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RESEARCH PULSE

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GREETINGS FROM RESEARCH PULSE

Hello and nice to see you again... Welcome back to Research Pulse.

We are delighted to continue sharing stories of research happening at Curtin Singapore.

In this bi-monthly publication of Research Pulse, we share research on organisational agility, led by Dr. Tien Nguyen and a team of international researchers. We are also happy to highlight an external engagement project led by Dr. Carolyn Koh, which focuses on improving cycling safety on Pulau Ubin, an idyllic island off the northeastern coast of mainland Singapore. Finally, Mr. Jeffrey Woo shares his Curtin Singapore PhD candidature journey.

I would like to thank Dr. Tien Nguyen, Dr. Carolyn Koh, and the team members of the Ubin Safe Cycling Project, as well as Mr. Jeffrey Woo, for sharing their research initiatives with the entire University. Please read on and enjoy Research Pulse, and thank you for tuning in. We hope you enjoy reading about our research adventures.

Best Wishes,
Dr. Adrian Tan
Research Director
Curtin Singapore



The Organisational Impact of Agility: A Systematic Review

Contributed by Dr. Tien Nguyen

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In recent years, the world economy has faced unprecedented crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the tech and trade war between the US and China, the Ukraine-Russia conflict, and the Gaza Strip conflict, which has triggered a marine crisis in the Red Sea. These challenges have heightened the need for organizations to develop more agile business models to navigate environmental turbulence and economic downturns (McKinsey & Company 2020). Complexity and unpredictability are now dominant forces, challenging traditional management methods that rely on structured planning. Consequently, agility is no longer a choice but a necessity for organisational survival (Harraf et al. 2015).

With the aim to assess the current state of literature on organisational agility and its outcomes, our paper set out to address the following five sub-questions:

- 1. How are organisational agility and organisational performance defined and measured?*
- 2. What is the relationship between organisational agility and organisational outcomes?*



The Organisational Impact of Agility: A Systematic Review

Contributed by Dr. Tien Nguyen

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3. Which theories are used to examine the relationship between organisational agility and organisational outcomes?
4. What are some possible mediators or moderators that affect the relationship between organisational agility and organisational outcomes?
5. What are the implications for future research on this topic?

Our systematic literature review of 249 empirical studies from 1998 to February 2024 reveals that agility is a significant predictor of organisational outcomes. The details of agility, outcomes, and intervening factors in this relationship are summarised in the figure below.

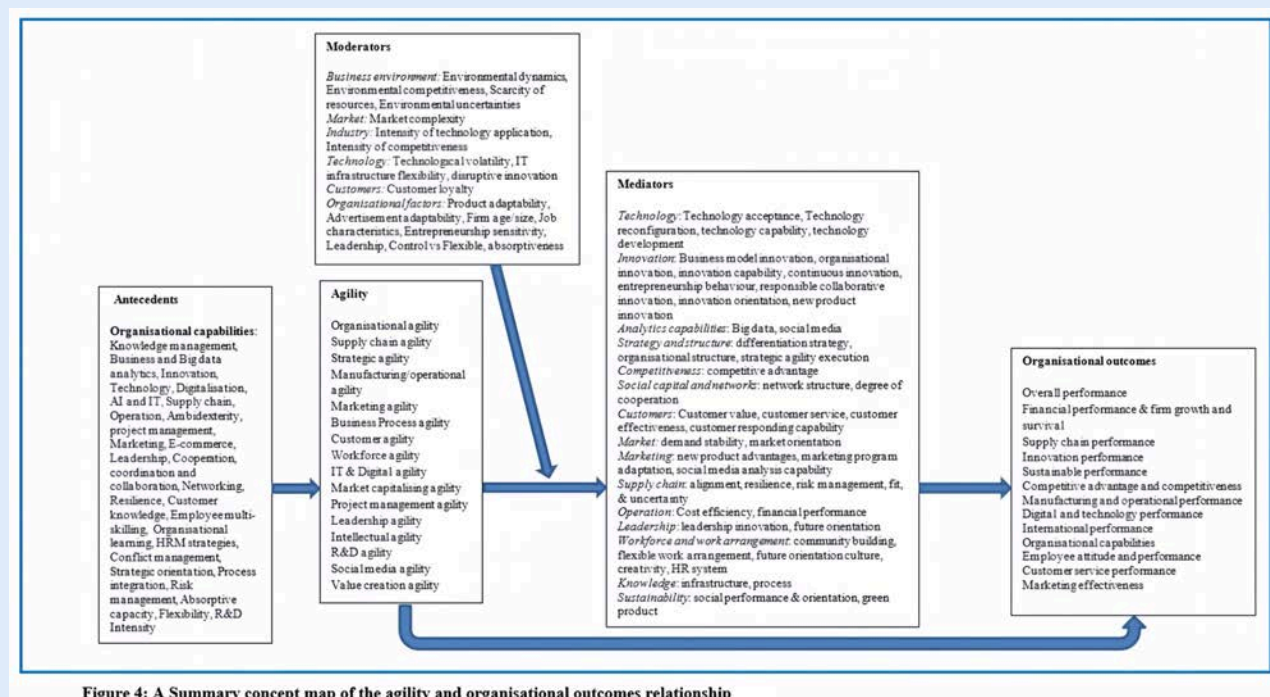


Figure 4: A Summary concept map of the agility and organisational outcomes relationship

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Through the findings of this paper, we have outlined several important implications for future research:

1. Measuring agility: Our literature review shows that organisational agility is a matter of becoming rather than being. The literature on agility and firm performance has not provided a solid answer as to how and to what extent agility and its dimensions should be measured. This provides opportunities for future research to explore more extensive approaches to measuring agility based on the literature and explore how organisational agility and its dimensions could be improved. imensions and their impact on organisational outcomes.

2. Multi-theoretical approaches: The literature highlights the growing use of multi-theoretical approaches for a more extensive understanding of this relationship. It is recommended that future research should explore new theories and simultaneously continue to incorporate multiple theories to examine the relationship between agility and firm performance.

3. Under-explored dimensions of agility: The findings of our paper also indicate that the organisational impact of some types of agility, such as workforce agility, intellectual agility, leadership agility, and project management agility, has not been thoroughly examined in the literature. This provides opportunities for future research to investigate these dimensions and their impact on organisational outcomes.



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4. Intervening factors: Our review presents that many aspects of organisational performance benefit from agility. However, these benefits are likely dependent on a wide range of factors. This encourages future research to continue searching for intervening factors that have meaningful impacts on the agility-performance relationship.

5. Methodology: Our review shows that quantitative research is the primary approach in agility-firm performance research. However, overreliance on causality might prevent researchers from understanding the underlying reasons why agility can translate into organisational outcomes and the dynamics behind this causal relationship. As such, future research should use a mixed-method approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This will help understand the organisational impact of agility at the surface level and reveal the processes, dynamics, blockages, enablers, and other organisational factors that explain the relationship between agility and organisational outcomes.



The Organisational Impact of Agility: A Systematic Review

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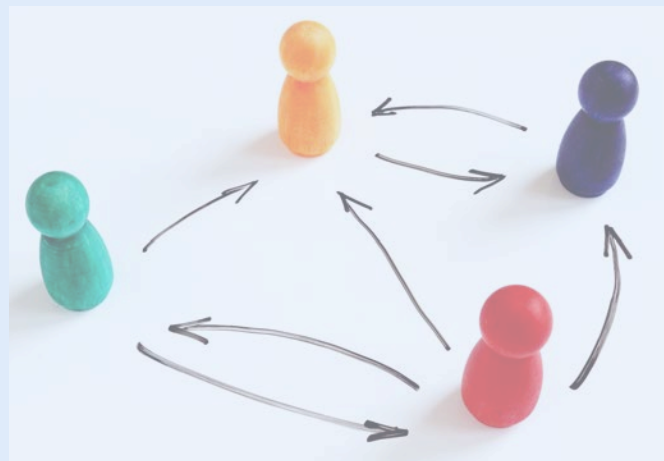
Our study makes two significant contributions to the field. First, by answering the research question "*What is the current status of the literature on organisational agility and organisational outcomes?*", it provides a comprehensive overview of the literature on agility and outcomes based on 26 years of empirical research. More importantly, it identifies the gaps in knowledge and proposes directions for future research and practice. We hope that this study will inspire future investigations to advance further in this literature.

References

McKinsey & Company. 2020. *Agility in the Time of COVID-19: Changing Your Operating Model in an Age of Turbulence*.

Retrieved from <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/agility-in-the-time-of-covid-19-changing-your-operating-model-in-an-age-of-turbulence>.

Harraf, A., I. Wanasika, K. Tate, and K. Talbott. 2015. "Organizational Agility." *Journal of Applied Business Research* 31 (2): 675–686.



Ubin Safe Cycling Project

Contributed by Dr. Carolyn Koh

In 2022, Curtin Singapore was invited by the Friends of Pulau Ubin Committee (FUN) to conduct research on whether visitors to Pulau Ubin should wear safety helmets while cycling on the island. Our students from the Master of International Business program were assigned the project. They conducted both qualitative and quantitative surveys to find out if visitors to Pulau Ubin should wear helmets while cycling and if they were willing to do so. The students interviewed cyclists on the island and on the mainland, as well as bicycle vendors operating on the island. The total sample size was 2,082, comprising a 50/50 mix of Singaporeans and foreigners aged between 16 and 70 years old.

The findings and recommendations were presented by Drs. Nik Chong (Project Lead) and Carolyn Koh to Minister Desmond Lee, Minister of National Development and Chairman of the FUN Committee, as well as the FUN Committee and top executives from the National Parks Board (NParks), which manages Pulau Ubin. The recommendations were as follows:

- Wearing helmets should be enforced for the safety of all visitors who choose to cycle on the island.
- Engagement with the islanders and visitors is needed to educate cyclists and vendors who rent bicycles about safety, the island's terrain, and the requirement of wearing helmets when cycling on Pulau Ubin (as it is not a park, and traffic rules regarding helmet use on roads apply).



Ubin Safe Cycling Project

Contributed by Dr. Carolyn Koh

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- Bicycle rental vendors should incorporate helmet rentals as part of their rental package. A simple, effective helmet rental plan should be rolled out for vendors to adopt. This plan should include:
 - Consideration for financial assistance.
 - A maintenance system for rental helmets.
 - Exploring the possibility of helmets for sale.
 - Recyclable, low-cost, single-use helmets.
 - A souvenir line of helmets for international visitors.

Phase 2

Drawing from the research findings and recommendations from Phase One, we have now embarked on Phase Two of the project. In this phase, we aim to find out how we can convert the responses received in Phase One — suggesting that the public felt it was a good idea to wear helmets while cycling on Pulau Ubin — into actual willingness to wear helmets on the island. We will explore ways to change consumer behavior, with a focus on public health and safety.



Ubin Safe Cycling Project

Contributed by Dr. Carolyn Koh

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We will conduct qualitative research to answer the following questions through focus groups and face-to-face interviews:

- How do we get stakeholder buy-in for wearing helmets on the island?
- What would make cyclists willing to wear helmets?
- What would make it viable for small business operators to include helmet rentals/sales as part of their rental package?

Design Competition

Phase Two will include a sustainable helmet design competition, open to local polytechnics and design schools. The helmet designs will be used as a tool to collect data through the application of the Diffusion of Innovation theory.

Outcomes and Impact

The outcomes for Phase Two are:

- To produce a white paper for the FUN Committee and National Parks Board.
- To develop the white paper into a journal article(s) for publication.
- To create designs for helmets that are sustainable and cost-effective.



Ubin Safe Cycling Project

Contributed by Dr. Carolyn Koh

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We hope this project will have a positive impact on society and the planet. Using the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Curtin's Strategic Framework as our guide, we have identified the following:

- **People:**

SDG 3 - Good health and well-being: Safety for visitors to the island through helmet use while cycling.

SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth: Supporting Pulau Ubin's small businesses and islanders.

- **Planet:**

SDG 11 - Sustainable cities and communities: Developing Pulau Ubin into a sustainable island from the perspective of the triple bottom line—People, Planet, and Profit.

- **Partnership:**

SDG 17 - Partnership for the goals: Curtin Singapore will continue to strengthen its partnership with the FUN Committee and NParks. We will also build relationships with polytechnics and design schools, giving their students opportunities to pitch their designs to a panel of design experts and government officials.



Ubin Safe Cycling Project

Contributed by Dr. Carolyn Koh

continued...

Our Team

This project demonstrates the importance of developing research teams. We cannot work in silos. Instead, we should engage with our colleagues and work on our research projects together. Only through collaboration can we expand our individual and Curtin Singapore's research capacity.

We have an amazing team working on this project, each with their own special skills. Every member has brought their experience and expertise to the group, and the ability for us to learn from each other has been invaluable.

Our team members are:

- Dr. Zahirah Zainol
- Dr. Ashley Tong
- Dr. Nik Chong
- Mr. Ernest Paul
- Mr. Shaowen Ng
- Dr. Carolyn Koh

The project will take four months to complete, and we are grateful to the Curtin Singapore Research Committee for the research funding awarded to us to conduct this project.



Reflection of my HDR journey: Visiting the Bentley campus for my PhD Milestone 1

Contributed by Mr. Jeffrey Woo

My name is Jeffrey Woo. I am a sessional academic staff member supporting Curtin Singapore's undergraduate and postgraduate nursing programmes. I am also a PhD candidate with Curtin Singapore and the Curtin School of Nursing. It is indeed my pleasure and privilege to share my experiences at the initial stage of my Higher Degree by Research (HDR) journey.



Reflection of my HDR journey: Visiting the Bentley campus for my PhD Milestone 1

Contributed by Mr. Jeffrey Woo

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As a part-time candidate, I commenced my studies for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in February 2024. While I am excited about this learning journey, I also feel nervous about what will be expected of me as I pursue my PhD, especially since I am returning to study after a two-year break following the completion of my Master's Degree. Thankfully, I have received excellent support from both the Singapore and Perth campuses, particularly from my principal supervisor, Professor Tracey Moroney OAM (Head of School, Curtin School of Nursing), co-supervisor, Dr. Zhou Huaqiong Jo, and Dr. Adrian Tan (Research Director, Curtin Singapore). Their valuable guidance and advice helped me complete all my HDR Milestone 1 (M1) requirements to confirm my PhD candidature.



**From left to right:
Dr. Zhou Huaqiong Jo, Prof. Tracey Moroney OAM, Mr. Jeffrey Woo**



Reflection of my HDR journey: Visiting the Bentley campus for my PhD Milestone 1

Contributed by Mr. Jeffrey Woo

continued...

Every milestone in HDR programmes is significant and meaningful. It represents not only the progression each HDR candidate undergoes, with their learning being monitored, but also marks an achievement that deserves a celebratory moment of success. One important step towards the completion of HDR M1 is delivering an M1 presentation to the school's reviewers and panel of academics. Despite being an offshore PhD candidate based in Singapore, where I pursue my HDR candidature, I had the opportunity to travel to the Bentley campus in Perth, Australia, to deliver my oral presentation in person on 11 July 2024. I am extremely grateful for the six days I spent in Perth as I had the opportunity to visit the Bentley campus and tour its facilities and experience campus life in person, which offered a different perspective from what I experienced in Singapore. Despite being an alumni of Curtin University, this was my first time to the Perth campus. My supervisors were very welcoming and took the time to show me around the Bentley campus, introduce me to the Curtin School of Nursing facilities, and introduce me to other academics.



Reflection of my HDR journey: Visiting the Bentley campus for my PhD Milestone 1

Contributed by Mr. Jeffrey Woo

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The M1 presentation allowed me to share my research proposal on understanding the lived experiences of registered nurses working in Singapore nursing homes with respect to patient safety culture. I chose a phenomenological approach as the methodology for my research project. I truly value the past five months of preparation and learning, which entailed intensive reading and guidance from my two supervisors. I was challenged to rationalise the choice of the research methodology, find a suitable theoretical framework, and formulate research questions and objectives that aligned with the chosen methodology. Although it had been at least two years since I last delivered a formal oral presentation as part of an assessment, and I was initially nervous, I soon felt at ease sharing my research proposal with the panel of assessors with enthusiasm. While I was motivated by the positive compliments I received from the panel of reviewers for the comprehensiveness and rigor of my research methodology, I am also grateful and humbled by the feedback the reviewers gave, which offered valuable insights for improving my research proposal. On 19 August 2024, the Curtin Graduate Research School officially informed me that I had successfully completed my M1. Though I was delighted to hear the outcome, I am also deeply thankful to my supervisors for their support and guidance, which enabled me to complete Milestone 1 well within the first six months of my enrolment in the PhD programme.



Reflection of my HDR journey: Visiting the Bentley campus for my PhD Milestone 1

Contributed by Mr. Jeffrey Woo

continued...

As the first milestone of my PhD journey is completed, I am thankful for the opportunity to travel to Perth, as it brought me many fond moments of learning and sharing, new insights, and perspectives to conduct my research, which is informed by the valuable feedback from the Curtin School of Nursing academics. Most importantly was the memorable time spent with my supervisors. I look forward to many good days ahead as I continue my candidature beyond this milestone until I complete my PhD programme.



**Mr. Jeffrey Woo at the Bentley campus in Perth, Australia,
delivering his oral presentation in person**

Latest Conference Presentations

By Mr. Jeffrey Woo:

Factors Influencing Nursing Students' Experiences and Understanding of Patient Safety Culture: An Integrative Review

~ 35th International Nursing Research Congress, Singapore

By Ms. Joelle Yap:

The Resilience of Nurses Responding to Natural Disasters: Findings from an Integrative Literature Review

~ Curtin School of Nursing 50th Anniversary Conference, Perth



Calendar of Events

These are some upcoming events planned for the year. Full details of the events will be made known through official communication nearer the time.

