

Enterprise Resource Planning Lifecycle Management and Implementation – A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

This systematic literature review investigates the evolution and critical determinants of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP). Despite their strategic importance for achieving operational excellence and sustainability goals, organizations continue to face alarmingly high project failure rates, frequently reported between 60% and 70%. This persistent problem stems from a critical gap in standardized, comprehensive implementation strategies that fail to encompass the full system lifecycle—from pre-implementation readiness assessments to long-term post-implementation evolution. By synthesizing findings from diverse case studies, the review focuses on the ERP lifecycle, existing frameworks, and the complex interplay of barriers and enablers. The analysis underscores the necessity of a systematic, roadmap-based approach to align organizational strategy with integrated system functionality across all phases. This study results in the design of a conceptual design guidance framework; however, future research should expand on the use and testing of this framework to validate its effectiveness across diverse sectors.

Keywords

Enterprise Resource Planning Systems, Systematic Literature Review, Framework

1. Introduction

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems are integrated information systems designed to automate and streamline corporate operations by enabling the real-time exchange of shared information, data, and processes across an entire organisation (Alzahmi et al., 2025; Powel et al., 2013). At their core, ERP systems utilise a central database that collects and distributes data to multiple applications, supporting diverse company functions through a unified IT and information structure (Ali and Miller, 2017; Alzahmi et al., 2025; Bournaris et al., 2020; Meghana et al., 2017). This integration across functional areas, such as finance, human resources, operations, logistics, sales, and marketing, enhances the flow of information throughout a business, allowing data to be entered once and immediately updated across the organization (Ali and Miller, 2017; Alzahmi et al., 2025; Meghana et al., 2017; Saade and Nijher, 2016).

Companies adopt ERP systems to achieve various strategic and operational objectives such as (Ali and Miller, 2017; Alzahmi et al., 2025; Basu et al., 2024; Bournaris et al., 2020; Herath and Wijenayake, 2019; Hwang and Min, 2015; Meghana et al., 2017; Powel et al., 2013; Saade and Nijher, 2016; Alsughayer, 2025; Wei et al., 2005):

- Competitive Advantage
- Process Integration and Standardization
- Enhanced Information Access
- Operational Efficiency and Cost Reduction
- Replacing Legacy Systems

- Organizational Growth and Performance Improvement

Despite the numerous benefits, ERP implementation is a complex, expensive, and time-consuming process due to certain reasons (Adam et al., 2007; Ali and Miller, 2017; Herath and Wijenayake, 2019; Hwang and Min, 2015; Law et al., 2009; Panayiotou et al., 2015; Powel et al., 2013; Razmi et al., 2009; Alsughayer, 2025; Wei et al., 2005):

- High Failure Rate
- Misalignment
- Resistance to Change
- High Costs

1.1 Problem statement and/or aim

Despite the strategic importance of ERP for achieving operational excellence and sustainability goals, organizations continue to face alarmingly high project failure rates, frequently reported between 60% and 70% (Ali and Miller, 2017; Saade and Nijher, 2016). This persistent problem stems from a critical gap in standardized, comprehensive implementation strategies that fail to encompass the full system lifecycle—from pre-implementation readiness assessments to long-term post-implementation evolution (Ali and Miller, 2017; Chofreh et al., 2017). A fundamental challenge identified is the inherent misalignment between the standardized "best practice" logics embedded in ERP software and the unique cultural and operational requirements of diverse organizations, leading to disruptive organizational change and user resistance (Panayiotou et al., 2015; Vos and Boonstra, 2022; Wei et al., 2005). Furthermore, as enterprises attempt to integrate complex sustainability metrics into their core systems, they often lack a structured framework to manage the increased complexity of data integration and cross-functional coordination (Almarri et al., 2025; Alzahmi et al., 2025; Chofreh et al., 2017). Many organizations also prioritize technical "go-live" milestones over system resilience, neglecting the maintenance and support phases where actual business benefits are realized (Law et al., 2009; Teoh et al., 2017).

Consequently, there is an urgent need for a cohesive implementation framework that provides clear roadmaps, manages cultural misfits, and streamlines coordination to ensure that ERP systems serve as effective catalysts for sustainable business transformation rather than becoming costly operational failures (Alzahmi et al., 2025; Gosain et al., 2005). With this in mind, the following questions will need to be answered. What methodology is best suited to achieve this aim? How will the success of the framework be measured?

2. Methodology

A systematic literature review (SLR) was carried out to gather information in order to accomplish the aim. This took the shape of a scoping SLR, which made it possible to look into the definition, advantages, challenges, and facilitators of frameworks for implementing ERP systems (Wei et al., 2005). The SLR approach put forward by Albliwi et al., 2014 served as the basis for this investigation and is described in the following steps and sections:

2.1 Step 1 – Develop research purpose

This study aimed to provide guidelines for ERP system implementation in South Africa by gathering and documenting existing literature on the scope, advantages, challenges, and facilitators of ERP system implementation frameworks.

2.2 Step 2 – Develop research protocol

Table 1 depicts the developed research protocol.

Table 1. Research review protocol (Adapted from Xiao et al., 2019)

Purpose of the study	• Gather and document existing literature on the scope, advantages, challenges, and facilitators of ERP system implementation frameworks.
Inclusion criteria	• Literature that contains “Enterprise resource planning”, “Implementation”, “Strategies” and “Framework” in the title, abstract or keywords

	Literature that discusses the definition, advantages, challenges, and facilitators of frameworks for implementing ERP systems
Exclusion criteria	Non-English articles
Search criteria	- Science direct - Scopus - Web of Science - Emerald Insight
Keywords	“Enterprise resource planning” AND “Implementation” AND “Strategies” AND “Framework”
Quality assessment criteria	- All duplicate literature must be eliminated - Literature must be scientific - Literature must be reviewed for relevance - Literature must be reviewed for accurate comprehension and interpretation of ERP systems - Data collecting for studies must be transparent.

2.3 Step 3 – Establish relevance criteria

The field of ERP systems is not a new field, as such, to restrict the net cast for inclusion, for the purpose of including studies, the following relevance criteria were created:

- Literature that contains “Enterprise resource planning”, “Implementation”, “Strategies” and “Framework” in the title, abstract or keywords
- Literature that discusses the definition, advantages, challenges, and facilitators of frameworks for implementing ERP systems
- Non-English articles should be excluded.

2.4 Step 4 – Search and retrieve the literature

Step 4 involved searching and retrieving the literature using the databases listed in Table 1, yielding 116 papers in total. The identification component in Figure 1 shows how the papers are broken down in this process.

2.5 Step 5 – Selection of studies

The duplicates and retraction notices have been eliminated from the search results. As can be seen in the screening part of Figure 1, 95 papers passed the screening procedure consequently. Following that, several studies were eliminated because they failed to address the definition, benefits, obstacles, and enablers of ERP system implementation. A few studies that provided an overview and history of ERP systems were disqualified. Finally, some studies were disqualified since they just addressed the applications and features of ERP systems. Only 22 studies qualified for inclusion following the exclusion process, as shown in the eligibility portion of Figure 1.

2.6 Step 6 – Quality assessment for relevant studies

All 22 studies satisfied the criteria to be included in the SLR, as shown in Figure 1, after being evaluated based on the quality criteria listed in Table 1.

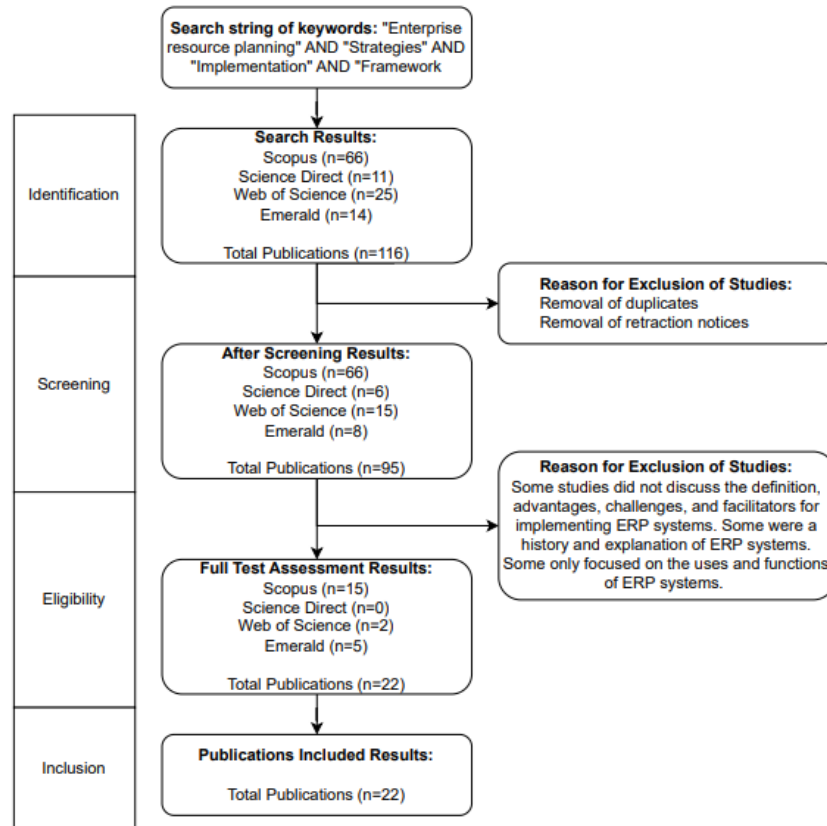


Figure 1. Selection process chart (As per PRISMA guidelines)

3. Results (Findings) and Discussion

Steps 7 and 8 from the SLR methodology are expanded on in this section:

3.1 Step 7 – Data extraction

Once the selection of papers to be included was finalized, the full texts of the research were examined, and data was taken out. Table 2 lists the studies that are included and the data that is included in each study. This extracted data was highlighted and explained in the upcoming sections.

Table 2. Data extracted from literature

Title	Authors	Barriers	Enablers	Life cycle	Framework
Sustainable enterprise resource planning systems implementation: A framework development	A.G. Chofreh, F.A. Goni, J.J. Klemeš	x	x	x	x
Development of a roadmap for Sustainable Enterprise Resource Planning systems implementation (part II)	A.G. Chofreh, F.A. Goni, J.J. Klemeš	x	x	x	x
The influence of cultural values on Enterprise System adoption, towards a culture – Enterprise System alignment theory	J.F.J. Vos, A. Boonstra	x	x	x	x
Critical Success Factors on the Implementation of ERP Systems: Building a Theoretical Framework	A. Kouriati, T. Bournaris, B. Manos, S.A. Nastis	x	x	x	x

Critical success factors in enterprise resource planning implementation: A review of case studies	R.G. Saade, H. Nijher	x	x	x	x
ERP system implementation in large enterprises – a systematic literature review	M. Ali, L. Miller	x	x	x	x
TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE ERP SYSTEMS: EMERGING TRENDS, CHALLENGES, AND FUTURE PATHWAYS	W. Alzahmi, K. Al-Assaf, R. Alshaikh, Z. Bahroun	x	x	x	x
A business process modeling-enabled requirements engineering framework for ERP implementation	N.A. Panayiotou, S.P. Gayialis, N.P. Evangelopoulos, P.K. Katimertzoglou	x	x	x	x
Managing the full ERP life-cycle: Considerations of maintenance and support requirements and IT governance practice	C.C.H. Law, C.C. Chen, B.J.P. Wu	x	x	x	x
The concurrent application of lean production and ERP: Towards an ERP-based lean implementation process	D. Powell, E. Alfnes, J.O. Strandhagen, H. Dreyer	x	x	x	x
Enterprise Resource Planning Systems for Health, Safety, and Environment Management: Analyzing Critical Success Factors	M. AlMarri, et al.	x	x		x
Role of ERP systems in management accounting in SMEs in Saudi Arabia	S. Alsughayer	x	x	x	x
Project management: a case study of a successful ERP implementation	F. Carton, F. Adam, D. Sammon	x	x	x	x
The Strategic Importance of ERP Systems Implementation in The FMCG Industry in Sri Lanka	H.M.R.P. Herath, S.I. Wijenayake	x	x	x	x
Towards a resilience management framework for complex enterprise systems upgrade implementation	S.Y. Teoh, W. Yeoh, H.S. Zadeh	x	x	x	x
Identifying the drivers of enterprise resource planning and assessing its impacts on supply chain performances	D. Hwang, H. Min	x	x	x	x
The management of cross-functional inter-dependencies in ERP implementations: emergent coordination patterns	S. Gosain, Z. Lee, Y. Kim	x	x	x	x
Understanding misalignment and cascading change of ERP implementation: a stage view of process analysis	H. Wei, E.T.G. Wang, P. Ju	x	x	x	x
Developing a practical framework for ERP readiness assessment using fuzzy analytic network process	J. Razmi, M.S. Sangari, R. Ghodsi	x	x	x	x
An innovative model on intention to adopt cloud-based ERP among SMEs	A. Basu, S. Dutta, R. Jha	x	x	x	x
Prioritizing the factors affecting cloud ERP adoption – an analytic hierarchy process approach	Meghana H.L., A.O. Mathew, L.L.R. Rodrigues	x	x	x	x

3.2 Step 8 – Analysis and synthesis of findings

3.2.1 Annual distribution of literature

Although the research protocol did not specify a time frame for data collection, the studies reviewed indicate that the earliest references to ERP date back to 2004. The majority of publications, however, occurred in 2017. After reaching this peak, publications declined during the COVID-19 period but have since picked up as the workforce returned to the office. Figure 2 illustrates the annual breakdown of publications.

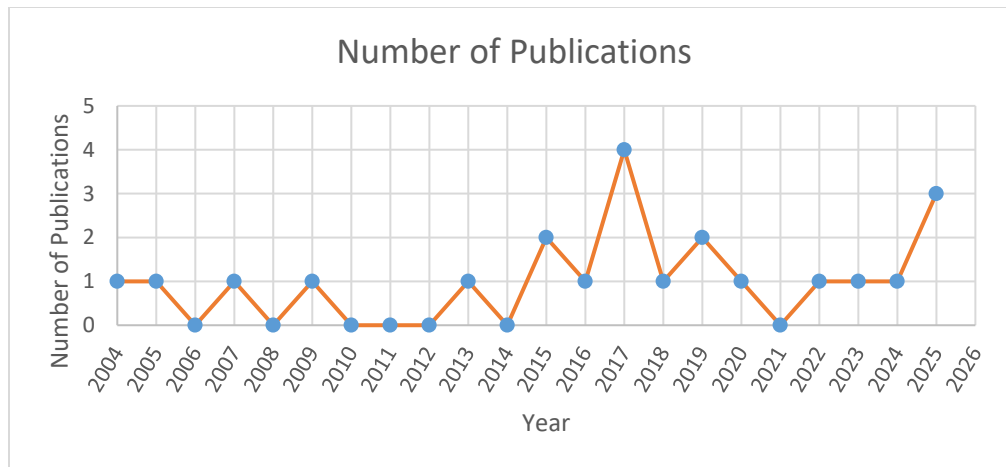


Figure 2. Line graph of number of publications per year

3.2.2 Keywords

An analysis of the keywords in the studies revealed that the most common keyword was ERP, followed by Enterprise Resource Planning Implementation. This was expected, given the focus of the SLR topic. However, other prevalent keywords included management, critical factors, systems, framework, and sustainability, all of which align with ERP research. A word cloud was generated from the keywords to illustrate their frequency of use, as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Word cloud of keywords

3.2.3 Enablers of ERP systems implementation

Successful Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) implementation is crucial due to the significant investments in time and resources, and the high reported failure rates (Adam et al., 2007; Herath and Wijenayake, 2019; Razmi et al., 2009; Saade and Nijher, 2016; Wei et al., 2005). Identifying and managing Critical Success Factors (CSFs) is essential to overcome challenges and achieve desired benefits (Chofreh et al., 2017; Bournaris et al., 2020; Gosain et al., 2005; Law et al., 2009; Panayiotou et al., 2015; Saade and Nijher, 2016). CSFs have been divided into four distinct areas (Adam et al., 2007; Albliwi et al., 2014; Ali and Miller, 2017; Almarri et al., 2025; Alzahmi et al., 2025; Basu et al., 2024; Chin-Fu et al., 2004; Chofreh et al., 2017; Chofreh et al., 2018; Bournaris et al., 2020; Gosain et al., 2005; Herath and Wijenayake, 2019; Hwang and Min, 2015; Law et al., 2009; Meghana et al., 2017; Panayiotou et al., 2015; Powel et al., 2013; Razmi et al., 2009; Saade and Nijher, 2016; Alsughayer, 2025; Teoh et al., 2017; Vos and Boonstra, 2022; Wei et al., 2005):

- **Strategic and Management-Related Factors:**

- Top Management Support and Commitment
- Clear Understanding of Strategic Goals and Vision
- Business Plan and Scope Definition
- Realistic Expectations
- Cost-Benefit Analysis/Well-Defined Budget
- Formalized Project Approach and Methodology
- Leadership/Project Championship
- Resource Allocation
- Assigning Responsibilities
- Performance Monitoring, Evaluation, and Feedback
- **People and Organizational Factors:**
 - Organizational Change Management
 - Organizational Culture and Readiness
 - Communication, Collaboration, and Trust
 - Composition of a Capable and Balanced Project Team
 - User Involvement, Support, and Training
 - Employee Morale and Motivation
 - Organizational Structure
 - Managing Conflicts of Interest
- **Technical and System-Related Factors:**
 - ERP-Business Process Alignment/Minimum Customization
 - Software and Vendor Selection
 - IT Infrastructure and Legacy System Management
 - Data Accuracy, Quality, and Integrity
 - Software Testing and Troubleshooting
 - System Support and Maintenance (M&S)
 - Security and Privacy
 - Scalability
- **External and Contextual Factors:**
 - Use of External Consultants
 - Competitive and External Pressures
 - National Culture
 - Economic Growth/Investment Worthiness

3.2.4 Barriers of ERP systems implementation

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) implementation is a complex, expensive, and time-consuming undertaking that frequently encounters significant challenges and a high rate of failure (Adam et al., 2007; Herath and Wijenayake, 2019; Powel et al., 2013; Razmi et al., 2009; Wei et al., 2005). Reported failure rates range from over 50% to as high as 70-75%, with some studies indicating that as few as 10% or 33% of projects are successful (Herath and Wijenayake, 2019; Razmi et al., 2009). Many organizations do not achieve the desired performance from their ERP investments, often due to inadequate preparedness and inappropriate project management (Adam et al., 2007; Bournaris et al., 2020; Herath and Wijenayake, 2019). The following barriers were found and categorised (Adam et al., 2007; Albliwi et al., 2014; Ali and Miller, 2017; Almarri et al., 2025; Alzahmi et al., 2025; Basu et al., 2024; Chin-Fu et al., 2004; Chofreh et al., 2017; Chofreh et al., 2018; Bournaris et al., 2020; Gosain et al., 2005; Herath and Wijenayake, 2019; Hwang and Min, 2015; Law et al., 2009; Meghana et al., 2017; Panayiotou et al., 2015; Powel et al., 2013; Razmi et al., 2009; Saade and Nijher, 2016; Alsughayer, 2025; Teoh et al., 2017; Vos and Boonstra, 2022; Wei et al., 2005):

- **Strategic and Project Management Failures:**
 - Lack of a Comprehensive Plan
 - Inadequate Project Management

- Poor Requirements Definition
- Unrealistic Expectations and Goals
- Underestimation of Effort
- Limited Focus on Post-Implementation
- **Organizational and Human Factors:**
 - Resistance to Change
 - Lack of Top Management Support
 - Inadequate Communication and Collaboration
 - Insufficient Training and User Involvement
 - Organizational Culture and Readiness
 - Lack of Expertise and Resources
 - Conflicts of Interest
- **Technical and System-Related Factors:**
 - Misfit and Customization
 - Legacy Systems Integration
 - Data Quality
 - System Instability and Performance
 - Security and Privacy
- **External and Economic Factors:**
 - High Costs
 - Economic Environment
 - Vendor and Consultant Issues

3.2.5 ERP life cycle

The ERP life cycle is conceptualized not as a single event but as an ongoing journey that spans from initial planning to long-term system evolution (Law et al., 2009; Wei et al., 2005). While various models exist, the most general categorization divides the life cycle into three primary phases: pre-implementation, implementation, and post-implementation (Adam et al., 2007; Albliwi et al., 2014; Ali and Miller, 2017; Alzahmi et al., 2025; Basu et al., 2024; Chin-Fu et al., 2004; Chofreh et al., 2017; Chofreh et al., 2018; Bournaris et al., 2020; Gosain et al., 2005; Herath and Wijenayake, 2019; Hwang and Min, 2015; Law et al., 2009; Meghana et al., 2017; Panayiotou et al., 2015; Powel et al., 2013; Razmi et al., 2009; Saade and Nijher, 2016; Alsughayer, 2025; Teoh et al., 2017; Vos and Boonstra, 2022; Wei et al., 2005).

Pre-implementation involves preparatory procedures such as readiness assessments, defining the business case, and selecting appropriate software and partners. Implementation focuses on deploying the system through configuration, process re-engineering, and user training, with success depending heavily on top management commitment and organisational alignment. Finally, post-implementation covers the ongoing maintenance and support required to ensure system reliability and where actual business benefits materialise.

3.2.6 ERP framework

The literature proposes several structured frameworks designed to bridge the gap between technical functionality and organizational strategy:

- **Sustainable ERP (S-ERP) Master Plan:** This framework integrates Triple Bottom Line indicators (social, environmental, and economic) through a decisional paradigm that spans strategic, tactical, and operational levels (Alzahmi et al., 2025; Chofreh et al., 2018).
- **BPM-enabled Requirements Engineering:** A hybrid model that combines technology-driven and process-driven approaches, using business process modeling to design "TO-BE" workflows that align system functionality with unique business needs (Panayiotou et al., 2015).
- **Resilience and Coordination Frameworks:** These address organizational vulnerabilities through situational awareness and restoration plans (Teoh et al., 2017). They also identify three coordination

patterns—lean (standardization), rich (mutual adjustment), and mediation (executive mandate)—to manage cross-functional dependencies (Gosain et al., 2005).

- **Culture-Enterprise System Alignment:** This theory uses archetypical "Accepting" and "Resisting" cultural profiles to help project managers develop culture-sensitive implementation strategies (Vos and Boonstra, 2022).
- **Lean-ERP and Readiness Assessments:** The ERP-Based Lean Implementation Process merges lean principles with the system lifecycle to eliminate waste, while the Readiness Assessment Framework uses fuzzy logic to evaluate organizational preparedness before a project begins (Powel et al., 2013; Razmi et al., 2009).

4. ERP system literature-based implementation framework

A successful Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) implementation framework is a holistic and systematic approach that addresses the entire lifecycle of the ERP system, from initial planning to ongoing maintenance and evolution, as shown in Figure 4. It emphasizes that ERP success goes beyond merely "going live" and involves achieving desired organizational performance, efficiency, and strategic objectives.

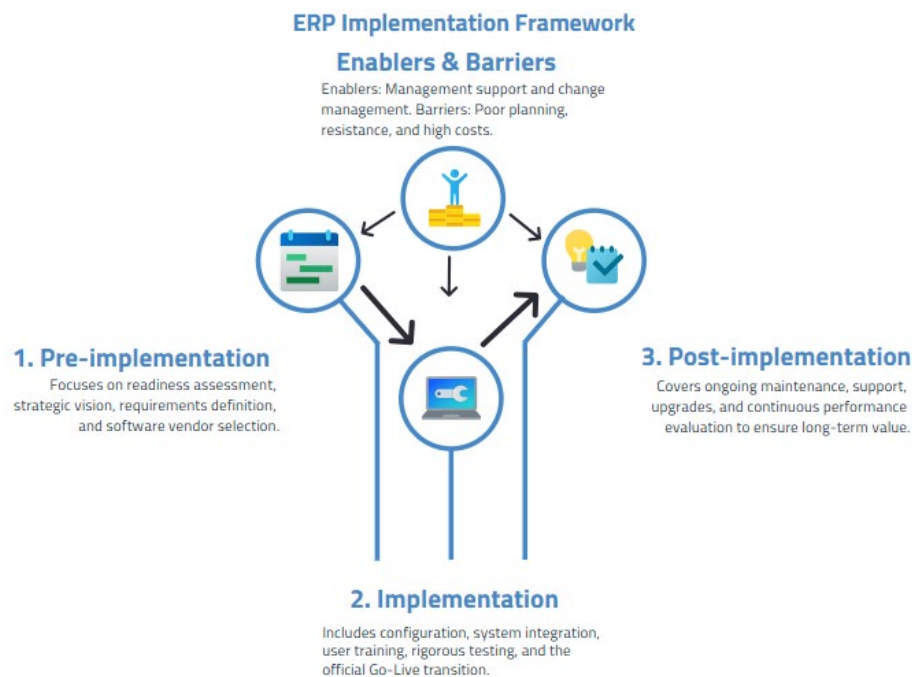


Figure 4. ERP literature-based implementation framework

4.1 Pre-implementation Phase

The pre-implementation phase begins with initiation and authorization, where formal approval is secured, the business case is clarified, and stakeholder expectations are aligned with overarching project objectives. This is followed by a thorough readiness assessment and current situation analysis to evaluate organizational problems, opportunities, and overall preparedness across IT infrastructure, resources, and culture. Establishing a strategic vision and clear goal definition is essential for defining the system's mission and identifying measurable business benefits. Organizations must then conduct a detailed cost-benefit analysis to justify the necessary investment and reach a definitive go/no-go decision. The requirements definition and "as-is" business process analysis follow, identifying areas for improvement and often utilizing business process re-engineering to align operations with industry best practices. Careful software and vendor selection ensure that the chosen package and implementation consultants provide the best functional fit for the organization's unique needs. Effective project organization involves forming a dedicated project team and executive steering committee while clearly assigning responsibilities to ensure accountability. Finally, preliminary training and education are provided to top management and core users to familiarize them with system concepts and the impending changes required for successful adoption.

4.2 Implementation Phase

The implementation phase begins with detailed planning to refine project goals and establish actionable action plans for executing the project. Following this, the execution stage involves carrying out all planned tasks according to specifications, including software configuration and installation of necessary modules while strictly aiming for minimal customization to ensure system stability. System integration is then performed to link the ERP platform with existing systems and resolve any data inconsistency issues. Throughout these processes, ongoing training and user involvement provide continuous, tailored education to ensure active participation during configuration and testing. Rigorous system testing and troubleshooting are conducted to address errors before the official go-live cutover, which represents the formal transition to the new system and the shutdown of legacy applications. To ensure adherence to predefined plans and objectives, project progress is tracked through continuous monitoring and controlling. Finally, the closing stage marks the formal completion of implementation tasks and the fulfillment of all contractual obligations.

4.3 Post-implementation Phase

The post-implementation phase, often characterized by the routinization and infusion of the system into the organization's daily operations, begins with post-go-live initiation and planning to define management strategies and governance structures for the system's long-term life cycle. A core component of this stage is Maintenance and Support (M&S), which provides essential technical assistance through corrective maintenance to fix software errors, adaptive maintenance to meet evolving user needs, and preventive maintenance to ensure ongoing system stability and security. To keep pace with dynamic business environments, organizations must proactively manage upgrades and enhancements, implementing new modules and updated software versions that allow the system to evolve and satisfy new strategic requirements. Effective management also requires rigorous performance monitoring and evaluation, where system reliability, data integrity, and user satisfaction are regularly assessed against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to verify that anticipated business benefits—which typically materialize one to three years after deployment—are being fully realized. This commitment facilitates continuous improvement, characterized by the ongoing optimization of business processes and system usage to maximize operational efficiency and enterprise value. Finally, the closing stage of post-implementation formally concludes phase-specific activities, ensuring the system is fully functional, stable, and successfully meets all defined user requirements.

5. Conclusion

This systematic literature review has addressed the persistent problem of high failure rates in enterprise resource planning implementation, which frequently range from 60% to 70% due to critical misalignments between standardised system logic and unique organizational requirements. To investigate these challenges, relevant data extracted from a comprehensive body of literature and case studies spanning several decades, focusing on diverse organisational contexts and the full system lifecycle. The systematic data analysis was facilitated through Table 1, which enabled the identification and categorisation of specific barriers and enablers across the pre-implementation, implementation, and post-implementation phases.

By synthesising these findings, the study focused on bridging the gap between theoretical critical success factors and their practical application, particularly in the emerging transition toward sustainable and integrated safety management systems. The framework encompasses the necessity of interdisciplinary expertise, robust data integrity, and situational awareness to mitigate implementation risks and enhance long-term system resilience. This study results in the design of a literature-based guidance framework with the intent of being an original contribution to the field by providing a comprehensive synthesis of ERP benefits, barriers, and lifecycle dynamics, establishing a foundational reference point that not only advances scholarly understanding of current system designs but also sets a forward-looking precedent for the development of more adaptive, resilient, and organisationally responsive ERP implementations. However, future research should expand on the use and testing of this framework to validate its effectiveness and applicability across a wider range of industries and organisational settings.

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