



STRATEGIES IN TIMES OF PANDEMIC CRISIS: EVIDENCE FROM RETAIL TEXTILE FIRMS

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Abstract

Objective: This study is a pioneering exploration that uniquely focuses on how micro and small enterprises (MSEs) in the textile retail sector in Manaus transformed reactive strategies into actions that promote organizational resilience by developing dynamic capabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This unique focus will provide a fresh perspective and engage the reader in a new understanding of crisis management in the textile retail sector, sparking their interest in the novel insights presented.

Approach: Phenomenological analysis was used, with semi-structured interviews conducted with seven owners of MSEs in the textile retail sector in Manaus. The data were analyzed to identify emerging company adaptation strategy trends, such as shifts in supply chain management, changes in marketing strategies (e.g., digital marketing, customer engagement), and adoption of digital technologies (e.g., e-commerce platforms, digital payment systems).

Relevance: This study is a pioneering exploration of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on MSEs in the textile retail sector in Manaus. It acknowledges the entrepreneur's pivotal role as a moderator between strategies and resilience, valuing their contribution. The research underscores the significance of dynamic capabilities and, notably, the owners' characteristics in adaptation and survival in times of crisis, highlighting the importance of your work in the field.

Main results: This study highlights the pivotal role of the entrepreneur as a moderator in MSEs' organizational resilience. The owners' skills and decisions strongly influence this resilience. They evolve reactive strategies into emergent ones and systematize them into dynamic capabilities, thus contributing to organizational resilience. The entrepreneur's role emerges as an essential moderator, either amplifying or diminishing the effectiveness of these strategies. These insights are significant and will enhance understanding organizational resilience in crisis management.

Theoretical/Methodological Contributions: The research provides practical insights into how MSEs in the textile retail sector in Manaus adapted their strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic, underlining the critical role of dynamic capabilities and organizational resilience. The study also contributes to the theory by redefining organizational resilience as a psychological resource dependent on the owner's characteristics. Methodologically, the phenomenological research allowed for a deep understanding of the entrepreneurs' experiences and strategies in response to the crisis, providing a wealth of practical knowledge for the field. These insights can be directly applied to crisis management strategies in the textile retail sector, equipping the audience with a wealth of practical knowledge.

Managerial Contributions: The research suggests that support programs and public policies should focus on developing entrepreneurs' skills, including training and support networks, to strengthen MSEs' resilience. Additionally, it highlights the importance of considering the owners' demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, and educational background, when planning interventions during crises. This targeted approach can significantly enhance the effectiveness of crisis interventions.

Keywords: dynamic capabilities, reactive strategies, emergent strategies, entrepreneurship, organizational adaptability

Cite as / Como citar

American Psychological Association (APA)

Petry, J. F., Filizola, K. S., Uchôa, A. G. F., Barandão, C. N., & Souza, A. A. Jr. (2024, Sept./Dec.). Strategies in times of pandemic crisis: evidence from retail textile firms. *Iberoamerican Journal of Strategic Management (IJSM)*, 23(3), 1-33, e25947. <https://doi.org/10.5585/2024.25947>

(ABNT – NBR 6023/2018)

PETRY, J. F.; FILIZOLA, K. S.; UCHÔA, A. G. F.; BARANDÃO, C. N.; SOUZA JÚNIOR, A. A. Strategies in times of pandemic crisis: evidence from retail textile firms. *Iberoamerican Journal of Strategic Management (IJSM)*, v. 23, n. 3, p. 1-33, e25947, Sept./Dec. 2024. <https://doi.org/10.5585/2024.25947>

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Estratégias em tempos de crise pandêmica: evidências do varejo têxtil

Resumo

Objetivo: Analisar as orientações sobre como as micro e pequenas empresas (MPEs) do varejo têxtil em Manaus transformaram estratégias reativas em ações que promovem a resiliência organizacional por meio do desenvolvimento de capacidades dinâmicas durante a pandemia de COVID-19.

Abordagem: Foi utilizada a análise fenomenológica, com entrevistas semiestruturadas realizadas com sete proprietários de MPEs do setor de varejo têxtil em Manaus. Os dados foram analisados para identificar temas emergentes e padrões nas estratégias de adaptação das empresas.

Relevância: Este estudo é pioneiro ao examinar o impacto da pandemia de COVID-19 nas MPEs do varejo têxtil em Manaus, focando no papel do empreendedor como moderador entre estratégias e resiliência. A pesquisa destaca a importância das capacidades dinâmicas e das características pessoais dos proprietários na adaptação e sobrevivência em tempos de crise.

Principais resultados: Os resultados mostram que a resiliência organizacional das MPEs está fortemente ligada às habilidades e decisões dos proprietários. Estratégias reativas evoluíram para estratégias emergentes, que foram sistematizadas em capacidades dinâmicas, culminando em resiliência organizacional. O papel do empreendedor emergiu como um moderador essencial, amplificando ou diminuindo a eficácia dessas estratégias.

Contribuições teóricas/metodológicas: A pesquisa contribui para a compreensão de como as MPEs do varejo têxtil em Manaus adaptaram suas estratégias durante a pandemia de COVID-19, enfatizando o papel crítico das capacidades dinâmicas e da resiliência organizacional. O estudo contribui para a teoria ao redefinir a resiliência organizacional como um recurso psicológico, dependente das características individuais do proprietário. Metodologicamente, a pesquisa fenomenológica permitiu uma compreensão profunda das experiências e estratégias dos empreendedores em resposta à crise.

Contribuições Gerenciais: A pesquisa sugere que programas de apoio e políticas públicas devem focar no desenvolvimento das habilidades dos empreendedores, incluindo treinamentos e redes de suporte, para fortalecer a resiliência das MPEs. Além disso, destaca a importância de considerar as características demográficas dos proprietários ao planejar intervenções durante crises.

Palavras-Chave: capacidade dinâmica, estratégias reativas, estratégias emergentes, empreendedorismo, adaptabilidade organizacional

Estrategias en tiempos de crisis pandémica: evidencia de las empresas textiles minoristas

Resumen

Objetivo: Analizar cómo las micro y pequeñas empresas (MPEs) del sector minorista textil en Manaus transformaron estrategias reactivas en acciones que promueven la resiliencia organizacional mediante el desarrollo de capacidades dinámicas durante la pandemia de COVID-19.

Planteamiento: Se utilizó el análisis fenomenológico, con entrevistas semiestruturadas realizadas a siete propietarios de MPEs del sector minorista textil en Manaus. Los datos se analizaron para identificar temas emergentes y patrones en las estrategias de adaptación de las empresas.

Relevancia: Este estudio es pionero al examinar el impacto de la pandemia de COVID-19 en las MPEs del sector minorista textil en Manaus, enfocándose en el papel del emprendedor como moderador entre estrategias y resiliencia. La investigación destaca la importancia de las capacidades dinámicas y las características personales de los propietarios en la adaptación y supervivencia en tiempos de crisis.

Principales resultados: Los resultados muestran que la resiliencia organizacional de las MPEs está fuertemente ligada a las habilidades y decisiones de los propietarios. Las estrategias reactivas evolucionaron hacia estrategias emergentes, que se sistematizaron en capacidades dinámicas, culminando en resiliencia organizacional. El papel del emprendedor emergió como un moderador esencial, amplificando o disminuyendo la efectividad de estas estrategias.

Aportes teóricos/metodológicas: La investigación contribuye a la comprensión de cómo las MPEs del sector minorista textil en Manaus adaptaron sus estrategias durante la pandemia de COVID-19, enfatizando el papel crítico de las capacidades dinámicas y la resiliencia organizacional. El estudio contribuye a la teoría al redefinir la resiliencia organizacional como un recurso psicológico, dependiente de las características individuales del propietario. Metodológicamente, la investigación fenomenológica permitió una comprensión profunda de las experiencias y estrategias de los emprendedores en respuesta a la crisis.

Contribuciones gerenciales: La investigación sugiere que los programas de apoyo y las políticas públicas deben enfocarse en el desarrollo de las habilidades de los emprendedores, incluidos entrenamientos y redes de apoyo, para fortalecer la resiliencia de las MPEs. Además, destaca la importancia de considerar las características demográficas de los propietarios al planificar intervenciones durante crisis.

Palabras clave: capacidades dinámicas, estrategias reactivas, estrategias emergentes, emprendimiento, adaptabilidad organizacional

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a global economic crisis and posed significant challenges for Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs), as declining revenues threatened their survival (Jiménez-Zarco et al., 2021). This crisis presents unprecedented challenges, particularly for MSEs in textile retail, compelling these businesses to reassess their current practices and make urgent changes to navigate their future. Most of these challenges stemmed from restrictive policies, such as nationwide lockdowns and mobility restrictions implemented by governments to curb the spread of the pandemic (Fei et al., 2020; Hatab et al., 2021). Retail MSEs, in particular, faced various issues, including reduced demand, supply chain disruptions, order cancellations, raw material shortages, and transportation interruptions, among other operational challenges (Nguyen et al., 2021; Shafi et al., 2020).

In this context, textile retail MSEs in Manaus demonstrated remarkable resilience, urgently adapting their strategies to survive the disruption caused by the pandemic. Despite the need for reactive strategies to address emerging challenges, these businesses showed a remarkable ability to prepare for and deal with such an unpredictable event. Previous studies

have reported risks and the survival of MSEs if the lockdown persisted for over two months (Hatab et al., 2021; Oliveira & David, 2024; Shafi et al., 2020). Shafi et al. (2020) argue that more than 80% of companies were unprepared and lacked a plan to deal with the new context. Giunipero et al. (2022) highlight that risk and survival are associated with two factors contributing to the success or failure of MSEs. The first factor relates to sudden, unpredictable, and difficult-to-mitigate external environmental events like the pandemic. The second-factor concerns management skills within the company. The studies prove that reactive strategies, such as cost reduction and operational reorganization, became imperative for ensuring business continuity during the crisis. However, the success of these strategies depended not only on the immediate responsiveness of the companies but also on their ability to adapt and become resilient in the face of uncertainty, as evidenced by relevant findings in the research.

In this scenario, organizational resilience emerges as a central concept to understand how textile retail MSEs in Manaus managed to face the challenges of the pandemic and even identify growth opportunities amidst the crisis (Duchek, 2020; T. A. Williams et al., 2017). *Organizational resilience* is a dynamic capability that allows companies to adapt and recover from disruptive events like the pandemic (Akpan et al., 2022). Companies that demonstrate resilience possess skills that enable them to adjust, integrate, and reshape their internal and external resources to meet the demands of changing environmental conditions, as conceptualized by Teece et al. (1997) as dynamic capabilities. In other words, reactive strategies can be considered immediate responses to crises, and dynamic capabilities refer to the company's ability to adapt and innovate over time, while organizational resilience encompasses these aspects and goes beyond, integrating them into a continuous process of learning and evolution (Duchek, 2020). Resilience denotes the ability to survive a crisis or shock and emerge from it in a stronger position (Lengnick-Hall & Beck, 2005).

This research explores how textile retail MSEs in Manaus can transform their reactive strategies into actions that ensure survival and promote organizational resilience by developing dynamic capabilities. Many believe that MSEs—especially in the textile retail sector—are prone to vulnerability and losses during crises but can also find opportunities to develop resilience (Ali et al., 2021; Lim et al., 2020). This was the case, for example, with electronic textile retail, which grew exponentially during the pandemic's lockdown period (Shabir & AlBishri, 2021). This growth is a testament to the potential for resilience and even growth in crisis.

By addressing these issues, this research seeks to contribute to the theoretical understanding of the relationship between reactive strategies, dynamic capabilities, and

organizational resilience in times of crisis, highlighting the importance of organizational resilience as an essential component for the survival and growth of textile retail MSEs in Manaus. Analyzing these aspects strengthens the academic understanding of these phenomena and offers practical guidance for other companies facing similar challenges in crisis contexts. By integrating these concepts, the research aims to develop a more cohesive and comprehensive theoretical framework that guides future investigations into crisis management in MSEs. In this way, the study provides practical and strategic tools to improve the resilience and competitiveness of MSEs in adverse contexts, offering support to those navigating crises.

The remainder of the article is structured to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research. The following section will explore the primary theoretical lenses and the methodological development. Section four will present data analysis and discussions, followed by the final considerations.

Literature Review

The Impact of the Pandemic on MSEs as Context

As Zaazou and Abdou (2022) noted, several studies were conducted in a short period to measure the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on entrepreneurs in many countries and to find ways to overcome the crisis with minimal losses. Most studies agreed that the coronavirus had had a severe negative impact on all sectors of industry and services, particularly on micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (Guerra et al., 2022; Hatab et al., 2021; Shafi et al., 2020; Tambunan, 2021; Thekkoote, 2023). The literature on the COVID-19 pandemic has grown since its onset in early 2020. Unfortunately, empirical studies on its impact on MSEs and how MSEs are affected by COVID-19 remain limited, especially in Brazil.

The pandemic has posed incredible challenges worldwide, leading to a massive health crisis and severely impacting every aspect of how people trade, work, live, and consume. The world has already witnessed numerous crises caused by external factors, such as major floods, earthquakes, and epidemic outbreaks, including globally significant events like SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome), the H1N1 swine flu pandemic, the Ebola outbreak, avian influenza, the Salmonella Infantis outbreak, and the Zika outbreak, among others. These crises have significantly impacted society, the economy, and MSEs; beyond causing economic losses, these events also pose a grave threat to the continuity of MSEs (Shafi et al., 2020).

The international lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic caused a socioeconomic shock that affected citizens and MSEs everywhere, disrupting their operations and commerce, which are essential for survival and sustainability. A consensus exists that the pandemic has heightened challenges for small businesses worldwide, regardless of size, location, or funding source (Engidaw, 2022). Many companies have faced financial decline and might not survive the post-pandemic stage due to their small size and resource limitations. MSEs have limited capacity and resources to recover from this crisis, especially those in developing countries with high poverty rates and economic and political instability (Shafi et al., 2020).

Crises can have various primary causes or initial triggers that signal an economic crisis, such as a sudden and significant price increase. A *financial crisis* is defined as large, unexpected, and uncontrollable fluctuations beyond acceptable limits in prices, exchange rates, or commodity supply that occur within a specific period (Tambunan, 2021). The crisis triggered by the pandemic directly affected the self-employed more than employees and small businesses more than large companies. Small businesses in retail, personal services, hospitality, entertainment, and the arts were the most affected (Bartik et al., 2020; Belitski et al., 2022).

The pandemic-induced crisis threatened the existence of many companies and demanded a rapid response from entrepreneurs. To understand this unique situation, which has no documented equivalent in entrepreneurship literature, we turn to the literature on business crisis management, which addresses how companies respond to crises, namely, their resilience capacity (Kuckertz et al., 2020). The pandemic impacts MSEs; some can sustain and even achieve growth in the crisis economy. Therefore, the company is conceptualized as a system of various resource components (strategic-physical-financial-human-organizational resources), and the development of the business unit is the expansion of this resource system (Lim et al., 2020).

Thus, MSEs can find ways to exit and survive the crisis. It is important to note that some companies can be the starting point for eventual recovery due to their resilience, driven by business agility and strategic planning capacity. In other words, MSEs can respond to unpredictable changes in the operational environment due to their strategic agility (García-Vidal et al., 2020; Nurunnabi, 2020; Vidmar et al., 2020). Many companies implement resilience-related responses to transform crisis-induced adversity into opportunity (Kuckertz et al., 2020).

Facing Uncertainty and Response Capacity

Uncertainty is a constant in the business environment, affecting companies of all sizes and sectors. A striking example of this uncertainty was the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly impacted businesses worldwide (Adobor et al., 2021). *Uncertainty* is the inability to predict the likelihood of future events (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967) and is closely related to insufficient knowledge about cause-and-effect relationships (Duncan, 1972). This situation makes business decision-making particularly challenging, as decision-makers, with their expertise and strategic thinking, face the difficult task of acting based on limited information (Liesch et al., 2011), empowering them to make a difference.

In MSEs, decision-makers seek to reduce uncertainty through two main approaches: forecasting and control. Predictive strategies focus on acquiring and analyzing information that allows for a better assessment of the unknown, while control strategies rely on environmental unpredictability through entrepreneurial behavioral actions (Liesch et al., 2011). According to Milliken (1987), there are three main types of perceived uncertainty: state uncertainty, which refers to a lack of knowledge about changes in environmental components; effect uncertainty, which is the inability to predict the impact of these changes on the organization; and response uncertainty, which involves a lack of knowledge about response options and the consequences of those choices.

In this context, it is crucial to understand how MSEs can face these uncertainties and develop an adequate response capacity. Reactive strategies are an immediate way to deal with crises. However, they can also lead to learning and adaptation processes that strengthen the organization's ability to adjust and evolve in a constantly changing environment. This learning potential of crises not only helps in facing them but can also be transformed into opportunities, fostering a sense of optimism about the future.

Reactive Strategies

Reactive strategies, crucial in organizational management, are primarily employed during periods of crisis (Ali et al., 2021; Khanchel et al., 2023). These are measures an organization adopts in direct response to unforeseen events, sudden challenges, or crises that threaten its operations or objectives (Smith, 2021). They represent a spontaneous reaction to environmental changes (Williams & Tse, 1995) and are implemented without extensive prior planning, aiming to address the emerging situation immediately (Ali et al., 2021). Rather than being part of a predefined strategic plan, reactive strategies are triggered as a quick and often temporary response to adverse circumstances (Williams & Tse, 1995). Miles et al. (1978) define

this type of strategy as reactive, indicating an adjustment to an inconsistent and unstable environment.

However, it is essential to note that although reactive strategies may be seen as a direct response to environmental change, they also reveal aspects of an organization's dynamic capabilities. These capabilities refer to the organization's ability to integrate, adapt, and reconfigure resources and competencies in response to external environmental changes (Teece et al., 1997). Therefore, even when reactive strategies are activated as a quick and temporary response to adverse circumstances, they can also demonstrate the organization's dynamic nature, adjusting and responding agilely and effectively to unforeseen situations—a fundamental aspect of dynamic capabilities (Teece, 2018; Teece et al., 1997).

Emerging Strategies and Dynamic Capabilities

Reactive strategies are an organization's immediate responses to unforeseen events or crises. Organizations implement these strategies quickly to deal with adverse situations threatening their operations or objectives (Ali et al., 2021; Smith, 2021). These emergency actions are characterized by being unplanned and aim to mitigate adverse impacts temporarily and swiftly (Williams & Tse, 1995). On the other hand, emerging strategies develop organically from the daily interactions within the organization and continuous adaptation to the business environment (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985). They evolve as a result of an ongoing process of learning and adapting to changing circumstances (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011; Lengnick-Hall & Beck, 2005).

These emerging strategies are adopted in unstable and complex environments, demonstrating that the organization is flexible, open, and responsive to changes. They reflect the company's willingness to continuously learn and adapt to an ever-evolving reality, enabling the identification and exploitation of new opportunities that arise from these dynamic changes (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985).

While seemingly distinct, reactive and emerging strategies are interconnected. Reactive strategy, implemented to address crises, often lead to acquiring new knowledge and experiences that shape future actions. This continuous learning process can elevate these immediate responses into more structured patterns of behavior, which are the hallmarks of emerging strategies.

Reactive strategies are pivotal in triggering organizational learning processes, contributing to the continuous adaptation and evolution of emerging strategies. This cycle of immediate response and constant learning strengthens the organization's dynamic capabilities.

Dynamic capabilities refer to the ability to integrate, adapt, and reconfigure resources and competencies in response to changes in the external environment (Teece, 2018; Teece et al., 1997).

Dynamic capability is a process of strategic adaptation, utilizing adaptive practices—routinized actions and repeated skills that sustain the organization's ability to adjust (Quansah et al., 2022). These practices, which include regular risk assessments, scenario planning, and continuous learning initiatives, are crucial in enabling organization members to detect and leverage significant changes as threats or opportunities to address. They facilitate the transformation and reconfiguration of the company's assets, resulting in intentional adjustments that respond to new information and contexts (USAID, 2021).

In this way, reactive strategies can initiate learning and adaptation processes, reinforcing adaptive practices and contributing to the organization's overall ability to evolve. This continuous cycle of response and adjustment, a key to organizational resilience, underscores the need for ongoing adaptation and learning in the face of dynamic changes, ensuring the organization's readiness to face future challenges.

The organizational capacity to face changes brought by external events, such as the pandemic, cannot be explained solely by the mechanisms of dynamic capability (Martinelli et al., 2018). Even without dynamic capability, MSEs can make changes through ad hoc decisions or luck, characterizing reactive strategies (Zollo & Winter, 2002). Therefore, MSEs' dynamic capability is heavily dependent on the leadership's vision and ability to integrate and execute change (Zahra et al., 2006). The leader's competencies, such as strategic foresight, decision-making skills, and the ability to inspire and motivate, strongly influence response capacity and dynamic capability, underscoring the pivotal role of leadership in shaping organizational resilience (Shalender & Yadav, 2019).

Thus, the ability to capitalize on disruptive surprises that threaten the survival of MSEs—actively facing unexpected events—can be understood as resilience (Duchek, 2020). In organizational management, resilience refers to an organization's ability to withstand and recover from disruptive events, such as economic downturns or natural disasters, and to adapt and grow in the face of continual change. Organizational resilience emerges from the combination of dynamic capabilities and reactive strategies. These strategies not only help in crisis management but also have the potential to transform crises into opportunities for strengthening and growth, inspiring the organization to face challenges with a positive outlook.

Organizational Resilience

In academic literature, the abstract concept of resilience is characterized by diverse interpretations and definitions (Conz & Magnani, 2020). This diversity underscores the crucial need for a more unified understanding of resilience and the elements it encompasses (Duchek, 2020). At the organizational level, resilience refers to the inherent characteristics of organizations or individuals that enable them to respond agilely, recover quickly, or develop innovative ways to operate under pressure (Linnenluecke, 2017; Thekkoote, 2023). Essentially, organizational resilience refers to a company's ability to absorb shocks and disruptions effectively, develop specific responses to adverse situations, and ultimately engage in transformative activities that leverage these disruptive surprises as opportunities (Duchek, 2020). This ability ensures the organization's survival during crises and promotes its long-term strengthening and growth (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011).

Researchers can also understand resilience in entrepreneurship from two perspectives. First, it is synonymous with preparation, resistance, persistence, or self-efficacy, explaining why some entrepreneurs and their companies perform better than their non-resilient counterparts. Second, by studying cognitive and behavioral traits, we can see how distinct forms of entrepreneurship, such as social entrepreneurs, enhance a company's ability to adapt to new circumstances and contribute to long-term sustainability through innovation.

Resilience can be understood as the ability of Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) or individuals to effectively deal with self-inflicted disasters and crises, maintaining stability while ensuring the flexibility and diversity needed for future innovation and development (Buultjens et al., 2017; Ntounis et al., 2022; Thekkoote, 2023). In engineering and physical sciences, resilience is defined as elasticity under pressure in the business context; it is seen as the leaders' ability to adjust, adapt, and reinvent their companies' business models (Linnenluecke, 2017). Resilience is generally viewed as a desirable trait for an organization and its members, helping them cope with adversity (Linnenluecke, 2017). Resilience is an attribute that a company possesses along a continuum: before, during, and after an event, whether external or internal. Duchek (2020) defines three successive stages of resilience: anticipation, coping, and adaptation:

Anticipation is an essential aspect of resilience, and it involves preventive measures related to potential disturbances. It refers to the early detection of critical developments within the company or its environment and the proactive adaptation to these changes. This includes forecasting and preventing potential dangers before they can cause significant damage.

Coping: Involves dealing with unforeseen dangers after they manifest. Organizational resilience can be understood as the active and purposeful management of unexpected events.

Adaptation: Includes adjusting after crises and using change to move forward. This process consists of proactive adaptation, exposure, recovery and restoration, post-impact determination of resilience, and future adaptation. Adaptation helps organizations avoid or reduce the negative consequences of unexpected events.

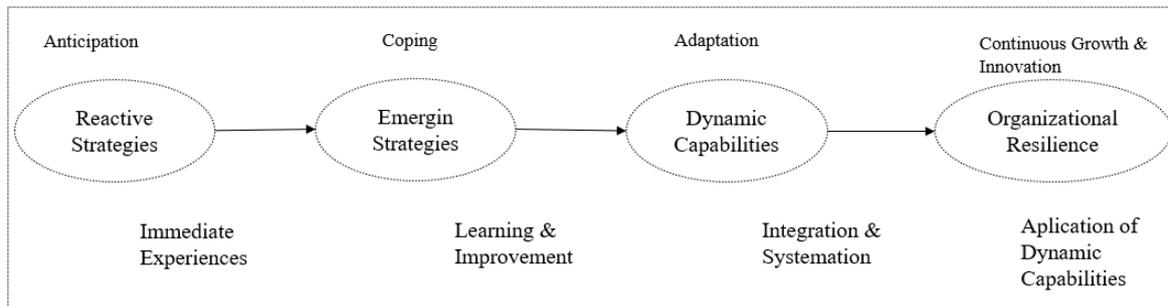
Based on the ideas of Duchek (2020) and Martinelli et al. (2018). The entrepreneur's ability to anticipate/detect, adapt/exploit, and cope with self-inflicted disasters and crises is closely associated with dynamic organizational adaptability capabilities. These capabilities develop over time, allowing the organization to respond flexibly and positively to unexpected events.

Lengnick-Hall et al. (2011) argue that organizational resilience is embedded in individual skills, routines, and processes that guide the company conceptually, enabling it to act decisively and establish an environment of adjustable diversity and integration. This approach allows the organization to overcome potentially debilitating challenges from disruptive shocks. Therefore, adopting a dynamic capabilities perspective aligns with the processual view of organizational resilience, which goes beyond mere recovery. It includes continuously adapting to changes, recognizing new opportunities to advance, and integrating adaptive capacities that enable the organization to face constantly evolving circumstances (Martinelli et al., 2018).

Understanding how MSEs can develop resilience is aided by a conceptual model (Figure 1) that begins with reactive strategies. These immediate responses to crises and shocks provide an initial foundation of experience and learning. Over time, these reactive responses evolve into emerging strategies, where organizations begin to structure their responses based on previous learnings, developing more effective protocols and procedures. As these emerging strategies become systematized, they transform into dynamic capabilities and integrated and adaptable skills that allow the organization to detect, react to, and proactively adapt to changes and crises. This continuous learning and adaptation through dynamic capabilities culminate in organizational resilience, enabling survival during crises and promoting constant growth and innovation.

Figure 1

Conceptual Model of Organizational Resilience



The description of the flow represented in the conceptual model (Figure 1) begins with immediate experiences—MSEs start with strategies, quickly responding to crises to mitigate their effects. In learning and improvement—over time, these reactive responses are refined and transformed into a more structured strategy based on previous experiences. In the integration and systematization phase—these strategies are integrated into the organization's dynamic capabilities, enabling a more proactive and adaptable approach. This emphasis on the proactive and flexible approach reassures us about the organization's preparedness. Finally, the practical application of these dynamic capabilities culminates in organizational resilience, where the organization can anticipate, face, and adapt to crises, promoting survival and transformation.

In the initial stage, reactive and emerging strategies—as discussed reactive strategies form the initial basis for crisis response. As the organization learns from these experiences, they evolve into emerging strategies. In the anticipation stage, these reactive strategies help the organization quickly detect and respond to immediate threats. As the organization moves into the coping stage, emerging strategies enable continuous adjustment and more effective responses to ongoing crises, aligning with Duchek's (2020) the idea of resilience through coping and adaptation. These strategies manage events as they occur and establish a foundation for long-term adaptation and organizational transformation.

Next, dynamic capabilities—emerging strategies are systematized into dynamic capabilities, as proposed by Teece (2018) and Teece et al. (1997), which allows the organization to adapt to changes and crises proactively. These dynamic capabilities form the basis on which organizational resilience is built as Lengnick-Hall et al. (2011) argue. For example, anticipation capabilities help the organization forecast and prevent potential dangers before they cause harm, aligning with Duchek's (2020) the first stage of resilience. During the coping stage, these dynamic capabilities enable the organization to manage unexpected events decisively. Finally, in the adaptation stage, dynamic capabilities facilitate post-crisis adjustments and use changes for organizational advancement and growth. Thus, adopting a dynamic capabilities perspective sustains organizational resilience and promotes continuous adaptation and innovation to face constantly evolving circumstances.

Finally, organizational resilience—the culmination of these dynamic capabilities results in organizational resilience, which goes beyond mere recovery to continuous adaptation and innovation, promoting long-term growth and strengthening. In the anticipation stage, this resilience manifests in forecasting and mitigating potential threats before they cause harm. In the coping stage, resilience allows the organization to effectively manage crises as they occur, utilizing the developed dynamic capabilities. Finally, resilience translates into the organization's ability to recover, transform, and continuously innovate in the adaptation stage, ensuring sustainable growth despite adversity.

Research Methodology

To achieve the objectives, we conducted a detailed analysis of seven MSEs in the textile retail sector in the city of Manaus, using semi-structured interviews. This research, significant in its depth and scope, employed a qualitative study based on data from the textile retail sector in Manaus. According to Patton (2005), qualitative research is instrumental when the goal is to gain deep insights into a real-world phenomenon.

We conducted the study using semi-structured interviews, adopting a phenomenological perspective by focusing on the lived experiences of MSE owners. Phenomenology analyzes how experiences reveal themselves (Sanders, 1982). The phenomenological design employed a semi-structured questionnaire with conceptual tools to allow interviewees to actively participate in constructing a clear picture of the pandemic's actual impact on their businesses.

For this purpose, we used a semi-structured interview guide adapted from the studies by Hatab et al. (2021) and Zaazou and Abdou (2022). The questions were translated and tailored to the context of textile retail (Table 1). The research questionnaire consisted of semi-structured questions divided into seven specific sections: (i) Characteristics of MSEs in the textile retail sector (demographic questions); (ii) Perceived immediate impacts of COVID-19 on MSE business operations; (iii) Perceived long-term impacts of the pandemic on the company and business; (iv) Sources of risk for the operations and performance of the companies; (v) MSEs' perception of various risk categories and total risks; (vi) Risk management strategies implemented by the companies; and (vii) Supply chain opportunities emerging from the pandemic.

These sections were structured according to the research pillars: reactive and emerging strategies, dynamic capabilities, and resilience. As detailed in Table 1, these pillars are crucial in understanding how MSEs in the textile retail sector in Manaus have responded to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Regarding the impacts of COVID-19, we included semi-structured questions corresponding to nine questions adapted from the studies by Hatab et al. (2021) and Zaazou and Abdou (2022). We designed these questions to capture the perceived impacts of the pandemic on company sales and revenues, supply chain, production costs, financial issues and cash flows, labor availability, and layoffs.

We conducted the research in person from August 2021 to February 2022. We interviewed seven business owners (six women and one man) with an average of 22 years of experience in the textile retail market. The respondents had an average age of 43.44 years. Four interviewees reported having completed high school, and three had higher education. To collect accurate responses, we ensured the anonymity and confidentiality of the MSEs. Each interview, conducted with meticulous attention to detail, lasted between 40 and 90 minutes. The interviews were recorded and transcribed to facilitate the phenomenological analysis of the data.

The literature review informed our selection of the MSEs, which highlighted the importance of convenience sampling in qualitative research (Creswell & Clark, 2018; Palinkas et al., 2015). We chose the city of Manaus, the capital of the state of Amazonas, as it was the epicenter of the epidemic in the Brazilian Amazon, which caused a sudden increase in deaths and profound socioeconomic impact.

Eligibility criteria included being the owner or manager of an MSE in the textile retail sector, located in Manaus, operating during the COVID-19 pandemic, and preferably having at least one year of experience managing the company. Exclusion criteria included not being the owner or manager of the MSE, MSEs not belonging to the textile retail sector, MSEs not operating during the COVID-19 pandemic, and participants who could not provide sufficient information or did not consent to participate in the research.

We adopted the content analysis technique, following systematic procedures to categorize and code the interviewees' responses described by Bardin (2011). Content analysis is a robust methodology for identifying thematic categories in qualitative texts (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). First, we transcribed all interviews and read them multiple times to ensure familiarity with the data. Then, we performed open coding, fragmenting the responses into meaning units and assigning initial codes. We developed these codes based on emerging themes identified in the participants' narratives and categorized them according to the research pillars: reactive and emerging strategies, dynamic capabilities, and resilience (Table 1).

Our data analysis was conducted with a strong focus on validation. We used content analysis to categorize responses according to the research pillars: reactive and emerging strategies, dynamic capabilities, and resilience. To enhance the reliability of the results, we

conducted data triangulation using a multi-method approach, comparing qualitative data with findings from previous studies in the literature. This rigorous validation, a cornerstone of our research, helped ensure that the interpretations were consistent and supported by robust evidence, thus increasing the validity and reliability of the results obtained (Patton, 1999; Yin, 2018).

The textile retail MSEs are business units in neighborhoods characterized by low-income populations. These MSEs typically acquire goods from large centers like São Paulo and the Brazilian Northeast. In three units, the owners reported traveling to São Paulo to purchase products at major fairs.

Investigating the owners' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic provides an authentic context for observing how reactive and emerging strategies transform into dynamic capabilities as Teece (2018) and Teece et al. (1997) our qualitative approach, which focuses on the lived experiences and adaptive responses of MSEs to crises, allows for a deep and nuanced analysis of the anticipation, coping, and adaptation processes. This approach is precious in understanding these businesses' dynamic capabilities and resilience. Duchek (2020) states that our adopted methodology is robust in its application and aligns seamlessly with the established theoretical framework. This alignment provides a solid foundation for analyzing dynamic capabilities and organizational resilience in MSEs, instilling confidence in the theoretical underpinnings of our research.

Methodological Development

The semi-structured interview guide was developed based on the studies by Hatab et al. (2021) and Zaazou and Abdou (2022), adapting them to the specific context of the textile retail sector in Manaus. The questions were carefully crafted to comprehensively capture various aspects of reactive strategies, emerging strategies, dynamic capabilities, and organizational resilience, as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1

Approach to Theoretical Aspects

Research Pillars	Interview Guide Questions
<p>Reactive and Emerging Strategies</p>	<p>Impacts of the pandemic on business:</p> <p>2. What were the immediate impacts of COVID-19 perceived on your business operations?</p> <p>5. What strategies did you use/employ/adopt immediately upon perceiving the risks that the pandemic brought to your business? Or how have you managed the challenges the pandemic has brought to your business?</p> <p>6. How have you managed the risks the pandemic has brought to your business?</p> <p>8. How have competitors in the same sector faced the challenges presented by the pandemic to their businesses?</p>
<p>Dynamic Capabilities</p>	<p>Financial issues and cash flows, labor availability, and layoffs:</p> <p>4. Given the drop or absence of business revenue, would you consider starting a new product line to help generate income?</p> <p>5. What are your plans regarding cash flow management? How have you managed it?</p> <p>9. Are you thinking of investing in technology such as online sales, offering new services, or more accessible channels for customers?</p> <p>10. Are you considering changing your business strategies and investing in innovation shortly? Have you done so, will you do so, or are you trying to perceive any strategy...?</p> <p>11. Do you consider shifting your marketing, sales, and business management to digital operations like mobile apps?</p> <p>14. Do you have any lessons or tips to share with what you have learned from the pandemic?</p>
<p>Resilience</p>	<p>Impacts of the pandemic on business:</p> <p>3. What were the pandemic's perceived medium- and long-term impacts on your company and business?</p> <p>4. What risks did you perceive the pandemic brought to your company's operations, i.e., the risks that impacted or impacted your business performance?</p> <p>7. What opportunities has the pandemic brought to your business? Financial issues and cash flows, labor availability, and layoffs:</p> <p>6. To what extent was customer accessibility affected due to the pandemic?</p> <p>7. Did your company receive any financial support from the government? If so, please specify.</p> <p>8. During this challenging period, how are you supporting your team financially and mentally?</p> <p>13. Did you have to lay off employees?</p> <p>15. How do you see the future of your business post-pandemic? What tips or advice would you give?</p> <p>16. How do you define your company? In terms of products, services, pricing, business, etc.? Why is your company different?</p>

The collected data were analyzed qualitatively using content analysis. The responses were categorized and related to the three research pillars to identify patterns and insights regarding the strategies adopted by the MSEs.

We built this study on three fundamental pillars: reactive and emerging strategies, dynamic capabilities, and resilience. However, a fourth pillar, related to the entrepreneur's role and focused on their capacity, emerged prominently during the research.

Analysis And Discussion

Impact of the Pandemic on Textile Retail MSEs

Epidemics are known for their impact on the economy and society, and COVID-19 presents unprecedented challenges, such as the threat to the lives of millions of people worldwide, in addition to the deaths already caused. At the same time, pandemic-related policies, such as social distancing, particularly affected MSEs (Belitski et al., 2022). Some MSEs had to permanently close their operations due to disruptions that impacted revenue and the creation of new businesses (Piva & Guerini, 2022). However, we understand that the effects of the pandemic are adverse but not highly critical to MSEs as they seek to develop capabilities and leverage their resources more effectively (Horváth & Lafuente, 2021).

We classify the companies studied as MSEs in the textile retail sector in the city of Manaus. These are small enterprises with up to one employee and an average of 22 years in operation. The pandemic's impact resulted in an approximately 80% reduction in sales, a consequence of the policies adopted to mitigate the spread of the virus. The decline in sales reflects a new consumption behavior, exposing the owners' financial fragility and putting the business's survival at risk (Chhatwani et al., 2022; Fei et al., 2020; Hatab et al., 2021).

The accounts confirm a decrease and even an interruption in purchasing new products due to a lack of goods and cash flow problems. Sales on credit with payments via installment plans (trust-based sales (Petry et al., 2022) were severely affected—customers could not visit the store to make installment payments. Intimate apparel, as reported by the interviewees, was marked by a lack of products and price increases, "in some cases over 100% for restocking." The literature identifies the decrease in sales as the first impact of the pandemic on MSEs. Revenue losses among small businesses were more significant than among large companies. MSEs had less capacity to quickly adjust to restrictive policies, decreased demand, and product shortages, and had lower capacity to secure the necessary financing for the adjustments required to survive or maintain the business (Belitski et al., 2022; Fairlie & Fossen, 2022). Respondents also reported that social restriction policies reduced sales and led to difficulties in maintaining budgets and paying rent for commercial spaces. Similar observations appeared in studies by Tambunan (2021), Fei et al. (2020), Hatab et al. (2021) and Mehta e Kaur (2021), where

companies negotiated wages with their workers in response to decreased demand and renegotiated debt payment terms with banks and suppliers.

Regarding government financial support during the restrictive policies to contain the pandemic, respondents stated that municipal restrictive measures were not total; "it was a less restrictive lockdown." As for financial aid, the interviewees did not mention government financial support measures during the pandemic. This outcome contrasts with the Brazilian government's prevention and insolvency measures, including emergency benefits for the maintenance and survival of MSEs. The lack of access to the benefit may be associated with the authorization, in most cities, for the operation of certain businesses, which offered an opportunity to survive the crisis (Hakim et al., 2021).

Reactive and Emerging Strategies

The interviews indicated that in the face of the abrupt drop in sales—which reached 80% in some cases—the primary concern was maintaining cash flow and ensuring the business's survival. Reactive strategies were evident in the responses related to the immediate actions taken by the entrepreneurs. For example, Ivanir (a fictitious name for the respondent) provided discounts and negotiated with suppliers as immediate strategies to cope with the crisis. Ivana and Sarah (fictitious names for the respondents) mentioned adopting online sales and diversifying the products offered, adapting to the new market demands. These actions highlight the ability to respond quickly to the changes imposed by the pandemic, focusing on maintaining cash flow and retaining customers, as emphasized by Kumar et al. (2011) and Day (1994).

Emerging strategies developed organically, adapting to new market realities, such as using social media for sales, adopting online channels, and offering free delivery of goods (Questions 8, 9, 10, and 11). These responses demonstrate the flexibility of MSEs in exploring new market opportunities and their continuous adaptation capability, aligning with Mintzberg and Waters' (1985) concept of emerging strategies. These strategies develop organically in response to changing business environment conditions (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985).

Dynamic Capabilities

As MSEs evolved from emerging strategies to dynamic capabilities, they systematized adaptive responses into organizational routines and processes. Dynamic capabilities involve the organization's ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competencies to respond quickly to changes (Teece, 2018; Teece et al., 1997).

The companies' dynamic capabilities were observed in their strategic reconfiguration of resources and competencies to meet new demands, such as introducing new products (masks

and hand sanitizer) and seeking alternative suppliers (Questions 3, 4, 12, and 13). Rebeca (a fictitious name for the respondent) highlighted implementing a barcode system to improve cash flow control, demonstrating an effort to formalize processes and enhance operational efficiency. This strategic thinking illustrates the capacity to understand and adjust their resource base deliberately Teece et al. (1997) described.

This systematization is essential for developing dynamic capabilities, supported by three main elements: behaviors, capacities, and skills (both individual and organizational), routines and processes, and mechanisms of learning and knowledge governance (Meirelles & Camargo, 2014). The emphasis on individual and organizational skills underscores the importance of personal and collective development in fostering dynamic capabilities.

Organizational Resilience

Organizational resilience is the culmination of reactive, emerging, and dynamic capabilities. Duchek (2020) suggests that resilience relies on three pillars: anticipation, coping, and adaptation. The MSEs in this study discovered these elements by anticipating cash flow problems, dealing with challenges through sales innovation, and adapting to new market realities, such as the increased use of social media for sales.

Francisco (a fictitious name for the respondent) emphasized the importance of maintaining financial reserves, which aligns with the capacity for risk anticipation and contingency preparation. Rebeca (a fictitious name for the respondent) mentioned using digital platforms as an essential strategy for adapting to and coping with the challenges imposed by the pandemic.

The ability to proactively adapt to crises and continuously innovate positions these companies robustly in the post-crisis market. Several interviewees mentioned that digital marketing strategies helped businesses survive during the pandemic and opened new market opportunities. These strategies included creating online stores for sales. This finding demonstrates the interdependence between resilience and competitive advantage as Teece et al. (1997) discussed.

The Role of the Entrepreneur

The interviews highlighted the importance of the entrepreneur's role, showing how their skills influence the resilience and innovation of the businesses. The entrepreneur's role is crucial in developing and implementing reactive strategies, emerging strategies, and dynamic capabilities. The interviews reveal that the owners' skills play a significant role in the resilience of MSEs. Owners like Ivanir, Ivana, and Rebeca (fictitious names) demonstrated initiative and

innovation by adapting their business strategies to face the crisis. Quick and effective decision-making, continuous team training, and a focus on business survival (Questions 7, 8, 9, and 10) emphasize the owner's importance in guiding and adapting the business, as discussed by Wall e Bellamy (2019) and ElNaggar and ElSayed (2023).

The literature highlights that entrepreneurs' capacity for change and resilience closely relates to their skills and behaviors (Hadjielias et al., 2022; Wall & Bellamy, 2019). Owners' ability to reconfigure and leverage their resources to create market value is critical to organizational resilience (ElNaggar & ElSayed, 2023).

The reports indicate that the pandemic's effects on the creativity and entrepreneurship of MSEs are adverse. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic influenced businesses to adopt e-commerce, i.e., the ability to move from fragility to resilience, which is a response to the crisis and exogenous shocks at the core of resilience (Belitski et al., 2022). It is important to note that in small businesses, owners play a decisive role in filling resource gaps and engaging in practices such as innovation and decision-making to keep the business viable. In this sense, the practices and behaviors adopted by the owners influence the resilience of small businesses (Hadjielias et al., 2022; Santoro et al., 2021). Innovation drivers related to MSE resilience depend on the business's capabilities and the owner's ability to reconfigure and exploit resources to create market value (ElNaggar & ElSayed, 2023).

Given the size of the businesses and resource limitations, a phenomenological analysis of the interviews revealed the owners' role in dealing with disruptions in goods, social restrictions from policies to prevent the virus's spread, and their resilience in the face of change. The literature has emphasized the importance of small business owners having an environmentally significant role in small businesses' competitiveness, growth, and failure (Wall & Bellamy, 2019). The environmental uncertainty perceived by the owner drives the business's innovation model (ElNaggar & ElSayed, 2023). The owner's and the business's capabilities are closely interrelated; thus, enhancing personal resilience resources positively influences the business's resilience (Hadjielias et al., 2022; Wall & Bellamy, 2019).

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the resource scarcity of small businesses; maintaining performance and survival became a central issue (Grözinger et al., 2022). From the dynamic capabilities perspective, small businesses demonstrate that owners developed resilient strategic capabilities to maintain and survive in the face of disruptive changes such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Resilience serves as a valuable asset that helps entrepreneurs overcome obstacles; thus, we view entrepreneurs as resilient when they can overcome challenges or

modify their business to capitalize on new situations (Conduah & Essiaw, 2022; Markman et al., 2005) and ensure the continuity of the business.

MSE resilience, therefore, is not merely a passive response to crises but an active process of adaptation and innovation, where the ability to react quickly and adjust to new market conditions becomes crucial for long-term survival and success. MSEs that can transform reactive strategies into emerging strategies, continuously adapting to changes and challenges, demonstrate a significant advantage. Owners amplify resilience by using their skills and knowledge to implement new practices and explore market opportunities effectively (ElNaggar & ElSayed, 2023; Hadjielias et al., 2022).

The collected data indicate flexibility and agility in responding to crises are essential for MSE resilience. Companies that quickly adopted e-commerce and social media as sales and communication channels managed to mitigate some of the pandemic's negative impacts, maintaining customer relationships and generating revenue despite physical restrictions. This rapid adaptation reflects companies' dynamic capabilities, which include the ability to sense, seize, and transform opportunities in response to changes in the external environment (Teece et al., 1997).

Moreover, the capacity for innovation, driven by the need to face unforeseen challenges, is a central component of organizational resilience. Introducing new products, services, and business models, such as online sales and free delivery, are examples of emerging strategies born out of the need for adaptation and survival (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985). These strategies are not preplanned but emerge from owners' and managers' daily actions and decisions, reflecting the dynamic and adaptive nature of MSEs.

Therefore, MSEs build resilience on reactive strategies that evolve into emerging strategies driven by dynamic capabilities and continuous innovation. Small business owners' ability to quickly identify changes in the business environment, adjust operations, and explore new opportunities is crucial for overcoming crises and ensuring business continuity and growth. This continuous adaptation and innovation process allows MSEs to transform adversities into lasting advantages.

Table 2 summarizes the interconnection between the theoretical concepts and the empirical data discussed, highlighting the strategies and capabilities that enable the textile retail MSEs in Manaus to face and overcome the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given the study context, as illustrated in Figure 1, the analysis of responses revealed a new category: the role of the entrepreneur (Table 2). The role of the entrepreneur predominantly acts as a moderator in the conceptual model. We base this inference on the fact that the

entrepreneurs' skills, experiences, and decisions can amplify or attenuate the effectiveness of reactive and emerging strategies and dynamic capabilities. Consequently, these variables directly influence organizational resilience, demonstrating that the entrepreneur's role is fundamental in adapting to and overcoming crises by MSEs.

Table 2

Summary of Strategies and Capabilities of Textile Retail MSEs in Manaus

Category	Description	Key Authors	Examples of Collected Data
Reactive Strategies	Immediate responses to crises aimed at maintaining the business.	Day (1994) and Kumar et al. (2011)	Discounts, negotiations with suppliers, selling products outside the store.
Emerging Strategies	Strategies that organically arise from daily interactions and continuous adaptation.	Mintzberg and Waters (1985)	Adoption of online sales, use of social media for promotions and sales, and free delivery.
Dynamic Capabilities	Ability to understand and reconfigure resources and competencies to respond to environmental changes.	Meirelles and Camargo (2014) and Teece et al. (1997)	Price adjustments, seeking alternative suppliers, innovation in products like masks and hand sanitizer, and process improvement.
Organizational Resilience	Ability to anticipate, cope with, and adapt to adversities and crises.	Duchek (2020) and Hadjielias et al. (2022)	Use financial reserves, maintain constant and motivational communication with the team, and adapt operating hours.
Role of the Entrepreneur	Importance of the owners' skills in guiding and adapting the business during crises.	ElNaggar and ElSayed (2023) and Wall and Bellamy (2019)	Owners adopt innovative practices, quick and effective decision-making, continuous team training, focus on survival, and adaptation to new conditions.

Final Considerations

This research explored how textile retail MSEs transformed their reactive strategies into actions that promoted organizational resilience by developing dynamic capabilities. From the phenomenological analysis of the data, it was possible to (i) describe the phenomena revealed by the narratives, (ii) identify emerging themes from the descriptions, (iii) highlight subjective reflections of these emerging themes, and finally, (iv) abstract the essences. The study aimed to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the future of MSEs in the textile retail segment in Manaus, where small business units were vulnerable to crises. The analyses highlight that financial resources and the owners' capacity are essential elements for the survival of MSEs during the pandemic to ensure business continuity. Table 2 provides a summary of the findings from both theoretical and business perspectives.

Theoretical Contributions - This article aimed to deepen our understanding of resilience as a crucial factor for the survival and growth of textile retail MSEs. The conclusions drawn from the study underscore the significant role of the owner's characteristics in resilience, particularly in their perception of the crisis and the development of reactive and emerging strategies. In this context, resilience is heavily reliant on the personal capacities of the owners to navigate adverse situations. Therefore, resilience can be viewed as a psychological resource closely tied to the owner's ability to confront and overcome challenges. This study suggests a shift in focus from the strategies of MSEs to the pivotal role of the owner, reflecting their expectations for the business's survival and continuity.

Directions for Future Research – The demographic analysis of the respondents reveals essential nuances in the strategies adopted by MSEs. Gender and educational background significantly affect how owners perceive and address the crisis. Based on the demographic data, we can infer that women, with their emotional resilience skills and support networks and owners with higher education, innovation capabilities, and technological adaptation, contribute to the organizational resilience of MSEs. These observations reinforce the importance of considering the individual characteristics of entrepreneurs when analyzing responses to crises and developing support and intervention strategies.

Practical Implications – MSE owners are susceptible to financial challenges, and COVID-19 may jeopardize the viability of their businesses. However, the study reveals that MSEs were not uniformly affected by the pandemic, and there were variations in these companies' responses. The individual characteristics of entrepreneurs, such as gender, education level, and available financial resources, significantly impact how they cope with the crisis shocks. The conclusions indicate that different forms of support, such as support networks, training, and qualifications, can enhance the chances of survival and continuity of businesses. Therefore, policies and support programs should focus on entrepreneurs' specific characteristics to maximize the interventions' effectiveness, empowering readers with actionable insights. **Study Limitations**—The data were collected amid the 'damage' caused by the pandemic, which included movement restrictions and a significant impact on public health, especially in Manaus. The analyses and discussions rely on cross-sectional interviews. However, future studies could conduct longitudinal examinations to assess how these connections behave over time. However, future studies could conduct longitudinal examinations to assess how these connections behave over time. Other qualitative research techniques, such as documentary research, surveys, direct observation, and interviews with

observational evidence, could substantially enhance the discussion, sparking the reader's interest in potential future developments.

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