

Enhancing ERP Implementation Processes in South African Retail SMEs: A Study on Operational Efficiency and Customer-Centric Approaches

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Abstract : Purpose: The purpose of this study is to identify and analyse the factors influencing ERP implementation in South African SMEs in the textile & apparel retail sector, with the goal of providing insights that improve decision-making, enhance operational efficiency, and meet customer expectations. Design/Methodology/Approach: A quantitative research methodology was employed, utilising a probability (random) sampling technique to ensure equal opportunity for sample selection. The researcher conducted an extensive review of current literature to identify knowledge gaps and applied data analysis methods, including descriptive statistics, reliability tests, exploratory factor analysis, and normality testing. Findings/Results: The study revealed that South African SMEs in the textile & apparel retail industry must evaluate critical factors before implementing an ERP model. These factors include assessing client requirements, examining the experiences of existing ERP system users, understanding system maintenance needs, and forecasting expected performance outcomes. Practical Implications: The findings provide actionable recommendations for textile and apparel retail SMEs aiming to adopt ERP systems. By focusing on the identified critical factors, businesses can enhance their ERP adoption processes, reduce operational inefficiencies, and better align with customer and sustainability demands. Originality/Value: This study contributes to the limited body of knowledge on ERP implementation challenges in South African textile and apparel retail SMEs. It provides a unique perspective on how strategic ERP adoption can drive operational improvements and support sustainable development practices within the industry.

Keywords : retail SMEs, enterprise resource planning, operational efficiency, customer centricity

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