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## **Organizational resilience as a measure and attribute of enterprise excellence**

*Doctoral dissertation abstract*

### **Introduction**

Organizational resilience, understood as the phenomenon of positive adaptation to change as part of the organization's operation in the turbulent environment of the present times, constitutes the subject of the research presented in this dissertation.

The concept of resilience allows us to answer the question: Which features of persons and organizations make it possible for them to thrive and demonstrate correct development trends despite difficult and turbulent internal and external conditions. The idea of resilience has been conceptualized, i.a., as *personal resilience* — the ability to appropriately cope with, adapt to, and engage in everyday issues in the changing and stressful conditions of one's life, while preserving one's identity and life orientation. From the point of view of management, studies on *organizational resilience* raise more and more interest. These studies conducted in various fields, using different methods and based on various assumptions, gave, however, rise to the different definitions of organizational resilience.

Due to there being a number of definitions of the phenomenon, the author of this thesis defined his own organizational resilience definition on the basis of systematic reviews and critical analysis of literature. The organizational resilience was defined as the ability of an organization to thrive, survive and develop in an environment full of changes and uncertainties, while maintaining the organization's identity.

### **Objectives**

In his research, the author assumes that organizational resilience is a feature which impacts on organizational longevity and the organization's economic and management efficiency. In his work, the author formulates cognitive and methodological objectives. The cognitive objectives include:

- (1) Measuring organizational resilience of Polish companies.
- (2) Determining those attributes of resilience which have the greatest impact on the overall resilience of an enterprise.
- (3) Studying the relationship between organizational resilience and the economic standing of the enterprise.
- (4) Studying the relationship between organizational resilience and the selected characteristics of the enterprise.

Methodological objectives were set in addition to the cognitive ones:

- (1) Developing the Polish adaptation of the *Benchmark Resilience Tool* (BRT),
- (2) Analysing the psychometric properties of the Polish adaptation of the BRT, including reliability and theoretical validity.

- (3) Devising methodological recommendations for future research into organizational resilience.

The cognitive and methodological objectives related to the completion of the research project were formulated by the author within the following research questions:

- Question 1. What is the level of organizational resilience of Polish joint-stock companies?
- Question 2. Which attribute of resilience has the greatest impact on overall organizational resilience of Polish companies?
- Question 3. Is there a relationship between organizational resilience and the economic efficiency of the enterprise?
- Question 4. Is there a relationship between the size of the enterprise and its organizational resilience?
- Question 5. Is the Polish adaptation of BRT (PL-BRT) an accurate and reliable tool in a similar fashion to the original version (BRT), and does it correctly reflect the structure of the original?

## **Methods**

In order to achieve the objectives, the author used data collected in two stages: Stage one involved a pilot study conducted on the population of managers at the SGH Warsaw School of Economics in 2015, while stage two was a survey which the author carried out in 2016 on 160 individuals from 80 Polish joint-stock companies. The survey was conducted according to the Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) method. It was carried out using a translated Benchmark Resilience Tool supplemented with questions regarding the company's characteristics. The responses were evaluated on an eight-point scale. Each of the tested resilience attributes described in the previous chapter was measured using several questionnaire items, an average of which was then calculated to reduce the calculation error. This allowed to obtain a scale with improved continuity, which better reflected the research phenomenon and minimized random measurement errors. The research tool was structured (invariable order and number of questions) and standardized (invariable wording of questions and conditions of their presentation to the respondents as identical as possible), therefore meeting the boundary conditions of the standardized questionnaire-based interview. The interview questionnaire included closed and semi-open questions. These were mainly about material truth (objective, i.e. concerning facts and numbers) or, to a much lesser extent, about psychological truth (subjective, i.e. opinions and judgements). The interviews were carried out with representatives of listed companies, in senior and middle management positions, and with several regular employees. Next, the collected data were subjected to statistical analyses.

## **Findings**

The research demonstrated that companies listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange are characterized by a high level of organizational resilience, which stems from their adaptability. The planning capability of Polish enterprises was slightly worse, but still at a good level. Polish companies are characterized by efficient decision-making, an appropriate level of delegation of power, and employees being promoted basing on their competences. The biggest weaknesses of Polish companies in terms of their organizational resilience were the preparation and testing of emergency plans. This attribute of resilience should be improved in Polish companies

to enhance their resilience to the crisis. Furthermore, the survey showed that “staff engagement”, followed by “leveraging knowledge”, “situation awareness” and “proactive posture” had the greatest impact on the overall resilience of the enterprise. No relationship between the organizational resilience and performance of the company was demonstrated during the research. This confirms the assumption that in order to prove the relationship between organizational resilience and economic results, as postulated in theoretical sources, other research methods should be used, such as case and longitudinal studies. It was, however, proven that higher levels of “leadership and culture” are accompanied by lower levels of employee turnover. It also turned out that higher “staff engagement” and “innovation and creativity” accompanied lower values of average annual employee turnover.

When it came to the relationship between organizational resilience and size of the enterprise, based on the empirical study carried out by the author and the available literature, one may assume that no such relationship exists (at least in the proposed scope). It was, however, noted that a greater number of branches is associated with a higher level of “situation awareness”. Higher revenues were also related to improved “planning strategies”. In addition, the more full-time employees there were in a company, the better were the company’s planning strategies and internal resources.

As regards the methodological objective of the work, as in the case of other adaptations, the validity and reliability of scales were determined using Cronbach’s  $\alpha$ . The indicators obtained as part of the study confirm the validity and accuracy of the adapted tool. The individual scales and the overall organizational resilience measured using the Polish adaptation of BRT were characterized by their reliability being close to the original. Furthermore, for six scales and the overall score, the reliability of the Polish version was greater than that of the original. Analysis of the reliability of PL-BRT demonstrated that only a small number of items had insufficient discriminatory power. Following the analysis of those items, a decision was made to remove some of them from the questionnaire, and to retain or reformulate the rest. These analyses resulted in a questionnaire with satisfactory internal consistency, as well as containing items that well-differentiated the population in terms of the measured characteristics.