

organizations to remain agile with market changes, changes in competition, changes in customer preferences, changes in technology, changes in social factors, and changes in the economy (Žitkienė & Deksnys, 2018). Several factors affect business agility (Marhraoui & Manouar, 2017), namely Information Technology (IT), human resources, processes, knowledge management, innovation, and organizational structure. So it can be said that business agility or organizational agility is the ability of a company to see changes and opportunities so that companies can act quickly and effectively to survive, develop, and compete in an interconnected and volatile global business environment.

According to research conducted, 73.5% of research journals wrote that business agility is one way for companies to be able to face, respond, and adapt quickly to changes and competition in the market (Baškarada & Koronios, 2018; Cai et al., 2019; Darvishmotevali et al., 2020; Martínez-Caro et al., 2020; Zaini et al., 2020). Companies need to be able to deal with change. Companies can create and change strategies and tactics related to business agility (Barlette & Baillette, 2020; Qosasi et al., 2019) so that companies can use them to cope with fluctuating internal and external changes.

Harraf et al. (2015) in their journal wrote that 10 pillars influence business agility, namely a culture of innovation, empowerment, tolerance or ambiguity, vision, change management, organizational communication, market analysis

and response, operations management, structural fluidity, and learning organization. There are two antecedents of business agility, namely the ability of digital platforms and the company's innovation capacity (Kurniawan & Hamsal, 2019). These two things have an independent effect and have an impact on business agility. In addition, two aspects must be considered in business agility, namely internal and external aspects (Crick & Chew, 2017). The internal aspect is the company's ability to reconfigure its resources so that it can respond in a timely, effective, and efficient manner. While the external aspect is the environment that generates the need for changes that exist around the company (Pahala et al., 2021).

From 401 related journals, several factors have been found to affect business agility. Some of them are operational management, knowledge management, firm performance, employee empowerment, intellectual capital, human resource organizational learning, management, dynamic management capabilities, organizational culture, knowledge sharing, transformational performance, new product development, dynamic capabilities, strategic transformation, marketing, scenario planning, cash flow and debt, fuzzy agility index, organizational creativity, and IT. Of the many factors found, it has been decided to take IT as one of the factors that are considered the most influencing business agility with several considerations, namely, the development of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Society 5.0, the emergence of the COVID-19 outbreak, and the progress of the IT field. which has had a far-reaching impact on the business on several levels (Juneja & Kothari, 2018).

This research was made with the main purpose of wanting to know how business agility can affect a company and how information technology can affect business agility. In addition, this study also wants to see the results of previous studies related to factors that influence business agility, who plays an important role in running business agility, and why information technology is needed in a business.

2. Methodology

This research was conducted through a systematic literature review with the topic of business agility. A systematic literature review is a research method, a process for identifying, and critically assessing relevant research, as well as for collecting and analyzing data from that research. A systematic literature review aims to provide an updated summary of the current state of research knowledge. In addition, a systematic literature review also addresses the main problem that usually occurs in research, namely bias. This systematic literature review collects all empirical evidence that matches the eligibility criteria that have been determined to answer the research questions that have been determined. The following is a chart of the process of searching and selecting journal literature that researchers use in conducting research:

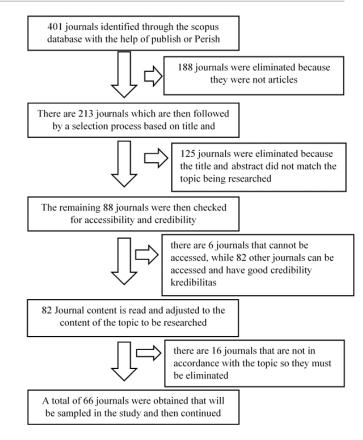


Fig 1. Chart of the process of searching

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Journal Analysis of Research Question

Today, companies have to face a very dynamic and constantly changing environment, especially related to new technology and product innovation. Not only that but also intense competition makes companies have to be ready to keep changing so they don't lose out to other competitors. Therefore, companies must create strategies or tactics to innovate so that companies can remain competitive and agile in an uncertain environment. Business agility is needed at all levels of the company's divisions as a way to operate, leading to a rethink of organizational structure, influence, and control that can have an impact on the company (Govuzela & Mafini, 2019; Gunsberg et al., 2018). Not only that, but business agility also refers to a company's ability to detect and direct market opportunities (Al-Omoush, 2021; Barlette & Baillette, 2020; Gerster et al., 2020; Martínez-Caro et al., 2020; Panda & Rath, 2017, 2018c; Park et al., 2017; Shahzad et al., 2016; Zaini et al., 2020) and can innovate for companies to achieve goals (Cai et al., 2019; Nwankpa & Merhout, 2020).

In following up on opportunities that exist in the market, business agility can also direct, facilitate, mobilize and reconfigure the resources needed in the company so that they can be optimally used by the company to create copyright value and protect value for the company (Cheng et al., 2020; Chan et al., 2019; Côrte-Real et al., 2017; Lin et al., 2020; Panda & Rath, 2017; Saluy et al., 2021; Teece et al., 2016; Tsou & Cheng, 2018). That way, companies can gain, improve, influence, and maintain important aspects of the company, especially for business agility, namely competitive advantage (Lee et al., 2015; Luftman et al., 2015; Y. Mao & Quan, 2015) in these uncertain times to improve the company's performance and

creativity for the better (Darvishmotevali et al., 2020; Endri et al., 2020; Krotov et al., 2015).

3.2. Factors Influencing Business Agility

In business agility, there are many influencing factors ranging from the dimensions that exist in business agility, internal aspects, external aspects, capabilities, and components related to business agility, to factors that can hinder business agility. There are three dimensions in business agility, namely customer agility, partner agility, and operational agility (Khayer et al., 2020; Tsou & Cheng, 2018). Customer agility enables the company to capitalize on changes in the marketplace by providing new value that can help improve internal operations customization so that the company can expand its competitive action and grow in market position (Ricardianto et al., 2020).

Partnership agility is the company's ability to leverage the assets, knowledge, and competence of suppliers, distributors, contract manufacturers, and logistics providers through partnerships. This business agility allows organizations to adopt an extended enterprise network when the enterprise requires access that is not available within the enterprise. While operational agility refers to the extent to which a company can easily and quickly change its business operations to adapt to the current market environment (Gerster et al., 2020). This of course allows the company to see changing opportunities, and threats in the environment so that it can provide a fast and focused response to customers and stakeholders by configuring the company's internal resources and processes (Mansur et al., 2021).

According to Panda and Rath, (2017), two attributes can affect business agility, namely speed, and innovation. The speed in question is the realization of time and the right response to changes that occur in the market. While innovative concentrates more on the quality of the response. To improve business agility, the success of IT integration and business planning that utilizes resources has an impact on the company (Panda & Rath, 2018a; Panda & Rath 2018c)), as well as the effectiveness of organizational knowledge and application of corporate knowledge (Baškarada & Koronios, 2018). However, it turns out that several aspects can become obstacles in improving business agility, namely bureaucratic structures, cultural practices and routines, inflexible governance, lack of capacity to act, poor implementation, the fixed mindset at any level, neglected aspects of change, as well as unbalanced working relationships (Holbeche, 2019). In addition, the uniqueness of the company, the technical obstacles that must be overcome, and the involvement of technology gradually affect business agility (Krotov et al., 2015).

3.3. Parties with the main Role for Business Agility

In carrying out business agility in a company, many aspects influence, one of which is the person who has a role to run it. According to research conducted, the top management of a company is the most influential party in running the company's business agility (Gao et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2015; Cegarra-Navarro et al., 2016). The top management has an important role in building business agility through an adaptive business environment by encouraging creative thoughts to produce innovations and new ideas (Al-Omoush, 2020). Not only that, but top management must also pay attention to the importance of exploiting IT as a way to improve business agility (Diarto et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2015). Top management who is aware of this will increase the effectiveness of the company's operational initiatives so that it can make the organization more agile in dealing with a dynamic business environment.

However, top management must also avoid spending too

much in developing IT integration, so that with a set budget, the company can develop the types of IT capabilities that are most useful and needed by the company (Gao et al., 2020). In addition to top management, employees also play a role in creating a company's business agility. Four policies influence employees in creating business agility (Wahyono, 2018), namely an adaptable structure, multi-skilled and flexible people, fast decision making, and continuous learning. The sections related to business agility in a company are HR, operations, IT, and HR managers who are related to Business Process Management (BPM).

3.4. Why IT is necessary for a Company

The application of technology is needed as a tool so that companies can progress and develop. Indeed, the existence of IT has a positive influence on the development of the company. IT has become an indispensable component in building enterprise capabilities to identify and act in response to change (Baloch et al., 2018; Melián-Alzola et al., 2020; Permadi et al., 2020). According to research, organizations become more responsive when they have a strong IT infrastructure so that they can detect, process, communicate, expand, and fulfill market demands (Panda & Rath, 2018b; Son et al., 2018). IT capabilities play an important role in developing business agility by increasing the company's capacity to perceive and respond to a dynamic environment. There are also various benefits that IT capabilities provide to agility, such as speeding up information processing, controlling business processes, and creating digital options (Fletcher & Griffiths, 2020; Khayer et al., 2020).

In addition, IT is also very important to allow companies to flexibly increase the company's ability to provide technical solutions quickly, manage its internal business operations to meet customer demands and preferences, and assist in modifying operational strategies while sensing and responding to changing market conditions (Fletcher & Griffiths, 2020; Liu et al., 2018). IT can have a significant impact on the growth and viability of the company's internal and external, for example by reducing communication costs because it will be later seen that the effective and efficient use of IT can be the main differentiator between successful and less successful companies (Cepeda & Arias-Pérez, 2019; Cheng et al., 2020). In terms of business intelligence, the research conducted is to deepen the findings that data integration and analytical capability are two core components. These two things play different but mutually reinforcing roles in a company's adaptation process. This study also clarifies that business intelligence has a great impact on increasing enterprise knowledge development (Cheng et al., 2020). Big data analytics technology related to business intelligence also enables companies to increase their competitive advantage. Therefore, the business intelligence function can help organizations to improve agility (Cheng et al., 2020; Côrte-Real et al., 2017).

3.5. Why does IT Influences Business Agility

IT involvement in business operations offers opportunities to increase agility. IT capabilities are defined as the ability to mobilize and deploy IT-based resources, improve business strategies, work processes (Mikalef & Pateli, 2017). Provide the ability to understand the characteristics of incoming signals from the internal and external environment, filter raw signals into actionable information, and lastly to respond promptly (Mao & Quan, 2015). There is also research that says that today's technology, namely cloud computing and big data analytics, can guard organizations to stay competitive due to its quick response to the market disruption, effective strategy execution, and beneficial business outcome, to maintain a leading position. in the market and increase business agility (Khayer et al., 2020;

H. Mao et al., 2020; Shuradze et al., 2018). For example, Dangerous Good companies expect IT to increase agility as it deploys advances in IT applications that enable companies to effectively connect with suppliers, customers, and business partners (Martínez-Caro et al., 2020). While in agribusiness companies, the results show that companies can achieve business agility by utilizing e-commerce because of more relevant management capabilities (Lin et al., 2020).

Data analytics can also improve business agility because it can help organizations to better and faster understand the market, make timely business decisions, quickly take advantage of opportunities by analyzing data (Ghasemaghaei et al., 2017), increase the use of data, starting from analysis from simple to more advanced analytics to facilitate significant business decision-making (Zaini et al., 2020), so the results suggest that these capabilities can have a positive impact on firms (Côrte-Real et al., 2017). In addition, there is also modern IT such as cloud computing that provides business agility that simplifies operations and management tasks (Barona Lopez et al., 2017; Kim, 2015; Wang et al., 2018) and also facilitates information sharing between companies and customers which allows improving customer agility (Liu et al., 2018; Najib et al., 2021). Finally, this research supports several previous articles. (Walter, 2021) which suggest that organizational agility contributes by integrating insights from different streams of research on organizational agility, which are closely related to strategic management and derivatives of agile models. This research also supports a study by (Ridwandono & Subriadi, 2019), through a critical literature review process that contributes manually from journals related to Information Technology and Organizational Agility obtained from a reputable journal database. In addition, a literature review based on the extraction and synthesis process, with several identified themes, and within each theme, will be useful as an insight for further research.

4. Conclusion

Business agility is an important aspect for companies because it can help companies to cope with changes in the business environment, both internally and externally. Several factors can affect business agility in a company which is divided into two parts, namely internal and external. Top management is the most influential party in running business agility. However, employees in the HR, operations, and IT divisions also play a role in assisting top management in creating the company's business agility. IT becomes an important component in companies to identify and take action to deal with change. Adequate IT capabilities can make companies agile in achieving competitive advantage.

For further research, the authors suggest deepening the discussion about business agility and IT in a more specific industry and not just, in general, to make it easier for companies to adjust the strategies used about business agility and IT in these industries. In addition, the advice that researchers can give to the industry is to apply IT in the company so that it can become more agile. For micro-enterprises, training on IT knowledge for business management is needed, as well as adequate infrastructure so that the training can run well. Microbusinesses can also apply simple cloud computing to collect customer data so that business people can see their customer segmentation and can make the right strategy for the business. For large companies, business people can use cloud computing, big data analytics, business intelligence, and other more sophisticated IT technologies to be applied within the company to help companies collect, store, process, and display data in the form of information that can be used to help companies make effective decisions, identify new opportunities

and increase the company's competitive advantage.

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