

Strategic Agility and Financial Performance of Companies in Emerging Markets: Case of Moroccan Companies Listed on the Casablanca Stock Exchange.

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Abstract

Strategic agility has increasingly been recognized as a cornerstone of organizational resilience in turbulent economic environments. This paper investigates the impact of strategic agility on the financial performance of firms operating in an emerging market environment, with a specific focus on Moroccan companies listed on the Casablanca Stock Exchange. Anchored in the dynamic capabilities framework (Teece, 2007), the study operationalizes strategic agility through three core dimensions: sensing, seizing, and transforming. A mixed-methods approach is employed, combining a structured questionnaire administered to 30 listed firms with financial data covering the 2019–2023 period. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) is used to test six hypotheses relating strategic agility to both accounting and market-based financial indicators. The results reveal a strong positive relationship between agility and internal performance metrics such as revenue, EBITDA, and net income, whereas the relationship with return on equity is not statistically significant. The findings offer important implications for both managers and policy makers.

Keywords : Strategic agility, dynamic capabilities, financial performance, emerging markets, Morocco.

Introduction

In an increasingly volatile and uncertain global environment marked by rapid technological change and fragmented value chains, strategic agility has become essential for firms seeking to sustain competitive advantage. This concept involves an organization's capacity to detect early signals, swiftly mobilize its resources, and reconfigure internal processes to adapt to external shifts (Teece, 2007; Doz & Kosonen, 2008). While the literature on strategic agility is extensive in developed economies, empirical evidence from emerging markets remains scarce. In these markets, businesses often contend with more rigid structural constraints, occasionally flawed governance, and limited financial depth. This gap is particularly salient in the context of Moroccan listed companies.

This observation prompts the central research question : **To what extent can strategic agility enhance the financial performance—both internal and external—of Moroccan firms listed on the Casablanca Stock Exchange?**

This question is especially pertinent as these firms operate in a hybrid institutional framework, where macroeconomic uncertainty coexists with opportunities for openness and innovation.

- **Research Topic and Objective**

The present article focuses on the relationship between strategic agility and financial performance within the specific context of emerging markets, using Moroccan listed companies as a representative case. Anchored in the dynamic capabilities framework (Teece, 2007), this research operationalizes strategic agility through three fundamental dimensions : sensing, seizing, and transforming.

The main objective is to empirically assess how these dimensions of strategic agility influence key financial indicators — including revenue, EBITDA, operating income, net income, return on equity (ROE), and stock price — over the 2019–2023 period. The study also seeks to highlight whether agile firms demonstrate superior financial resilience and adaptability during turbulent periods, such as the COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath.

- **Contribution and Significance**

This research seeks to address three primary gaps in the literature: the lack of empirical data on strategic agility in emerging markets, the absence of an integrated model linking strategic agility and long-term financial performance and the need to contextualize findings within Morocco's specific economic environment, where agility is influenced by capital structure, sectoral affiliation, and organizational maturity.

The findings are expected to enrich the academic discourse on strategic agility and offer actionable insights for executives seeking to strengthen their firms' financial resilience in volatile environments.

- **Structure of the Paper**

This paper is structured as follows:

- Section 1 : reviews the theoretical foundations and key concepts underlying strategic agility and financial performance, drawing from the dynamic capabilities perspective.
- Section 2 : presents the methodological framework, including the operationalization of variables, sample characteristics, and statistical approach using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).
- Section 3 : discusses the empirical results, testing the proposed hypotheses, interpreting the relationships between agility and performance indicators, and finally, concludes with key contributions, limitations, and avenues for future research.

1. Theoretical foundations and conceptual framework

1.1. Strategic Agility

Strategic agility elevates the notion of agility to the strategic level of the firm. Whereas operational agility relates to day-to-day processes and workflows, strategic agility refers to a firm's ability to swiftly realign its strategy in response to shifts in the competitive environment.. This includes, but is not limited to, factors such as technological changes, government regulations, and shifting consumer preferences.

David Teece, in *Dynamic Capabilities and Strategic Management*, argues that “strategic agility is a function of dynamic capabilities that enable firms to adapt to market disruptions and create new opportunities” (Teece, D. J., 2007, p. 1340). Hence, companies with dynamic capabilities can rapidly reorganize their resources to exploit new opportunities or defend against threats.

Pettigrew and Whipp, in *Managing Change for Competitive Success*, note that “strategic agility is not just reactivity, but a proactive ability to ‘sense’ market changes and respond appropriately” (Pettigrew, A. M., & Whipp, R., 1991, p. 44). Their work emphasizes the importance of market perception and competitive intelligence in developing strategic agility.

Doz and Kosonen (2008) conceptualizes strategic agility as the ability of a company to make rapid turns by transforming and renewing itself without losing the market opportunities

available. They highlight three core pillars supporting strategic agility: Strategic Sensing, Resource Mobilization, and Organizational Reactiveness.

Earlier, Goldman et al. (1995) were among the first to conceptualize agility not only as a project management or product development method but also as a corporate strategy. In their book *Agile Competitors and Virtual Organizations: Strategies for Enriching the Customer* (1995), they identify four strategic dimensions of agility: Customer Enrichment, Organizational Cooperation, Mastering Change, and Leveraging Knowledge.

More recent studies, such as those by Tallon and Pinsonneault (2011) view strategic agility as the capacity of a firm to react rapidly to business environment changes, adapt to them, and take actions to control uncertainty, Nazir and Pinsonneault (2012) describe it as the ability to detect and respond to internal and external changes; while Queiroz, Tallon, Sharma, and Coltman (2018) define it as the capability to detect and respond agilely to emerging environmental threats and opportunities. Arokodare (2020) describes strategic agility as “an organization’s ability to detect changes in dynamic and fast-paced environments, respond rapidly by seizing market opportunities, combine, enhance, mobilize, and reconfigure its capabilities, thereby achieving and sustaining superior performance over its competitors.” This definition acknowledges the roles of strategic sensitivity and collective capabilities, with the ultimate goal being market outperformance.

Other scholars have offered more nuanced or even critical perspectives of strategic agility. For instance, Sull, in *Why Good Companies Go Bad*, warns that “the ability to change strategy is not always beneficial; it must be balanced by ‘strategic anchors’” (Sull, D. N., 1999, p. 47). That is, he cautions against the risks of over-agility, where constant strategic shifts can destabilize a company.

Volberda and Elfring, in *Rethinking Strategy*, add further nuance by noting that “strategic agility may involve paradoxes, such as the need to balance exploitation and exploration” (Volberda, H. W., & Elfring, T., 2001, p. 89). This highlights the inherent complexity of strategic agility: truly agile firms must know when to exploit current opportunities and when to explore new avenues.

These recurring elements suggest that strategic agility can be conceptualized as a meta-capability encompassing both the sensing and reconfiguration dimensions of dynamic capabilities.

1.2. Financial Performance

The question of how to measure firm performance arises within the context of intense market competition. Traditionally, the central issue has been whether a firm has succeeded—or is likely to succeed—in creating greater shareholder value than its competitors over a given period (Charreaux, 1998).

In the entrepreneurial literature, Marion et al. (2012) provide an important clarification by emphasizing that performance can be understood in multiple ways: (1) as the result of an action (Bouquin, 2004); (2) as the success of that action (Bourguignon, 1995); and (3) as the manner in which the result is achieved (Baird, 1986). The choice among these interpretations carries methodological implications for performance evaluation and, consequently, for assessing the actors involved.

In certain contexts, assessing financial performance alone may suffice. However, in more complex organizational environments, a multi-criteria approach that integrates financial, economic, operational, and other relevant indicators is often more appropriate (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

Research in strategic management contributes to a more integrated understanding of organizational performance by linking functional and strategic dimensions. From this perspective, a company is considered high-performing when it creates value on a sustainable basis (Porter, 1985). As Norman and Ramirez (1993) aptly state, “the art of strategy is to create value.”

In sum, firm performance is a multidimensional and context-dependent construct. Financial indicators, while indispensable, capture only one aspect of a broader and more holistic performance framework that encompasses both tangible and intangible dimensions of value creation.

1.3 Literature Review: Strategic Agility and Financial Performance

Empirical research on the relationship between strategic agility and firm performance reveals consistent and compelling findings across diverse contexts. Doz and Kosonen (2008) demonstrated that firms capable of detecting market trends and responding rapidly achieve faster revenue growth and improved profit margins. Similarly, Sambamurthy et al. (2003) found that organizations that effectively reorganize assets and competencies to seize emerging opportunities exhibit superior financial performance, particularly in profitability and return on investment.

In the Kenyan manufacturing sector, Ofoegbu and Akanbi (2012) emphasized the critical roles of strategic sensitivity, collective commitment, and resource fluidity in enhancing perceived performance. Arokodare et al. (2019) further highlighted the moderating influence of organizational culture, which can amplify the positive effects of agility by strengthening competitive advantage and customer satisfaction. In the context of Chinese firms, Liu et al. (2019) found that rapid adaptability and efficient resource mobilization are key determinants of sustained competitiveness in dynamic markets.

Recent studies, including those by Yildiz and Aykanat (2021) and ALTaweel and Al-Hawary (2021), underscore the pivotal role of organizational innovation as a mediating factor between strategic agility and performance. Investment in innovation capabilities significantly enhances the performance impact of agility by fostering continuous improvement and adaptability.

The benefits of agility extend beyond large firms. Research on SMEs, such as that by Ogunleye et al. (2021) and Shin et al. (2015), demonstrates that organizational learning and collaborative innovation are key mechanisms through which agility drives operational and financial outcomes. In Nigeria's oil sector, Arokodare (2021) showed that the integration of sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring capabilities enables firms to better exploit market opportunities and mitigate risks. Complementing these findings, Shaik and Dhir (2021) revealed that psychological factors, including executive motivation and resilience, further strengthen the effectiveness of strategic agility in highly competitive contexts.

In the Iranian ceramic industry, Tooranloo and Sagha (2019) identified knowledge management and competitive intelligence as crucial enablers of organizational agility and, consequently, performance improvement. Collectively, these studies converge on a critical insight: strategic agility is a foundational driver of firm performance, particularly when embedded within an innovative and adaptive organizational culture.

From a managerial perspective, the evidence suggests that firms should invest in strategic monitoring systems, innovation-oriented cultures, and cross-level strategic alignment to enhance responsiveness and sustain competitive advantage. These practices enable organizations to anticipate environmental changes, adapt swiftly, and maintain performance stability in volatile markets. In essence, strategic agility emerges not merely as a source of competitive advantage, but as a strategic imperative for long-term organizational survival and success in today's turbulent business environment. Firms that embrace agility-based principles not only enhance their competitiveness but also secure sustainable growth and resilience.

Building upon this empirical foundation, our research aims to construct a strategic agility index for Moroccan listed firms, grounded in Teece's (2007) dynamic capabilities framework, and to examine the correlation between this index and a set of accounting-based and market-based performance indicators.

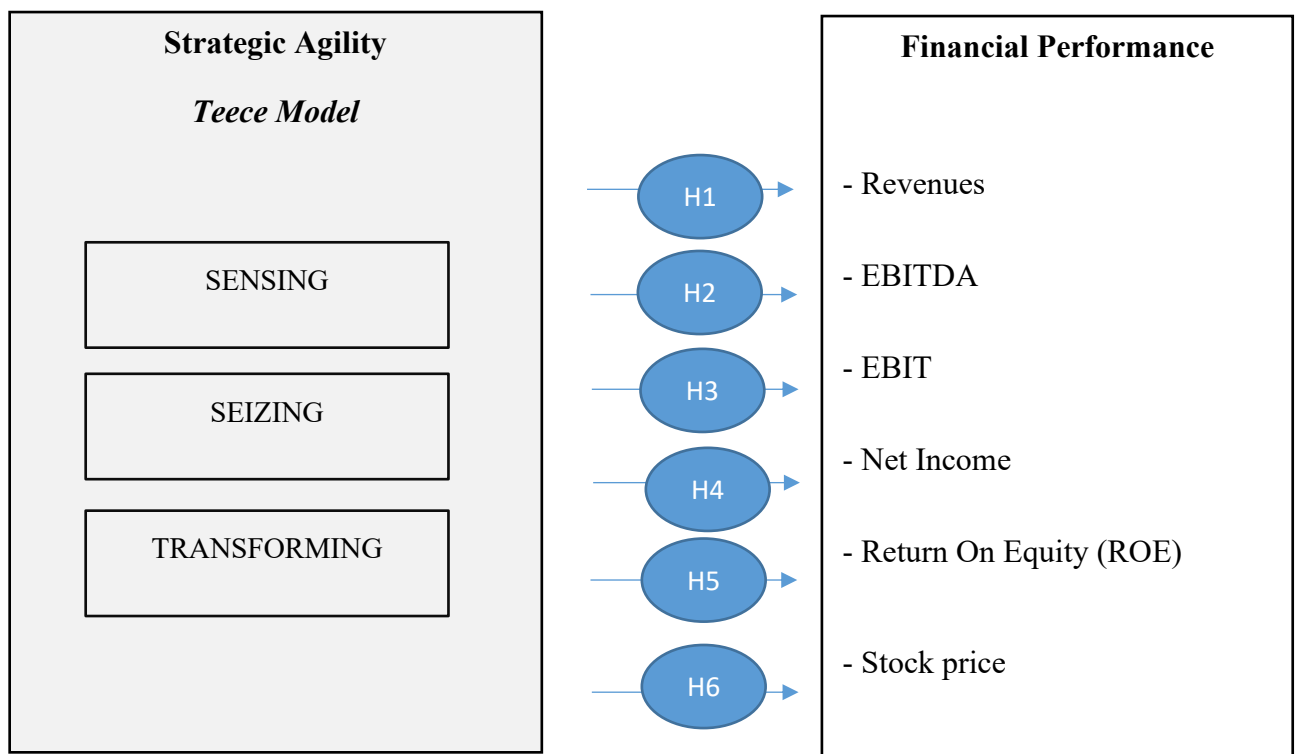
General Hypothesis:

If there is a positive relationship between strategic agility (measured using a scoring framework) and the accounting and market performance of Moroccan issuers, then strategically agile (non-agile) issuers are characterized by positive (negative) trends in their accounting and market performance indicators.

Sub-Hypothesis:

- H1: Strategically agile Moroccan issuers show a positive trend in their turnover (revenue).
- H2: Strategically agile Moroccan issuers show a positive trend in their EBITDA.
- H3: Strategically agile Moroccan issuers show a positive trend in their operating income.
- H4: Strategically agile Moroccan issuers show a positive trend in their net income.
- H5: Strategically agile Moroccan issuers show a positive trend in their return on equity (ROE).
- H6: Strategically agile Moroccan issuers show a positive trend in their stock price.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



2. Methodology

Building on Teece's dynamic capabilities framework, this section details the operationalization of strategic agility dimensions for empirical analysis.

Although the theoretical framework related to strategic agility is relatively robust, it still requires rigorous operationalization for empirical testing.

2.1 Epistemological positioning and reasoning approach

From an epistemological standpoint, this study adopts a post-positivist position, which is particularly suitable for examining the relationship between strategic agility and financial performance among Moroccan listed firms. Post-positivism acknowledges that while absolute objectivity in research is unattainable, scientific inquiry can still strive for rigor, validity, and replicability through systematic observation and empirical testing. This philosophical stance provides the flexibility to integrate mixed methods, combining quantitative analysis with qualitative insights, thereby offering a more comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics underlying strategic agility in emerging markets.

In line with this epistemological orientation, the research follows a hypothetico-deductive reasoning approach. This approach begins with the formulation of hypotheses derived from established theoretical frameworks—particularly the dynamic capabilities theory (Teece, 2007)—which are then empirically tested using financial and organizational data. Such reasoning ensures a structured and rigorous investigation, allowing not only for the validation or refutation of predefined hypotheses but also for the refinement of theoretical models in light of empirical evidence. This methodological alignment reinforces the study's scientific credibility while maintaining openness to contextual interpretation and theoretical evolution.

2.2 Independent Variables

The independent variables, representing the dimensions of strategic agility, were selected to reflect Teece's theory:

- The first variable is the sensing and perception capacity, which evaluates a firm's ability to monitor its environment and interpret market signals.
- The second capacity relates to opportunity seizing, assessing how firms quickly allocate resources to exploit detected opportunities.
- Lastly, the transformation capacity analyzes the organizational flexibility of firms and their ability to reorganize resources to meet new market demands.

These dimensions were quantified through a structured questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale to evaluate various aspects of agility, including:

- Questions on Sensing Capacity
 - Strategic monitoring: Evaluates the firm's ability to monitor its environment to detect weak signals and emerging trends.
 - Opportunity analysis: Assesses the ability to analyze and interpret information to identify potential opportunities.
 - Commitment to innovation: Includes R&D investments and initiatives aimed at exploring new technologies and markets.
- Questions on Seizing Capacity
 - Market responsiveness: Measures how quickly and effectively the firm can capitalize on new opportunities.
 - Development of new products/services: Assesses the ability to launch new products or services in response to market data.
 - Business model adaptation: Evaluates the flexibility and speed of adapting commercial and operational strategies.
- Questions on Transforming Capacity
 - Change management: Assesses the firm's ability to manage and implement changes in organizational structures and processes.
 - Innovation culture: Measures how much continuous innovation and improvement is encouraged among employees.
 - Strategic realignment: Evaluates the ability to realign resources with new strategic requirements.

Each aspect is rated on a scale from 1 to 5, where: 1 indicates very poor performance or a lack of initiative in the area concerned. 5 indicates outstanding performance or leadership in the area concerned. This questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 30 listed companies from various sectors and with different capital structures (national and multinational). The responses collected provide an assessment of various aspects of strategic agility as perceived by the management teams of the companies in our study.

The overall score for evaluating a firm's strategic agility is calculated by summing the individual criterion scores. The formula is as follows:

$$\text{Overall Score} = \sum (\text{Criterion Score}).$$

Table 1: Strategic Agility Scoring Grid

Dimensions of Agility	Criteria	Scoring Threshold
Opportunity Detection	Detects opportunities	≥ 36
	Does not detect opportunities	< 36
Opportunity Seizing	Seizes opportunities	≥ 36
	Does not seize opportunities	< 36
Transformation and Reconfiguration	Transforms quickly	≥ 36
	Transforms slowly	< 36
Strategic Status	Agile	≥ 108
	Non-Agile	< 108

Source: Developed by the author

2.3 Dependent Variables

Having established the framework for measuring strategic agility, it is essential to examine how this agility translates into measurable financial outcomes. The following section therefore details the dependent variables used to evaluate firms' financial performance.

For this study, we adopted an approach based on accounting indicators drawn directly from the financial statements published by the issuers. These indicators include revenue, EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortization), operating income, net income, and return on equity (ROE). For assessing market performance, the considered parameter is the stock price.

Thus, the analysis of the impact of strategic agility on financial performance was conducted by examining the evolution of these indicators over a five-year period, from 2019 to 2023. The 2019–2023 period was selected because it encompasses a full economic cycle marked by significant fluctuations, including the COVID-19 crisis and the subsequent recovery phase. This time frame thus provides a relevant and diversified context to evaluate how strategic agility enables firms to adapt to turbulence and maintain financial performance under varying market conditions.

The specific definitions of the indicators used are as follows:

- Revenue: Represents the total sales of goods and services over an accounting period. Its analysis provides insights into the company's commercial dynamics: an increase indicates growth, stagnation suggests stability, and a decrease may signal difficulties.

For corporate groups, consolidated revenue is taken from consolidated financial statements. In the banking sector, it corresponds to net banking income.

- EBITDA: Indicates the income generated from the core activity before deduction of financial charges, taxes, and depreciation. It reflects the company's profit-generating capacity and cash flow potential. This indicator is either directly extracted from financial statements (in the intermediate management balances) or calculated as follows:

EBITDA = Revenue – (raw materials, goods) – (external expenses, taxes, salaries, other charges)

- Operating Income: Calculated as EBITDA minus depreciation and provisions, this result shows the profit from core operations before interest and taxes, providing a view of economic profitability.

Operating Income (REX) = EBITDA – (depreciation, amortization, provisions)

- Net Income: Details the net profit attributable to shareholders after tax deductions.
- Return on Equity (ROE): Measures the profitability of the capital invested by shareholders. It quantifies net profit as a percentage of shareholders' equity, thus indicating the company's ability to generate returns for investors. This ratio is calculated as:

$$\text{ROE} = \frac{\text{Net Income}}{\text{Shareholders' Equity}}$$
A higher ROE means greater profitability of the capital used by the company. Some firms conduct share buybacks to mechanically increase their ROE.
- Stock Price: The stock price represents the market value of a single share at a given time for a publicly traded company. This price is determined by supply and demand dynamics in the stock market.

This selection of indicators ensures a comprehensive and precise understanding of firms' financial performance, thereby effectively guiding strategic decision-making and investment policies.

2.4 Statistical Method

It is essential to choose a robust statistical method tailored to the specific hypotheses being tested. In this context, the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method—a variant of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)—was deemed most appropriate for this study, for several key reasons:

- Theoretical Model Complexity: Our model integrates several latent variables, such as strategic agility, financial performance, and control variables (industry sector, capital

origin). PLS allows simultaneous modeling of these relationships while maximizing the explained variance. This ability is critical for validating our hypotheses (Chin, 2010).

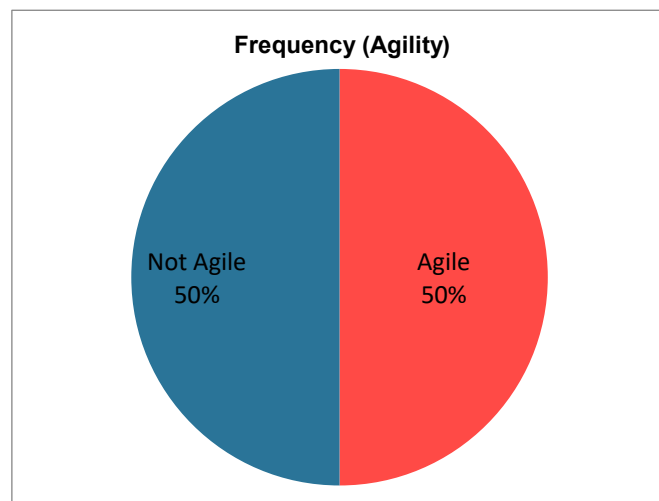
- Small Sample Size: The PLS method is particularly suitable for studies with small sample sizes, as it imposes fewer constraints than traditional SEM techniques. Furthermore, it is effective even when the data do not follow a normal distribution, which is a notable advantage over methods that require this assumption (Hair et al., 2012).
- Explanatory and Predictive Objectives: Our research aims to both explain relationships between variables and predict firms' financial performance. PLS stands out for its ability to meet both goals, offering robust estimates even in complex theoretical models and with data that do not fully meet the assumptions of covariance-based SEM methods (Hair et al., 2017).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Strategic Agility

Strategic agility is a central variable in our study, as it determines the ability of companies to adapt quickly to external changes. Data collected from the questionnaire reveal that half of the responding companies (50%) are considered agile, while the other half (50%) are not.

Figure 2: Distribution of "Strategic Agility" Frequency Among Responding Entities



Source : SPSS Software

This balanced result between agile and non-agile companies is interesting on several levels. Firstly, it suggests that strategic agility is not a universal norm among the companies in our sample, but that there is a clear division between those that adopt this strategy and those that do not. This finding will allow for effective comparison of the effects of agility on various financial

variables (revenue, EBITDA, net income, etc.). Furthermore, this parity may reveal that strategic agility is either in the process of being adopted in a number of companies or that it is a contextual response that heavily depends on the external environment (e.g., sector or capital structure). Indeed, we have demonstrated in a previous study that the industry sector and capital origin strongly influence the adoption of strategic agility within listed Moroccan companies: companies in high-innovation sectors and those with foreign capital tend to adopt agile practices more readily, giving them a better ability to adapt to environmental changes (Herradi T. Defouad R. (2024). Strategic Agility: The Impact of Industry Sector and Capital Origin on the Strategic Agility of Listed Moroccan Companies. Management Control, Auditing and Finance Review (MCAFR) - Volume No. 1, Issue No. 3- p 24).

3.2 Strategic Agility and Financial Performance : Structural Model

3.2.1 Exploratory Analysis

Before implementing a structural model, certain steps must be followed: the first step involves conducting an exploratory analysis aimed at determining the correlations that may exist between the variables under study.

We use the KMO measure to test whether the partial correlations between variables are sufficiently low for factor analysis to be useful.

Table 2: KMO Sampling Adequacy Measure and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.693
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	852.779
	df	15
	Sig.	.000

Source: SPSS Software

In our study, the KMO measure of 0.693 indicates that our data are moderately adequate for factor analysis. Therefore, the analysis is possible. Bartlett's test with a significant chi-square ($p < 0.05$) shows that our variables are significantly correlated, validating the application of factor analysis on this data set.

Subsequently, we analyze the communalities matrix, which allows us to detect items that contribute less information in the factor analysis.

Table 3: Representation Quality of Financial Variables in Principal Component Analysis

Variable	Communality
Revenue	0.85
EBITDA	0.82
Operating Income	0.80
Net Income	0.78
Stock Price	0.55
Return on Equity (ROE)	0.50

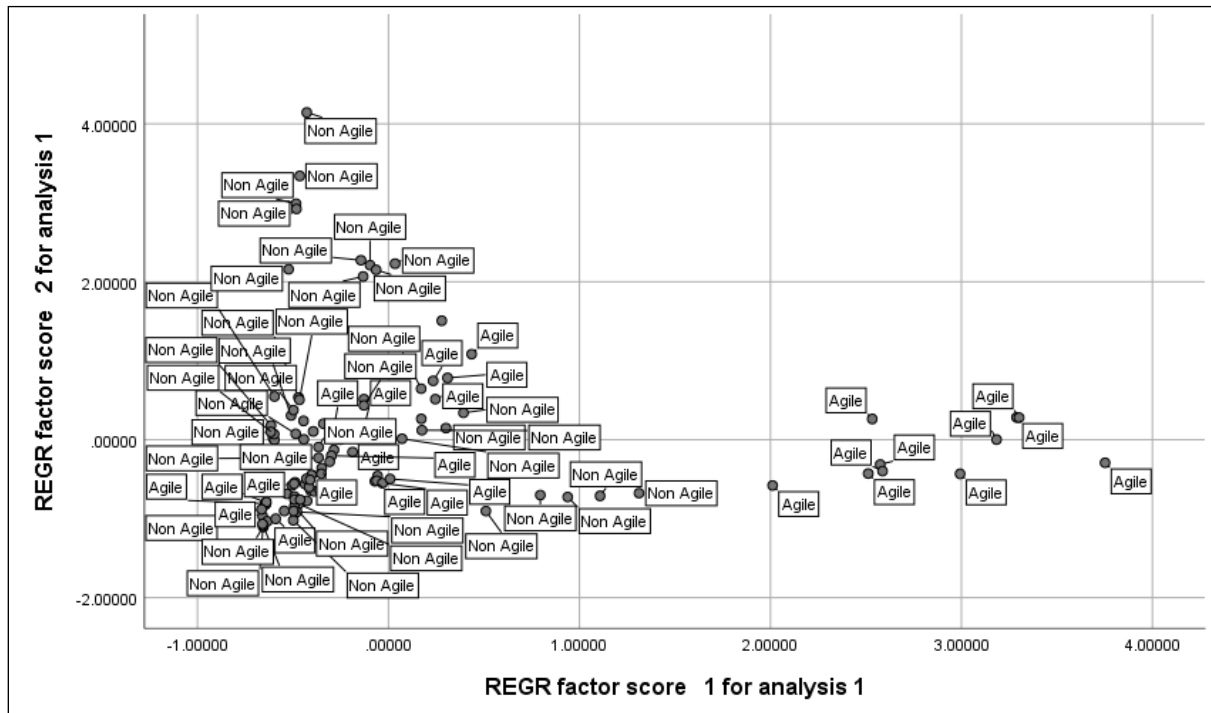
Source: SPSS Software

Given that all retained variables have values above 0.4, we decide to keep all variables in the analysis. However, we can already distinguish two types of variables :

- **Well-Represented Variables:** Revenue, EBITDA, operating income, and net income are all well explained by the principal components, with communalities close to 1. This means that these variables share common characteristics and that PCA has captured a large portion of their variance. These variables are therefore very relevant for the analysis. We will group these variables into a first component called Operational Financial Performance.
- **Moderately Represented Variables:** Stock price and ROE are less well represented, with communalities around 0.5. This could indicate that these variables have a significant portion of variance not explained by the retained principal components. We will group these variables into a second component called Market Financial Performance.

To explore the potential relationship between these two principal components and our central concept of strategic agility, we created a scatter plot representing the factor scores from our principal component analysis (PCA). The points on the graph are divided into two groups: Agile and Non-Agile, representing companies that are strategically agile or not.

Figure 3: Distribution of Agile and Non-Agile Companies According to Factor Scores



Regarding Component 1 "Operational Financial Performance," we observe that strategically agile companies have higher scores on this axis (ranging from 0 to 4), suggesting that companies that have adopted strategic agility achieve better operational performance. Conversely, strategically non-agile companies are more concentrated on the left side of the graph, with scores ranging from -1 to 2, indicating lower operational performance. This suggests that these companies lag in terms of operational efficiency and internal management compared to Agile companies.

As for Component 2 "Market Financial Performance," most strategically agile companies are concentrated around zero on the Y-axis, with slight dispersion. This indicates that in terms of external performance, there is no trend as marked as for internal performance. It is possible that market performance depends more on external factors (e.g., general economic conditions) than on strategic agility alone. On the other hand, Non-Agile companies show greater dispersion on this axis, ranging from -2 to 4, suggesting more variability in how they are perceived in the market or in their external performance.

To complete and deepen the analysis of model fit, we will focus on aspects related to the reliability and validity of constructs, particularly based on reliability indicators such as Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, composite reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

Table 4 : Construct Reliability and Validity

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
Strategic Agility	0.89	0.90	0.91	0.65
Operational Financial Performance	0.87	0.88	0.89	0.63
Market Financial Performance	0.68	0.70	0.72	0.45

Source : SMART PLS

Based on Cronbach's Alpha, and excluding market financial performance, all indicators are excellent, showing very good internal consistency (high Alpha and rho_A), as well as good convergent validity. The global fit indices, although improvable, do not question the relevance of the obtained results and show a model that is overall acceptable.

3.2.2 Hypothesis testing and results analysis

This test corresponds to the evaluation of structural relationships between variables to validate or refute our research hypotheses. In analyzing these hypotheses, the significance level retained for the tests is 5% (0.05), a commonly used threshold in empirical research and statistical analysis.

a. Testing Hypothesis H1: Strategically Agile Moroccan Issuers Achieve Positive Revenue Growth

Indicator	Coefficient	t-value	p-value	R²
Agility -> Revenue	0.963	9.83	< 0.001	0.177

The analysis shows that the path coefficient between strategic agility and revenue is 0.963, with a t-value of 9.83, which is highly significant ($p < 0.001$). The results also indicate that strategic agility explains 17.7% of the variance in revenue. These results allow us to confirm the following hypothesis: Strategically Agile Moroccan Issuers Achieve Positive Revenue Growth.

b. Testing Hypothesis H2: Strategically Agile Moroccan Issuers Achieve Positive EBITDA Growth

Indicator	Coefficient	t-value	p-value	R²
Agility -> EBITDA	0.983	10.22	< 0.001	0.177

The analysis shows a coefficient of 0.983, with a t-value of 10.22 and a p-value < 0.001, confirming a very significant relationship. These results allow us to confirm the following hypothesis: Strategically Agile Moroccan Issuers Achieve Positive EBITDA Growth.

c. Testing Hypothesis H3: Strategically Agile Moroccan Issuers Achieve Positive Operating Income Growth

Indicator	Coefficient	t-value	p-value	R ²
Agility -> Operating Income	0.977	9.77	< 0.001	0.177

The model reveals a coefficient of 0.977, with a t-value of 9.77 and a p-value < 0.001, confirming a significant relationship. These results allow us to confirm the following hypothesis: Strategically Agile Moroccan Issuers Achieve Positive Operating Income Growth.

d. Testing Hypothesis H4: Strategically Agile Moroccan Issuers Achieve Positive Net Income Growth

Indicator	Coefficient	t-value	p-value	R ²
Agility -> Net Income	0.969	9.69	< 0.001	0.177

The model presents a coefficient of 0.969, with a t-value of 9.69 and a p-value < 0.001. These results demonstrate that strategic agility positively influences the net profits of the companies in our study. This allows us to confirm the following hypothesis: Strategically agile Moroccan issuers achieve positive net income growth.

e. Testing Hypothesis H5: Strategically Agile Moroccan Issuers Achieve Positive Return on Equity (ROE)

Indicator	Coefficient	t-value	p-value	R ²
Agility -> ROE	0.147	1.47	0.142	0.096

The coefficient of 0.147, although positive, is weak and not statistically significant at the 95% confidence level (p-value > 0.05). This indicates that strategic agility has no notable impact on this indicator, allowing us to refute the following hypothesis: Strategically agile Moroccan issuers achieve a positive evolution in their return on equity (ROE).

Hence, Hypothesis H5 is not validated (rejected).

f. Testing Hypothesis H6: Strategically Agile Moroccan Issuers Achieve Positive Evolution of Their Stock Price (CR)

Indicator	Coefficient	t-value	p-value	R ²
Agility -> CR	0.991	10.11	< 0.001	0.096

The coefficient obtained is 0.991, with a t-value of 10.11 and a p-value < 0.001 . This result shows that although strategic agility may be perceived as risky by some investors, agile companies tend to see their market value increase.

This allows us to confirm the following hypothesis: Strategically agile Moroccan issuers achieve a positive evolution of their stock price (CR).

3.3 Discussion of Results

For revenue, strategic agility acts as a revenue catalyst by accelerating the ability to respond to market signals. In other words, this relationship is based on these companies' ability to react quickly to market changes, adjust their offerings, and continuously innovate. This finding is also supported by other studies, notably by Overby, Tallon, and others.

In the context of Moroccan companies, the results show a similar dynamic. Companies that adopt flexible strategies are able to increase their revenue by reacting more swiftly to market fluctuations and changing consumer expectations. This is particularly relevant in sectors such as services, where customer needs evolve rapidly, and companies must continuously adjust their offerings to remain competitive.

The same holds true for other performance indicators, where strategic agility directly improves outcomes by enhancing internal operational efficiency—through cost reduction and risk anticipation (logistics, regulation, cost fluctuations), thus improving profitability. One of the core effects of strategic agility is improving process profitability through better allocation of internal resources (Zain et al., 2005). More flexible management of production flows and capacities also facilitates reduction in operational costs, particularly those related to overproduction, obsolescence, and inventory management (Sambamurthy et al., 2003).

In the Moroccan context, the link between strategic agility and improved performance indicators is particularly important, as it reflects companies' ability to optimize internal resources and adjust operations to maximize operational margins. In sectors like manufacturing or retail, where margins are tight and variable costs high, the ability to quickly and effectively adapt to demand fluctuations is essential for maintaining high profitability.

Regarding ROE, the impact of strategic agility is slower and more indirect. This may be due to sector capital intensity reducing the speed of return on investment despite agility, the financing structure (equity vs. debt), or the economic cycle and strategic investment decisions affecting agility's impact on capital profitability.

In Moroccan firms, this suggests that while strategic agility helps in better asset use and more efficient resource allocation, it doesn't immediately result in a marked ROE improvement. In

industries with heavy infrastructure or expensive equipment, the impact may be diluted by maintenance and renewal costs. Thus, firms should not only adopt agile practices but also reassess their long-term investment strategies to improve ROE.

Another factor is how firms finance their assets. Lu and Ramamurthy (2011) showed that in highly leveraged environments, the impact of agility on ROE may be limited, as much of the revenue goes to debt repayment. Firms financed more by equity have more flexibility to reinvest in productive assets, giving agility more direct influence on ROE.

Finally, for stock prices: although strategically agile Moroccan issuers do see positive developments in their stock value, strategic agility alone is not enough—it must be supported by financial communication and investor relations strategies.

In Morocco's emerging market context, agility's impact on stock prices is noticeable but moderate. This can be attributed to the nature of emerging markets, like Morocco's, which are characterized by higher volatility and limited liquidity. Chakrabarti and Mitchell (2005) noted that in emerging markets, stock performance is often more influenced by macroeconomic and external factors—such as political stability, currency fluctuations, and government policy—than by internal strategies. Thus, even if agile practices improve internal performance, they may not directly affect stock valuation.

3.4 Theoretical Contributions

Theoretically, this research enriches the existing literature on strategic agility by integrating a contextual perspective specific to emerging markets. Unlike studies in developed economies where firms have ample resources for agile strategies, Moroccan companies face more rigid constraints in resources and regulation. This work highlights how such constraints shape agile practice implementation in Morocco.

Additionally, this study incorporates elements of the dynamic capabilities theory to explain how strategic agility enables firms to quickly adapt and reconfigure internal resources in response to external threats and opportunities.

3.5 Practical Implications

From a managerial standpoint, this study offers concrete recommendations for Moroccan business leaders and those operating in emerging markets. The results underscore the critical importance of strategic agility in maintaining and enhancing competitiveness in environments marked by constant change and economic uncertainty.

Leaders are encouraged to embed agile practices into their decision-making and organizational processes, particularly regarding market responsiveness, operational flexibility, and innovation

capacity. This research also highlights the need to develop organizational learning capabilities and foster a corporate culture oriented toward collaboration and experimentation.

Moreover, companies should strengthen their ability to anticipate trends and adjust strategies in response to rapid changes in their competitive environments.

3.6 Study Limitations

This research is not without limitations :

- **Sample and Generalizability:** The sample consists of Moroccan companies listed on the Casablanca Stock Exchange. While relevant, the findings may not be generalizable to all Moroccan companies, especially unlisted ones.
- **Study Period:** Although useful for analyzing agility's impact on financial performance, the selected timeframe may not capture long-term dynamics. Some effects, particularly on market performance, may appear over longer horizons.
- **Non-Financial Aspects:** This study focuses on financial indicators and does not consider non-financial performance aspects such as customer satisfaction, innovation, or sustainability. These are essential for evaluating overall performance and should be included in future research.

3.7 Research Perspectives

International Comparison: A comparative perspective with other emerging countries could provide insights into the Moroccan context. Comparing Morocco to other African or Asian economies could reveal contextual variables influencing agile practice effectiveness.

Overall Performance Evaluation: Including non-financial elements to evaluate agility's impact on overall, not just financial, performance. A longitudinal study (over a decade or more) could better capture these long-term effects.

Impact of New Technologies: This research opens the way for studies on how digital technologies (e.g., AI, big data) influence strategic agility. Integrating these technologies into decision-making could transform corporate agility and its financial impact—a topic worth future attention.

Conclusion

This study clearly demonstrates that strategic agility has a significant and positive impact on the operational financial performance of listed Moroccan companies—particularly on indicators like revenue, EBITDA, and net income. Agile companies show superior capabilities in seizing market opportunities, reducing reaction times, and optimizing resource use for better profitability.

However, the impact of strategic agility on market financial performance indicators (e.g., stock price, ROE) is more mixed. While some agile companies experienced stock value growth, others saw no significant market reaction to their agility efforts. These findings emphasize the role of external factors—such as investor perception, macroeconomic conditions, and financial market confidence—that can moderate the direct effect of agility on stock valuation.

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