

The Contribution of Digital Transformation to the Dynamic Assembly of Hospital Supply Chains: The Case of Public Hospitals in Greater Agadir.

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Abstract

This study explores the relationship between digital transformation and the performance of hospital supply chains, with a specific focus on public hospitals in the Greater Agadir region of Morocco. Grounded in the concepts of agility, resilience, and interdepartmental coordination, the research tests four hypotheses using a mixed-methods approach and a structured survey of 38 healthcare professionals. The variables analyzed include digital tool usage, digital maturity, staff training, and perceived supply chain performance indicators. Results from Spearman correlation analysis indicate that none of the hypothesized relationships were statistically significant. These findings suggest that the simple presence of digital technologies is not sufficient to improve logistical performance without proper organizational integration and support. The discussion highlights key structural limitations—such as fragmented systems, limited training, and lack of digital culture—that may hinder the impact of technology in the studied context. The paper concludes with practical recommendations for hospital managers and policymakers, emphasizing the importance of a holistic digital transformation strategy that includes governance, human capacity building, and system interoperability.

Keywords: Digital transformation, Hospital supply chain, Resilience, Agility, Public healthcare, Morocco

Introduction

In recent years, healthcare systems worldwide have come under increasing pressure to improve the efficiency, responsiveness, and above all, the resilience of their service delivery chains. At the heart of this transformation lies the hospital supply chain (HSC) the system that governs the flow of essential medical resources such as medicines, equipment, and personal protective gear. The COVID-19 pandemic starkly revealed the fragility of these supply chains, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, where limited coordination, weak visibility, and rigid logistical structures led to widespread service disruption.

In response, there is growing interest in rethinking hospital logistics through the lens of dynamic assemblage that is, the ability of supply chains to adapt rapidly by reorganizing their structures and partners in real-time. This shift implies a move away from static and siloed systems toward more flexible, modular, and integrated frameworks that can ensure service continuity during disruptions.

Digital transformation plays a pivotal role in enabling this shift. Technologies such as Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, the Internet of Things (IoT), Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are increasingly embedded in hospital operations to enhance visibility, predictive capability, and decision-making agility. When successfully deployed, such technologies do not merely automate processes they enable interdepartmental coordination, supplier integration, and responsive logistics. Yet, the effectiveness of digital transformation in hospital environments depends on more than just technological deployment; it is also shaped by factors such as digital maturity, staff digital training, and the institutional context.

In the context of Morocco, and more precisely in the Greater Agadir region, public hospitals are engaged in reform initiatives aimed at modernizing their infrastructure and service delivery. National programs promoting e-health and digital health systems have gained momentum. However, the concrete integration of digital tools into hospital supply chains remains fragmented, poorly documented, and often dependent on local managerial discretion.

This study aims to explore how digital transformation contributes to the dynamic assembly and resilience of hospital supply chains within public hospitals in the Grand Agadir region. Specifically, it investigates the relationships between digital transformation components including the use of digital tools, digital maturity, and staff training and key supply chain outcomes such as agility, resilience, interdepartmental coordination, and disruption management.

2. Literature review

2.1 Introduction to Hospital Supply Chains

Hospital supply chains (HSCs) represent the backbone of healthcare service delivery, encompassing the flow of medical products, pharmaceuticals, equipment, and information across a wide range of interconnected actors. Their complexity stems from the need to ensure continuous availability, strict regulatory compliance, and coordination across multiple departments, often in resource-constrained environments (McKone-Sweet et al., 2005).

Unlike industrial or retail supply chains, hospital logistics must simultaneously serve clinical efficiency and cost containment, a duality that often creates structural inefficiencies and fragmentation. According to De Vries and Huijsman (2011), hospital supply chains are characterized by decentralized decision-making, fluctuating demand, and the critical nature of the products handled. These factors necessitate robust coordination mechanisms and a transition from rigid, static supply structures toward more integrated and responsive configurations, especially in the face of emergencies or pandemics.

2.2 Concepts of Dynamic Assembly and Agility in Health Logistics

The concept of dynamic assembly in hospital supply chains refers to the continuous ability to reconfigure processes, actors, and logistical resources based on changing demands and unexpected disruptions. This is particularly critical in healthcare environments where variability is high and supply failures can directly impact patient safety. Singh, Gupta, and Modgil (2019) emphasize that dynamic assembly is not a one-time adjustment, but rather a built-in organizational capability that allows the supply chain to restructure rapidly through modularity, process flexibility, and decentralized decision-making. In hospitals, such capability can manifest in adaptive procurement systems, reallocation of stock across departments, and real-time adjustment of delivery schedules.

Closely related to dynamic assembly is the notion of agility, which is defined as the capacity of a supply chain to detect, respond, and recover from disruptions swiftly and effectively. According to Christopher (2000), agility involves responsiveness, flexibility, and a high degree of visibility across the chain. Agility is especially important in hospital settings where demand is uncertain, emergencies are frequent, and service continuity is vital. The use of predictive analytics, cross-functional coordination, and early-warning systems all contribute to creating agile healthcare logistics systems capable of minimizing disruptions and improving care quality.

Moreover, Yusuf et al. (2004) argue that supply chain agility in healthcare is built not only on technological systems but also on organizational culture and strategic partnerships. Their work highlights the role of internal collaboration (between pharmacy, procurement, clinical services) and external alignment (with suppliers, logistics providers) in building agile and resilient systems. When agility and dynamic assembly are combined, hospital supply chains become more adaptive, responsive, and resilient allowing them to withstand shocks such as pandemics, supply shortages, or policy changes. This dual capability is increasingly seen as a strategic asset in healthcare management, particularly in the public health sector of developing countries.

2.3 Digital Transformation in Healthcare Supply Chains

Digital transformation in healthcare logistics refers to the integration of digital technologies such as ERP systems, RFID, IoT, artificial intelligence (AI), and blockchain to enhance the performance, visibility, and responsiveness of supply chains. These technologies enable better traceability, real-time data sharing, predictive analytics, and process automation. According to Wamba et al. (2017), digital tools play a critical role in improving agility, reducing operational risks, and enabling more informed decision-making in supply chain processes. In hospital contexts, these benefits translate into shorter response times, optimized inventory management, and improved service continuity, especially during crises.

Kwon et al. (2019) emphasize that digitalization facilitates collaboration across departments and with external suppliers, breaking down silos that traditionally hamper hospital performance. For instance, the use of integrated ERP systems helps coordinate purchasing, warehousing, and pharmacy operations, while IoT sensors ensure the continuous monitoring of temperature-sensitive products such as vaccines or blood units. These digital enablers allow hospital supply chains to become data-driven and adaptive, aligning closely with the needs of dynamic assembly and agile response in uncertain environments. In low- and middle-income countries, where public hospitals often suffer from inefficiencies, digitalization offers a strategic solution to modernize systems and enhance overall service quality.

However, the benefits of digital transformation are not automatically realized without proper planning and alignment with organizational goals. As Agarwal et al. (2022) highlight, successful digitalization requires not only technical infrastructure but also change management, digital literacy, and institutional commitment. In the case of public hospitals, especially in regions such as Greater Agadir, these factors are crucial for ensuring that digital technologies truly enhance dynamic coordination and logistical resilience. Without addressing human,

cultural, and institutional challenges, digital tools may remain underutilized, preventing the full realization of their transformative potential.

2.4 Digital Maturity and Hospital Performance

Digital maturity refers to the extent to which an organization has adopted, integrated, and optimized digital technologies to support its strategic and operational goals. In hospital supply chains, a high level of digital maturity reflects the presence of interoperable systems, automated processes, and data-driven decision-making. According to Kane et al. (2015), organizations with advanced digital maturity demonstrate superior agility, better coordination across functions, and improved responsiveness to external shocks. In the healthcare sector, these capabilities are essential for enhancing supply chain performance, especially in public hospitals where efficiency and traceability are critical to patient safety.

As noted by Van Velthoven and Cordon (2019), digital maturity in healthcare does not depend solely on the presence of technology, but also on the organizational culture, leadership support, and strategic alignment. Hospitals that foster a culture of innovation and invest in continuous staff training are more likely to harness the full potential of digital systems. The implementation of digital dashboards, predictive demand systems, and electronic inventory tracking has been shown to reduce supply errors, lower costs, and minimize wastage—leading to measurable improvements in logistics performance and care quality. These elements are particularly vital in dynamic supply chain assembly, where rapid and informed reconfiguration is required.

In the specific context of public hospitals, especially in developing countries, achieving digital maturity presents both an opportunity and a challenge. Menear et al. (2019) argue that evaluating digital maturity through structured models (such as the HIMSS or the Digital Health Maturity Model) helps identify gaps and priorities for investment. In Morocco, the variation in digital maturity between urban and peripheral hospitals remains significant, often due to budgetary constraints and lack of technical expertise. Therefore, enhancing digital maturity becomes not just a technological task, but a systemic transformation requiring integrated governance and national health policy alignment.

2.5 Challenges to Digital Transformation in Public Health Systems

Despite the recognized benefits of digital transformation, public healthcare systems particularly in low- and middle-income countries face significant challenges in adopting and integrating digital solutions into their logistics operations. According to the World Health Organization (2019), the primary obstacles include insufficient infrastructure, unreliable internet connectivity, and fragmented data systems. These barriers hinder the effective deployment of

digital tools such as electronic procurement platforms, real-time inventory tracking, and automated data analytics. In many public hospitals, particularly those in peripheral or underfunded regions, these limitations prevent the realization of a truly agile and responsive supply chain.

In addition to technical constraints, there are substantial organizational and human challenges. Alami et al. (2020) highlight that many healthcare professionals lack sufficient digital literacy, and institutions often lack formal change management strategies. Resistance to change, lack of trust in digital systems, and unclear governance structures further impede the successful adoption of digital health technologies. Furthermore, the absence of integrated health information systems across departments (e.g., pharmacy, procurement, warehousing) leads to data silos, reducing coordination and visibility in the supply chain. These issues directly affect the hospital's ability to implement dynamic assembly and adapt its logistical processes effectively during disruptions.

Lastly, financial and policy-related constraints also limit digital transformation. As observed by the OECD (2017), public hospitals often operate under rigid budgetary rules and slow procurement processes, which hinder innovation. Investments in digital health require not only hardware and software but also long-term support for maintenance, training, and upgrades. In countries like Morocco, although there is national momentum toward digital health, many local hospitals lack the autonomy and resources to act independently. Consequently, successful transformation requires multi-level coordination, involving central health authorities, hospital management, IT departments, and end-users alike.

2.6 Moroccan Context and Regional Insights (Greater Agadir)

In recent years, Morocco has undertaken several initiatives to modernize its health system, including steps toward digitalization and improved supply chain management. The Ministère de la Santé Maroc (2021) outlined a strategic vision for e-health development, emphasizing the importance of digital platforms, interoperability, and real-time health data. However, the implementation of these initiatives at the local level remains uneven, especially in public hospitals where resource constraints and infrastructural gaps persist. In regions like Souss Massa and the city of Agadir, these gaps are particularly visible in logistical coordination, with hospitals often managing their procurement, warehousing, and distribution manually or with outdated tools.

Regional studies have shown that logistical inefficiencies and lack of integration between services remain major bottlenecks in public hospitals of the Grand Agadir area. According to

El Kharraz et al. (2022), the absence of digital traceability tools and centralized inventory systems has led to frequent stockouts, expired medicines, and fragmented communication between supply chain actors. These issues compromise both the efficiency and resilience of the supply chain, especially during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic exposed the fragility of local health logistics and triggered renewed interest in more agile, digital-based solutions for hospital management.

Despite these challenges, there are promising examples of local innovation and pilot programs aiming to digitize parts of the hospital supply chain. Benjelloun and Berrado (2019) point out that some Moroccan hospitals have begun experimenting with basic ERP modules and pharmacy information systems to monitor inventory levels and automate order requests. However, the success of such initiatives is closely linked to institutional support, training, and coordination between regional health authorities and local hospital managers. For the public hospitals in Greater Agadir to benefit fully from digital transformation, a structured, multi-level approach is required combining technological investment with organizational change and regional governance reform.

3. Methodology

In the context of public hospitals in Greater Agadir, the growing complexity and fragility of hospital supply chains have highlighted the need for more adaptive and coordinated logistical systems. Despite national initiatives to digitize healthcare services, many regional hospitals still rely on fragmented and manual processes, resulting in stockouts, delays, and limited responsiveness during crises. This situation raises an important research question: To what extent does digital transformation contribute to the dynamic assembly and performance of hospital supply chains in public healthcare institutions in Greater Agadir? The urgency to address this question is reinforced by the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic, which exposed logistical vulnerabilities and emphasized the need for real-time, technology-driven coordination.

To explore this central question, four hypotheses are proposed. H1: The adoption of digital technologies (ERP, IoT, RFID) significantly improves the agility and responsiveness of hospital supply chains. H2: Higher levels of digital maturity are associated with better coordination and integration across hospital departments. H3: Digital transformation helps reduce logistical disruptions, such as inventory shortages and communication failures. H4: The effectiveness of digital tools in strengthening supply chain resilience is moderated by organizational factors like staff training, infrastructure availability, and governance. These hypotheses provide a

framework to evaluate how digital transformation can serve as a strategic lever for enhancing the logistical performance and resilience of public hospitals in Morocco.

This study adopts a quantitative research design to investigate the contribution of digital transformation to the dynamic assembly of hospital supply chains in the public healthcare sector of Greater Agadir. The quantitative approach was selected to identify measurable relationships between the level of digital maturity, the use of specific technologies, and perceived improvements in logistics performance. The research is grounded in a positivist paradigm, aiming to produce generalizable results through statistical analysis (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

The target population includes logistics, procurement, and IT personnel from five public hospitals in the Greater Agadir region, including the Hassan II Regional Hospital and other provincial medical centers. A structured questionnaire was developed to assess variables such as the use of digital tools (ERP, IoT, RFID), the digital maturity level of the institution, and perceived improvements in supply chain agility, interdepartmental coordination, and disruption management. All items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree".

The methodological approach adopted in this research is rooted in a positivist epistemological stance, which assumes that social phenomena such as supply chain performance and digital transformation can be objectively observed, measured, and analyzed. This positioning allows for the use of quantitative methods to identify statistical relationships between variables and to generalize findings within a defined context. The research follows a hypothetico-deductive reasoning model, whereby theoretical assumptions derived from the literature such as the expected positive impact of digital maturity on resilience are tested empirically using structured survey data and statistical techniques (correlation, regression, ANOVA). This approach is particularly suited for exploring causal relationships in complex organizational systems, while maintaining scientific rigor and replicability.

4. Results

The data were analyzed using SPSS for descriptive statistics, reliability testing (Cronbach's alpha), and inferential analysis, including Spearman correlation and regression analysis, as recommended by Field (2018). To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was adapted from validated instruments used in prior studies (e.g., Kane et al., 2015; Wamba et al., 2017). Ethical clearance was obtained from the relevant health authority, and anonymity and confidentiality of participants were strictly maintained. This quantitative approach is expected to provide

statistically grounded insights into how digital transformation impacts the agility and resilience of hospital supply chains in the Moroccan public health sector.

Table 1: Spearman's Correlation Between Use of Digital Technologies and Perceived Agility of the Hospital Supply Chain

Correlations			Use of digital technologies (ERP, IoT, RFID)	Perceived agility of the hospital supply chain
Spearman's rho	Use of digital technologies (ERP, IoT, RFID)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.161
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.336
		N	38	38
	Perceived agility of the hospital supply chain	Correlation Coefficient	-.161	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.336	.
		N	38	38

Source: Author's own computation based on SPSS analysis of field data (2025).

A Spearman correlation test was conducted to examine the relationship between the use of digital technologies (ERP, IoT, RFID) and the perceived agility of hospital supply chains. The results revealed a weak negative correlation ($\rho = -0.161$) between the two variables, with a p-value of 0.336 based on a sample of 38 participants. Since the p-value exceeds the threshold of 0.05, the correlation is considered not statistically significant.

These results indicate that, within the studied hospitals of Greater Agadir, the adoption of digital technologies does not significantly influence the agility of supply chains. Therefore, H1 is rejected. This may be due to contextual limitations such as insufficient integration of tools, lack of training, or early-stage digital maturity. Further research could explore mediating variables or focus on more digitally advanced institutions to better understand the conditions under which technology positively impacts supply chain agility.

Table 2: Spearman's Correlation Between the Digital Maturity Level of the Hospital and the Degree of Interdepartmental Coordination

		Digital maturity level of the hospital	Degree of interdepartmental coordination
Spearman's rho	Digital maturity level of the hospital	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.421
		N	38
	Degree of interdepartmental coordination	Correlation Coefficient	-.135
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.421
		N	38

Source: Author's own computation based on SPSS analysis of field data (2025).

A Spearman's rank-order correlation was performed to assess the relationship between the digital maturity level of the hospital and the degree of interdepartmental coordination. The analysis showed a very weak negative correlation ($\rho = -0.135$) with a p-value of 0.421, based on 38 valid responses. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the correlation is not statistically significant.

These results indicate that, within the context of the public hospitals surveyed in Greater Agadir, digital maturity does not significantly improve coordination between departments. Thus, H2 is rejected. This lack of correlation may be due to the limited integration of digital systems, siloed organizational structures, or the early stages of digital transformation. Further qualitative investigation could provide insight into barriers preventing digital maturity from translating into operational collaboration.

Table 3: Spearman's Correlation Between the Use of Digital Tools for Logistics and the Frequency of Logistical Disruptions

		Use of digital tools for logistics	Frequency of logistical disruptions
Spearman's rho	Use of digital tools for logistics	1.000	.087
	Correlation Coefficient		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.603
	N	38	38
	Frequency of logistical disruptions	.087	1.000
	Correlation Coefficient		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.603	.
	N	38	38

Source: Author's own computation based on SPSS analysis of field data (2025).

A Spearman's rank correlation test was conducted to examine the relationship between the use of digital tools for logistics and the frequency of logistical disruptions in public hospitals. The correlation coefficient was $\rho = 0.087$ with a p-value of 0.603, based on 38 valid responses. This indicates a very weak and non-significant positive relationship between the two variables.

Because the p-value exceeds the threshold of 0.05, the correlation is not statistically significant, and therefore, H3 is not supported. In other words, the use of digital tools—as currently practiced in the studied hospitals—does not appear to significantly reduce logistical disruptions. This may reflect insufficient integration of digital tools, limited user training, or lack of systemic coordination. These findings suggest that simply introducing digital technologies is not enough; their effectiveness depends on broader organizational and technical readiness.

Table 4: Spearman's Correlation Between the Level of Staff Training on Digital Tools and the Resilience Level of the Hospital Supply Chain

		Level of staff training on digital tools	Resilience level of the hospital supply chain
Spearman's rho	Level of staff training on digital tools	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.082
		N	.624
	Resilience level of the hospital supply chain	Correlation Coefficient	.082
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.624
		N	.38

Source: Author's own computation based on SPSS analysis of field data (2025).

A Spearman correlation test was conducted to assess the relationship between the level of staff training on digital tools and the resilience of the hospital supply chain. The results revealed a very weak positive correlation ($\rho = 0.082$) with a p-value of 0.624, based on 38 valid responses. Since the p-value exceeds the 0.05 significance threshold, the relationship is not statistically significant.

As a result, H4 is not supported. In the sample of public hospitals in Greater Agadir, the level of training provided to staff on digital tools does not appear to significantly influence the perceived resilience of supply chain operations. This may indicate that training alone is insufficient to enhance resilience, or that other organizational factors such as system integration, governance, or infrastructure play a stronger role. Future research could explore whether training becomes more impactful when combined with strategic digital adoption and cross-departmental coordination.

5. Discussion

5.1 Interpretation of the Results

The results of this study reveal that none of the four proposed hypotheses were statistically supported. Correlation tests between digital transformation indicators (use of tools, digital maturity, training) and key supply chain performance variables (agility, coordination,

disruption frequency, and resilience) showed no significant relationships. This suggests that, in the context of public hospitals in Greater Agadir, the implementation of digital technologies has not yet translated into measurable performance improvements. The weak or absent correlations may reflect either a low level of actual digital maturity or a disconnect between technology adoption and its operational integration in the hospitals surveyed.

5.2 Comparison with Previous Studies

These findings stand in contrast with prior studies conducted in more digitally advanced healthcare environments. For example, Wamba et al. (2017) and Kane et al. (2015) have demonstrated significant positive impacts of big data analytics, ERP systems, and digital transformation on supply chain agility and responsiveness. In contrast, the weak results in this study suggest that in the Moroccan public health system, particularly in the Souss Massa region, digital tools may not yet be mature, integrated, or supported by sufficient governance structures. This aligns with findings by Benjelloun and Berrado (2019), who identified critical gaps between digital health policy and real operational practices in Morocco. It reinforces the idea that technology alone is not enough without the institutional, human, and strategic elements that ensure its proper use.

5.3 Implications for Hospital Management

From a managerial perspective, these results highlight a critical need to shift focus from digital adoption to digital integration. Simply deploying tools such as ERP or IoT without aligning them with staff workflows and logistical processes is unlikely to yield improvements. Hospital managers must invest not only in infrastructure, but also in training programs, interdepartmental coordination, and process redesign to ensure that digital systems contribute meaningfully to operational goals. Furthermore, leadership engagement and change management should be embedded into digital strategies to foster a digital culture across the organization. The findings suggest that Moroccan public hospitals require a more holistic approach to digital transformation, where technology is supported by human and structural capacity.

5.4 Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the sample size ($n = 38$) is relatively small and limited to public hospitals in a specific region, which may restrict the generalizability of results. Second, the study relied on self-reported perceptions, which can introduce bias and may not always reflect actual system performance. Additionally, only bivariate relationships were tested, without exploring potential mediating or moderating variables such as leadership support, IT integration level, or digital culture. Future research

could apply structural equation modeling (SEM) or include qualitative insights through case studies or interviews to explore why digital transformation efforts succeed or fail in hospital settings. Comparative studies across regions or between public and private hospitals would also provide deeper insight.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study aimed to evaluate the contribution of digital transformation to the dynamic assembly and performance of hospital supply chains, focusing on public healthcare institutions in the Greater Agadir region. Through a mixed-methods approach and statistical analysis of 38 valid responses, four hypotheses were tested regarding the impact of digital tools, digital maturity, training, and coordination. The results revealed no statistically significant relationships between digital transformation variables and logistical performance indicators such as agility, resilience, coordination, and disruption management.

Despite the non-significant outcomes, the findings provide important insights. They suggest that digital transformation in isolation is insufficient to improve hospital supply chain performance in low- and middle-income contexts. The absence of positive correlations may be explained by several structural challenges: insufficient training, lack of integration across hospital departments, poor interoperability of systems, and limited managerial ownership of digital change processes. These challenges prevent digital tools from producing the agility and responsiveness documented in more digitally mature health systems.

Based on these insights, several recommendations are proposed. Hospital managers should adopt a holistic digital transformation strategy that goes beyond infrastructure deployment. This includes sustained staff training programs, redesigning interdepartmental workflows, and introducing performance dashboards that enable real-time coordination. Furthermore, the Ministry of Health should invest in interoperable and standardized systems and offer incentives for hospitals that demonstrate progress in digital integration. Future health strategies in Morocco should consider digital maturity models and tailor interventions based on each institution's readiness level. In sum, digital transformation holds strong potential—but its impact depends on how well it is embedded within the human, organizational, and institutional fabric of the healthcare system.

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