

Business continuity management and organizational resilience among small and medium enterprises

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Abstract

Business operations can be disrupted by a wide range of unforeseen events and such disruptions can vary in scale and impact, ranging from minor inconveniences to severe crises that threaten the very existence of a business. This study assessed the Business Continuity Management (BCM) and the Organizational Resilience of Small and Medium Enterprises in Batangas City which examined the proactive risk management, continuity planning, and adaptive strategies that enable them to withstand and overcome challenges. The study also described the firmographic profile of SMEs in terms of the nature of business, size, and years of operation, assessed Business Continuity Management as to risk management, crisis management, and disaster recovery, evaluated Organizational Resilience in terms of Operational Resilience, Strategic Resilience and Cultural Resilience, tested the significant differences on the responses when grouped according to profile, tested the significant relationships between business continuity management and Organizational Resilience and proposed action plan that Small-Medium Enterprise owners can implement to ensure the continuity of business. The study utilized descriptive research design. The study revealed that respondents moderately agree with regards to preparedness of Business Continuity Management (BCM) in terms of risk management, crisis management, and disaster recovery. For Organizational Resilience the respondents demonstrated strong agreement as to Operational Resilience, Strategic Resilience and Cultural Resilience. There were significant differences in terms of Business Continuity Management on the responses when grouped according to profile; However, in terms of Organizational Resilience, most of the variable were significant but not with Operational and Cultural aspects of Industry and operational under the profile years of operation. There is significant relationship between business continuity management and organizational resilience and that more prepare the business continuity management is, the better their organizational resilience is. Finally, an action plan was developed for Small and Medium Enterprise owners that can be used to ensure the continuity of business.

Keywords: Business Continuity Management (BCM), organizational resilience, risk management, crisis management, disaster recovery, operational resilience, strategic resilience, cultural resilience

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1. Introduction

Unexpected events can disrupt business operations. Disruptions can vary in scale and impact, ranging from minor inconveniences to severe crises that threaten a business's very existence. Business Continuity Management (BCM) was created to prevent or lessen risks, lessen the effects of emergencies or disasters, and shorten the time it takes to return things to normal. A framework for enhancing organizational resilience is offered by business continuity management. It is a comprehensive approach that detects possible risks to a company and its operations (Anir et. al., 2019). BCM has been incorporated into various crisis-resolution ideas. It is related to ideas like catastrophe recovery, crisis management, and risk management. By addressing risks through actions and suitable measures, BCM is related to risk management. Through the incident management component, BCM and crisis management are very closely related. Crisis operation is allowed to reply to both palpable and impalpable events, like mishaps that damage a company's character or fiscal performance. also, disaster recovery is a subset of business durability operation since it's principally a plan with the structure to support it that's enforced in the event of a disaster (Supriadi, & Pheng, 2018).

The Philippines is ranked as the ninth most disaster-prone nation in the 2019 World Risk Report, which bases this ranking on the country's vulnerability to natural catastrophes, its ability to adapt to them, and its ability to cope with them. Additionally, according to the 2015 poll, the top three effects of catastrophes on businesses were damage to premises and equipment, the inability of the company to deliver to consumers, and the incapacity of staff to report to work. Without basic information on business continuity management, risks connected with disaster strikes are quite high, and owing to limited resources Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) might be particularly vulnerable to business disruptions.

Looking at the situation deeper, the researcher believed that organizational resilience is the adaptive capacity of an organization, to recover, and grow in the face of uncertainties, crises, or unexpected challenges. In the 21st century, where uncertainty and rapid change are the standard, resilience is no longer optional, instead, it is a critical capability for organizations to survive, thrive, and achieve their long-term goals. In addition to being able to endure shocks, resilience enables businesses to use crises as a chance for innovation and expansion. To elaborate, operational resilience refers to an organization's capacity to continue providing value and doing essential tasks even in times of disaster. It involves ensuring that day-to-day operations can continue smoothly, despite disruptions. Operational resilience requires organizations to have the ability to reallocate resources such as finance, technology, or personnel to address immediate challenges. It also requires proactive identification and mitigation of risks to minimize disruptions and having backup plans and systems ensure critical operations can push through during a crisis. On the other hand, the researcher also believed that the organizations here in the Philippines must have strategic resilience that is more on maintaining strategic consistency while being flexible to adapt to changing circumstances. For example, during economic downturns, strategic resilient organizations might pivot their business models, explore new markets, or invest in innovations to stay competitive. The researcher believed that business leaders can anticipate changes, make informed decisions, and guide the organization through uncertainty. There should be preparation for multiple future scenarios and having strategies in place to respond effectively and of course embracing change and using crises as opportunities to innovate and grow.

Furthermore, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) often lack the financial, technological, and human resources that larger organizations must recover from crises. Events like economic downturns, natural disasters, cyberattacks, or even pandemics can have devastating effects on SMEs, leading to business closures and job losses. Understanding how business continuity management and organizational resilience can help SMEs

navigate these challenges is crucial for their survival and growth. While business continuity management is well-documented in large companies in most cases, its application and effectiveness in SMEs remain under-researched. SMEs often face unique challenges in implementing BCM, such as limited budgets, lack of expertise, and competing priorities. This study sheds light and aims to address the gap by investigating the Business Continuity Management and Organizational resilience of Small and Medium Enterprises in Batangas City. Business owners will be able to assess their perceived organizational resilience and the preparation for any business disruption through Business Continuity Management.

Objectives of the Study - This study assessed Business Continuity Management (BCM) and the Organizational Resilience of Small and Medium Enterprises to examine proactive risk management, continuity planning, and adaptive strategies that enable them to withstand and overcome challenges. Specifically, it sought to describe the firmographic profile of SMEs in terms of the nature of business, size, and years of operation. Assess Business Continuity Management as to risk management, crisis management, and disaster recovery; evaluate Organizational Resilience in terms of Operational Resilience, Strategic Resilience, and Cultural Resilience; test the significant differences in the responses when grouped according to profile; test the significant relationships between business continuity management and Organizational Resilience; and propose an action plan that Small-Medium Enterprise owners can implement to guarantee the steadiness of business.

2. Methods

Research Design - To evaluate the organizational resilience and business continuity management of small and medium-sized businesses, the researchers employed a descriptive research approach. The goal of descriptive study design is to gather data methodically to characterize a population, circumstance, or phenomenon. More precisely, it aids in addressing the research problem's what, when, where, and how inquiries as opposed to its why. The researcher found it suitable to assess the relevance of Business Continuity Management (BCM) and Organizational Resilience for the continuity of business.

Participants of the Study - The respondents of this study are the owners or the top management of Small and Medium Enterprises in Batangas City. They are chosen as they are responsible for the decision-making process of the business. The total list of population was provided by the Business Permit and Licensing Office of Batangas City. The researcher used Raosoft Calculator to determine the total number of respondents.

Data Gathering Instruments - A survey questionnaire was used by the researcher in data gathering. Questions were adapted from "BCM Questionnaires 10: Crisis Management" Goh (2021) and other studies related to BCM and Organizational Resilience. It was validated by experts in the field and was subjected to preliminary testing. The questionnaire has three (3) parts. Part 1 describes the firmographic profile of the respondents of SMEs in terms of the nature of the business, size, and years of operation. Part 2 consists of (3) components of Business Continuity Management which are, Risk Management, Crisis Management, and Disaster Recovery. Part 3 consists of the Organizational Resilience of SMEs in terms of Capital Resilience, Strategic Resilience, and Cultural Resilience. The items in the questionnaire were given corresponding weights of 1 to 4. Equivalent verbal descriptions are also provided. The following scoring system was used. The scale of 4 with the range of 3.50 to 4.00 has a verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree. While a scale of 3 with a range of 2.50 to 3.49 has a verbal interpretation of Agree. And a scale of 2 with a range of 1.50 to 2.49 has a verbal interpretation of Disagree. And lastly, a scale of 1 with a range of 1.00 to 1.49 has a verbal interpretation of Strongly Disagree. The reliability test used the Cronbach Alpha with Acceptable results for all the domains. Risk Management has 0.704 with acceptable remarks, Crisis Management has 0.800 with good remarks, Disaster Recovery has 0.846 with good remarks, Robustness has 0.847 with good remarks, Agility with 0.854 with good remarks and Adaptability has 0.916 with excellent remarks.

Data Gathering Procedure - After submitting the proposal for feedback and receiving final approval from the thesis adviser, the researcher proceeded to adapt the questionnaire. The validation of the instrument was

carried out with the guidance of the research adviser and a university statistician. To identify potential respondents, the researcher obtained a list of registered SMEs from the City's Business Permit and Licensing Office. Data collection was then conducted by distributing a Google Form through email and the Facebook pages of SME owners. In addition, printed versions of the questionnaire were given to SME owners and managers who lacked online access. The collected survey responses were then compiled and forwarded to the university statistician for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis - Simple descriptive statistics such as weighted mean, frequency, and percentage were utilized to describe if there is a significant difference in the research variables when grouped according to firmographic profile. Shapiro-Wilk test of normality was employed to identify whether a parametric test or non-parametric test would be used. If it is Parametric, Pearson r was used, and if it is not Spearman rho.

Ethical Considerations - The study followed ethical procedures by providing participants with a consent form as an indication of their agreement to take part in the research. To maintain the study's validity, certain details about participant involvement were kept confidential until the research was completed. Participants were also informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without explanation, penalty, or negative consequences. Data privacy was prioritized to ensure participants were fully aware of the research process, and all personal information collected from respondents was kept strictly confidential and not shared outside the research team. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that all measurement tools used in the study were publicly available, and, when necessary, permission from the original authors would be obtained. Lastly, proper citations were used throughout the study to avoid plagiarism.

3. Results and discussion

Table 1
Firmographic Profile of the Respondents

	f	%
Industry		
Merchandising	162	45.9
Service	191	54.1
Size of the Business		
Small	182	51.6
Medium	171	48.4
Years of Operation		
0 – 30 years	187	53.0
31 – 40 years	43	12.2
41 years and above	123	34.8

Table 1 indicates the frequency and percentage of the respondents' firmographic profiles. As to industry 162 are merchandising and 191 are service with 45.9 % and 54.1 % of the total sample respectively. As to the size of the business, 182 are small and 171 are medium with 51.6 % and 48.4 % of the total sample respectively. As to the years of operation 187 are in 0-30 years, 43 are 31 - 40 and 123 are 41 years and above with 53.0 %, 12.2 %, and 34.8% respectively. The service industry included in this research includes salons, restaurants, manpower services, agencies, etc. The service sector of SMEs has been identified as a driving force behind the shift towards smaller organizational structures, contributing to the increasing share of SMEs in total employment and income (Kamarudin, 2024). The merchandising industry included retail from small to medium enterprises. Merchandising, which involves the promotion and sale of products to consumers, is likely a critical function for SMEs, particularly those in the retail sector, as it can influence consumer demand and sales performance (Mulaudzi et. al., 2021). Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are essential to economic development, often constituting most businesses and serving as significant employment sources. SMEs are typically categorized based on the number of employees, with small enterprises having 10-49 employees and medium enterprises having 50-249 employees (Henschel & Heinze, 2018). Entrepreneurial ventures and startups, particularly those under 30 years of age, are critical for economic growth innovation. However, they face significant challenges, with high failure rates reported within the first few years of operation (Perry et. al., 2018).

Factors including management practices, family involvement, cultural values, and the ability to adapt to change are identified as critical for the longevity of businesses that have matured beyond 31 years. These findings underscore the complexity of business survival and the need for a holistic approach to understanding the determinants of long-term success (Riviezzo et. al., 2022).

Table 2*Summary Table for Business Continuity Management*

	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Risk Management	3.53	Strongly Agree	1
Crisis Management	3.52	Strongly Agree	2
Disaster Recovery	3.39	Agree	3
Overall	3.48	Agree	

Legend: 1.00 – 1.49 Strongly Disagree, 1.50 – 2.49 Disagree, 2.50 – 3.49 Agree, 3.50 – 4.00 Strongly Agree

Table 2 summarizes the assessment of Business Continuity Management of business owners and managers in terms of risk management, crisis management, and disaster recovery. Based on the result, the composite means of 3.48 presented that the business owners and managers have agreed to Business Continuity Management among the three indicators in general. In terms of the three indicators, respondents strongly agreed to risk management (3.53), crisis management (3.52), and disaster recovery (3.39). Risk Management ranks highest on the ranking as it is the proactive approach of Business Continuity Management. Risk management provides a structured approach to identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks that could disrupt business operations (Mošková & Bugarová, 2023). Second, on the ranking is the Crisis Management which some of the respondents, especially those start-ups in the early years haven't experienced yet as there is no crisis yet. Crisis management involves the immediate response and management of a disruptive event to mitigate its impact on an organization's operations (Mishra et. al., 2018). Last on the ranking is the disaster recovery which involves the planning after the crisis and mostly about IT-related processes such as IT Disaster Recovery Planning (IT DRP) which focuses on the recovery and restoration of IT systems and infrastructure post-disruption (Kesa, 2023).

Table 3*Summary Table for Organizational Resilience*

	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Operational Resilience	3.64	Strongly Agree	1
Strategic Resilience	3.51	Strongly Agree	3
Cultural Resilience	3.53	Strongly Agree	2
Overall	3.56	Strongly Agree	

Legend: 1.00 – 1.49 Strongly Disagree, 1.50 – 2.49 Disagree, 2.50 – 3.49 Agree, 3.50 – 4.00 Strongly Agree

Table 3 summarizes the assessment of the organizational resilience of business owners and managers in terms of operational resilience, strategic resilience, and cultural resilience. Based on the result, the composite mean of 3.56 presented that the business owners and managers have strongly agreed on organizational resilience among the three indicators in general. In terms of the three indicators, respondents strongly agreed with operational resilience (3.64), strategic resilience (3.51), and cultural resilience (3.53) with a very small difference respectively. Operational resilience got the highest ranking as it has to do with the operation where the industries become profitable. By ensuring that the operation is robust, the industry may then focus on other factors such as strategic and cultural resilience. Hepfer and Lawrence, (2022) differentiate that while operational resilience is crucial for immediate response to disruptions, strategic resilience is necessary for long-term adaptability. On the other hand, cultural resilience underpins both, providing the necessary mindset and behaviors for an organization to navigate through crises and evolve. Each form of resilience plays a distinct role, and together they contribute to an organization's overall resilience capacity. Therefore, it is not a matter of prioritizing one over the others but rather understanding how they interact and support each other (Deep, 2023).

Table 4*Differences in Business Continuity Management When Compared According to Profile*

	t/F	p-value	Interpretation
Industry			
Risk Management	-3.722	.000	Significant
Crisis Management	-2.357	.019	Significant
Disaster Recovery	-2.247	.025	Significant
Overall BCM	-2.966	.003	Significant
Size			
Risk Management	-12.996	.000	Significant
Crisis Management	-13.288	.000	Significant
Disaster Recovery	-15.934	.000	Significant
Overall BCM	-15.857	.000	Significant
Years of Operation			
Risk Management	15.249	.000	Significant
Crisis Management	17.568	.000	Significant
Disaster Recovery	15.174	.000	Significant
Overall BCM	18.603	.000	Significant

Legend: Difference is significant at 0.05 alpha level

Table 4 compares business continuity management answers when they are classified by profile. The calculated p-values are all smaller than the alpha threshold, indicating that there was a significant difference when grouped according to industry, size, and years of operation.

The industry is significant with BCM (.003) and its domains, risk management (0.000), crisis management (0.019), and disaster recovery (0.025). Both industries of service and merchandising were susceptible to business disruptions which indicate the need to establish Business Continuity Management according to specific organizational needs. The impact of disruptions is not uniform across all service industries or types of disruptions. For instance, the study of Khlystova et. al., (2022) reveals that while some sectors within the creative industries suffered due to the COVID-19 pandemic, others, like IT and software, found positive implications. Moreover, the relationship between service disruptions and service quality in the airline industry is moderated by firm size and business strategy, indicating that not all service firms are equally affected. For the Merchandising industries, Wairimu et. al., (2022) highlight the vulnerability of the retail sector to disruptions, which can lead to insolvency and liquidation for some firms. The study also finds a significant relationship between supply chain (SC) agility capability and resilience in the retail sector, suggesting that dynamic SC agility practices can enhance a firm's ability to withstand disruptions.

Size is highly significant with BCM (.003) and its domains, risk management (0.000), crisis management (0.000), and disaster recovery (0.000). This result is supported by the study of Vanichchinchai (2022) which covers research on automotive parts manufacturers in Thailand and shows that industry-specific factors such as firm size, international level, and export level have significant positive impacts on overall BCM and its components. Interestingly, while BCM is traditionally associated with larger organizations, the dynamic nature of the global business environment and the reliance on information systems have made BCM equally relevant for start-ups. Start-ups, with their limited resources, may find implementing BCM challenging, yet the potential impact of disruptions on their operations and the increasing customer expectations for service availability underscore the necessity of BCM (Turulja & Bajgorić, 2022).

Years of operation are highly significant with BCM (.000) and its domains, risk management (0.000), crisis management (0.000), and disaster recovery (0.000). (Interpretation) This result is supported by the study of Păunescu & Argatu (2020) indicates that mature organizations often have established BCM strategies, which are essential for maintaining essential business operations during crises. Further explained by Anir et. al., (2019). These strategies are not only about having plans in place but also about embedding BCM into the organizational culture and structure, such as through enterprise architecture. Start-up businesses are increasingly recognizing the importance of Business Continuity Management (BCM) as a critical component for sustaining operations during and after disruptive events (Marisa & Oigo, 2018). BCM encompasses strategies and processes to ensure

that essential functions can continue throughout and after a crisis (Mishra et. al., 2018).

Table 5

Differences in Organizational Resilience When Compared According to Profile

	t/F	p-value	Interpretation
Industry			
Operational	-1.459	.145	Not Significant
Strategic	-2.950	.003	Significant
Cultural	-1.416	.158	Not Significant
Overall Organizational Resilience	-2.447	.015	Significant
Size			
Operational	-2.868	.004	Significant
Strategic	-8.386	.000	Significant
Cultural	-6.745	.000	Significant
Overall Organizational Resilience	-7.936	.000	Significant
Years of Operation			
Operational	2.254	.107	Not Significant
Strategic	9.412	.000	Significant
Cultural	7.708	.001	Significant
Overall Organizational Resilience	5.814	.003	Significant

Legend: Difference is significant at 0.05 alpha level

Table 5 compares organization resilience answers when they are classified by profile. The calculated p-values are all smaller than the alpha threshold, indicating that there was a significant difference when grouped according to industry, size, and years of operation. Industry is significant with OR (.015) and its domain, strategic (0.003). Merchandising and service industries of Small and Medium Enterprises influenced perceived organizational resilience in different ways. This result is supported by the study of Ahmić (2022) which mentioned that organizational resilience is a multifaceted concept that plays a crucial role in the service and merchandising industry, particularly in terms of strategic planning and management. The literature suggests that resilience in these industries involves anticipation, coping, and adaptation to disruptions, which are essential for maintaining competitive advantage and ensuring business continuity. Furthermore, the study of Rodonaia et. al., (2018) highlights the significant impact of intellectual capital on strategic agility and organizational excellence in the service sector, suggesting that strategic agility mediates the relationship between intellectual capital and organizational excellence. Similarly, Shukor et. al., (2020) identifies a positive impact of supply chain integrations on a firm's supply chain agility and organizational flexibility in the service industry. These findings imply that strategy with agility is an important component of organizational resilience, enabling firms to adapt and excel in dynamic service environments.

Size is highly significant with OR (0.000) and its domains, operational (0.000), strategic (0.000), and cultural (0.000). (Interpretation) This result is supported by the study of Ahmić (2022) which identifies that strategic sustainability orientation significantly influences organizational resilience and its sub-components, including agility, with the influence varying by firm size. Small firms showed a significantly different impact compared to large and medium-sized firms. Similarly, Koçyiğit & Akkaya (2020) found a positive impact of organizational structure flexibility on organizational agility across small, medium, and large enterprises, suggesting that flexibility contributes to agility irrespective of firm size.

Years of operation are significant with OR (.003) and its domains, strategic (0.000), and cultural (0.001). Perceived Organizational resilience is significantly influenced by how start-ups and mature businesses respond with agility to face challenges. The study of Sincorá et. al., (2023) states that both start-up and mature businesses contribute to organizational resilience, but they do so through different mechanisms.

Table 6 shows the relationship between BCM and OR. The estimated rho-values showed a strong direct connection, and the resulting p-values were lower than the alpha threshold of 0.01. This indicates a considerable relationship between BCM and OR, and that the more prepared the business continuity management is, the better their organizational resilience is.

Table 6*Relationship of Business Continuity Management to Organizational Resilience*

	rx _y	p-value	Interpretation
Risk Management			
Operational	.491**	.000	Significant
Strategic	.455**	.000	Significant
Cultural	.265**	.000	Significant
Overall Organizational Resilience	.497**	.000	Significant
Crisis Management			
Operational	.480**	.000	Significant
Strategic	.372**	.000	Significant
Cultural	.192**	.000	Significant
Overall Organizational Resilience	.423**	.000	Significant
Disaster Recovery			
Operational	.519**	.000	Significant
Strategic	.524**	.000	Significant
Cultural	.271**	.000	Significant
Overall Organizational Resilience	.539**	.000	Significant

Legend: Relationship is significant at 0.05 alpha level

Organizational resilience and business continuity management (BCM) have a complex and mutually beneficial interaction. BCM is a comprehensive framework that covers operational, financial, strategic, technological, supply chain, and human resources to guarantee that businesses continue to perform critical tasks in the face of disruptive events. This helps to increase organizational resilience. BCM plays a crucial role in boosting organizational resilience by offering an organized method for identifying potential threats and their effects, as well as by assisting an organization in responding to and recovering from disruptions. Effective leadership, communication, innovation, and continuous improvement are further factors that contribute to organizational resilience and are essential for maintaining resilience in turbulent times (Rouca & Figueiredo, 2024). The combination of BCM with Cyber Threat Intelligence further enhances this resilience, particularly in the context of cyber threats (Hytönen et. al., 2023). However, the implementation of BCM in SMEs remains a challenge, indicating an area for further development and support (Kaufhold et. al., 2018). Additionally, the relationship between organizational resilience and crisis management is highlighted, with resilience affecting the pre- and post-crisis periods and crisis management impacting adaptive resilience (Pekdemir & Küçükaltan, 2024).

4. Conclusion and recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

- Majority of the firms belong to the service industry, small enterprises and operating for 30 years.
- The respondents agreed with regards Business Continuity Management as to risk management, crisis management, and disaster recovery. Although there is room to improve on documentation of plans such as BCP, CMP, and RTO for some of the Small and Medium Enterprises in Batangas City primarily in the service and merchandising industry.
- The respondents demonstrated strong agreement in Organizational Resilience in terms of Operational Resilience, Strategic Resilience, and Cultural Resilience.
- Significant differences were observed in Business Continuity Management responses when grouped by profile. However, regarding Organizational Resilience, most variables showed significant differences except for the Operational and Cultural aspects related to Industry, as well as the Operational aspect under the profile of years of operation.
- There is a significant correlation between business continuity management and organizational resilience, indicating that the greater the preparedness in business continuity management, the stronger

the organizational resilience becomes.

- An action plan was developed for Small-Medium Enterprise owners to implement and ensure the continuity of business.

The following recommendations are forwarded as an offshoot of the conclusions drawn.

- Service and Merchandising industries may review and validate the outlined action plan provided in the study for proper implementation.
- Businesses may enhance their understanding and implementation of Business Continuity Management (BCM) and organizational resilience through BCM training and profound education.
- Future researchers may compare resilience and BCM practices across different industries, organizational sizes, geographic regions, and cultural contexts. Identify similarities, differences, and contextual factors that influence resilience outcomes, allowing for more nuanced and contextually relevant recommendations.
- Future researchers may also delve deeper by focusing on specific segments such as risk assessment for specific lines of business, documentation of plans, updates, and implementation strategies.

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