International Journal of Science, Research and Technology (IJSRAT)

|Bimonthly | Peer-Reviewed | Scholarly Journal|

|ISSN 2454-3853|www.ijsrat.com|editor@ijsrat.com|Vol.6, Issue 6, November-December 2023|

DOI: 10.15662/IJSRAT.2023.0606005

AI-Driven Cloud Automation for Intelligent Enterprise Resource Planning Systems

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ABSTRACT: Artificial Intelligence is increasingly employed to drive business automation, including the support and orchestration of processes across Information Systems. Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems have, thus far, delivered a low degree of automation despite the high degree of standardization, shared data, and knowledge they provide across business functions. One explanation lies in the requirement Engineering stage of the development methodology, which relies on the interaction with business users or external stakeholders to fully understand System requirements, business-related, functional, non-functional, performance, security, Quality-of-Service, and other relevant aspects. To gain full advantage of the resources that AI offers, the analysis of Requirements Engineering phases and Logical and Physical Requirements is central to the design of Smart Cloud ERP solutions.

The Requirements Engineering framework supports AI-driven Cloud ERP by streamlining the interaction with business users, automating the modeling of Logical and Physical Requirements, and reducing effort and time by combining users with AI-based recommendation and validation systems. Specific techniques of Data Governance and Quality, Process Automation and Orchestration, Intelligent Forecasting, and Planning are also articulated to promote automation. Innovative Performance, Scalability, Cost, Accuracy, Robustness, and Trust metrics are defined and supported by empirical evidence from the Manufacturing, Supply Chain, Financial, and Human Resource contexts of two pioneering ERP cloud deployments.

KEYWORDS: AI-Driven ERP Systems, Smart Cloud ERP, Requirements Engineering, AI-Assisted Requirements, Business Process Automation, ERP Process Orchestration, Logical Requirements Modeling, Physical Requirements Design, Data Governance in ERP, Data Quality Management, Intelligent Forecasting, AI-Based Planning, ERP Automation Frameworks, Cloud ERP Architecture, Performance and Scalability, Cost Optimization Models, Robustness and Accuracy Metrics, Trustworthy ERP Systems, Enterprise Process Integration, AI-Enabled Decision Support.

I. INTRODUCTION

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solutions provide a central platform for data and processes within organizations, integrating formalized business processes with data governance and cloud capabilities. Management of ERP supports the entire organization through business process management and monitoring. AI technology has enhanced cloud services. Effective cloud solutions for businesses allow for the automation of business processes according to demand and load, requiring minimal human management.

Current scientific literature offers limited coverage of cloud support for business processes measured by business process management, a necessary condition for actual ERP functionality in the cloud. When an enterprise cloud solution can manage execution accurately and predict future loads, it can also perform the necessary analysis and detection of business opportunities. This capability falls under the key areas of Forecasting and Intelligent Resource Planning with Search Support, which aid in preparing company forecasts along with the necessary resources to respond to updates and changes in customer demand.

II. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF AI-DRIVEN ERP IN THE CLOUD

Leveraging Cloud Automation represents the next wave of innovation for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solutions. The basic tenets of Cloud Automation apply equally within the context of ERP systems. Hence, its concepts, services, architectural deployment models, and process automation techniques provide a supporting framework for the definition and realisation of Smart ERP Solutions as encapsulated in the following propositions.

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Cloud Automation is defined as the use of technology to streamline and automate daily management and operations of cloud environments and cloud-based applications. The term refers not only to the automation of individual tasks but also encompasses the integration of multiple functions that can then be orchestrated across complex hybrid or multi-cloud environments. These functions span Resource Management and Provisioning, Infrastructure Deployment, Private Cloud Management, Service and Incident Management, and Process Automation. Cloud Automation can also be supported by other Cloud Services — Discovery, Orchestration, Monitoring and Reporting, and Security.

Cloud Automation applies to IaaS, PaaS and SaaS deployments. It is also being extensively applied within specific cloud services provided by public cloud providers. Intelligent Business Process Automation is a service complementing Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) who aims to take Complexity out of Private Data Centre Hosting services. The service allows customers to achieve complex workloads using a point-and-click approach without investing in complex infrastructure as these environments are orchestrated and automated to be on-demand and scalable. Business Process Automation Bridges the gap between IT and business users through a Secure, Intuitive interface Business users can automate any service request or process workflow across the enterprise Cloud Automation Services comprises a set of services which can be delivered to the customer as Managed Services, as part of its Remote Infrastructure Management & Support, VoiP, Unified Messaging, Data Centre Management or IT Operations suite or as stand-alone Automation Orchestration services.

2.1. Concepts of Cloud Automation

Cloud Automation encompasses both a variety of Cloud-Computing Services and a specific architectural model for the provision and utilization of such services. Cloud Automation is the orchestration of Clouds as a Service, including the resources offered (Infrastructure, Platform, Software, Data) and Automation Services of any sort (Process Automation, Automation Framework, Cloud Orchestration, Ensemble Systems, …). Cloud-Based Service-Automation is mainly concerned with the automation of the Life Cycle of Service-Oriented Applications: Service Modeling, Service Deployment, Service Execution and Control, Service Monitoring, and Service Composition, both in terms of Control Planes and Dataflows. Process Automation focuses on the automation of enterprise processes and their orchestration across organizational boundaries. Intelligent Process Automation is the combination of Process Automation with technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and Knowledge Management.

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Systems support companies in automating and controlling key organizational processes such as Preparing and Monitoring Budgets, Capital Expenditure Planning, Inventory Management, and Human Resources Management. Enterprise Resource Planning Cloud Automation encompasses the Automation of Cloud Services of Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and other technologies that facilitate the development of Cloud-Based Intelligent ERP Systems, and the Application of such Services to Intelligent ERP.

2.2. Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning in ERP

Data and computational capabilities are central to Intelligent ERP solutions. Considerable interest currently exists in the application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) technologies to ERP, either separately or together. AI supports intelligent decision-making by adding cognition-like intelligence to computer-based systems and choosing appropriate activities based on contextual knowledge. Input information is often incomplete or noisy and several contextual features may be available. Methods for the automated detection of patterns in such data and their unlimited capability for testing possible combinations of competing hypotheses have resulted in many successful applications.

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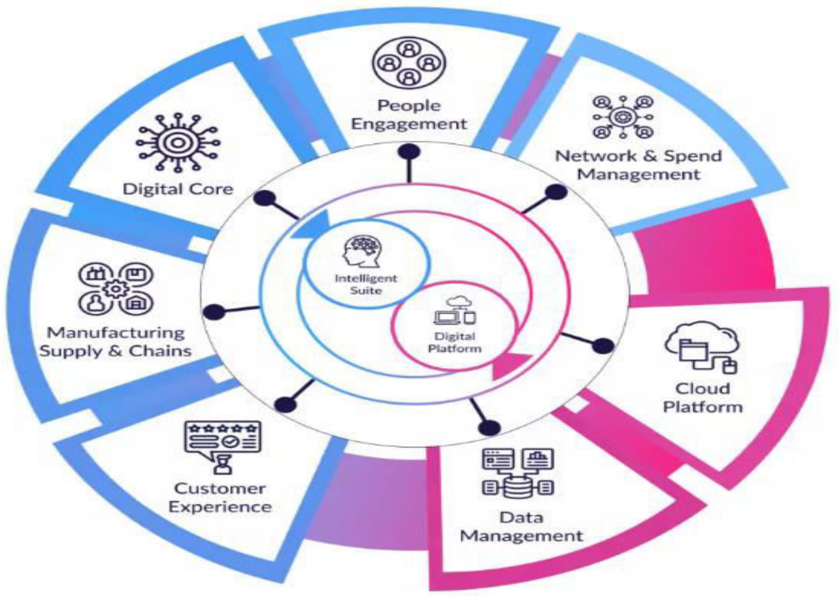

Fig 1: AI in ERP Systems

ML applies algorithms that learn from exposure to sets of instances. Additional knowledge layers are introduced for reasoning and for generating intelligible explanations, with use in Fraud Detection, Voice-Based Services, Churn Prediction. Other technologies, e.g., Decision Trees and Random Forests, operate through supervised, semi-supervised/directed systems; leveraging a Google Knowledge Graph; re-planning and other mechanisms. Input data can be tabular, sequential, temporal, spatial, or non-linear (graph or network data), use of Reinforcement Learning, Transfer Learning, Domain Adaptation and Continual Learning can broaden applicability.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study proposes an integrated framework for Requirements Engineering in Smart ERP Solutions adapted from a four-dimensional analysis space for Business Process Management and considers the major stakeholders involved at different stages of the process. The four main stages of Requirements Engineering—Elicitation, Modeling, Specification, and Validation—are examined in the context of Smart ERP and the resulting artifacts.

The requirement-elicitation stage aims to identify and explore automated or semi-automated business processes supported by Machine Learning to enhance the efficiency of an ERP solution. Participants in requirement elicitation can span all areas of the respective organization. The requirement-modeling stage formalizes the requirements identified during elicitation. This includes the structured description of intelligent forecasting or planning capabilities in an organizational area. The requirement-specification stage translates models generated in the previous step into more precise yet still tech-agnostic requirement specifications. Finally, the requirements-validation stage ensures that the formalized requirements are relevant, correct, and feasible. Essential for successful Smart ERP Solutions, these requirements capture how the business processes supported by the ERP Solution behave and the requirements for trustworthy Artificial Intelligence.

Table 1. Core dimensions extracted

Dimension	What the article says	ERP effect	Derived measurable variable
Requirements Engineering	Elicitation, modeling, specification, validation are central to smart ERP	Better system design and AI fit	RE
Data Governance & Quality	Privacy, lineage, audit, quality-at-source, profiling, control	Better reliability of AI outputs	DGQ
Process Automation & Orchestration	Task automation, workflow automation, orchestration across domains	Reduced manual effort and faster operations	PAO

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Dimension	What the article says	ERP effect	Derived measurable variable
Intelligent Forecasting & Planning	Forecasting, budgeting, S&OP, decision support, what-if analysis	Better planning and resource allocation	IFP
Performance / Scalability / Cost	Response time, throughput, scalability, cloud overhead, TCO	Operational feasibility in cloud ERP	PSC
Accuracy / Robustness / Trust	Prediction quality, fairness, re-tuning, monitoring	Trustworthy AI-enabled ERP	ART

3.1. Framework for Requirements Engineering in Smart ERP Solutions

Requirements Engineering provides an interesting dimension to Research Directions in Intelligent ERP, since the whole area of Cloud ERP and Intelligent ERP are still maturing, and there is no set portfolio of requirements for system providers or consumers. The growing importance of ERP systems as backbone and core of the business processes, as enabler for Business Process Management and Business Process Outsourcing, combined with the rapid rise of cloud computing, lays the foundation for the emergence of Cloud ERP, Enterprise Resource Planning, and Intelligent ERP systems. An initial approach presents how requirements can be elicited and validated from the perspective of a perspective ERP consumer and provider - a Cloud ERP user company planning purchase of Cloud ERP infrastructure and services and an ERP service provider company.

These requirements catalyze the research interest for Data Governance and Quality Management in Cloud ERP, Automation Techniques in Cloud ERP, and the Development of Intelligent ERP systems. These directions address Data Governance and Quality, exploring Data Lineage, data privacy and Security, Data Quality Assessment and Management, Process Automation and Orchestration, and Intelligent Forecasting and Planning. The aim is to formalize the requirements and to provide reference implementations for these sub-portfolios. The specific implementation of Cloud ERP requirements by the IIM Imitative is also evolving along these directions.

Equation 1. Cloud performance overhead

Let:

- R_{bare} = response time on bare-metal
- R_{cloud} = response time on cloud

We define overhead as the **extra response time relative to bare-metal**.

Step 1: Extra time introduced by cloud

$$\textbf{Extra time} = \boldsymbol{R_{cloud} - R_{bare}}$$

Step 2: Normalize by bare-metal baseline

$$Ov = \frac{R_{cloud} - R_{bare}}{R_{bare}}$$

Step 3: Convert to percentage if needed

$$Ov_{\%} = \left(\frac{R_{cloud} - R_{bare}}{R_{bare}}\right) \times 100$$

Interpretation

- $Ov > 0$: cloud is slower
- $Ov = 0$: same performance
- $Ov < 0$: cloud is faster

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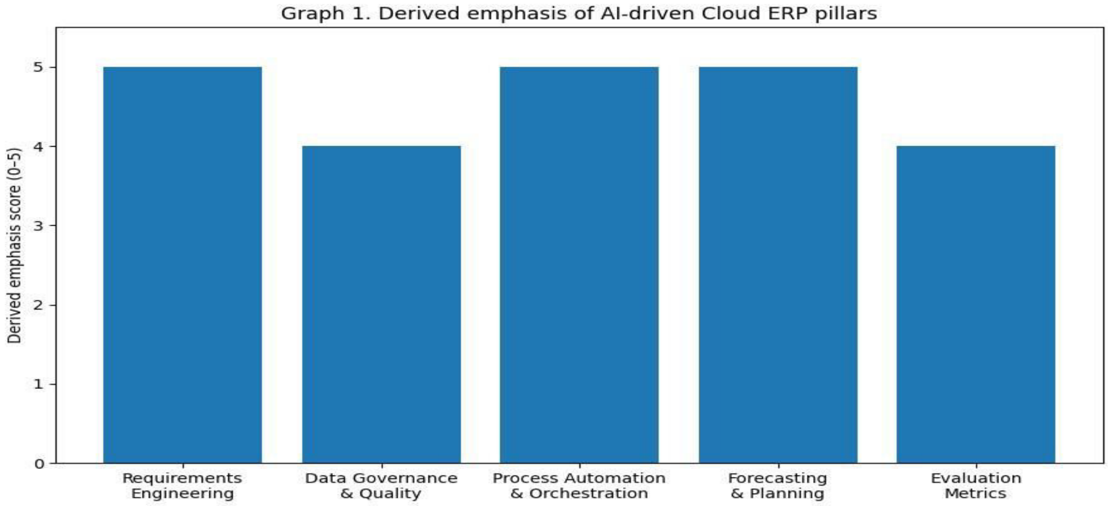

IV. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The primary objectives of this study are twofold. First, it precisely formulates the questions and considerations required to establish the Performance Metrics for an AI-driven Cloud ERP architecture and assesses Performance, Scalability, and Cost against these Metrics. Second, it applies this framework to encapsulate the methodologies needed to realize a Requirements Engineering process for a Smart ERP-Solution, subsequently serving as an exemplar that demonstrates AI-driven Cloud ERP undertaking across the various constituent dimensions.

The metrics serve to guide research and practice by identifying the key points for building highly scalable, real-world, AI-Powered Cloud ERP solutions. The objectives outline a Requirements Engineering framework for Intelligent Business Systems; the elicitation, modeling, and validation of requirements that facilitates the integration of AI and Other intelligent processes into cloud ERP systems; the establishment of a Data Governance and Quality framework that enables the controlled access and utilization of data across organizational and regulatory boundaries; the application of Process Automation and Orchestration techniques to Cloud ERP environments, focused on both Warehousing and ERP Solutions; and the implementation of Intelligent Forecasting and Planning processes that allow organizations to improve sales planning and capacity management through machine learning and AI techniques.

4.1. Objectives and Aims of the Research Study

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming an inseparable part of the ongoing digital revolution and serves as a mighty advanced technology that augments, extends, and empowers the intelligent features of existing Cloud Enterprise Resource Planning (Cloud ERP) systems. Today, businesses cannot afford to lose time in addressing their plans and actions to meet the changing customer requirements. AI technologies are used robustly in business lives. AI technologies and systems, such as Chat GPT, Google Bard, DataRobot, etc., are increasingly being used for critical business decision-making processes and operations in intelligent, accurate, and cost-effective manners. AI-based Cloud ERP systems give the necessary leads to business decision-makers by empowering intelligent Data Mining and Data Forecasting.

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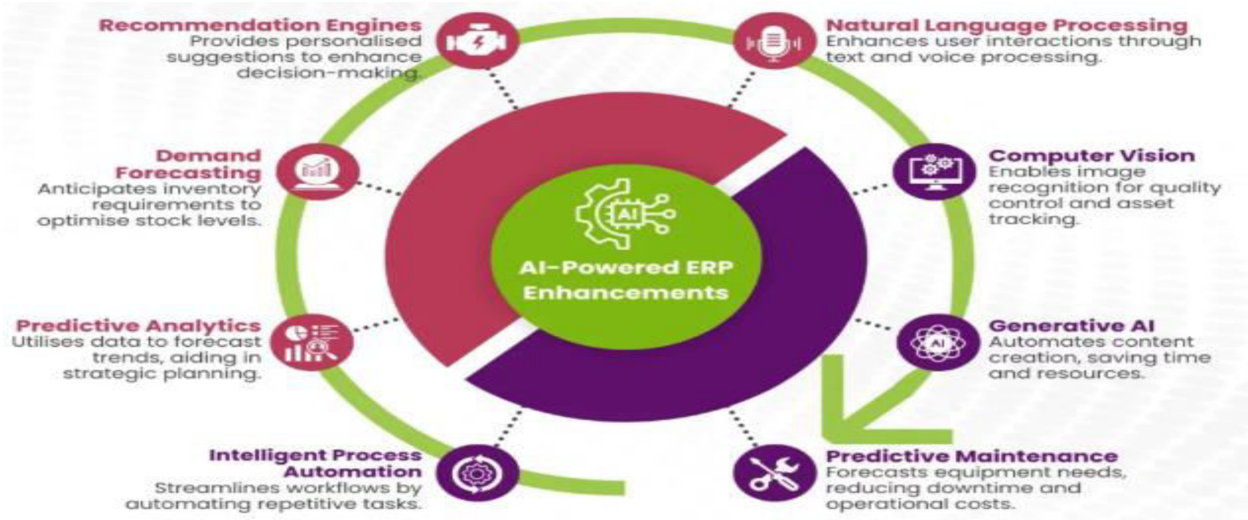

Fig 2: AI and Machine Learning Are Transforming ERP

As the AI-based Cloud ERP systems deliver timely, intelligent, and accurate suggestions and management leads to management, they are beneficial. Such intelligent Cloud ERP solutions provide driven changes in business lives. Companies can adopt AI processes for enhancing the ERP features, automating the data management process in Cloud ERP systems, and decreasing operating costs. The majority of users strongly support AI usage in Intelligent Cloud ERP systems. Smart ERP Solutions serve as decision support technology for Intelligent Destination Management Systems (IDMSs), Intelligent Supply Chain Management Systems (ISCMSs), and Intelligent Manufacturing and Service Systems (IMSSs). Cloud-ERP systems provide support for AI-enabled Data Governance by enabling trustworthy and quality data that assist AI processes in delivering smart, trustworthy, accurate, and intelligent outputs.

V. RESEARCH SUMMARY

A set of Performance Metrics and Assessment Criteria for an AI-Driven Cloud ERP have been defined, enabling empirical evaluation of software solutions supporting intelligent enterprise resource planning. At the heart of every enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution lies the notion of a self-containing representation of the enterprise; such a representation typically relates system- internal events to events occurring in the geographic environment of the enterprise. In practice, the scope of traditional ERP solutions is limited by the reliance on software code, the configuration of processes through workflow models stored in databases, and the devise-architecture response pattern.

A smart or intelligent ERP raises and answers questions about the enterprise and its environment instead of merely responding to requests. The entire data-churn process of the ERP is automated. New data are sensed, integrated, and examined using state-of-the-art data science engines, and new patterns discovered are used to trigger action without any direct human involvement or interaction. The accuracy of the forecasting and planning process is critical for the success of any business activity. The cost of an erratic sales forecast is often far larger than the cost of having excess or shortage of an inventory item.

5.1. Performance Metrics and Assessment Criteria for AI-Driven Cloud ERP

Performance metrics and criteria for evaluating AI-Driven Cloud ERP share characteristics with comparable measurement tasks. Authors in the realm of performance highlight response time, resource consumption, and system throughput as critical indicators of system performance. Decision makers focus on the system's ability to derive advanced insights from structured and unstructured data to enhance decision quality and explanation transparency and to identify weaknesses in current business design and operations. Other perspectives stress resource allocation efficiency and capitalizing on market opportunities without sacrificing level of service, and assess different levels of cost associated with the introduction of AI together with performance metrics. Three established areas—accuracy and robustness, trust and reliability, and performance, scalability, and cost—represent proven evaluation metrics that accommodate the specific evaluation needs related to new domains of AI-Driven Cloud ERP.

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Accuracy, robustness, and trust form the analytical foundation for ERPM-and-HRM-related use cases. Decision support systems such as intelligent forecasting and planning and solution proposals for intelligent financial management are classic AI subsystems applied on SQL and NoSQL databases. The trust associated with the AI prediction model, given its black-box character, requires a precise evaluation of prediction error measures and a comparison with conventional methods. The validation of prediction and classification models additionally encompasses category ratio evaluation, outlier identification, compatibility with the universe of discourse, and independence of header information. Robustness is constantly in question, particularly with rare-event prediction, for which adjustment and error control during production are essential.

Equation 2. Throughput

Let:

- N = number of completed jobs / transactions
- t = execution time

Step 1: Use the standard definition of throughput

$$T = \frac{N}{t}$$

Step 2: If workload depends on cloud resources

Suppose each node processes n_i transactions in time t, then total throughput is

$$T_{total} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{m} n_i}{t}$$

where m is number of active service nodes.

Interpretation

Higher T means the ERP system processes more work per unit time.

VI. METHODOLOGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING AI-DRIVEN CLOUD ERP

A framework for Requirements Engineering in Smart Enterprise Resource Planning Solutions is presented. Smart Enterprise Resource Planning solutions demand comprehensive consideration of Data governance, quality, Digital Process Automation and Orchestration, Intelligent Forecasting and Planning. The selection of appropriate techniques and the quality of the underlying data are critical to achieving performance and cost objectives, while also enabling accurate and trustworthy results.

A smart Enterprise Resource Planning solution is an Information System that utilizes Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning to meet the process and content requirements of an organization. These requirements are derived from organizational goals and strategies that span the dimensions of domain, time, culture, and environment. The usage of the Information System is automated to the greatest possible extent, where Automation is defined as requiring little or no human assistance. The term Intelligence refers to the characteristics of the outcome accuracy, robustness, and trustworthiness, which is the belief that results are sensible and can be relied upon, supported by proper controls and the detection of anomaly patterns for reliability.

Table 2. Derived symbols used in the equations

Symbol	Meaning
W	Workload level
$T(W)$	Throughput at workload W
$R(W)$	Response time at workload W
$C(W)$	Cost at workload W
$A(t)$	Prediction accuracy at model age / data staleness t
A_{min}	Minimum acceptable accuracy threshold
Q	Data quality
P	Process automation level
S	Scalability score

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Symbol	Meaning
Tr	Trust score
Rb	Robustness score
Ov	Cloud overhead
TCO	Total cost of ownership

6.1. Requirements Engineering for Intelligent ERP

Intelligent Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solutions rely on artificial intelligence and machine learning across diverse domains. Their successful adoption demands overcoming their high complexity and costs. To address this challenge, a framework for requirements engineering in Smart ERP solutions has been developed. It encompasses the identification, definition, analysis, specification, and validation of business, functional, and quality requirements. The approach is systematic yet adaptable, allowing for incrementally richer ERP solutions, with progressing adaptations of the corresponding components and modules. Specific methodologies are also provided for three critical areas: requirements elicitation and modeling; requirements validation with stakeholders; and governance and quality assurance of the data feeding the AI capabilities. These methodologies facilitate the integration of AI technologies into ERP in a feasible way.

Enterprise Resource Planning connects the various business functions of an organization within a shared database and information system, providing a unified view of the business. Such an integrated information system facilitates complex resource management challenges in organizations. The use of an ERP system offers a variety of benefits—including enhanced operational efficiency and productivity; improved internal controls; better forecasting and planning; and the ability to adjust operations to market changes.ERP systems are evolving to become Smart and Intelligent by incorporating Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning capabilities, which automate and enhance business operations by enabling the system to recognize complex patterns based on historic business data.

6.2. Data Governance and Quality in Cloud ERP

Strategies addressing data privacy, lineage and security, and data quality—vital to implementing intelligent decision-making and automation through AI and ML—contribute to seamless integration of data governance and quality in the intelligent ERP scope of intelligent enterprise resource planning. Aspects of data governance to be covered include privacy, including privacy by design, data audit and control, security, and risk management; data lineage; and techniques for ensuring data quality through collection control, quality checks, quality-at-source, profiling, and sampling.

Frameworks and processes supporting data governance in cloud delivery models—provisions addressing sensitive data, classification, outsourcing, data security and risk management, data audit, and control—provide guidance, and support for managing sensitive data and ensuring adherence to relevant regulations must be complemented by intelligent decisionmaking capabilities based on data provenance, AI/ML tools, and cloud automation services for data quality control by automation and integration. Providing appropriate architectures and services and constraints for data storage also enhances the application of intelligent capabilities.

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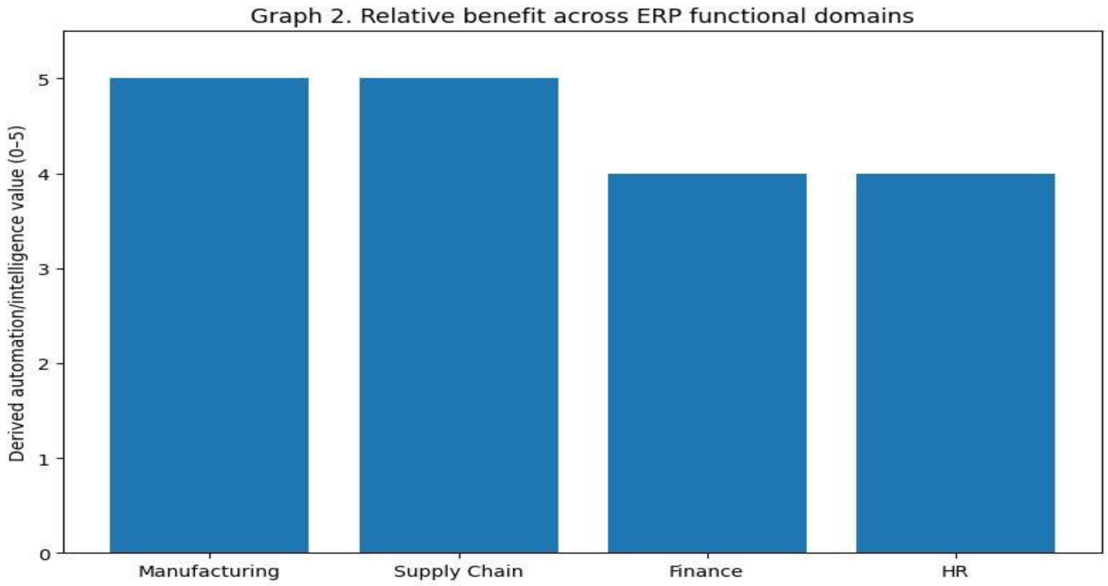

VII. AUTOMATION TECHNIQUES IN CLOUD ERP

Cloud ERP solutions leverage service and workflow automation at various levels. Service automation allows for the execution of standardized services and tasks without the need for human intervention. Workflow automation provides the ability to orchestrate complex interdependent tasks of long duration that span multiple administrative domains. Automation tools at both levels implement orchestration logic that resides in a control or coordination layer. Several off-the-shelf solutions are available that provide automation capabilities for standard business processes and tasks, as well as more general-purpose workflow management systems for enterprise-wide process orchestration. Each business function also has integration services that facilitate seamless business process execution across function silos, integrating on-premises applications with cloud applications and third-party applications.

Automation is not limited to service and workflow management; additional areas where automation is being embraced in the context Cloud ERP include intelligent demand forecasting, inventory planning, workforce planning, and budgeting. By leveraging the capabilities of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), it is possible to automate the next phase in enterprise planning—that is, the actual generation of plans. In an intelligent cloud ERP solution, the forecasting models will generate forecasts of items for which demand history data is considered adequate, to be accepted or adjusted by the planners. Decision support systems will guide the planning within the boundaries established by the organization. AI approaches can be applied to the planning of items with sufficient loss history (in a supply chain context) or to the workforce (in a services context).

Equation 3. Scalability
Let:

- workload changes from W_1 to W_2
- throughput changes from T_1 to T_2

Step 1: Percentage change in throughput

$$\%\Delta T = \frac{T_2 - T_1}{T_1}$$

Step 2: Percentage change in workload

$$\%\Delta W = \frac{W_2 - W_1}{W_1}$$

Step 3: Define scalability score

$$S = \frac{\%\Delta T}{\%\Delta W}$$

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Expanded form

$$S = \frac{\frac{T_2 - T_1}{T_1}}{\frac{W_2 - W_1}{W_1}}$$

Interpretation

- $S = 1$: ideal linear scaling
- $S < 1$: sub-linear scaling
- $S > 1$: super-linear scaling

7.1. Process Automation and Orchestration

Cloud Automation Services encompass the orchestration and control plane layers of the logical service automation model (figure 2). These layers enable essential cloud services: Cloud Service Automation (CSM) Configures, deploys, and manages cloud services; Cloud Resource Automation (CRA) Enables provisioning and management of hardware resources for various service forms; Cloud Service Broker Automation (CSBA) Automates the operation of the service broker component, managing interaction with service consumers and other service producers.

Process Automation refers to providing a controlled means to schedule, execute, and monitor repetitive tasks. Although these tasks can be performed through other input methods (such as a manual description), automation enables a streamlined point-and-click interface targeted at non-technical individuals. Such automation is primarily suited for well-known, repetitive, and predictable tasks that lend themselves to being scripted.

Task automation is performed through automation workflows formalized using a workflow language. In contrast to complex response automation, which also reacts, workflow automation is dedicated primarily to execution. The predominant role of process automation is to support human operators, typically allowing operators to easily and rapidly execute procedures that normally would be messy or painful to perform manually.

Task automation and such automation flows are efficiently enabled via orchestration products. These solutions incorporate a task repository to configure, store, and use any range of task operations across an enterprise. Cloud Orchestration refers to the integration of automated processes across multiple domains and layers. The term orchestration originates from service management, where it was applied to the coordination of multiple service automation processes spanning technology and organizational domains. The new level of automation is “complete automation of everything.”

7.2. Intelligent Forecasting and Planning

Intelligent Forecasting and Planning spans Supply Chain Forecasting and Planning and Financial Budgeting and Forecasting. Each area requires multiple forecasts (Sales or Purchases for the Supply Chain; Revenue and Expense Categories for Finance) covering future time horizons ranging from months to years in advance. Besides forecasting, ERP helps fine-tune resource allocation plans by recommending appropriate procurement and hiring activities. In the Supply Chain, the process is called Sales and Operations Planning (S&OP). For Finance, it emerges in Budgeting. Both require reliable forecasts and respond to changes introduced by the Forecasting Community. Consequently, the two areas demand four types of intelligent forecasting and planning.

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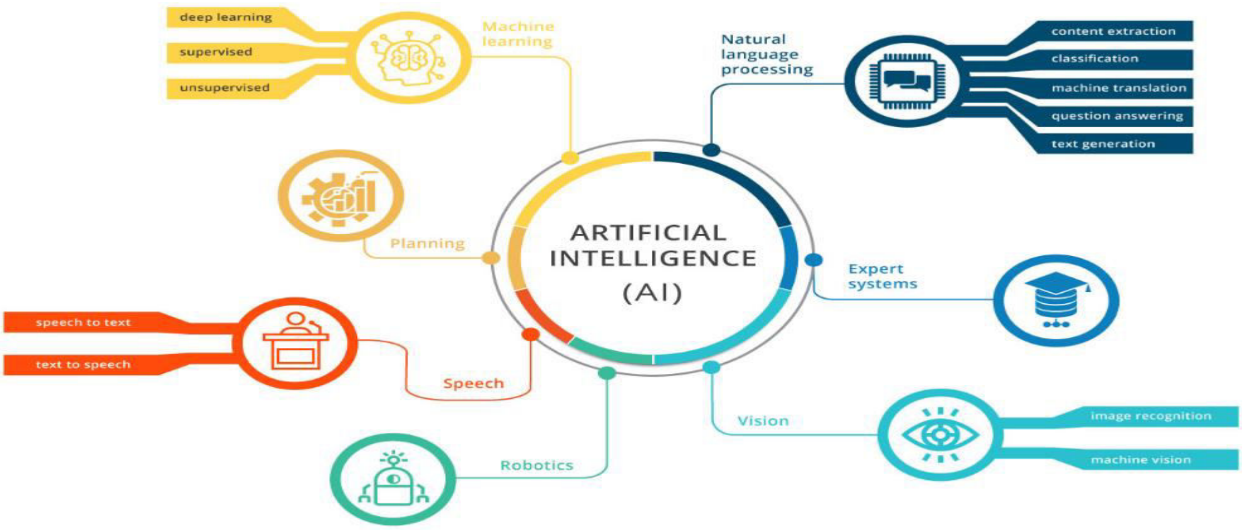

Fig 3: Leveraging AI to Transform ERP and Supply Chain Systems

What-if Analysis confirms possible scenarios under a variety of demand conditions. S&OP prioritizes supply and demand recommendations for scarce resources such as transportation capacity and production time. External Use Cases estimate procedures. Internal Use Cases condition omnichannel Demand-Supply forecasts by Production & Transportation constraints. The SCOR Supply Chain framework integrates Demand-Supply prediction with omnichannel planning to align cross-organization operations with organization strategy. Resource use decisions require Action-based Decision Support that synthesizes cost-benefit analysis and what-if scenarios in order to ensure appropriate use of internal and external resources under business program messages.

VIII. EVALUATION METRICS AND EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

Through-the-cloud Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) has recently gained academic and business interest. Cloud ERP expands the objectives of traditional ERP, pursuing the automation of system tasks without human involvement, reducing a company´s manpower and knowledge requirements. This change creates the need for evaluation metrics aligned with the newly defined objectives. The formulation of performance, scalability, and cost metrics is nowhere to be found, nor has empirical evidence validated their applicability across environments.

First, a comprehensive listing of metrics is finally gathered. Then, real-world business operation use cases, presented in two previous publications, are considered to provide initial empirical evidence of the defined metrics' applicability and their limits of usability. The use cases encompass Brazilian manufacturing and supply chain management operations and also include the financial and human resources areas of a German corporation's SAP S/4Cloud implementation. All applications involve the leveraging of AI-based technologies and plugins provided under the Microsoft Azure cloud platform and inside Microsoft-365 products.

Equation 4. Total cost of ownership difference
Let:
- TCO_{cloud} = cloud total cost of ownership
- TCO_{bare} = bare-metal total cost of ownership

Step 1: Define cloud TCO
$$TCO_{cloud} = C_{compute} + C_{storage} + C_{network} + C_{license} + C_{ops}$$

Step 2: Define bare-metal TCO
$$TCO_{bare} = C_{hardware} + C_{maintenance} + C_{power} + C_{space} + C_{admin}$$

Step 3: Compare both
$$\Delta TCO = TCO_{cloud} - TCO_{bare}$$

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Step 4: Percentage difference

$$\Delta TCO_{\%} = \left(\frac{TCO_{cloud} - TCO_{bare}}{TCO_{bare}}\right) \times 100$$

Interpretation

- positive: cloud costs more
- negative: cloud costs less

8.1. Performance, Scalability, and Cost

Four performance, scalability, and cost metrics assess the cloud service deployment model's viability. First, a solution benchmarked against the bare-metal deployment mode highlights the performance overhead introduced by public cloud virtualisation and orchestration layers and platforms for automating cloud provisioning. Second, measured execution times for each of the three workload classes characterise the performance behaviours of the cloud service. Third, a scalability test demonstrates the accuracy of the idea that the cloud-based ERP can be deployed as a cluster to service increasing workloads. Finally, the total cost of ownership of hosting the cloud service in a public cloud provider is assessed and compared against the projected total cost of implementing the requisite infrastructure on a bare-metal basis.

A testbed-structured performance evaluation of the AI-driven cloud ERP solution demonstrates how the public cloud service deployment model introduces execution time overheads and costs more than an equivalent bare-metal implementation. Analysis of the testbed results highlights the intrusive nature of public cloud virtualisation layers when running data processing workloads, especially those requiring intensive input/output (I/O) device access. Nevertheless, even using geographically remote resources, the overall impact on a manufacturing supply chain use case—spanning the procurement, production, and distribution phases—remains within acceptable limits for a corporate enterprise spanning large regions and relying on multiple resources dispersed throughout these. These observations indicate that, given sufficient temporal displacement, suitable cloud-based ERP solutions can ensure that workload execution will not miss deadlines.

Fig 4: Integrating Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Capabilities into Modern ERP Systems

8.2. Accuracy, Robustness, and Trust

A comprehensive assessment of the accuracy, robustness, and trust of the algorithms that drive the intelligent forecasting and planning of various resources in the cloud ERP solution is crucial to its real-world application. Adequate accuracy and robustness are essential when forecasting actual inventories or workloads to prevent suboptimal resource provisioning. Furthermore, the selection of data to be used when training the machine-learning algorithms must also consider the concept of fairness to ensure that the algorithms do not discriminate against a particular group of

|ISSN 2454-3853|www.ijsrat.com|editor@ijsrat.com|Vol.6, Issue 6, November-December 2023|

DOI: 10.15662/IJSRAT.2023.0606005

people during prediction. Numerous strategies can be adopted to guarantee fairness during training, and Empirical Risk Minimization is considered one of the most promising.

When a predictive model is injected into a cloud ERP solution, automatic tuning for adapting its parameters and hyperparameters becomes important to maintain adequate prediction accuracy. The tuning should be performed with the use of a data set that contains as many possible variations within its input attributes as possible, and a source of such variations is usually historic data. However, the relevance of historic data in data-driven prediction is inversely proportional to the age of the data. In the case of cloud ERP solutions, where the main goal of intelligent forecasting and planning is to shape resource provisioning and resource utilization for cost minimization, continuous control should be established to maintain an acceptable level of prediction accuracy in order to guarantee adequate provisioning over time. When the achieved accuracy falls below an acceptable level, a key monitoring component of the cloud ERP solution is then responsible for initiating a re-tuning process.

IX. CASE STUDIES AND APPLICATIONS

The following two sections detail two ERP-related use cases. The first is manufacturing and supply-chain management. The second involves finance and human resources management.

In the manufacturing use case, a manufacturing firm's Production and Supply Chain Management (PSCM) process is depicted in the diagram below. Its supply chain relies on a small number of suppliers and spans from raw material procurement to product stock depletion and subsequent replenishment. The process is both critical and time-consuming; therefore, intelligent ERP forecasting and planning are highly valuable. Demand forecasting and supply-chain network optimization models have been developed, and experiments conducted on artificial and real data exhibit high accuracy, low forecasting error, reliable performance, and operational applicability.

In the financial use case, three automated reporting components have been implemented in the Intelligent ERP framework, enhancing the financial report generation process for funds, profit, and loss, and resources. The components enable real-time reporting of specific parameters, such as available funds in-house for liquidity planning and effective cash management, providing timely and accurate information in an automated manner. State-of-the-art Intelligent ERP-based reporting minimizes time and cost without compromising quality.

9.1. Manufacturing and Supply Chain

The application of AI-driven cloud ERP to the manufacturing and supply chain domain is illustrated through two distinct examples. The first focuses on the reactive and preventive maintenance of industrial machinery and systems. A cloud-based ERP solution utilizes the machinery's IoT data and smart analytics for visual representation, predictive maintenance, and warranty management. It incorporates Machine Learning methods and a Web Map Service with ArcGIS. The second example centers on the global supply chain of a manufacturer dependent on the availability of COVID-19 vaccines for its operations. With data from five ERP systems in a single-cloud architecture, an intelligent forecasting-and-planning solution uses both historical and contextual information and results in improved supply chain decisions and calls for action.

The first examined solution addresses the service request and warranty management of on-site personnel servicing industrial machinery and systems that require information and continuous physical surveillance. The service request maintenance approach is reactive, while that of the warranty maintenance services is preventive; both are based on the IoT data of machinery. The intelligent ERP solution is cloud-based and integrates the ERP with IoT, smart analytics, and GPS. data collected from the IoT sensors on the machinery are used for smart analytics, and a Web Map Service with hyperlinked shapefiles and ArcGIS has been developed for visual representation (Kumar et al. 2022). Therefore, smart analytics can generate predictive maintenance information based on IoT data in the form of geo-located heat maps that showcase the risk levels of service-call urgency and forecast a period of peak service-call loads, upgrade the warranty period of the seized machinery, and determine the manpower-consumption costs for warranty maintenance.

International Journal of Science, Research and Technology (IJSRAT)
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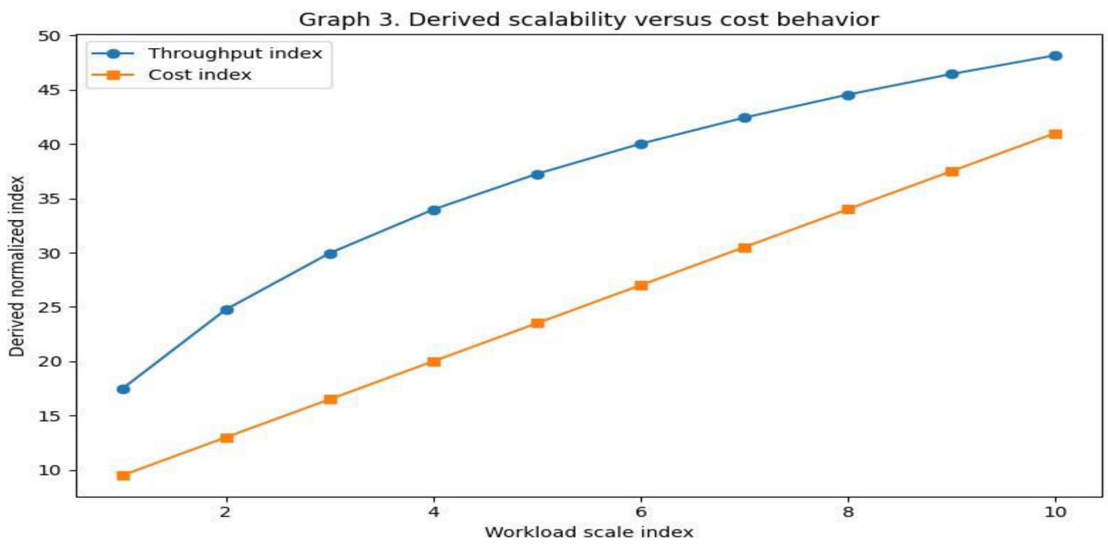
|ISSN 2454-3853|www.ijsrat.com|editor@ijsrat.com|Vol.6, Issue 6, November-December 2023|
DOI: 10.15662/IJSRAT.2023.0606005



9.2. Financial and Human Resources Management

Cloud ERP creates complex virtual environments that automate all aspects of Financial Management (FM) of an enterprise, including Accounting, Tax, Finance, Costing, and Treasury. It governs enterprise-wide financial policies, regulatory compliance, accounting rules, and transactions to create accuracy, transparency, and auditability of accounts. Cloud-based FM modules of SAP Web ERP or Oracle PeopleSoft Campus Solutions integrate with Transactional Data Sources, Automation Frameworks, and Cloud Governance Controls to ensure accuracy, auditability, and transparency of FM data. The functional areas of Finance and Treasury Process Automation (FTPA) validate transparency and correctness of the automated processes to reduce the cost, time, and manpower involved in these functions.

The Human Resource Management (HRM) module manages employee data, such as recruitment, income, payroll, attendance, timeoff, and appraisal, for the entire enterprise in a centralized manner. HRM governs policy decisions and implements organizational rules as applied to HR data. The HRM Module Automation (HRMA) functional area automates Payroll Function in Cloud ERP, which generates Payroll Data by following organizational Policies and Rules applicable to the Enterprise, thereby minimizing the workload in accumulating and checking Payroll Information for each employee manually. The Payroll Data generated through the process is auditable, traceable, and reliable as the entire process is governed by the Enterprise Policies.

Table 2. Derived symbols used in the equations

Symbol	Meaning
W	Workload level
$T(W)$	Throughput at workload W
$R(W)$	Response time at workload W
$C(W)$	Cost at workload W
$A(t)$	Prediction accuracy at model age / data staleness t
$A_{\min}$	Minimum acceptable accuracy threshold
Q	Data quality
P	Process automation level
S	Scalability score
Tr	Trust score
Rb	Robustness score
Ov	Cloud overhead
TCO	Total cost of ownership

|ISSN 2454-3853|www.ijsrat.com|editor@ijsrat.com|Vol.6, Issue 6, November-December 2023|

DOI: 10.15662/IJSRAT.2023.0606005

X. CHALLENGES, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The integration of artificial intelligence and cloud computing in enterprise resource planning creates opportunities for intelligent automation and new forms of service. However, major challenges must first be addressed, especially concerning ethics, legality, and data governance. The research findings described in this paper further the understanding of these issues, particularly for data quality in the context of AI-based machine-learning forecasting and planning in cloud ERP.

State-of-the-art AI models have proved their effectiveness in many applications, yet ethical concerns remain. The fact that the training datasets used to reliably assess these models often constitute a fraction of their true data complexity raises questions about their generalization ability beyond those datasets. The above issue becomes even more critical in data-scarce domains, such as forecasting and planning for smaller businesses, where the integration of auxiliary knowledge is increasingly proposed but still lacks rigorous foundations. Additional problems relate to compliance with legal and ethical frameworks. Recent advances in the field of Explainable AI have addressed these concerns by focusing on the interpretability of AI predictions. Nevertheless, for AI-based cloud services, a balanced and adaptable approach towards accountability and transparency guarantees a solid methodological ground for these advanced capabilities. A set of research requirements is proposed to assess and control these aspects across the entire AI service delivery lifecycle.

Equation 5. Prediction error
Let:

- y_i = actual value
- $\hat{y}_i$ = predicted value
- n = number of predictions

Step 1: Error for each instance

$$e_i = y_i - \hat{y}_i$$

Step 2: Absolute error

$$|e_i| = |y_i - \hat{y}_i|$$

Step 3: Mean Absolute Error

$$MAE = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n}|y_i - \hat{y}_i|$$

Step 4: Mean Squared Error

$$MSE = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n}(y_i - \hat{y}_i)^2$$

Step 5: Root Mean Squared Error

$$RMSE = \sqrt{\frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n}(y_i - \hat{y}_i)^2}$$

10.1. Ethical and Legal Considerations

Cloud ERP systems face special ethical and legal challenges due to their intense reliance on third-party services in the Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS) and Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) model. Confidential company data resides in these public environments, and its misuse, whether intentional or unintentional, may have catastrophic consequences for many organizations. Therefore, compliance with legal obligations, accountability within the decision chain, and transparent communication of the system's planning, forecasting, and resource-allocation processes become fundamental attributes.

Ethical concerns in the context of Smart Cloud ERP stem from the strong use of AI and data analyses in the decision processes. Their usage must be thorough to mitigate algorithmic bias effectively, aiming to increase decision quality.

International Journal of Science, Research and Technology (IJSRAT)
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These issues are particularly sensitive when police and intelligence services use such systems to access systems and sensitive data or conduct surveillance and monitoring activities on their citizens. The use of cloud-based ERP solutions by local and national governments, as well as global institutions such as the European Union, where data may be stored outside the territorial boundaries of the country of jurisdiction, raises ethical issues that must be solved as well.

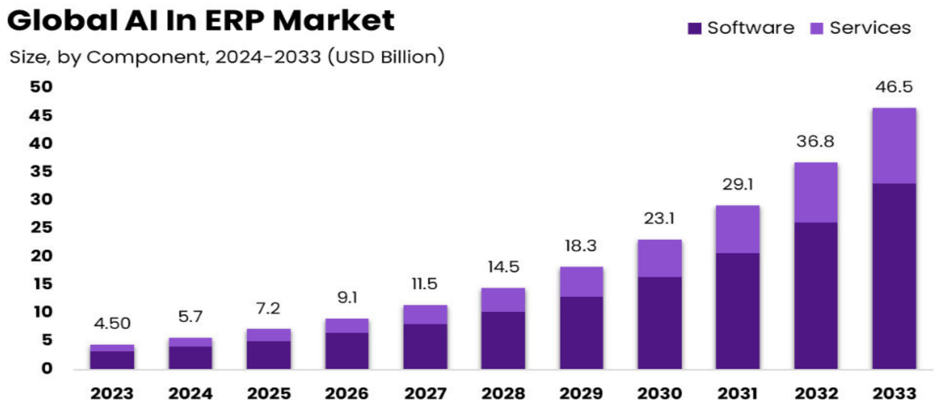

Fig 5: AI in ERP Market

10.2. Data sovereignty and Residency

Compliance with legal, regulatory, and business requirements on data sovereignty and residency is a significant challenge when adopting a Cloud ERP solution. ERP cloud providers may store the data of different customers in the same physical region. As a consequence, data from Company A may be located in the same room as Company B or in other rooms of the physical region, even from different countries. This situation has different implications, among them, the nation where the data is will not necessarily be governed by the country laws that Company A s obligated to obey.

Adopting these solutions, services, or IS has implications that need to be examined in terms of business legitimation and sense-making. It is important for companies to know under which regulation their data is being processed and the legal and business responsibilities that this entails. It is also necessary for companies to communicate with the ERP cloud provider to understand the guarantees provided, to be certain about possible outcomes when something goes wrong, and to establish the corresponding obligations and liabilities of these partners. Regulatory mechanisms must be integrated within the Cloud ERP solution to verify the country associated with the data being processed and cross-check it with the regulations of the corresponding country. Alerts must then be generated when there are non-compliance situations.

XI. CONCLUSION

The three main ethical challenges in Cloud ERP arise from: 1) the need to comply with myriad laws and regulations, often involving different jurisdictions; 2) the extent to which AI Generated recommendations should be accountable for business decisions; and 3) the reduced transparency concerning data processing generated by the employment of AI. The most important legal aspect is the need for careful consideration of national and regional regulations (e.g., GDPR) regarding Customer, Supplier, and Employee Data that may enter the system. Legal aspects are further complicated in Data as a Services and the use of Public Cloud (Multi-Tenant Model) when several companies share the same Cloud Platform and Cloud Services.

Data sovereignty and Data Residency concepts seek to protect sensitive data from access by governments and third parties and prevent localization of other data in an undesired location. Because of that, Data Residency regulations impose localization constraints on specific data. Companies involved in regulated industries (e.g., pharmaceutical and Financial) must especially consider the implications of Data Sovereignty and Data Residency when adopting Cloud Services and Cloud Solution, seeking for proof of compliance by the Cloud Service Providers. Specific architectural patterns are required to address Data Sovereignty and Data Residency, fostering the possibility of providing the same Cloud Service in different locations, with different Cloud Providers, and with the same solutions sandboxed.

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|ISSN 2454-3853|www.ijsrat.com|editor@ijsrat.com|Vol.6, Issue 6, November-December 2023|
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